

# Reporting Educators' Experiences Regarding Family–School Interactions With Implications for Best Practices

*Mehtap Kirmaci*

## Abstract

A growing international interest in family–school collaboration is also seen in the United States, with teachers increasingly asked to take responsibility for partnering with parents. Yet, little is known about how teachers develop an understanding of supportive family–school or teacher–parent interactions. I conducted a thematic analysis of 44 empirical articles published from 2007 to 2017 that explored preservice and in-service teachers' experiences regarding family–school–community interactions. This review of extant research revealed: (1) ongoing concern from teachers about the lack of teacher education and professional learning opportunities supporting family–school–community interactions, and (2) evidence of teachers' interest in gaining knowledge for collaborating more effectively with families. The majority of the studies reviewed focused on teachers' learning in working with families. The recurring findings among the studies included: (1) improved skills in working with diverse families; (2) increased ability to reflect on personal assumptions regarding diverse families; and (3) a broadened view of family diversity. Across the intervention-based studies, opportunities to reflect on personal assumptions about diversity and to have authentic interactions with families were viewed as important components of teacher learning to develop the above skills. Lessons learned can be applied by teacher educators and educational researchers to better support prospective and practicing teachers in their work with families from diverse backgrounds.

Key Words: family–school–community interactions, literature review, teacher preparation, professional development, diverse families, partnerships

## Introduction

Researchers, education leaders, and policymakers have long emphasized the role of family–school–community partnerships as a means of increasing academic achievement, especially in schools identified for improvement (Every Student Succeeds Act [ESSA], 2015; No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2002; Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014; Weiss & Stephen, 2009). As a result, standards for the teaching profession were expanded, and family–school–community collaboration was incorporated as a teaching competency in many professional associations (Kroeger & Lash, 2011).

Even though family–school–community collaboration has been advocated in educational research and policy as a means to promote student achievement, it is also critical to cultivating more democratic schools and more equitable educational opportunities for all students, particularly students in poverty and students of color (Baquedano-López, Alexander, & Hernandez, 2013). This is because public schools in the U.S. seem to be very different places than they were 25 years ago (Nieto, 2013). While mass movements of people across the world have led to tremendous demographic changes, the nation's elementary and secondary classrooms have become populated by a number of students from diverse racial/ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. In particular, the U.S. accommodates the largest immigrant population of any one nation, with 23 million immigrants, making up 19% of the world's total number (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UN DESA], 2015). In addition, the percentage of people living in poverty continues to rise, and thus poverty remains a major issue in the nation (Semega, Fontenot, & Kollar, 2017).

As U.S. society transitions to being much more racially/ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse, interestingly, the nation's current teaching force remains overwhelmingly European American. According to the U.S. Department of Education (2017), European American teachers represent 80% of the teaching profession, with teachers of color accounting for merely 20%. Moreover, these European American teachers are largely female, monolingual, and from middle class backgrounds (Nieto, 2013). These demographic divergences between the student body and the teaching force raise a challenge for public schools (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2014). Consequently, racial/ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity have come to be important components of educational issues, including family–school–community relations.

While teachers are expected to work effectively with families (ESSA, 2015), teachers' experiences with diverse families are as yet insufficiently documented in the literature (Hindin, 2010). Little is known about how teachers develop an understanding of family–school–community interactions in general and of their own interactions with families of various backgrounds. As a result, a broad synthesis of existing research regarding teachers' experiences in family–school–community interactions in the U.S. is needed, given its potential to inform future research and practice. With this concern in mind, this literature review examines current research on preservice and in-service teachers' experiences regarding family–school–community interactions. To this purpose, this study is guided by the following questions:

1. What is known about preservice and in-service teachers' experiences relating to family–school–community relations in the existing research?
2. What theoretical and methodological aspects of the existing research guide and support the research?

In the following sections, I begin with an overview of the methodology that was employed for the literature review. Then I ground my discussion of teachers' experiences with families according to their main themes. Next, exploring the literature, I detail the methodological traditions and theoretical perspectives guiding the reviewed studies. Finally, I conclude with a brief discussion of this investigation's implications for future research and professional development programs to better support prospective and practicing teachers in their work with families from diverse backgrounds.

## Methodology

In selecting research studies for inclusion in this paper, I conducted a systematic review of the relevant literature according to the following criteria:

1. My target population was preservice and in-service teachers majoring in childhood, elementary, and secondary education in every subject area; those studies that targeted special education teachers were excluded from this review. Moreover, I included studies that targeted teachers as their main participants; studies focusing on teachers as a relatively minor portion of a broader investigation were excluded from the study.
2. I included studies that were directly relevant to the aim of the research, that is, those examining preservice and in-service teachers' knowledge, practices, and perspectives relating to family–school–community relations and those addressing the intersection between preservice and in-service teacher professional learning and family–school–community partnerships.

3. Studies focusing on preservice and in-service teachers’ knowledge, perspectives, and practices relating to family–school–community relations were largely limited to those conducted within the U.S. However, studies conducted abroad but employing intervention projects targeting teacher learning in working with families were included to gain insight that might inform future research and practice in the context of the U.S.
4. I included studies situated in learning settings in a variety of formal and informal environments.
5. The review of literature incorporated only empirical studies. Literature reviews and conceptual papers were excluded.
6. This review was limited to journal articles; books or book chapters were excluded. From the journal articles, only peer-reviewed studies were included.
7. The included journal articles were limited to those appearing between 2007 and 2017.

Table 1. Journal Article Search Procedure

Key Words	Database	
	ERIC	Education Research Complete
<i>Teachers, parents, AND schools</i>	1,138 ⊘	1,950 ⊘
<i>Teachers AND family/parent involvement</i>	54	457
<i>Teachers, parents, AND science</i>	147	55
<i>Teachers, parents, AND math</i>	39	78
<i>Teachers, parents, AND literacy</i>	120	34
<i>Teachers, parents, AND social science</i>	9	21
TOTAL	1,014	

Within the above parameters, my examination of the research began with gathering studies from ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) and Education Research Complete. As Table 1 shows, the initial search was conducted with key words such as *teachers, parents, and schools*. Regarding these keywords, I found 1,138 studies from ERIC and 1,950 from Education Research Complete. Considering the difficulty of looking through all these journal articles, I began again and conducted another search using the terms *teachers* and *family/parent involvement*, which resulted in 54 studies from ERIC and 457 studies from Education Research Complete. Additionally, the terms *science, math, literacy, and social science* were used interchangeably along with

the terms *teachers* and *parents* in order to avoid missing any journal article that did not appear in the above searches. This search resulted in the following numbers, respectively: 55, 78, 34, and 21 journal articles from Education Research Complete; and 147, 39, 120, and 9 journal articles from ERIC. Thus, the scan resulted in 1,014 studies.

As a second step, I manually reviewed specific journals, including the *International Journal About Parents in Education*, the *School Community Journal*, and the *Journal of Family Diversity in Education*. Then, I reviewed the citation trail of each journal article that I found through the above search protocols and included these additional articles in the review study.

Reading through the abstracts based on the above seven parameters reduced the relevant literature to 44 journal articles. Inspired by Boyatzis's (1998) thematic analysis, an inductive approach was undertaken to seek emergent themes (patterns) across the journal articles. First, I read each journal article carefully, jotting down notes on or highlighting important points. To familiarize and re-familiarize myself with these journal articles, I developed an Excel worksheet and, for each study, recorded the name of the author(s), the purpose of the study, the targeted participants (preservice or in-service teachers), the study context, the theoretical/conceptual orientation, the methodology, the findings, and the implications. Based on my research questions, I categorized journal articles separately by their focus, methodologies, and theoretical/conceptual orientations using a color coding method. Then, I reexamined the studies within each category that provided an understanding of teachers' experiences related to family–school–community relations based on the existing literature.

## Findings

Based on my examination of the literature, I ground my discussion in two areas as a response to my two research questions. In the following sections, the areas of discussion are (1) the main themes that emerged from the review of the literature, including teachers' perceptions of family–school–community interactions, teachers' practices concerning family–school–community interactions, teachers' perceptions of the involvement of non-European American parents in their child's education, teacher self-efficacy in family–school–community interactions, and teachers' learning in working with families; and (2) theoretical and methodological features guiding the existing research.

In this review, most of the research studies focused on participants who are largely European American, middle class, and female, which reflects the current teacher workforce in the U.S. Also, these studies mostly examine teachers who work in urban schools serving primarily low-income and non-European

American student populations. Of examined studies, 25 focused on preservice teachers, 15 focused on in-service teachers, and four focused on both preservice and in-service teachers. The number of study participants ranged from one to 1,658.

### **Themes That Emerged From the Review of the Literature**

Terms relating to family–school–community interactions were used as they appeared in the studies to accurately illustrate the original ideas of the researchers in an attempt to prevent confusion. As the language that the researchers used changed according to their theoretical or conceptual predispositions, the terms used to describe family–school–community relations also changed according to different connotations across the studies. These included *parent/family involvement*, *parent/family engagement*, *family–school partnerships*, *family–school–community partnerships*, and *parent/family–school collaborations*.

While some of the researchers used different terms interchangeably to mean the same thing, others used the same terms but ascribed different meanings to them. For instance, *parent involvement* was used by several researchers, but the conceptualization of this phrase was inconsistent. While some described it as universal actions that parents and schools can do to foster students' learning (e.g., Uludag, 2008), others viewed it as referring to more heterogeneous practices that families, communities, and schools can engage in with one another (e.g., Gallo & Wortham, 2012). As Table 2 shows, the studies reviewed were categorized into five themes. Even though I organized this section by themes, it is worth noting that there exists noticeable overlap across the five themes.

#### ***Teachers' Perceptions on Family–School–Community Relations***

One set of studies addressed preservice teachers' (D'Haem & Griswold, 2017; Hindin, 2010; Patte, 2011) and in-service teachers' (Christianakis, 2011; Pryor & Pryor, 2009) attitudes toward and understandings of parent–school relations. Similarly, the researchers wanted to know how teachers perceived their roles and those parents' roles in their relation to one another but did not focus on how perspectives are related to practice. This body of research shows that teachers possess positive attitudes in working with families but that their understanding of ideal family–school interactions was rather limited and unidirectional. The teachers defined ideal parent–teacher interactions with pre-implied tasks that parents are expected to accomplish at home and school, so teachers felt responsible for communicating those expectations to parents.

Table 2. Distribution of the Themes Emerging From the Studies

Themes	Authors	# of Articles
Teachers' perceptions on family–school–community relations	Christianakis, 2011; D'Haem & Griswold, 2017; Hindin, 2010; Patte, 2011; Pryor & Pryor, 2009	5
Teachers' practices concerning family–school–community relations	Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Jensen, 2011; Seitsinger, Felner, Brand, & Burns, 2008	3
Teachers' perceptions of involvement of non-European Amer. parents in their child's education	Adair, 2014; Eberly, Joshi, & Konzal, 2007; Soutullo, Smith-Bonahue, Sanders-Smith, & Navia, 2016	3
Teacher self-efficacy on family–school–community relations	Bruïne et al., 2014; Melnick & Meister, 2008; Pedro, Miller, & Bray, 2012; Uludag, 2008; Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2011	5
Teachers' learning in working with families	Amatea, Cholewa, & Mixon, 2012; Baumgartner & Buchanan, 2010; Brown, Harris, Jacobson, & Trotti, 2014; Ferrara, 2009; Fleharty & Pope-Edwards, 2013; Gallo & Wortham, 2012; Hindin & Mueller, 2016; Hooks, 2008; Johnson, 2014; Kroeger & Lash, 2011; Lin & Bates, 2010; Loughrey & Woods, 2010; McCollough & Ramirez, 2012; Meyer, Mann, & Becker, 2011; Norris, 2010; Pohan & Adams, 2007; Pushor & Parker, 2013; Ramirez & McCollough, 2012; Rothstein-Fisch, Trumbull, & Garcia, 2009; Schechter & Sherri, 2009; Smith, Smith-Bonahue, & Soutullo, 2014; Stetson, Stetson, Sinclair, & Nix, 2012; Sutterby, Rubin, & Abrego, 2007; Symeou, Roussounidou, & Michaelides, 2012; Tirrell-Corbin & Cooper, 2014; Waddell, 2011; Warren, Noftle, Ganley, & Quintanar, 2011; Zeichner, Bowman, Guillen, & Napolitan, 2016	28

For example, Pryor and Pryor (2009) investigated in-service teachers' beliefs about their role in parent–school relations. The researchers administered surveys to 40 elementary and secondary teachers examining eight ideal teacher behaviors. These behaviors were related to communicating school and classroom expectations, providing information and resources for home learning

activities, and recruiting parents as volunteers in the classroom. The researchers found that most of the teachers' attitudes were positive with regards to communicating homework expectations, providing information on strategies to improve student learning, and recruiting parents for volunteering (though rates of secondary teachers were slightly lower regarding volunteering), whereas their intentions were weak in providing service and resources for home learning activities.

Other studies went further and investigated the factors that might form teachers' perceptions of family–school relations. For example, in interviewing 15 in-service teachers in an urban elementary school, Christianakis (2011) found that the in-service teachers experienced difficulty in the classroom due to lack of school resources and state-mandated paraprofessionals to support students with special needs in their classrooms. Working in underresourced schools was noted as a leading reason for teachers to conceptualize parental involvement as a set of practices that assist teachers in fulfilling their curricular requirements. Such teachers view parents' roles in monitoring their child's school assignments, volunteering in the classroom, and being present for school trips as a way to lessen their sometimes excessive teaching load. Building upon Epstein's (1995, 2005) six types of involvement framework, Hindin (2010) and Patte (2011) examined teacher candidates' learning experiences in their teacher education programs and found that teacher candidates did not observe ideal parent–school interactions in their field experiences. For example, Hindin found that the teacher candidates in one university observed their mentor teachers mostly interacting with families only through parent–teacher conferences and sending notes home. In addition, these teacher candidates observed their mentor teachers working in urban settings experiencing problematic relationships with their students' families. Although teacher candidates learned a variety of ways to work with parents through their coursework, the researcher found that teacher candidates' perceptions of parent involvement echoed the practices of their mentor teachers.

### *Teachers' Practices Concerning Family–School–Community Relations*

In this line of research, studies investigated the association between practicing teachers' intentions and their current actions in working with their students' parents. Utilizing surveys as data collection instruments, similarly, they found that the in-service teachers did not effectively implement communication systems to collaborate with parents, which they believed would foster students' school learning. For example, drawing from the "Parent Involvement Inventory" document published by the Illinois State Board of Education in 1994, Barnyak and McNelly (2009) surveyed 92 in-service teachers working

in K–12 classrooms in an urban school district in Pennsylvania. The researchers found that the teachers highly valued informing parents about homework policy, strategies on how to monitor homework, holding parent–teacher conferences, communicating to parents in case of misbehavior, and providing parents with strategies to enhance student learning. However, teachers' usual course of action merely consisted of attending parent–teacher conferences and communicating with parents in case of misbehavior.

Surveying 131 elementary school teachers based on Henderson and Mapp's (2002) partnership model, Jensen (2011) found more than a simple discrepancy between teacher attitudes and practices. She also drew attention to a school's requirements for teachers in establishing parent involvement. The researcher found that most of the schools where she conducted her research only required teachers to attend parent–teacher conferences and back-to-school nights. The schools' weak implementation of national family–school policies was identified as one possible explanation for the teachers' weak implementation process. These findings echo the concerns raised by family–school partnership scholars who have documented limited investments in family–school relations and insufficient monitoring of compliance with national family–school policies across many states and school districts (e.g., Mapp, 2012; Weiss & Stephen, 2009). There is a growing consensus about the problem—that even though family–school–community partnerships have begun to move closer to the center of national school reform efforts, increasing demands for standardization, high-stakes testing, and accountability have been narrowing school administrators' and teachers' practices with regard to family–school partnerships (e.g., Darling-Hammond, Wei, & Andree, 2010; Nichols & Harris, 2016).

#### *Teachers' Perceptions of Engagement of Low-Income and Non-European American Parents in Their Child's Education*

A third set of studies examined teachers' perceptions of low-income and families of color and these families' engagement in their children's academic trajectories. These studies (Adair, 2014; Eberly et al., 2007; Soutullo et al., 2016) mainly focused on European American in-service teachers working in early childhood and elementary education settings that served economically and culturally diverse student populations. These studies, in general, indicate deficient perceptions held by teachers regarding low-income and non-European American parents and those parents' involvement in their children's education, perceptions grounded in teachers' limited familiarity with them.

For example, Adair (2014) worked with 50 preschool in-service teachers working in five different cities of the U.S., each with long history of immigration. Adair examined the teachers' reactions to newly arrived immigrant

families in their respective schools. Utilizing video-cued ethnography, the researcher videorecorded a typical day of a preschool classroom accommodating largely immigrant children, then teacher participants within focus group interviews responded to the pedagogical environment and practices shown in the video. Employing Critical Race Theory (CRT) and poststructural data analysis techniques, Adair found that most of the teachers blamed immigrant families for turning their communities into dangerous places and held them responsible for trying to fit in their community, while some teachers valued the presence of immigrant students in the classroom. Analyzing Whiteness in relation to the social construction of race and immigration, Adair's research contributed to our understanding of how Whiteness might play a role in preventing European American teachers from positively engaging with immigrant families.

In another study, by conducting focus group interviews with 21 in-service teachers serving children from preschool to fifth grade, Eberly and her colleagues (2007) found that the teachers expressed negative judgements about low-income and non-European American parents' childrearing strategies and viewed them as unconcerned about their children's education. Drawing from Epstein's (2011) framework of family-school-community partnerships, Soutullo and colleagues (2016) investigated barriers the studied elementary school teachers perceived as preventing partnership between school and immigrant families. Interviewing 18 in-service teachers enrolled in a graduate program in early childhood education, they found that teachers identified several barriers to quality family-school interactions. The teachers perceived barriers that originated from the school's inefficient strategies for communicating with parents, barriers originating from the immigrant parents themselves (viewing them as not being responsive to school invitations), and impediments stemming from parents lacking the resources necessary for their child's school progress. The researchers found that participants expressed few concerns regarding their own attitudes, including ones that might prevent family-school partnerships.

This branch of research revealed a cultural disconnect between European American teachers and the low-income and non-European American families they serve. The above findings point to the need for preservice and in-service teacher professional development programs that challenge teachers to rethink their assumptions about their students and families who do not share similar cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds with them.

#### *Teachers' Self-Efficacy on Family-School-Community Relations*

A fourth set of studies investigated the perceptions of in-service teachers (Melnick & Meister, 2008; Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2011) and preservice teachers (Bruine et al., 2014; Pedro et al., 2012; Uludag, 2008) on their ability to work with families. The findings revealed different levels of self-efficacy developed

by preservice and in-service teachers in their teacher education programs, but common to all five studies, participants expressed a need for more educational opportunities in their training programs, such as dedicating a course or offering community outreach experiences specifically in this area.

Upon closer examination, it was clear that three of the studies (Bruïne et al., 2014; Uludag, 2008; Zygmunt-Fillwalk, 2011) were built upon the ideas of Epstein and colleagues, citing several of her studies. Similarly, these studies first investigated what type of experiences teachers went through in their preservice teacher education programs that were related to family–school–community partnerships and teachers' assessments of how sufficient their preparation was in this area. Commonly, they found that these partnerships were deemed a subject to be addressed as a component of a few required courses, rather than a course in its own right. Excepting early childhood education departments, teacher education programs attended by participants did not require candidates to take a course specifically addressing such partnerships; if offered, it was optional for teacher candidates.

For example, Zygmunt-Fillwalk (2011) surveyed 60 recent graduates from the elementary education program at a midwestern university to learn how their self-efficacy differed based on their preservice education preparation. Comparing the reflections of beginning teachers who had taken a “Family and Community Relations” course during their preservice education and those who had not, Zygmunt-Fillwalk found that teachers who had taken the course expressed a theoretical and practical understanding of the benefits of family involvement, while others expressed frequent resentment and contradictory perceptions toward families. The study also found that teachers without a theoretical and practical understanding of family involvement had difficulty in developing communication strategies and experienced a loss of confidence when their attempts to work with families were not met with success.

Bruïne et al. (2014) examined not only the quantity but also the quality of teacher experiences in their preservice preparation programs with respect to family–school partnerships. Conducting research in three universities, located in the United States, Netherlands, and Belgium, the researchers found considerable similarities in these universities' curriculum regarding family–school partnerships. All three universities offered a few required courses, including subjects linked to family–school partnerships, with limited attention given in secondary education programs. Closely examining the content of these courses, the researchers found that great emphasis was put on lectures, and discussion was mostly limited to one-way communication from teacher to parent, including informing parents about school programs and expectations. Conducting focus group interviews with 65 elementary and secondary teacher candidates

and 32 teacher educators, the researchers also found that primary teacher candidates felt a need to be better prepared for family–school interactions, even after they had taken a course specifically in this area. Although the majority of secondary teacher candidates and teacher educators perceived family–school partnerships as mainly a topic of interest for primary rather than for secondary teachers, they also indicated the necessity of preparing for communicating with parents, due to its necessity in case of problematic situations.

In this subset of studies, teacher self-efficacy was explored in relation to families in general. Even though two of the studies found that teacher candidates felt prepared for working with families (Pedro et al., 2012; Uludag, 2008), these studies did not describe in detail whether teacher candidates felt prepared to work with families from diverse racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds. Based on these findings, it would be naive to make certain generalizations regarding teachers' self-efficacy in family–school relations in the U.S. Nonetheless, this body of research actually echoes the long-standing concerns of many researchers and indicates there still exists a lack of training opportunities in many teacher education programs to help teachers develop the competencies necessary to effectively work with diverse families (Mapp, 2012; Miller, Lines, Sullivan, & Hermanutz, 2013).

### *Teachers' Learning in Working With Families*

The majority of the studies (28) focused on teachers' learning in working with families. These journal articles were mostly qualitative in nature (19) and employed a wide range of theoretical perspectives and methodological traditions. Home visits, parent interviews, mock parent–teacher conferences, classroom discussions, community outreach experiences, and professional development workshops were among the educational approaches incorporated into these impact-oriented intervention projects. Despite such theoretical and methodological variety, the majority of the researchers tended to use students' written assignments and oral reflections as their data collection sources. The time scales on learning experiences ranged from a single workshop to one semester to four years in length. The majority of the studies focused on preservice teacher education (17). Only seven studies focused in-service professional development environments; the remaining four studies concentrated on in-service teachers in their graduate programs. Most of the studies targeted early childhood and elementary education (22); only six studies focused on secondary education settings in addition to early childhood and elementary education settings.

Numerous important findings emerged from this research that have the potential to enlighten the broader field of family–school–community interactions. The recurring findings among the studies indicated that such educational

interventions produced improved skills in working with diverse families, an increased ability to reflect on personal assumptions regarding diverse families, and a broadened view of family diversity.

Table 3. Educational Strategies and Their Impact on the Participants

Experience	Result
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Book club with mothers (Pushor &amp; Parker, 2013)</li> <li>•Home visits (Johnson, 2014; Lin &amp; Bates, 2010; Meyer et al., 2011; Stetson et al., 2012)</li> <li>•Family interviews (Kroeger &amp; Lash, 2011)</li> <li>•In-service teacher workshop (Rothstein-Fisch et al., 2009)</li> <li>•Panel discussions conducted by parents (Norris, 2010)</li> <li>•University affiliated afterschool family program (Schechter &amp; Sherri, 2009)</li> </ul>	<p>Increased level of familiarity with diverse families and broadened view of family diversity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Group discussions (Smith et al., 2014; Symeou et al., 2012)</li> <li>•Conducting home visits (Amatea et al., 2012)</li> <li>•Watching film about parents (Gallo &amp; Wortham, 2012)</li> <li>•Interacting with families in informal learning settings (Ramirez &amp; McCollough, 2012)</li> </ul>	<p>Increased awareness of assumptions regarding diverse families</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Family interviews (Baumgartner &amp; Buchanan, 2010)</li> <li>•Interacting with families in alternative learning spaces (Loughrey &amp; Woods, 2010; McCollough &amp; Ramirez, 2012; Pohan &amp; Adams, 2007; Zeichner et al., 2016)</li> <li>•Conducting simulated parent–teacher conferences (Hooks, 2008)</li> <li>•Seminars and class discussions (Brown et al., 2014; Ferrara, 2009; Tirrell-Corbin &amp; Cooper, 2014)</li> <li>•Family project assignments (Fleharty &amp; Pope-Edwards, 2013)</li> </ul>	<p>Improved skills in working with diverse families</p>

Several researchers reported that teachers have increased their skills in working with families as a result of their intervention projects. While some studies had teachers conduct interviews with families (Baumgartner & Buchanan, 2010) or interact with families in alternative learning spaces (Loughrey & Woods, 2010; McCollough & Ramirez, 2012; Pohan & Adams, 2007; Zeichner et al., 2016), others had teachers conduct simulated parent–teacher conferences (Hooks, 2008), family projects (Fleharty & Pope-Edwards, 2013), or they directly focused on seminars and class discussions (Brown et al., 2014; Ferrara, 2009; Tirrell-Corbin & Cooper, 2014). For example, Zeichner and colleagues (2016) had elementary and secondary teacher candidates attend weekly panel presentations relating to issues of equity and diversity coupled with debriefing

sessions. The candidates were also given opportunities to engage in small group conversations with families in their school placement regions and simultaneously to receive training on how to make positive phone calls, conduct home visits, and involve parents in the curriculum. In addition, elementary teacher candidates attended a three-week summer program in their local schools where they had the chance to learn about families in the neighborhood. Utilizing surveys and individual/focus group interviews with 16 teacher candidates, the researchers observed a significant shift regarding teachers' understanding of family-school collaboration and their responsibilities as educators to facilitate such cooperation. Conducting follow-up case studies with two elementary education graduates and one secondary teacher education graduate, all in their first year of teaching, the researchers also found that these beginning teachers continued to use strategies they learned during their teacher education programs (Zeichner et al., 2016).

While the above studies reported increased teacher self-confidence, some studies found raised levels of consciousness in teachers' personal perceptions regarding diverse families. This realization came about through participation in seminars and group discussions (Smith et al., 2014; Symeou et al., 2012), conducting home visits (Amatea et al., 2012), interacting with families in informal learning settings (Ramirez & McCollough, 2012), and watching a documentary film about local parents (Gallo & Wortham, 2012). For example, Ramirez and McCollough (2012) required preservice elementary and secondary teachers to prepare culturally relevant math activities and implement them in a university-designated, Latino-serving educational organization. As a part of a math content class assignment, the student teachers utilized the knowledge possessed by local Latino families and integrated their community resources—such as social events, traditional games, and agricultural knowledge—with several mathematical investigation activities. The researchers found that having direct experiences with parents and working with them on a specific content helped preservice teachers amend their prior misconceptions about parents' interest and ability to assist in their children's education. One preservice teacher commented, "I learned from the mother that even though she doesn't speak English, this isn't an impediment to helping her children with homework. I also learned that people having limited resources doesn't mean that they don't understand the importance of an education for their children's future" (Ramirez & McCollough, 2012, p. 52).

In nine of the studies, participants demonstrated an increased level of familiarity with diverse families through book clubs with students' mothers (Pushor & Parker, 2013), home visits (Johnson, 2014; Lin & Bates, 2010; Meyer et al., 2011; Stetson et al., 2012), family interviews (Kroeger & Lash, 2011),

in-service teacher workshops (Rothstein-Fisch et al., 2009), panel discussions conducted by parents (Norris, 2010), and university-affiliated afterschool family programs (Schechter & Sherri, 2009). For example, Johnson (2014) asked nine graduate in-service teachers and four preservice teachers to conduct a home visit as a requirement in a practicum course with emphasis on English as a Second Language (ESL) and bilingual education. Building upon Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti's (2005) conception of funds of knowledge, the participants were initially exposed to a variety of readings and discussions related to the topic. Then the participants were asked to schedule and conduct a home visit with a family whose first language was not English. Analyzing student reflection sheets collected before and after the home visit experiences of the participants, the study found that most of the participants felt "anxiety" and "uncertainty" before conducting home visits; as one participant articulated:

I was not sure what to expect. I was uncertain what Ciarra's parents would think of me or why I decided to visit their home in particular. I was nervous and afraid I would not be able to carry on a conversation with the family. (Johnson, 2014, p. 370)

However, the researcher found that participants became closely involved with students' living environments following the visits, which alleviated their stress and anxiety. The anxiety was replaced with appreciation as they learned about the funds of knowledge the families possessed and gained new understandings as they were exposed to living experiences different from their own. In addition, the researchers found that the in-service teachers benefitted from this intimate interaction with families in their own classrooms, as one participant commented:

I enjoyed spending time and getting to know Arianna's mom [Leticia]. I would love to keep doing this. I feel like I have such a better relationship with Leticia and also with Arianna. Now when I see Arianna's mom at the pickup area, we actually talk and have a conversation instead of just smiling and saying hi. I also feel like Arianna listens more now because she knows I have that connection with her mother. (Johnson, 2014, p. 374)

As evident in the above examples, this category of research suggests that devoting energy to addressing family-school relations has a positive influence on preservice and in-service teachers. Across these studies, opportunities to reflect on personal assumptions about diversity and to have authentic interactions with families were identified as important components of teacher learning. However, the positive changes in teachers' attitudes in this section contradicts the long-stated concerns and research examined in the prior sections, which have indicated that teachers are not adequately prepared to work with families.

This discrepancy may have arisen because the research in this category was conducted mainly by university faculty members engaged in intervention projects incorporating novel strategies designed to produce observable impact on the participants, and as such, the inconsistency of the findings might be ascribed to the relatively small sample size of the studies, each of which was conducted in a particular classroom or teacher education program.

### Theoretical and Conceptual Considerations Guiding the Existing Literature

A wide range of theoretical perspectives and conceptual orientations was represented across the studies, including sociocultural-oriented approaches, behavioral and learning theories, critical and post-structural theories, and individual typologies regarding family–school–community relations.

Table 4. Theoretical and Conceptual Orientations Guiding the Studies

Theories and Conceptions as Cited in the Studies	#
Sociocultural-oriented approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory (2)</li> <li>•Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti’s (2005) funds of knowledge (6)</li> <li>•Culturally relevant approaches (4)</li> <li>•Bronfenbrenner’s (1986) ecological systems theory (3)</li> <li>•Dewey’s (1933, 1938) sustained inquiry model (2)</li> <li>•Kegan’s (1982) constructive–developmental theory (1)</li> <li>•Cultural values framework of individualism/collectivism (Greenfield, 1994; Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1989) (1)</li> <li>•Henderson and Mapp’s (2002) partnership model (1)</li> </ul>	20
Epstein’s family–school–community partnership framework and other approaches to family–school interactions similar to that framework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Epstein’s family–school–community partnership framework (12)</li> <li>•Bandura’s (1977) social cognitive theory (1)</li> <li>•Fishbein’s (1963, 1967) theory of reasoned action (1)</li> </ul>	14
Critical and post-structural theories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•CRT and post-structural theory (1)</li> <li>•Critical theory and postmodern theory (1)</li> </ul>	2
Typology consists of teacher–family–community involvement, teacher–family–community engagement, and teacher–family–community solidarity	1
Unspecified theoretical and conceptual orientation (except one, all of them used quantitative methods)	7

The review of the literature demonstrates that sociocultural-oriented traditions and Epstein’s family–school–community partnership framework are the

two dominant approaches used in the studies that focus on teachers' experiences regarding to family–school–community relations. Among the 44 under review, 14 studies built upon Epstein's (2005) notion of overlapping spheres of influence, her framework of family–school–community partnership (Epstein, 1995, 2011), or other theories (Bandura, 1977; Fishbein, 1963, 1967) that form the foundation of and complement Epstein's work. Studies built upon Epstein's work embraced her framework of six types of parent involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, decision-making, and collaborating with the community.

Although Epstein's framework fosters equal family–school–community participation in students' learning, its tenets of partnership seem to stress the technical aspects of parent–teacher relationships and mostly delegate implementation of agendas to school staff and teachers. As this approach views family–school–community interactions as a set of practices, it fails to fully account for its dynamic and multidimensional features, which can change across different venues and different time spans. Some propose that these idealized forms of actions reflect only European American, middle-class values and expectations (Baquedano-Lopez et al., 2013; Evans, 2018). As this approach may overlook nontraditional efforts diverse families make in their children's learning, the researchers using this approach might lead themselves and readers to see families whose practices do not match those of European American, middle-class families through deficit lenses.

Twenty studies were inspired by sociocultural-oriented traditions. As cited in the 20 studies, these traditions include Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory; Gonzalez, Moll, and Amanti's (2005) conception of funds of knowledge; culturally relevant approaches; Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems theory; Kegan's (1982) constructive–developmental theory; Dewey's (1933, 1938) sustained inquiry model; and the cultural values framework of individualism/collectivism (Greenfield, 1994; Hofstede, 2001; Triandis, 1989).

Sociocultural-oriented approaches commonly embraced a more extended view of family–school–community relations that transcends more restricted visions of the topic. All these approaches placed emphasis on creating opportunities for teachers to develop an understanding of diverse families and communities so that they could visualize a variety of ways parents might be involved in their children's education to foster student learning. As Evans (2013) indicated earlier in his review, these approaches indicate a number of shifts in the understanding of family–school–community relations and “suggest a new emphasis on relationship building [that] is slowly starting to replace more technical approaches” (p. 125). Another central aim across sociocultural-oriented studies was to accentuate the knowledge and experiences that families and

communities can convey to teachers that could serve as potential resources in the classroom. Building relationships with families, questioning personal hidden assumptions about diverse families, and fostering an understanding of cultural diversity were seen as important aspects of family–school–community relations within this group of approaches.

While many studies built upon Epstein’s family–school–community partnership framework and sociocultural-oriented approaches, only one study approached teachers’ experiences with families from the perspective of critical theory (Kroeger & Lash, 2011) and one study from a post-structural traditions viewpoint (Adair, 2014). These studies sought transformation in teachers’ thinking and in their approaches to families from culturally and socially diverse backgrounds. Building upon critical and post-structural theories, these studies attempted to go further than sociocultural-oriented studies by addressing how teachers’ individual experiences are embedded in broader social, economic, and political contexts and by unearthing these invisible factors shaping teachers’ interactions with families from diverse backgrounds. Thus, critical and post-structural traditions are beneficial in the area of family–school relations research as these theories have the potential to disrupt the dominant discourse and the power relations related to family–school interactions to seek transformation and promote resistance to potential problems associated with the topic.

### Methodological Traditions Guiding the Existing Literature

As the studies reviewed embraced a variety of theoretical and conceptual orientations, the design of their work also changed accordingly. Figure 1 below provides information about the distribution of the studies in terms of the methodologies.



*Figure 1.* Frequency of the method of inquiry used in the studies.

It is fair to say that a significant number of the studies were conducted via qualitative methods (26), compared to quantitative (11) and mixed method studies (7). Among 33 studies that utilized mixed method or qualitative methodologies, only 14 used interviews as their data collection source. Most of the qualitative studies were small-scale and impact-oriented intervention projects conducted by individual researchers in their own classrooms or teacher professional development programs. Written classroom assignments, reflection journals, discussion posts, and open-ended surveys were the most commonly employed data collection methods.

Quantitative method studies employed questionnaires as data collection tools. These studies employed large sample sizes ranging from 25 to 1,658 participants. Among those, only one study (Zygmunt & Fillwalk, 2011) employed causal comparative design research that attempted to explore the consequences of different learning experiences that had already occurred between the groups of teacher participants. There is also a complete absence of quantitative research utilizing quasi-experimental design, which can be a very useful method for exploring the causal impact of an educational intervention on teacher participants and evaluating the effectiveness of said intervention (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

## **Research Agenda for the Future**

### **Family–School–Community Relations in Secondary Schools**

Based on this literature review, it is fair to say that the topic of family–school–community relations is largely restricted to early childhood and elementary education levels. I found only eight studies that included secondary education teachers (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009; Bruïne et al., 2014; Ferrara, 2009; Johnson, 2014; Pryor & Pryor, 2009; Symeou et al., 2012; Warren et al., 2011; Zeichner et al., 2016). Of those, only one study (Barnyak & McNelly, 2009) specifically targeted this population. While home–school–community interactions change as the child proceeds through the educational pipeline, they have nevertheless been shown through research to be essential for student learning (Hill & Tyson, 2009; Wang, Hill, & Hofkens, 2014). The acceleration of academic demands and the intricacy of school bureaucracy in secondary schools make academic success a more challenging task for adolescents (Patrikakou, 2004). Given this critical time period in schools, one would expect a rise in home–school–community partnerships in secondary schools. However, underutilization of family–school relations increasingly exists on the secondary level (Daddis, 2011). The field will benefit from further research addressing the specific needs of preservice and in-service secondary teachers to identify

effective means of support in order to establish meaningful connections with families from diverse racial/ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds.

### **In-Service Teacher Education Relating to Family–School–Community Interactions**

Another point worth highlighting is that preservice teacher education received the most attention among the research studies focusing on teacher self-efficacy and teacher learning in working with families. I attribute this to the dominant discourse, which indicates that preservice teachers are or should be fully prepared and ready to teach in the classroom when they complete their teacher education programs. However, “teacher education courses alone cannot teach teachers the qualities that they will need in order to sustain their idealism and commitment” (Nieto, 2005, p. 218). We must remember that racial/ethnic, linguistic, and social class differences between teachers who are mostly European American, monolingual, and middle class and the students and families they serve make family–school partnerships a challenging task. Yet, in the face of pressure of high-stakes testing, accountability, and standardized curricula, teachers are constrained in what they can actually do to promote the best interests of their students and families. If in-service teachers cannot receive ongoing support for their professional development, they are more likely to fall back on traditional approaches that may be not well-suited for their students and families of various backgrounds (Weiss & Stephen, 2009). Building in-service teachers’ interest and capacity to partner with families of diverse backgrounds deserves much more research emphasis. Furthermore, more impact-oriented intervention projects addressing the specific needs of in-service teachers working with families of diverse backgrounds have the potential to inform in-service teacher professional development curricula.

### **Family–School–Community Interactions with Particular Content Area Focus**

The majority of the research studies examined focused on teachers’ experiences with families in the general sense; the studies that examined family–school–community interactions in a specific subject area were rather limited in number. Only one study was situated in the context of science (McCollough & Ramirez, 2012), while two studies focused on math (Flehart & Pope-Edwards, 2013; Ramirez & McCollough, 2012), and one each on English literacy (Schechter & Sherri, 2009) and art (Loughrey & Woods, 2010). Content-based cultural immersion programs with families are good intervention-based research contexts that can involve preservice and in-service teachers across grade levels to support their work with families in a particular content area focus.

Inside- and outside-of-school events that require the active involvement of students, family members, and teachers who can learn together and engage in interactions and dialogues around specific subject areas have a great potential to unite the school, the community, and the curricula (Kirmaci, Allexsaht-Snider, & Buxton, 2018). These kinds of research settings with a particular content focus would help teachers to better understand their students and their families' ways of thinking about related academic concepts, would allow them to recognize multiple ways of doing and demonstrating particular content, and would offer them ideas about how they can more efficiently work with their students and their families. It is important that future research include more intervention projects involving preservice and in-service teachers to support their work with diverse families in a particular content focus area.

### **Diversity of Theoretical and Conceptual Orientations**

In addition, the literature on teachers' perspectives and practices relating to family–school–community relations is insufficient for the task of effectively addressing factors influencing those perspectives and practices. Considering the potential of multiple influences on teachers' orientations towards working with diverse families, more attention should be paid not only to participants' perspectives and practices but also to how different layers of influences interact with one another. Deeper examination of complex relationships among factors requires a variety of theoretical and conceptual considerations in order to better understand teachers' experiences of family–school relations. However, the analysis of the literature pointed to two approaches generally guiding this particular field of research: Epstein's (e.g., 1995, 2005, 2011) family–school–community partnership framework, and sociocultural-oriented approaches. Research guided by critical and post-structural perspectives is rather limited. Examining teachers' experiences with family–school–community relations through critical and post-structural lenses has much to offer, providing the potential to reveal how family–school–community relations are influenced by broader sociopolitical, sociohistorical, and sociocultural contexts. Critical theories—those that can reveal how race, class, immigration, and power affect these relations (Prasad, 2005)—and post-structural theories that can decenter socially constructed realities and language relevant to the topic (Burr, 2003) have the potential to show us new possibilities for reimagining family–school–community interactions.

### **Long-Term, Intervention-Based Research Investments**

Lastly, the majority of intervention projects were small and short-lived efforts involving either one-semester-long classes or one-shot workshops; few

studies invested significant time and effort in their research (Ferrara, 2009; Tirrell-Corbin & Cooper, 2014; Zeichner et al., 2016). Large-scale and long-term intervention projects are an area necessary to future research to determine ideal strategies for teacher education related to family–school–community interactions. Large quasi-experimental and causal–comparative research studies have great potential to contribute to the field of teacher education related to family–school–community relations, as these research methods can help us to understand the causal impact of an intervention and its generalizability to the broader population. In addition, follow-up studies are needed to understand how teachers apply their learning experiences in their classrooms and how changes in teachers’ perceptions and practices are sustained and implemented over a period of time. Investigating the relationship between teacher practices, family–school relations, and student learning is also a research area worthy of attention, as none of the studies in this review focused on this issue. This kind of research is needed to not only inform teacher education practices but also to further underline the significance of family–school–community interactions in students’ social well-being and academic development. Future research might also examine the difficulties involved in accomplishing progress with preservice and in-service teachers. It may be that pushing preservice and in-service teachers towards new approaches, guiding them to rethink many things that they were very certain about, and affecting a deep change in their thinking is not an easy task. We should also ask questions that can frame future research: What are the challenges in changing teachers’ perceptions and practices regarding family–school–community relations? What are the circumstances that make teachers resistant to change?

### **Conclusion: Implications for Educational Practice**

Preparing teachers to meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds remains a critical issue for teacher educators today, especially in societies similar to the United States where significant racial/ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic discrepancies exist between the teacher workforce and the student body (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Teachers who do not share a racial/ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic class background with their students and have not been equipped with the knowledge, tools, and resources to work effectively with diverse students and their families cannot be regarded as qualified to work in socially and culturally complex classrooms (Nieto, 2014).

It is important that teachers develop an understanding of the issues of race/ethnicity, social class, and language and the role that they play in families’ daily experiences. Teachers should recognize the complexities inherent in families’

living experiences in order to see that family–school–community interactions might occur in multiple ways and multiple spaces that can transcend the traditional boundaries of family–school–community relations. Being able to reflect on taken-for-granted assumptions toward diverse families and thinking through those assumptions in relation to broader contexts, as well as being able to work with diverse families in extended ways and drawing upon their cultural and linguistic resources in the classroom, are critical skills that teachers should have. The research examined above demonstrates that these skills are not utopian; they can be acquired through carefully designed preservice and in-service teacher professional development programs. Across the intervention-based studies reviewed, opportunities to reflect on personal assumptions about diversity and to have authentic interactions with families were referred to as important components of teacher learning to develop these skills. I encourage preservice and in-service teacher educators to provide consistent learning experiences regarding family–school–community interactions and consider these two components in their programs to foster transformational understandings and effective professional practice.

Preservice and in-service teacher training might not be enough. As national education policies emphasize stronger family–school relations, policymakers should create conditions and foster environments conducive to the accomplishment of that goal. This requires that the school climate (e.g., attitudes of school administrators) should be encouraging and that there should be sufficient school resources (e.g., extra school staff, trained interpreters) and enough non-teaching time to allow teachers to put their knowledge into action. One might think that without these conditions, teachers alone would not be able to work with families in an effective manner. However, teachers cannot passively wait for these structural changes to take place. As Cochran-Smith (1991) stated, teachers should be prepared to “teach against the grain” (p. 280); they should be prepared to challenge these potential problems in their own teaching practices rather than justifying why they cannot efficiently work with families.

## References

\*Indicates a study included in the review.

*Note:* All references from the *School Community Journal* are available, open access, at <http://www.schoolcommunitynetwork.org/SCJ.aspx>

\*Adair, J. K. (2014). Examining whiteness as an obstacle to positively approaching immigrant families in U.S. early childhood educational settings. *Race, Ethnicity, and Education*, 17(5), 643–666.

\*Amatea, E. S., Cholewa, B., & Mixon, K. A. (2012). Influencing preservice teachers' attitudes about working with low-income and/or ethnic minority families. *Urban Education*, 47(4), 801–834.

- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215.
- Baquedano-López, P., Alexander, R. A., & Hernández, S. J. (2013). Equity issues in parental and community involvement in schools: What teacher educators need to know. *Review of Research in Education*, 37(1), 149–182.
- \*Barnyak, N. C., & McNelly, T. A. (2009). An urban school district's parent involvement: A study of teachers' and administrators' beliefs and practices. *School Community Journal*, 19(1), 33–58.
- \*Baumgartner, J. J., & Buchanan, T. (2010). Supporting each child's spirit. *Young Children*, 65(2), 90–95.
- Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- \*Brown, A. L., Harris, M., Jacobson, A., & Trotti, J. (2014). Parent teacher education connection: Preparing preservice teachers for family engagement. *The Teacher Educator*, 49(2), 133–151.
- \*Bruïne, E. J. de, Willemse, T. M., D'Haem, J., Griswold, P., Vloeberghs, L., & van Eynde, S. (2014). Preparing teacher candidates for family–school partnerships. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 37(4), 409–425.
- Burr, V. (2003). *Social constructionism* (2nd ed.). London, UK: Routledge.
- \*Christianakis, M. (2011). Parents as “Help labor”: Inner-city teachers' narratives of parent involvement. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 38(4), 157–178.
- Cochran-Smith, M. (1991). Learning to teach against the grain. *Harvard Educational Review*, 61(3), 279–311.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Villegas, A. M. (2014). Framing teacher preparation research: An overview of the field, Part 1. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 66(1), 7–20.
- Daddis, C. (2011). Desire for increased autonomy and adolescents' perceptions of peer autonomy: “Everyone else can; why can't I?” *Child Development*, 82(4), 1310–1326.
- Darling-Hammond, L., Wei, R. C., & Andree, A. (2010). How high-achieving countries develop great teachers (Research Brief). *Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education*, 1–8.
- \*D'Haem, J., & Griswold, P. (2017). Teacher educators' and student teachers' beliefs about preparation for working with families including those from diverse socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. *Education and Urban Society*, 49(1), 81–109.
- \*Eberly, J. L., Joshi, A., & Konzal, J. (2007). Communicating with families across cultures: An investigation of teacher perceptions and practices. *School Community Journal*, 17(2), 7–26.
- Epstein, J. (1995). School/family/community partnerships: Caring for the children we share. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 76(9), 701–712.
- Epstein, J. L. (2005). Links in a professional development chain: Preservice and inservice education for effective programs of school, family, and community partnerships. *The New Educator*, 1(2), 125–141.
- Epstein, J. L. (2011). *School, family, and community partnerships: Preparing educators and improving schools* (2nd ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Evans, M. P. (2013). Educating preservice teachers for family, school, and community engagement. *Teaching Education*, 24(2), 123–133.
- Evans, M. P. (2018). The challenge of family engagement policy implementation: A case study of Title I school–family compacts in the USA. In Y. Guo (Ed.), *Home–school relations: International perspectives* (pp. 37–54). Singapore: Springer Nature.

- Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015, Pub. L. No. 114-95, 129 Stat 1802 (2015). Retrieved from <https://www.congress.gov/114/plaws/publ95/PLAW-114publ95.pdf>
- \*Ferrara, M. M. (2009). Increasing parent involvement knowledge and strategies at the preservice level: The power in using a systematic professional development approach. *The Teacher Educator, 44*(4), 268–274.
- Fishbein, M. (1963). An investigation of the relationships between beliefs about an object and attitude toward that object. *Human Relations, 16*(3), 233–240.
- Fishbein, M. (1967). Attitude and the prediction of behavior. In M. Fishbein (Ed.), *Readings in attitude theory and measurement* (pp. 477–492). New York, NY: Wiley.
- \*Flehart, H. L., & Pope-Edwards, C. (2013). Family–school partnerships: Promoting family participation in K–3 teacher professional development. *Mathematics Teacher Educator, 2*(1), 55–73.
- \*Gallo, S. L., & Wortham, S. (2012). *Sobresalir*: Latino parent perspectives on new Latino diaspora schools. *International Journal of Multicultural Education, 14*(2), 1–17.
- Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., & Amanti, C. (2005). *Funds of knowledge: Theorizing practices in households, communities, and classrooms*. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A new wave of evidence: The impact of school, family, and community connections on student achievement*. Austin, TX: SEDL.
- Hill, N. E., & Tyson, D. F. (2009). Parental involvement in middle school: A meta-analytic assessment of the strategies that promote achievement. *Developmental Psychology, 45*(3), 740–763.
- \*Hindin, A. (2010). Linking home and school: Teacher candidates' beliefs and experiences. *School Community Journal, 20*(2), 73–90.
- \*Hindin, A., & Mueller, M. (2016). Assessing and understanding teacher candidates' dispositions toward and knowledge of parent involvement. *The Teacher Educator, 51*(1), 9–32. doi:10.1080/08878730.2015.1107673
- \*Hooks, L. M. (2008). Help! They don't speak English: Partnering preservice teachers with adult English language learners. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education, 29*(2), 97–107. doi:10.1080/10901020802059433
- \*Jensen, D. A. (2011). Examining teachers' comfort level of parental involvement. *Journal of Research in Education, 21*(1), 65–81.
- \*Johnson, E. J. (2014). From the classroom to the living room: Eroding academic inequities through home visits. *Journal of School Leadership, 24*(2), 357–385.
- Kirmaci, M., Alleksaht-Snyder, M., & Buxton, C. A. (2018). Teachers' experiences with Spanish-speaking, bilingual families in a science learning context: Empowering teachers through home–school partnerships. *Journal of Family Diversity in Education, 3*(1), 23–47.
- \*Kroeger, J., & Lash, M. (2011). Asking, listening, and learning: Toward a more thorough method of inquiry in home–school relations. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27*(2), 268–277.
- \*Lin, M., & Bates, A. B. (2010). Home visits: How do they affect teachers' beliefs about teaching and diversity? *Early Childhood Education Journal, 38*(3), 179–185.
- \*Loughrey, D., & Woods, C. (2010). Sparking the imagination: Creative experts working collaboratively with children, teachers, and parents to enhance educational opportunities. *Support for Learning, 25*(2), 81–90.
- Mapp, K. L. (2012). *Title I and parent involvement: Lessons from the past, recommendations for the future*. Retrieved from [https://edsources.org/wp-content/uploads/old/-title-i-and-parental-involvement\\_091556561921.pdf](https://edsources.org/wp-content/uploads/old/-title-i-and-parental-involvement_091556561921.pdf)
- \*McCollough, C., & Ramirez, O. (2012). Cultivating culture: Preparing future teachers for diversity through family science learning events. *School Science and Mathematics, 112*(7), 443–451. doi:10.1111/j.1949-8594.2012.00158.x

- \*Melnick, S. A., & Meister, D. G. (2008). A comparison of beginning and experienced teachers' concerns. *Educational Research Quarterly*, 31(3), 39–56.
- \*Meyer, J. A., Mann, M. B., & Becker, J. (2011). A five-year follow-up: Teachers' perceptions of the benefits of home visits for early elementary children. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 39(3), 191–196. doi:10.1007/s10643-011-0461-1
- Miller, G. E., Lines, C., Sullivan, E., & Hermanutz, K. (2013). Preparing educators to partner with families. *Teaching Education*, 24(2), 150–163.
- Nichols, S. L., & Harris, L. R. (2016). Accountability assessment's effects on teachers and schools. In G. T. Brown & L. R. Harris (Eds.), *Handbook of human and social conditions in assessment* (pp. 40–56). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Nieto, S. (Ed.). (2005). *Why we teach*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Nieto, S. (2013). Diversity, globalization, and education: What do they mean for teachers and teacher educators? *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, 49(3), 105–107.
- Nieto, S. (Ed.). (2014). *Why we teach now*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001, Pub. L. No. 107-110, § 115, Stat. 1425 (2002).
- \*Norris, K. E. (2010). Beyond the textbook: Building relationships between teachers and diversely structured families. *Multicultural Education*, 18(1), 48–50.
- Patrikakou, E. (2004). *Adolescence: Are parents relevant to students' high school achievement and postsecondary attainment?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project.
- \*Patte, M. M. (2011). Examining preservice teacher knowledge and competencies in establishing family–school partnerships. *School Community Journal*, 21(2), 143–159.
- \*Pedro, J. Y., Miller, R., & Bray, P. (2012). Teacher knowledge and dispositions towards parents and families: Rethinking influences and education of early childhood pre-service teachers. *Forum on Public Policy Online*, 2012(1), 1–15.
- \*Pohan, C. A., & Adams, C. (2007). Increasing family involvement and cultural understanding through a university–school partnership. *Action in Teacher Education*, 29(1), 42–50.
- Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the postpositivist traditions*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- \*Pryor, B. W., & Pryor, C. R. (2009). What will teachers do to involve parents in education?: Using a theory of reasoned action. *Journal of Educational Research & Policy Studies*, 9(1), 45–59.
- \*Pushor, D., & Parker, D. C. (2013). Reformation of storied assumptions of parents and poverty. *International Journal about Parents in Education*, 7(2), 164–176.
- \*Ramirez, O. M., & McCollough, C. A. (2012). “La Lotería”: Using a culturally relevant mathematics activity with pre-service teachers at a family math learning event. *Teaching for Excellence and Equity in Mathematics*, 4(1), 24–33.
- \*Rothstein-Fisch, C., Trumbull, E., & Garcia, S. G. (2009). Making the implicit explicit: Supporting teachers to bridge cultures. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 24(4), 474–486.
- \*Schechter, S. R., & Sherri, D. L. (2009). Value added? Teachers' investments in and orientations toward parent involvement in education. *Urban Education*, 44(1), 59–87.
- \*Seitsinger, A. M., Felner, R. D., Brand, S., & Burns, A. (2008). A large-scale examination of the nature and efficacy of teachers' practices to engage parents: Assessment, parental contact, and student-level impact. *Journal of School Psychology*, 46(4), 477–505.
- Semega, J. L., Fontenot, K. R., & Kollar, M. A. (2017). *Income and poverty in the United States: 2016. Current population reports*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce.
- Shadish, W. R., Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

- \*Smith, S. C., Smith-Bonahue, T. M., & Soutullo, O. R. (2014). "My assumptions were wrong": Exploring teachers' constructions of self and biases towards diverse families. *Journal of Family Diversity in Education*, 1(2), 24–46.
- \*Soutullo, O. R., Smith-Bonahue, T. M., Sanders-Smith, S. C., & Navia, L. E. (2016). Discouraging partnerships? Teachers' perspectives on immigration-related barriers to family-school collaboration. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 31(2), 226–240.
- \*Stetson, R., Stetson, E., Sinclair, B., & Nix, K. (2012). Home visits: Teacher reflections about relationships, student behavior, and achievement. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 21(1), 21–37.
- \*Sutterby, J. A., Rubin, R., & Abrego, M. (2007). Amistades: The development of relationships between preservice teachers and Latino families. *School Community Journal*, 17(1), 77–94.
- \*Symeou, L., Roussounidou, E., & Michaelides, M. (2012). "I feel much more confident now to talk with parents": An evaluation of in-service training on teacher-parent communication. *School Community Journal*, 22(1), 65–87.
- \*Tirrell-Corbin, C., & Cooper, D. (2014). Deweyan inquiry as a means of transforming the culture of family involvement in a Title I professional development school. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 41(3), 25–45.
- \*Uludag, A. (2008). Elementary preservice teachers' opinions about parental involvement in elementary children's education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(3), 807–817.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). (2015). *International migration report 2015*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/publications/migrationreport/docs/MigrationReport2015.pdf>
- United States Department of Education. (2017). *National teacher and principal survey (NTPS), "Public school teacher data file," 2015–16*. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- \*Waddell, J. (2011). Crossing borders without leaving town: The impact of cultural immersion on the perceptions of teacher education candidates. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 20(2), 23–36.
- Wang, M. T., Hill, N. E., & Hofkens, T. (2014). Parental involvement and African American and European American adolescents' academic, behavioral, and emotional development in secondary school. *Child Development*, 85(6), 2151–2168.
- Wang, M. T., & Sheikh-Khalil, S. (2014). Does parental involvement matter for student achievement and mental health in high school? *Child Development*, 85(2), 610–625.
- \*Warren, S. R., Nofle, J. T., Ganley, D. D., & Quintanar, A. P. (2011). Preparing urban teachers to partner with families and communities. *School Community Journal*, 21(1), 95–112.
- Weiss, H. B., & Stephen, N. C. (2009). From periphery to center: A new vision and strategy for family, school, and community partnerships. In S. Christenson & A. Reschley (Eds.), *The handbook of school-family partnerships* (pp. 448–472). New York, NY: Routledge.
- \*Zeichner, K., Bowman, M., Guillen, L., & Napolitan, K. (2016). Engaging and working in solidarity with local communities in preparing the teachers of their children. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 67(4), 277–290.
- \*Zygmunt-Fillwalk, E. (2011). Building family partnerships: The journey from preservice preparation to classroom practice. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, 32(1), 84–96.

Mehtap Kirmaci is a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Educational Theory and Practice at the University of Georgia and a former elementary school teacher. Her

current research interests include empirical explorations of teacher learning in working with culturally and linguistically diverse families, content-based and cross-cultural family learning programs, and dialogue-based pedagogies. Mehtap supervised field placements for preservice early childhood educators and worked as a research assistant on a NSF-funded research project, which focused on science and ESOL teachers, their middle and high school Latina/o students, and their families. Correspondence concerning this article may be addressed to Mehtap Kirmaci, Department of Educational Theory and Practice, 630 Aderhold Hall, The University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602, or email [mkirmaci@uga.edu](mailto:mkirmaci@uga.edu)