

PREPARING PRESERVICE TEACHERS FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

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While family engagement has been widely recognized as an essential practice in education, many educators continue to report being inadequately prepared to engage with families and partner with communities. The purpose of this review is to synthesize educator preparation practices together with the research methods employed in recent empirical studies focusing on preservice teacher preparation for family engagement. Twenty-three studies that focus specifically on preservice educator preparation for family engagement in U.S. educational settings are included in the review. Based on the review, a wide range of educator preparation practices are highlighted. These practices demonstrate the potential of educator preparation efforts beyond readings and discussions to prepare preservice teachers for family engagement. Even though positive impact on preservice teachers' competency development is reported, more educator preparation efforts are needed to prepare preservice teachers for community partnership beyond teachers' individual interactions with families. The integration of quantitative and qualitative approaches also presents potential for future research efforts regarding preservice teacher preparation for family engagement.

Keywords: preservice teacher, teacher education, family engagement

Partnerships among families, schools, and communities are essential in supporting student academic learning and social development (Casper & Hernandez, 2023; Mapp et al., 2022; Zeichner, 2023). However, educators often report feeling underprepared to engage and partner with families and communities (Hernandez, 2020; Zeichner et al., 2016). To support educator preparation for family engagement, the National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement (NAFSCE; 2022) published the educator preparation framework for family and community partnerships and specified the core competencies for educators. While family engagement may encompass a wide range of practices, the framework adopts the definition developed by the National Family, School, and Community Engagement Working Group, which describes family engagement as “a shared responsibility of families, schools, and communities for student learning and achievement; it is continuous from birth to young adulthood; and it occurs across multiple settings where children learn.” (Weiss et al., 2010, p. 3). The framework encourages collaborations among educator preparation programs (EPPs), families and communities, state educational agencies, and local educational agencies “to reimagine educator preparation for family and community engagement and to make systemic change” (Casper & Hernandez, 2024, p. 4).

The framework was employed by various EPPs to redesign the program (e.g., Park et al., 2024) or to track educator competency development (Bachman & Beard, 2025; Edwards et al., 2024). Understanding how current educator preparation practices support preservice teachers'

development of these core competencies and how teacher educators engage in research to document the effectiveness and impact of these practices can offer additional insights for EPPs to enhance current practices and measure educator competency outcomes.

In this review, we provide an overview of frameworks guiding educator preparation for family engagement and elaborate on the NAFSCE's (2022) framework for family and community partnerships that builds upon previous research and summarizes core educator competencies. Centering on these educator competencies, we synthesize educator preparation practices reported in recent empirical studies focusing on preservice teacher preparation for family engagement. In addition, we report research methods employed in these studies to draw implications for future educator preparation and research efforts.

Educator Preparation for Family Engagement

Family engagement has long been recognized as an essential component of education. Over the last several decades, research has shown that when families and schools work in authentic partnerships, there are benefits for all stakeholders. Some of the many findings include increases in student academic and social development, increased attendance, improved behavior, higher rates of graduation, and increased teacher satisfaction (Caspe & Hernandez, 2024; Jones et al., 2020).

Various family engagement frameworks have been developed and applied to support student academic learning and their overall wellbeing (e.g., Epstein et al., 2019; Ishimaru, 2019; Mapp & Bergman, 2019). Epstein framework of parental involvement is probably one of the most widely adopted frameworks in U.S. K–12 school settings and across EPPs (Epstein et al., 2019). The framework challenges the assumption that the educational responsibilities and practices of families and schools are separate and incompatible, promoting the mutual approximation and overlap of family and school practices. In addition to parental involvement activities such as communicating and volunteering, the framework emphasizes the importance of joint decision making that involves families and collaborations with community partners. Recognizing the need to leverage and develop families' capacity for engagement as well as the need to enhance educators' capacity to overcome family engagement challenges, Mapp and Bergman proposed the dual capacity-building framework. The framework starts with identified challenges for educators and families separately to promote essential conditions at both the process and organizational levels. Educators and families share the goals to build capacity through four domains: capabilities (skills and knowledge), connections (networks), cognition (shifts in beliefs and values), and confidence (self-efficacy). The capacity outcomes not only include enhanced capacity at the individual level for educators and families separately but also enhancement in capacity at the system level that leads to student and school improvements.

These frameworks have been applied in EPPs to better prepare educators to engage with families for student learning. Through the National Network of Partnership Schools at Johns Hopkins University, for example, Epstein and colleagues have supported teacher professional development, school programming, and district initiatives to share and advance effective family engagement strategies (e.g., Iver et al., 2021). The dual capacity-building framework has also been included in various resources that the U.S. Department of Education offers and in the call for applications for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program. Educator professional development on family engagement is included as one of the key components of these statewide centers.

However, many educators continue to report facing persistent challenges for meaningful family engagement and find themselves inadequately prepared to engage with all families from different backgrounds (He & Arcila, 2025; Peltier et al., 2025). To support educator preparation for family engagement, NAFSCE (2022) proposed the educator preparation framework for family and community partnerships. The framework builds upon the definition of family engagement as a shared responsibility and joint commitment for families, schools, and communities for the promotion of student learning and development within and beyond school settings (Caspé & Hernandez, 2023). It specifies partners, levers for change, and outcomes to advance family and community engagement in educator preparation. Ultimately, the targeted impact includes interconnected educator preparation partnerships; educators who are prepared; and family and community engagement that is universally practiced, leading to improved student, family, and school outcomes (NAFSCE, 2022).

Even though the framework was published in 2022, the core competencies were summarized based on previous research and educational practices. Based on this framework, educator preparedness is measured through eight core competencies along the following four domains: reflect, connect, collaborate, and lead. Within the domain regarding educators' competency to reflect, educators are expected to reflect, honor, and value families (competency 1) and embrace equity throughout family engagement (competency 2); these competencies require educators to look inward to surface their values and assumptions and situate their perspectives within cultural, historical, and social contexts. To connect, educators are expected to build trusting relationships with families (competency 3) and foster community partnerships for learning and family wellbeing (competency 4); these two competencies address educators' skills to not only connect with families to support student learning but also connect families with one another through community networks. To collaborate, educators partner with families to support student learning and development; specifically, they are expected to coconstruct learning opportunities with families (competency 5) and link family and community engagement to learning and development (competency 6). Finally, to lead, educators take part in lifelong learning (competency 7) and advocate for system change (competency 8).

Given the call to strengthen educator preparation for family engagement (Caspé & Hernandez, 2024), a review of current educator preparation practices aligned with the core competencies can provide insights for teacher educators to sustain, refine, and expand current efforts to prepare preservice teachers for family engagement and community partnerships. In addition, research examining the implementation, effectiveness, and impact of these practices can further strengthen connections between research and practice in educator preparation. Therefore, this review uses the NAFSCE core competencies as an analytical framework to examine educator preparation practices and the empirical evidence supporting them.

Method

Focusing on empirical studies in teacher education that examine preservice teachers' preparation for family engagement, in this review, we synthesize educator preparation practices that support preservice teachers' development of family engagement competencies and report methodological characteristics of these studies. Two specific research questions were addressed in this review:

1. What educator preparation practices are employed to support the development of preservice teachers' competencies for family and community partnerships?

2. How do researchers examine preservice teachers' preparedness for family engagement and community partnerships?

Inclusion and Exclusion

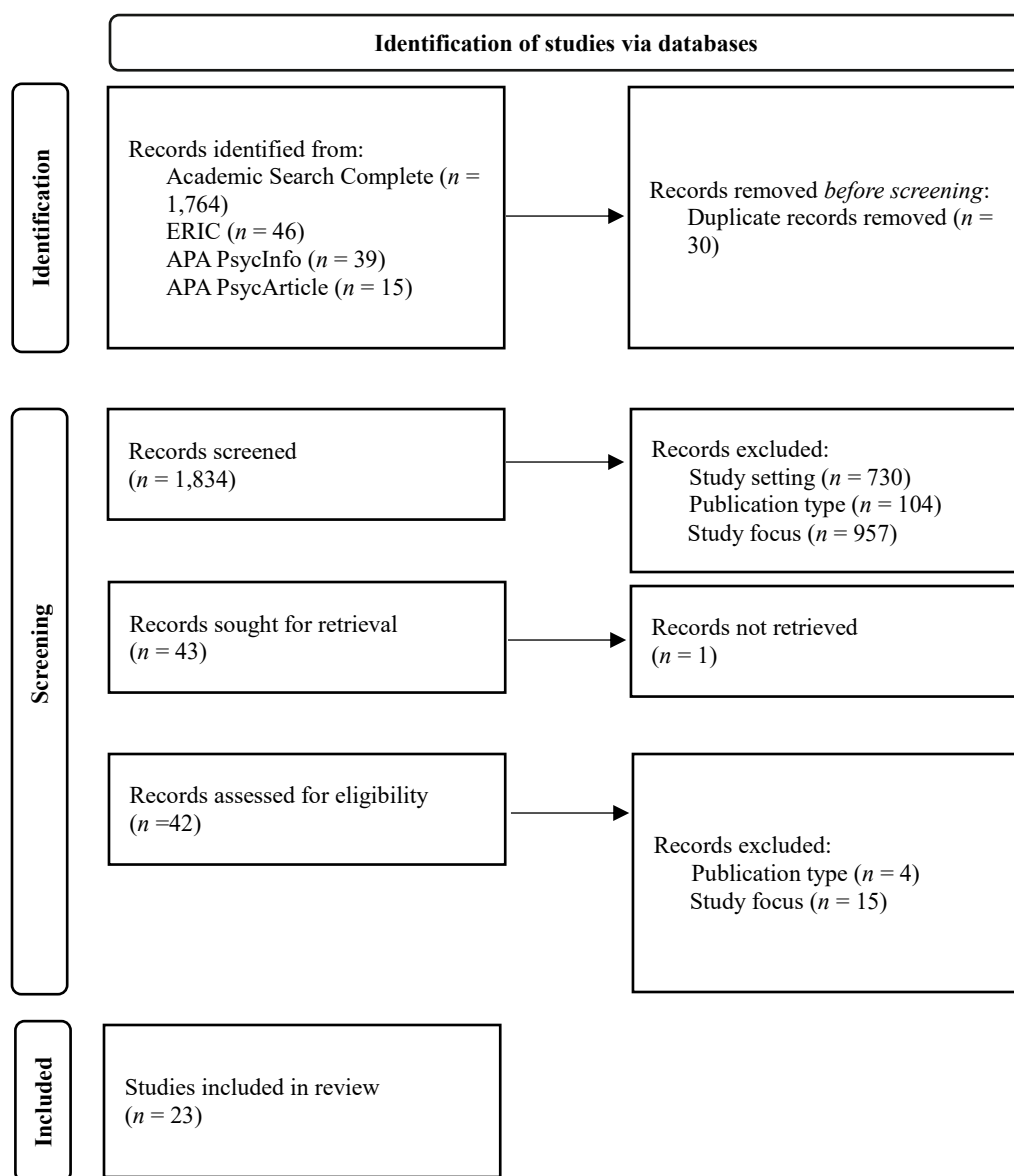
We included peer-reviewed empirical studies from 2020–2025 in this review. This timeframe was selected to capture research conducted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, a period that prompted development in educator preparation practices, family engagement, and school-community partnerships. The specific inclusion criteria included (a) peer-reviewed publications reporting empirical studies, (b) studies taking place in U.S. educator preparation context, and (c) studies reporting research regarding educator preparation practices with a focus on preservice teacher preparation for family engagement and community partnerships.

We excluded non-peer-reviewed publications such as reports, theses, and dissertations to focus on studies that have already been through the peer-review process for quality consistency. With a focus of the review on educator preparation practices and the research methodology, we also excluded conceptual articles or reviews that do not report specific educator preparation practices and research methodologies. Considering the diversity of family engagement contexts and differences in educator preparation in the international settings, we focused on studies that took place within the U.S. educator preparation context including preservice teachers as participants. Finally, we excluded studies that do not focus on preservice teacher preparation for family engagement or community partnerships.

Search and Identification of Studies

We identified peer-reviewed empirical studies through database search using keywords. Academic databases including Academic Search Complete (EBSCO), ERIC, APA PsycArticles, and APA PsycINFO were used as the primary databases. Google Scholar was used as the supplementary database. Keywords included “family engagement” or “parent involvement” or “parental engagement” or “parental involvement” or “parental support” or “parent support” or “family support” or “community” or “partnership” together with “teacher education” or “teacher training” or “teacher preparation” or “pre-service” or “preservice” or “student teacher” or “teacher candidate.” Limiting the search to 2020–2025, we identified records from databases including Academic Search Complete ($n = 1,764$), ERIC ($n = 46$), APA PsycInfo ($n = 39$), and APA PsycArticles ($n = 15$). After removal of 30 duplicate records, 1,834 English-language articles with duplicates removed.

The title and abstract of these articles were reviewed for initial screening. The screening excluded studies that took place in international EPPs ($n = 730$), nonempirical studies ($n = 104$), and studies that did not focus on preservice teacher preparation for family engagement ($n = 957$). A total of 43 articles were then identified for retrieval with 42 articles included in the full-text review. Following full-text review, records were excluded because of publication type ($n = 4$) or study focus ($n = 15$). Twenty-three studies were included for the final review. Figure 1 documents the identification process.

Figure 1*Search and Identification of Studies*

Data Extraction and Analysis

To address the research questions in this review, we extracted descriptive data from the studies including program context and study focus. We also identified specific educator preparation practices including readings, discussions, reflections, field experiences, service-learning projects, and simulations. Research methodology including data collection and analysis tools and procedures, key findings, and implications reported by the authors were also extracted.

To address the research questions, we analyzed extracted data regarding educator preparation practices and research methods based on the eight core competencies along the four domains of the framework. To address the first research question, we examined educator preparation practices that were reported to address the preparation of preservice teachers to develop specific educator competencies summarized in the NAFSCE (2022) framework. To address the second research question regarding how researchers examined these educator preparation practices, we explored how quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods approaches were employed to study preservice teachers' competencies or to examine the impact of educator preparation interventions on preservice teachers' competency development.

ATLAS.ti (ATLAS.ti Scientific Software Development GmbH, 2025, version 25.0.1) was used to manage the data extraction and analysis process. Three researchers first reviewed all included studies to finalize the codebook based on the NAFSCE framework and the research questions. The codebook was then imported to ATLAS.ti to set up the coding system for data extraction. Following the scoping review process (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005), we then charted the data with a focus on the eight core competencies to address the research questions based on selected articles. Query tool and code co-occurrence in ATLAS.ti were used to address the research questions by cross listing extracted data from selected studies with codes established for this review (see Table 1). Instead of independent coding by each researcher, all coding was conducted by the three researchers in a collaborative manner through ongoing meetings and discussions to reach consensus and ensure consistent interpretation of the studies included in this review (Cornish et al., 2014).

Table 1*Codebook*

Code Group	Code	RQ1	RQ2
EPP Strategies	Interaction Involving Families	X	
	Readings, Discussions, and Learning Modules	X	
	Simulations	X	
Design	Qualitative		X
	Quantitative		X
	Mixed Methods		X
Data Collection	Survey		X
	Interview		X
	Reflection		X
	Artifact		X
	Observation		X
	Other (e.g., reports, meeting notes)		X
Educator Competencies (NAFSCE, 2022)	Reflect, honor, and value families	X	X
	Embrace equity throughout family engagement	X	X
	Build trusting relationships with families	X	X
	Foster community partnerships for learning and family wellbeing	X	X
	Coconstruct learning opportunities with families	X	X
	Link family and community engagement to learning and development	X	X
	Take part in lifelong learning	X	X
	Advocate for systems change	X	X

Findings

Educator Preparation Practices

There is a wide range of educator preparation practices reported among the studies included in this review. These practices fall into three major categories: (a) interactions involving families ($n = 17$); (b) readings, discussions, and learning modules ($n = 11$); and (c) simulations ($n = 4$). Ten studies reported educator preparation practices in multiple categories, and two studies did not focus on any specific practices (Fisher et al., 2022; Nathans & Brown, 2021).

Interactions Involving Families

Researchers studied a variety of educator preparation practices that engage preservice teachers in interactions involving families. The most common practices reported were through required field experiences ($n = 12$). The field experiences can be designed as a designated course with a focus on family engagement (e.g., Accardo et al., 2020), required activities through field experience placement (e.g., Kelley, 2020), or projects such as service learning (e.g., Song, 2022) and action research (e.g., Brooks et al., 2021). To engage preservice teachers with multilingual families, for example, Morita-Mullaney (2021) described a “Family Multiliteracy Project” that required preservice teachers to conduct interviews regarding multiliteracy practices at home after reading and discussing the funds of knowledge theory. Focusing on translanguaging practices, Song reported a digital service-learning project including the learning of translanguaging pedagogy through readings and discussions in Phase I and discussions with students and families together with a virtual tutoring component in Phase II. Through these field experiences, preservice teachers’ direct interactions with families were required and typically accompanied by guided instructions and specific activities or tasks assigned by the teacher educators.

In addition to direct interactions with families through field experiences, teacher educators also invited families as guest speakers to teacher education courses ($n = 4$), engaged preservice teachers with families in communities ($n = 3$), and required preservice teachers to design and participate in family workshops or family nights ($n = 5$). Some of these practices were integrated with field experiences and implemented together in one course or through one project. Tinajero et al. (2023, 2024) described a project through which 30 Hispanic parents were invited to interact with preservice teachers. These interactions supported preservice teachers’ development of family workshops implemented with family groups. Families were then invited to offer their input and insights after the workshops. Stoehr and Civil (2022) required preservice teachers to design a mathematics lesson based on students’ out-of-school experiences; they also invited parents from the community to join the methods class because of the “often-limited access” preservice teachers may have to engage with families during their field experiences” (p. 371). These parents were also invited to join the project presentations at the end of the class to offer feedback to preservice teachers regarding the lessons they designed.

Readings, Discussions, and Learning Modules

Studies explicitly mentioned readings ($n = 5$), discussions ($n = 6$), reflections ($n = 6$), and online modules ($n = 4$) as educator preparation approaches. The readings explicitly mentioned were directly connected to the focus of the educator preparation efforts. For example, Callaway-Cole

and Drescher (2023) and Morita-Mullaney (2021) connected the readings to the funds of knowledge framework (Moll et al., 1992). Remillard and Moist (2022) included readings directly related to Epstein's model. Song (2022) shared that readings and discussions were related to translanguaging theory and pedagogy. Discussions were often related to assigned readings. In addition, preservice teachers also engaged in discussions regarding policies and practices in general (Hu et al., 2021; Koch, 2020). Assigning reflective journals was a common educator preparation practice as well (e.g., Callaway-Cole & Drescher, 2023; Koch, 2020; Song, 2022).

Among the four studies that reported the development of online modules regarding family engagement, three mentioned the use of case study or case discussions specifically (Kelley, 2020; Nathans & Brown, 2022; Nathans et al., 2022). The online Parent Teacher Education Connection (PTEC) curriculum developed based on Epstein's model was applied across institutions (Nathans & Brown, 2022).

Simulations

Four studies focused on the use of simulation as an educator preparation strategy to prepare preservice teachers for family engagement (Callaway-Cole & Drescher, 2023; Paz-Albo et al., 2023; Sebastian et al., 2024; Sebastian & Paulick, 2024). The EPP context and simulation experiences differ across these studies.

Paz-Albo et al. (2023) focused the simulation within the early childhood context and involved convenience samples of preservice teachers. Preservice teachers could choose the simulation case they wanted to work with (Office of Head Start, 2024). Through the simulation, preservice teachers could choose from prompts offered to interact with family members. These prompts were pregenerated and integrated into the simulation. No live interactions were required during the simulation. After the completion of the simulation, a summary of strategies was also provided.

Callaway-Cole and Drescher (2023) also focused on early childhood education in their study. Instead of using pregenerated prompts for preservice teachers to choose from, Callaway-Cole and Drescher used mixed reality simulations where preservice teachers could interact with a trained actor-controlled avatar and receive targeted feedback through the experience. In their study, the scenario selected was a parent-teacher conference with a focal student with disabilities. The parent-teacher conference scenario was discussed in class a week prior to the simulation and reviewed the day before the simulation. On the simulation day, three preservice teachers were randomly assigned to act as the teachers while others served as the support group for the teachers. Those acting as the teachers could pause the simulation at any time to seek suggestions from the support group. After the simulation, preservice teachers debriefed the experiences together and worked on individual reflections.

Sebastian et al. (2024) and Sebastian and Paulick (2024) described the use of animated avatars of parents and students remotely controlled by trained live actors using the Mursion platform. The actors were trained to interact naturally with the preservice teachers based on the given background of the character and some set lines during the simulation. The researchers engaged preservice teachers across the K–12 grade span through the simulation experiences with the actors playing a father avatar. Preservice teachers were given the background information of the fictional student prior to the simulation and then engaged in a virtual conversation with the avatar played by the trained actor. Sebastian and Paulick also described the coaching component

in which preservice teachers received coaching discussions and support after the first round of simulation and then repeated the simulation after the coaching session.

The spontaneity of preservice teachers' simulation experiences varied greatly across the four studies. While the predetermined prompt selection approach offered more clear instruction regarding the engagement strategies, the more spontaneous interactions better reflected the real-life engagement.

Competencies Addressed Through Educator Preparation Practices

Among the included studies, only two studies did not explicitly address any relevant educator competencies for family engagement (Fisher et al., 2022; Tajani, 2020). The other 21 studies discussed educator competencies regarding all four domains for family engagement including reflect, connect, collaborate, and lead. Educator preparation practices reported in these studies mainly target competencies to prepare educators to reflect, honor, and value families ($n = 12$), build trusting relationships with families ($n = 18$), and coconstruct learning opportunities with families ($n = 15$).

Half of the studies focusing on educator competencies regarding reflect, honor and value families focused on preparing preservice teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse families or families of students with special needs ($n = 7$). Koch (2020), for example, shared how the course engaged preservice teachers in class discussions about working with parents with children with disabilities and invited parents to join a class session to share their experiences and have conversations with preservice teachers. While the reflection assignment was generally open ended, Koch (2020) found that preservice teachers reflected on how they honored families' perspectives to embrace children's disabilities rather than fixing or eliminating the disabilities. Similarly, Stoehr and Civil (2022) reported that preservice teachers viewed Latino mothers "as valuable and knowledgeable resources" (p. 375) after interactions with them during a mathematics methods course. In addition to inviting parents to teacher education courses, school-based field experiences and community-engaged activities also supported preservice teachers' reflections. Inviting preservice teachers to walk around the neighborhood and participate in community events with the multilingual community, Hu et al. (2021) found that preservice teachers reflected on their students' daily experiences and started to associate these experiences with students' academic learning in schools.

Educators' competency to build relationships with families and coconstruct learning opportunities with families were often addressed together in most of the studies across the three major categories of educator preparation practices. Studies reporting educator preparation practices focusing on interactions with families through teacher education courses, field experiences, observations, service learning, workshops with families, and community-engaged activities usually include enhancing preservice teachers' skills to build relationships with families as one of the major goals. Nathans and Brown (2022) reported survey outcomes of preservice teachers' attitudes across four EPPs implementing online modules focusing on family engagement. They found that preservice teachers' participation in family nights positively impacted preservice teachers' knowledge and skills to connect with families. Remillard and Moist (2022) also found positive impact on preservice teachers' knowledge and skills to connect with families after preparing them to lead workshops for parents. Going beyond connecting with families, Tinajero et al. (2023) invited preservice teachers to interview parents to codesign miniworkshops that "drew upon the knowledge, needs, concerns, and strengths of bilingual families" (p. 18). When used to

support preservice teachers' development of family-engagement competencies, readings, discussions, and online modules primarily served as supplements to direct interactions with families. While all four studies describing simulations also reported focusing on preservice teachers' competency to build relationships with families, researchers also pointed out the need to further support preservice teachers to establish a collaborative relationship with families (Callaway-Cole & Drescher, 2023; Sebastian et al., 2024).

Measuring Educator Preparedness for Family Engagement

Most studies reported the use of qualitative approaches to examine preservice teachers' preparedness for family engagement ($n = 12$). Five studies reported the use of quantitative approaches. In addition, six studies reported the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Two of these studies explicitly mentioned the use of mixed methods approaches.

Qualitative Approaches

Qualitative data were collected using multiple data sources including reflections ($n = 7$), artifacts ($n = 4$), qualitative survey responses ($n = 3$), and interview data ($n = 3$). Other qualitative data sources included transcripts from coaching sessions (Sebastian & Paulick, 2024) or field notes (Hu et al., 2021). Not surprisingly, most studies involved a relatively small number of participants. Four studies included in this review included qualitative data from more than 20 participants (Hu et al., 2021; Koch, 2020; Thanheiser, 2020; Tinajero et al., 2023).

Written reflections were commonly used in qualitative studies in combination with other data sources. Callaway-Cole and Drescher (2023) collected postsimulation written reflections in which students processed experiences of the simulation together with in-class discussions as artifact data in their study to examine the use of mixed reality to prepare early childhood educators to support diverse family needs. Sebastian and Paulick (2024) analyzed preservice teachers' reflections after the coaching sessions together with coaching transcripts and qualitative survey responses from pre and postsurveys. Similarly, to examine preservice teachers' development of communication skills with parents of English learners, Tinajero et al. (2023) collected qualitative data using open-ended pre and postsurvey responses; artifacts data including lesson plans; "comprehensive reflection essays written about pre-service teachers' experiences in communicating with parents; and preservice teachers' experiences with teaching parents" (p. 19). Stoehr and Civil (2022) reported that while the project included multiple data sources, their study focused on the analysis of individual written reflection from eight preservice teachers. Koch (2020), on the other hand, used reflection as the primary data source and collected reflection papers from 106 undergraduate students across four semesters and six course sections. With reflection as the only data source, Koch's study involved the largest number of participants among all qualitative studies included in this review.

Even though interviews were commonly used in qualitative studies in teacher education, only three studies included in this review utilized interviews for data collection to explore preservice teacher experiences. Bradford and Norman (2022) used interviews as the primary data collection method to explore six senior undergraduate teacher candidates' lived experiences by using and interpreting participants' own words as they described and made sense of those experiences. Hu et al. (2021) collected individual interview data from 48 preservice teachers in addition to reflections and field notes. The interview format allowed researchers to probe

participants' responses beyond written reflections alone. Tajani (2020) conducted interviews with multiple stakeholders including supervisors, field experience coordinators, and professors in addition to surveys from preservice teachers to examine how educator preparation coursework support preservice teachers to work with diverse families in urban settings.

Most studies employing qualitative data approaches reported using inductive data analysis procedures (e.g., Hu et al., 2021; Stoehr & Civil, 2022; Tajani, 2020; Thanheiser, 2020; Tinajero et al., 2023). Brooks et al. (2021) and Song (2022) also specified the action research design. Critical participatory action research was defined as a “qualitative approach to inquiry that attends to social, political, and historical systems” in Brooks et al.'s study (p. 64). Instead of having preservice teachers and families included as participants, they were involved as codesigners for the educator preparation curriculum and involved as coresearchers. Brooks et al. reported the benefits and impact of critical participatory action research and argued that educator preparation practices for family engagement “such as reading books and articles, attending a workshop or class, or watching videos do little to effect changes in beliefs and professional practices” (p. 69) and encouraged teacher educators and researchers to consider leveraging the assets from families and communities for systemic change and transformation.

Quantitative Approaches

Five studies reported using quantitative approaches to measure educator preparedness for family engagement (Fisher et al., 2022; Jones et al., 2020; Nathans & Brown, 2021, 2022; Paz-Albo et al., 2023). All studies invited participants to self-report their perspectives using established or customized instruments. Two studies examined preservice teachers' perceptions in general while three studies focused on intervention outcomes.

Both Fisher et al. (2022) and Jones et al. (2020) reported preservice teacher perceptions without connecting the measures to any specific educator preparation practices. Fisher et al. compared preservice teachers' perceptions regarding family engagement in Israel and the United States using Fisher's Perception of Parental Involvement Scale (Fisher, 2011). The instrument reflected a broad range of involvement and engagement activities “that take place inside and outside the school, both at the organization and student levels” (Fisher et al., 2022, p. 715), and invited participants to indicate their agreement of desired family engagement activities on a Likert-scale. Jones et al. focused more specifically on early childhood special education preservice teachers. Due to the specific focus and the lack of research in the field, they developed an online survey to measure early childhood special education preservice teachers' self-efficacy and their perception of preparedness from EPPs regarding building partnerships with families of students with disabilities. With targeted recruitment nationwide, they collected 105 responses that were included in their descriptive analysis. Both studies shared general trends based on data collected, acknowledged the potential variability of educator preparation experiences, and called for more EPPs to address family engagement.

Nathans and Brown (2021, 2022) measured the change of preservice teachers' attitudes toward parent involvement as a result of the PTEC curriculum design based on the six types of parent engagement identified by Epstein (2001). They used the Attitude Toward Parent Involvement Survey instrument developed by Epstein et al. (1993) to evaluate the efficacy of the PTEC curriculum. Since the instrument was originally designed to be used with in-service teachers, Nathans and Brown (2021) validated its use with the preservice teacher population and reported that preservice teachers' attitude changed as a result of the PTEC curriculum across four

universities (Nathans & Brown, 2022). Paz-Albo et al. (2023) adapted an instrument from their previous research to examine the impact and effectiveness of four computer-based early childhood education and care simulations. The instrument included 21 items: three biographical items, 14 Likert-scale items, two closed-ended items, and two open-ended items regarding participants' perceptions of the simulation. Analysis was conducted to report preservice teachers' perceptions towards the use of simulation and to compare the responses across institutions.

Using Both Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches

Among the five studies reported using both quantitative and qualitative data, two studies explicitly mentioned the use of mixed methods design (Nathans et al., 2022; Remillard & Moist, 2022). Nathans et al. (2022) employed a convergent approach that combines quantitative measures from preservice teachers' knowledge assessments and an attitude survey with qualitative evidence from reports, observations, and meeting notes to corroborate findings about the impact of EPP implementation. Remillard and Moist, on the other hand, collected quantitative data regarding preservice teachers' knowledge, comfort, and beliefs in a pre and post manner and collected qualitative data using open-ended questions and debriefing sessions; they employed typological analysis to "describe the nature of change in participants' knowledge, comfort, and beliefs around family mathematics engagement" to further elaborate on the quantitative findings (p. 137).

Tinajero et al. (2024) did not label their study as mixed methods; however, they also used a convergent approach that combined pre and postsurveys of preservice teachers' self-efficacy with reflective essays to help "explain why the changes happen" (p. 569). Two additional studies employed quantitative and qualitative approaches through data conversion (Kelley 2020; Sebastian et al., 2024). Kelley collected data regarding preservice teachers' knowledge and beliefs regarding family engagement in a qualitative manner using concept maps and reflections first; through thematic analysis, the qualitative data were quantified by assigning numerical values to each of the coding categories. Paired samples *t* tests were then conducted to compare the pre and postconcept maps. Similarly, Sebastian et al. (2024) converted simulation transcripts into quantitative data using a rubric derived from the literature; the researchers then used exploratory factor analysis and identified three main factors underlying the simulation including sharing positive information, facilitating a productive meeting, and creating and maintaining a positive climate. Students were then grouped into low, medium, and high score range based on their rubric scores along these three factors.

Discussion

The review highlighted promising practices that support educator preparation for family engagement including interactions with families, readings, discussions, learning modules, and simulations. Regardless of whether preservice teachers were required to interact directly with families through projects (e.g., Morita-Mullaney, 2021) or through interactions organized by teacher educators (e.g., Tinajero et al., 2023, 2024), researchers reported positive impact on the development of preservice teachers' competencies for family and community partnerships. It is important to note that readings, discussions, and reflections were often supplementary components employed to support preservice teachers' experiences. In studies where no field experiences were integrated, preservice teachers were engaged in case discussions (e.g., Kelley, 2020) or simulations (e.g., Paz-Albo et al., 2023). Researchers emphasized the importance of engaging families or the

perspectives of families into the EPPs beyond readings and theoretical discussions (Brooks et al., 2021).

As one of the key educator preparation practices, reflection was employed not only as a strategy to prepare preservice teachers but also as an important data collection approach. Half of the studies included in the review targeted preservice teachers' competencies to reflect, honor, and value families (e.g., Koch, 2020). The analysis of preservice teachers' reflections was often combined with other data sources to measure preservice teacher growth and examine the impact of specific educator preparation practices (e.g., Callaway-Cole & Drescher, 2023). Researchers employed reflections in their studies to illustrate how preservice teacher reflection can be used to support preservice teacher development and as an integrated data collection approach to study educator preparation practices for family engagement.

Few studies included in this review focused on system-level equity issues (competency 2), community partnerships (competency 4), efforts linking family and community engagement to learning (competency 6), or educators' leadership competencies (competencies 7 and 8). The quantitative measures employed tend to focus on individual preservice teachers' attitudes towards family and community engagement (competency 1; e.g., Fisher et al., 2022) together with their individual knowledge and skills to build trusting relationships with families (competency 3) and coconstruct learning opportunities with families (competency 5; e.g., Nathans & Brown, 2021, 2022). Inductive qualitative outcomes were consistent with findings from quantitative studies with a few studies explicitly commenting on family and educator capacity building through the research process (e.g., Brooks et al., 2021). The findings from this review highlighted an imbalance between competencies focused on individual teacher development and those addressing family-school-community partnerships, leadership, and systemic change. This pattern underscored the importance of examining family and community engagement not only as an individual educator competency but also as an organizational and equity-oriented endeavor that requires broader attention in both educator preparation and educational research (Caspe & Hernandez, 2024; Ishimaru, 2019; Mapp & Bergman, 2019).

The integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in the study of preservice teachers' preparedness for family engagement offered additional insights for researchers (e.g., Nathans et al., 2022; Remillard & Moist, 2022). Data conversion techniques to convert qualitative data collected into quantitative data for statistical analysis also allowed researchers to use statistical analysis to draw additional findings and implications (e.g., Kelley, 2020; Sebastian et al., 2024). With the advancement of research design, especially mixed methods design, as well as growing practices such as mixed reality simulations employed in EPPs, researchers may want to consider using complex mixed methods design beyond traditional quantitative and qualitative approaches alone to further examine the impact and effectiveness of various educator preparation practices for family and community partnerships.

Conclusion

The promising practices identified based on the reviewed studies offer insights for teacher educators to consider integrating family engagement components in educator preparation practices beyond readings and discussions. While the positive impact of these practices on preservice teachers' development on family engagement competencies is encouraging, the review also revealed that more educator preparation efforts need to be developed to support preservice teachers for community partnerships and leadership capacity building. In addition to providing

opportunities for preservice teachers to interact with families at the individual level, teacher educators need to cultivate community participation in educator preparation to disrupt the existing power hierarchies to further support preservice teachers' competency development (Zeichner, 2023). Teacher education researchers may also want to consider designs such as critical participatory action research and mixed methods to include perspectives from a wide range of stakeholders to further inform educator preparation practices for family and community partnerships.

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