

Chapter 2

Mapping the Theoretical Landscape of More-Than-Parental Involvement



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Abstract This chapter presents an overview of the conceptual toolkits used to theorise relationships between ECEC settings and families in academic journal articles, published in English, between the years 2000–2010 and 2021–2022. The reconstructed overview of the theories employed by researchers from different regions of the world creates a base for classification of the theories as *positivistic* (i.e., interested in measuring PI for prediction and control of academic achievement), *interpretative* (i.e., aiming at deeper contextual understandings of the perspectives of all social actors that have a part PI), or *critical* (i.e., delving into the socio-economic conditions and power relations constituting diverse understandings of the world of PI, in conjunction with the desire for change). The chapter concludes with an outline of the theories discussed in further chapters, which are of an interpretive and critical nature and embrace the understanding of more-than-parental involvement presented in Chap. 1.

Keywords Parental · Intergenerational · Participation · Decolonization · Rethoretisation

Navigating the Theoretical Landscape

Theories applied to conceptualise parental involvement (PI) have been previously subject to reflection in the field of early childhood education and care (ECEC). While revisiting the phenomenon of PI, Tekin (2011) recognised three significant theoretical approaches to the concept: the cultural-historical perspective, Bronfenbrenner’s ecological systems theory, and Epstein’s models. Green (2017), in

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contrast, reconstructed theories employed in research on PI, into groups based on their different epistemologies (positivistic, interpretative, and critical). Based on a biometric literature analysis, Addi-Racah et al. (2021) drew networks of clusters of psychological and sociological theories used in the research on PI between 2014 and 2018, showing how theoretical approaches can facilitate different understandings of PI and work with diverse epistemologies. Despite their differences, each one of these overviews assumes that theories play a significant role in conditioning and improving our understanding of PI. While the critical and sociological approaches tend to challenge the white-middle-class premisses underlying the notion of PI (Devlieghere et al., 2022; Addi-Racah et al., 2021), the dominating positivistic account (Green, 2017), as well as school attainment-oriented psychological perspectives (Addi-Racah et al., 2021), support an understanding of PI as an asymmetric practice of parents fitting into the criteria set out by preschools (Crozier, 2001; Doucet, 2011; Devlieghere et al., 2022). Addi-Racah et al. (2021, p. 13) have shown how salient the privilege and domination of urban, US-centric theoretical perspectives can be by pointing out the number of times certain theorists have been cited, like Epstein (424 citations), Jeynes (307 citations), Hoover-Damsey (225 citations), Lareau (184 citations), and Hill (148 citations).

This chapter aims at balancing this domination by drawing a qualitative map of theories that conceptualise PI, and whose potential could be used to conceptualise more-than-parental involvement in ways that allow for the “democratic deficit” to be overcome (Van Laere et al., 2018). This means that after presenting a qualitative overview of the found theories, their different aims and intentions will be discussed, and those theories that merit a closer look when trying to embrace the relational and contextual perspective of more-than-parental involvement (as presented in Chap. 1) will be outlined.

Methodology

The literature search was driven by the following research question: *What theories have been employed to conceptualise PI in early childhood education?* The search was conducted in December 2022 and included the following academic databases: ERIC (2604 hits), Web of Science (4518 hits), Teacher Reference Center (176 hits), SocINDEX (621 hits), Academic Search Elite (2607 hits), and Scopus (10,606 hits). The keywords employed in the search were intended to capture possible synonyms, expansions, and equivalents of (a) parents/caregivers, (b) involvement/engagement/collaboration, and (c) early childhood education. This resulted in the inclusion of the following keywords:

- + parent* OR famil* OR relative* OR caregiver* OR mother* OR father*
- + involve* OR participant* OR engage* OR collaborat* or cooperat*
- + kindergarten OR preschool* OR early childhood education OR ECE OR early childhood education and care OR ECEC OR preschool education OR daycare OR nurser*.

Table 2.1 Overview of the number of articles on PI published between 2000 and 2022

Year	Number of articles	Year	Number of articles
2000	8	2012	14
2001	4	2013	19
2002	3	2014	16
2003	1	2015	14
2004	4	2016	22
2005	3	2017	40
2006	8	2018	38
2007	2	2019	41
2008	11	2020	45
2009	9	2021	49
2010	9	2022	59
2011	16		

The number of hits after the duplicate control was 14,342. A further review of the identified articles was conducted with the help of Rayyan.ai software, which allows for systematisation. As the search included many articles from the field of early childhood medicine and health, as well as early intervention studies where parental opinions/involvement/engagement were significant, the selection criterion employed was journal articles belonging to the formal level of early childhood/preschool education. Such excluded a great body ($n = 13,648$) of articles from other fields than early childhood education and publications in the form of book chapters or books ($n = 259$). The final number of articles included in the review was 435. An overview of the number of articles per year is presented in Table 2.1.

The numbers show the incredible growth of research interest in this subject, in the last years. Because of the high number of articles, those that were included in the analyses were published in 2000–2010 and 2021–2022. In the analysis of the articles, the focus was on the theoretical framework used, the country/cultural context of the reported research, and the aim/intention of the article. This approach created a foundation for the selection of theories for further chapters of the book.

Parents' Involvement Conceptualised (Around the World?)

The Figs. 2.1–2.3 presented below show in which countries and regions of the world the diverse theories were applied from the year 2000 and the periods of 2001–2010 and 2021–2022. With the passage of time, the number of countries researching and publishing on PI grew incredibly, which also influenced the breadth of the theoretical approaches being employed. While some theories have been applied in the field since 2000, others are relatively new.

Year 2000

Figure 2.1 presents the theories used to conceptualise PI in the field of ECE in the year 2000. The articles come mainly from the United States, but also from Italy and Malaysia, and the depicted theories are as follows:

- (A) Attachment theory – inspired by writings of Bowlby (1997)
- (B) Ecological model Bronfenbrenner (B) – inspired by writings of Bronfenbrenner (1975, 1979)
- (C) Cultural-historical approach – Vygotsky (1926/1997) inspired approach including writings of diverse authors
- (D) Social constructivism and discourse theory – Foucault (1981) inspired critical approach to meanings and society
- (F) Family involvement questionnaire developed by Fantuzzo et al. (2000)
- (Q) Theory of ECEC quality – inspired postmodern theoretisations of quality as meaning-making (Dahlberg et al., 1999; Moss, 1988)
- (I) An inductively developed set of themes capturing aspects of involvement that were meaningful to parents participating in the study
- (S) Synthetic use of diverse categories coming from different models and approaches

Table 2.2 provides a detailed overview of the articles published on this subject in 2000.

Regardless of only eight articles being found through the query, the array of theoretical approaches being used is quite wide. In some cases, the theoretical approach was replaced by a tool that defined the diverse dimensions of PI and measured the degree to which different groups of parents (e.g., those with a lower socio-economic status) represent certain forms of PI defined in advance (Fantuzzo et al., 2000). Such an approach was balanced by trials of more adequate models capable



Fig. 2.1 Mapping theories applied in research on PI in 2000. (Source: own elaboration)

Table 2.2 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories – 2000

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Cassibba et al. (2000)	USA & Italy	Attachment theory	To validate an attachment measuring tool Q-Sort	A
Fantuzzo et al. (2000)	USA	Family involvement questionnaire	Measuring home- and school-based involvement among parents with lower SES	F
Hanson et al. (2000)	USA	Typology taken from earlier research on communication, information, engagement, decision-making	To understand family experience of transition between early childhood education services	I
Hewitt and Maloney (2000)	Malaysia	Bronfenbrenner + Vygotsky-inspired, contextual perspective on social interactions	Families' motives for children's attendance of preschool and families' perceptions of preschool education	C
Lubeck and deVries (2000)	USA	Social constructivism and discourse theory	Reconstructing discourses structuring parental (of parents representing different social classes) relations with educational institutions	D
New et al. (2000)	Italy	Postmodern perspectives on ECEC quality	Exploring local and contextual understandings of (meanings attached to) PI	Q
Kohl et al. (2000)	USA	Combining models of PI	Mapping weaknesses and strengths of different models, developing dimensions of PI sensitive to demographic risk factors	SN
Soodak and Erwin (2000)	USA	Developed in an inductive way	Finding factors of PI that are meaningful for the parents	I

of either capturing PI (Cassibba et al., 2000; Hanson et al., 2000; Kohl et al., 2000) or *understanding* the perspectives of the social actors involved (Hewitt & Maloney, 2000), as well as the social production of PI and its criteria (Lubeck & deVries, 2000; New et al., 2000; Soodak & Erwin, 2000). Theories deployed to understand the social conditions and power relations underpinning the existence of temporary forms of PI, such as discourse theory and postmodern theories of quality (Dahlberg

et al., 1999), show how theory can be used to enable critical reflection over existing practice and inspire changes in established conditions. In contrast to such theories, ready-made scales did not inspire discussion of the assumptions and meanings attached to PI, but rather raised questions as to how the performance of the expected forms of PI among parents could be increased.

2001–2010

Figure 2.2 presents a map of the theories found in publications from 2001 to 2010 that conceptualised PI in the field of ECE. The articles were again mostly from the United States, but a higher number of countries and continents became visible in English-language journal articles during this time. Other countries with relevant publications included Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Germany, Greece, Israel, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, the United Kingdom, and Thailand. The theories depicted were as follows:

- (A) Attachment theory – inspired by writings of Bowlby (1997)
- (AA) Academic achievement theories – mostly developed by Jeynes (1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2010)
- (AC) Theory of acculturation – growing on sociological research on adaptation to a culture started by Thomas and Znaniecki (1996)
- (B) Bronfenbrenner’s theory of ecological systems– inspired by writings of Bronfenbrenner (1975, 1979)
- (BU) Bourdieu’s social theory (Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)



Fig. 2.2 Mapping theories applied in research on PI for the period 2001–2010. (Source: Own elaboration)

- (C) Cultural-historical approach – Vygotsky (1926/1997) inspired approach including writings of diverse authors (e.g. Rogoff, 2003; Hedegaard., 2005; Hedegaard & Fler, 2008)
- (CR) Critical theories that highlight power relations – inspired by Foucault’s (1981) analysis of discourse and power
- (CL) Collaboration theory – including sociological and psychological conceptualisations of collaboration and partnerships
- (D) Discourse theory – based on approaches of Foucault (1981), Laclau (1995) and Laclau & Mouffe (1985)
- (E) Epstein’s (1986, 1990, 1992, 2001) models of parental involvement
- (F) Fantuzzo’s family involvement questionnaire developed by Fantuzzo et al. (2000)
- (Fs) Family systems theories – that are Bateson (1971, 1978) inspired approaches to understand families and their involvement in PI as systemic
- (G) Gender theory understood here as both feministic and sociological approaches aiming to capture the role of gender in PI
- (Lit) Literacy theories – including approaches measuring early literacy and numeracy, as well as perspectives on literacies as cultural practices (Rogoff, 2003; Cummins, 2001, 2009)
- (NO) No theoretical toolkits employed
- (Q) Theories of quality – including modern (Harms & Clifford, 1980; Harms et al. 1998; Howes et al., 1992) and postmodern (Dahlberg et al., 1999; Moss, 1988) approaches
- (I) Inductively developed conceptual networks
- (SC) Social capital theories – inspired by sociological works of Coleman (1988, 1994) and Putnam (2000)

The tables below present the theories used in each country and the ways in which they were categorised. Specifically, Table 2.3 contains journal articles from 2001 to 2003, Table 2.4 covers articles from 2004 to 2005, Table 2.5 covers 2006–2007, Table 2.6 covers 2008, Table 2.7 covers 2009, and Table 2.8 covers articles published in 2010.

Theories of Relationships and Literacies

During 2001–2010, the English-language research on PI published in academic journals intertwined diverse theories, and authors from different regions of the world started contributing to the field. The recognised need for conceptualising full and equal partnerships between families and educational institutions inspired the use of the theory of the educational village (Breitborde & Swiniarski, 2002) and notion of social capital (Devjak & Berncik, 2009; Farrell et al., 2004; File, 2001). The theory of attachment was used to underline the foundational and relational (and not only structural/formal) character of PI in ECE (Bretherhon et al., 2005; Hughes & Kwok, 2007). The relationship between fathers and preschools is seen as an

Table 2.3 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories: 2001–2003

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
File (2001)	USA	Social capital – Coleman	Presenting social capital as matching the practical needs of PI	SC
Korat (2001)	Israel	Cultural-historical approach: Vygotsky, Rogoff, Brunner-inspired conceptual toolkit	Focus on “bridges to literacy”, enhancing children’s literacies through home–kindergarten collaboration	C
Makin and Spedding (2001)	Australia	Support at Home for Early Language and Literacies (SHELLS)	Demonstrating how a flexible model of supporting home practices of language and literacies can function and Indigenous and non-Indigenous families	Lit
Tulananda (2001)	Thailand	Ecocultural theory, Gender theory, Anthropology	Understanding how cultural (gender) discourses create conditions for social interactions in institutional setting of preschool	G, B, D
Bhering (2002)	Brazil	Epstein + concept of “climate”	Understanding how climate for PI created by teachers encourages PI of different groups of parents	E (+)
Breitborde and Swiniarski (2002)	USA	Partnership theories of Barbour Educational Village theory	Creating models for parental involvement that would build on the community’s resources and responsibility	SC
Lee (2002)	Korea	Emergent literacy theories	Identification of activities/factors influencing early literacy development.	Lit
Hill and Craft (2003)	USA	No theory – PI defined in relation to parental SES and background	Finding variables that together with PI mediate academic achievement	NO

extension of the most crucial nourishing attachments for a child’s socialisation and participation in play.

The idea of bridging home and kindergarten practices (connected to enhancing literacies) is also articulated by the cultural-historical theoretical perspective (Korat, 2001). Literacy theories may, however, serve different intentions and values. For instance, Makin and Spedding (2001) used a flexible model to demonstrate support at home for early language and literacies (*SHELL*) that acknowledges the diverse needs and practices of Indigenous and non-Indigenous families, whereas Lee (2002) focused on measuring the factors contributing to literacy development. In another vein, Arnold et al. (2008) confirmed the correlation between a particular definition of PI and preliteracies, whereas Taylor et al. (2008), by building on multiliteracy

Table 2.4 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories: 2004–2005

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/goal with the paper	Categorised as
Cassidy et al. (2004)	USA	Epstein & literacy theories	Understand how to value parental culture in home literacy programmes	E, Lit
Farrell et al. (2004)	Australia	Social capital, new sociologies of childhood	Researching the social capital of children, their families and community members in the context of state-wide initiative of integrated early childhood and family hubs	SC
Ishii-Kuntz et al. (2004)	Japan	PI not theorised, focus on gender theories	Understanding factors in genders roles supporting fathers' involvement in ECEC	G
Morrow and Malin (2004)	UK	Critical theories focusing on power relations and paradox of empowerment	Understanding the parents themselves as beneficiaries of PI and the paradox of empowerment	Cr
Bretherton et al. (2005)	USA	Extended attachment theory	Presenting fathers as attachment figures, playmates and socialisation agents	A
Downer and Mendez (2005)	USA	The model of Epstein + the PI scale of Fantuzzo	Measuring how social class frames ways of PI, and how it influences school achievement	AA, E, F
Kim et al. (2005)	USA	National Households educational Survey	Focus on parental standards emphasising high or low academic achievement	NO

perspectives, challenged the colonial dichotomy of a right or wrong way to facilitate literacies, thus empowering culturally diverse ways of knowing and the home practices that support it. Zhou and Salili (2008) also took a culturally sensitive approach when looking at home literacy environments that support children's interest in books.

Combining Models and Theories

The diverse combinations of theories that arose from 2001 to 2010 may be interpreted as part of a search for conceptual tools capable of embracing the deep (albeit not always just) and complex socio-cultural entanglements of PI. Embracing the complexity of culture with anthropological theories and depicting the power relations that underpin the practices of PI with the toolkits of Butler and Foucault, as done by Maranhão and Sarti (2008), brings diverse values and views into the process and goal of education, while also allowing for the possibility of empowerment. Morrow and Malin (2004) describe a trajectory of empowerment connected to one particular programme (Sure Start) and show how reducing asymmetries in power

Table 2.5 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories: 2006–2007

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/goal with the paper	Categorised as
Barbarin et al. (2006)	USA	Quality theory Academic achievement	Understanding different meanings attached to quality of home–school collaboration by Latinos and African parents	AA, Q
Caughy and O’Campo (2006)	USA	Social capital	Showing how social capital of the neighbourhood and family affects children’s cognitive development and problem-solving ability	SC
Christian (2006)	USA	Family system theory	Finding psychological variables of family as a group that explain the family’s behaviour in different contexts	FS
Dearing et al. (2006)	USA	Not found in the text		NO
Seginer (2006)	USA	Bronfenbrenner, social capital, Epstein	Literature review mapping development of more ecological/ contextual approaches in research on PI	B, E, SC
Souto-Manning and Swick (2006)	USA	Bronfenbrenner, Vygotsky-inspired cultural-historical perspective, Freire	Redefining the paradigm of PI for practice. Description of parental strengths, inclusive approach, validating families and multiple formats of involvement. Focus on the role of teachers’ (discriminating) beliefs towards different groups of parents	B, C, Cr
Xu and Gulosino (2006)	USA	Epstein, Lareau (Bourdieu)	The role of habitus and capitals in enabling partnerships	E, BU
Zellman and Perlman (2006)	USA	Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale + parent child care involvement scale	Demonstration of causality between parental involvement in care of the child and the quality of ECEC	Q
Hughes and Kwok (2007)	USA	Attachment theory	Measuring the influence of parent–student and teacher–student attachments on achievements in reading	A
Pomerantz et al. (2007)	USA	Epstein	Analysing factors of PI that contribute to a better academic achievements (commitment of resources)	AA, E

Table 2.6 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories – 2008

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the paper	Categorised as:
Arndt and McGuire-Schwartz (2008)	USA	Family Systems Theory Epstein Academic achievement Multicultural consideration in promoting parental involvement	Understand aspects that matter in parental involvement with a deep understanding of the complexity, dynamics and richness of relationships in the family	AA, E, FS
Arnold et al. (2008)	USA	Academic achievement and Literacy	Measuring correlation between PI and preliteracy development	AA, Lit
Dearing et al. (2008)	USA	Academic achievement Bronfenbrenner Epstein	Finding correlations between child–teacher relation and parental involvement in case of low-income, multicultural families	AA, B, E
Harry (2008)	USA	Epstein supported by review of existing research	Understanding barriers connected to implementation of ideal practices including deficit views on families and cross-cultural misunderstandings related to the meanings of disability, differential values, and culturally based differences in caregivers' views of their roles	E
Huang and Mason (2008)	USA	Academic achievement Epstein	Summary of knowledge on motivation components behind academic achievement. Role of PI	AA, E
Maranhão and Sarti (2008)	Brazil	Malinowski (anthropological perspective on culture) and critical theories depicting power relations of Foucault & Butler	Different values and views of the process and goal of education represented by families and schools. Possibility of enabling good strengthening confidence of both sides through the process of sharing child care	Cr
Melhuish et al. (2008)	UK	Evidence on academic achievement supported as supported by PI	Focus on creating accurate variables	AA
Palm and Fagan (2008)	USA	Ecological perspective Situated fathering (Fagan, 1999)	Understanding how gender relationships and attitudes towards the other gender's ability to care influence PI	B, G
Suizzo et al. (2008)	USA	Bronfenbrenner Family Involvement questionnaire Critical race theory	Understanding racism's influence on PI at schools	B, Cr, F

(continued)

Table 2.6 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the paper	Categorised as:
Taylor et al. (2008)	Canada	Multiliteracies Postmodernism and postcolonialism as critical theories unmasking the Eurocentric discourses on national identities	Empowerment of different ways knowing, describing possibility of decolonisation in PI by acknowledging different (multi) literacies.	Cr, Lit
Zhou and Salili (2008)	China	Home literacy environment	Understanding how cultures shape children's interests in books and facilitation of different directions of literacies	Lit

relations opens up space for disagreements, conflicts, and dilemmas, which again raises important questions regarding professionals' preparation to work in such complex environments.

It was also found that Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was combined with both critical and academic-achievement-oriented theoretical perspectives. While merging the model with critical race theory allows for the representation of racism underpinning PI at schools (Suizzo et al., 2008), operationalising the child's development level through academic achievement uses theory to justify the search for correlations between the effects of child–teacher relations and PI on academic attainment, particularly in the case of low-income families (Dearing et al., 2008). Combining Bronfenbrenner's model with the PI questionnaire developed by Fantuzzo et al. (2000) shows that PI influences children's socio-emotional competence, which is considered important for learning and school readiness (Sheridan et al., 2010). When analysing the academic and social outcomes connected to PI in a public kindergarten, Powell et al. (2010) employed both Bronfenbrenner's and Epstein's models, as well as Fantuzzo's questionnaire. Even the intentions of combining a theory with a model are often connected to capture "more", looking at the findings may give an impression of a wide theory being narrowed down to a model and its focus.

In another vein, Seginer's (2006) literature review shows how the employment of theories of social capital, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, and Epstein's model enables more ecological and context-oriented approaches to research on PI. However, Epstein's theory turned out to be used for different aims. For instance, Pomerantz et al. (2007) employed the theoretical toolkit to analyse parental commitment to resources, which turned out to be a factor contributing to better academic achievement. Inspired by Epstein's model, Huang and Mason (2008) scrutinised the components behind academic achievement and found a supporting role for PI.

Table 2.7 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories – 2009

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Almanza et al. (2009)	USA	Epstein Social capital School readiness	Presenting a “village route” to kindergarten readiness – demonstrating a school readiness programme acknowledging children’s communities	AA, E, SC
Ball (2010)	Canada	Earlier research on fatherhood and exclusion	Understanding of Indigenous men’s experiences of fatherhood: personal wellness, learning fathering, socioeconomic inclusion, social support, legislative and policy support, and cultural continuity	Cr
Brown et al. (2009)	USA	Ecological perspective on school readiness, quality of relationships between parents and ECEC	A trial of extending the PI beyond the walls of the early childhood classroom to include children’s and teachers’ relationships with the parents/ community	AA, B, F, Q
Cheadle (2009)	USA	Social capital, Human capital, Cultural capital, Concentrated cultivation	Operationalisation of parental educational investment that results with better academic results of white middle class children	SC, Cr, BU
Devjak and Bernik (2009)	Slovenia	Social capital Relationships Collaboration	Demonstrating that the quality of cooperation depends on tradition, objectives, social context, legal framework, and situational demands.	CL, SC
Halgunseth (2009)	USA	Bronfenbrenner Epstein Children’s learning in supportive networks	Demonstrating supporting children’s learning in ecologies of families in different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds	B, E, C
Nagel and Wells (2009)	New Zealand	Epstein Focus on indigenous families	Adapting the model of Epstein into indigenous context with focus on cultural artefacts reflecting family’s identity, use of home languages, and creating a sense of belonging	E, Cr
Sakellariou and Rentzou (2009)	Greece	Quality theory Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale (ECERS-R) Ecological approach	Examining differences among different types of setting and collaboration, different types of communications and ways of encouraging parents to be involved and if they have a role	B, Q
Turney and Kao (2009)	USA	Epstein Social capital Leareu/Bourdieu	Mapping disadvantages by identifying socio-economic, cultural-linguistic, and logistical barriers to involvement of immigrant parents	BU, E

Table 2.8 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories – 2010

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Ball (2010)	Canada	Gender theory (and its postulates of inclusion)	Shedding the light on marginalised experience and necessity of institutional acknowledgement of different kinds of parental experience	G
Biedinger (2010)	Germany	Bourdieu and diverse sociological perspectives on inequalities	A trial of equalising developmental inequalities. Showing how PI influence cognitive development, and how it self depends on the levels of parental cultural and social capital	BU
Bodovski and Durham (2010)	USA	Social capital Cultural capital	Showing the importance of parental acculturation to achieve academic success	AA, SC, BU
Capps et al. (2010)	USA	Acculturation theory Gender	Demonstration of how the higher acculturation of migrant fathers makes them more involved in the education of their children	AA, G
Hindman et al. (2010)	USA	Ecological approach to development Socio-economic and cultural privileges Academic Achievement	Showing how children's literacies increase through family participation in the development of early language and social skills	AA, B, BU, SC
Kindervater (2010)	USA	No theory – focus on school readiness	Showing home-practices making children ready for school	NO
Moghni et al. (2010)	Malaysia	Satisfaction, loyalty, and reputation as indicators of customer "Climate" created by teachers, encouraging PI	Explaining relationship between the Montessori characteristics and parental satisfaction	NO
Powell et al. (2010)	USA	Bronfenbrenner Epstein Fantuzzo: questionnaire of parental involvement	Analysis of factors in PI influencing academic and social outcomes in public kindergarten	B, E, F
Sheridan et al. (2010)	USA	Bronfenbrenner Fantuzzo	Showing PI as influencing socio-emotional competence – that is of great importance for learning and thus school readiness	B, F

Combining Epstein's theoretical model with the concept of "climate" allows us to explore how (pre)schools create an atmosphere conducive to the various dimensions of PI (Bhering, 2002). Related to literacy theories, Epstein's perspective contributes to the recognition of the value of parental culture in home literacy programmes (Cassidy et al., 2004). The complexity of family relationships and their involvement with educational institutions can also be seen in the extension of Epstein's model by the perspectives of family systems theory and multicultural considerations, as in the study of Arndt and McGuire-Schwartz (2008). These authors combine the model of Epstein with theories of social capital and Bourdieu's social theory, what makes the model "able" to map disadvantages by identifying socio-economic, cultural, linguistic, and logistical barriers to PI faced by migrant parents. In Harry's (2008) research, supported by the existing body of knowledge on equality, Epstein's model is used to promote understanding of the barriers to the implementation of ideal practices. Deficit views of families, cross-cultural misunderstandings, differing values, and culturally based differences in caregivers' views of their roles also came into the picture in other studies. Epstein's model was also adapted to research on Indigenous families (Nagel & Wells, 2009) and enabled descriptions of culturally responsive practices of PI.

Such cultural sensitivity is generally not appreciated in research on PI that applies acculturation theory, which shows the importance of parental acculturation in achieving academic success in the next generation of the family (Bodovski & Durham, 2010). More specifically, Capps et al. (2010) combined acculturation theory with gender theory, which allowed for an exploration of how the acculturation of migrant fathers shifts gender performances more in line with the dominant culture, including greater involvement in children's education.

Gender Perspective

The gender dimension also appears in the article by Ishii-Kuntz et al. (2004), who try to understand how the different factors related to gender roles can support PI. In a similar way, Tulanada (2001) explored how cultural gender discourses create conditions for social interactions, including those between professionals and parents in the ECEC context. The presumption of different expectations and attitudes towards the other gender's ability to care also comes out in the research of Palm and Fagan (2008). Awareness of gender discrimination underpins the work of Ball (2010), who uses the emancipatory potential of gender theories to shed light on marginalised parental experiences and claims of institutional acknowledgement.

Quality Theories

An interesting approach to PI is presented in articles that build on quality theories. While modernistic approaches to quality see PI as a significant element in the process of ensuring ECEC quality (Sakellriou & Rentzou, 2009; Zellman & Perlman, 2006),

according to postmodern approaches, quality is understood as a process of meaning-making, and such researchers are more interested in the meanings attached to good home–school collaboration involving different groups of parents (Barbarin et al., 2006). Awareness of the quality of cooperation as anchored in traditions, social contexts, legal frameworks, and situational demands is also discussed by Devjak and Berncik (2009).

2021–2022

Figure 2.3 presents a map of the theories found in articles published from 2021 to 2022. The extent to which the different theories were applied to diverse cultures shows significant growth, as the published articles come from 32 countries from all regions of the world, including Australia, Austria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Korea, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tanzania, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The greater number of published papers and the wider scope of countries contributing to international journal publications led to a greater number of theories being involved. The theories depicted in the articles published in 2021–2022 are as follows:

- (A) Attachment theory – inspired by writings of Bowlby (1997)
- (AA) Academic achievement theories – mostly developed by Jeynes (1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2010)
- (B) Bronfenbrenner’s theory of ecological systems – inspired by writings of Bronfenbrenner (1975, 1979)

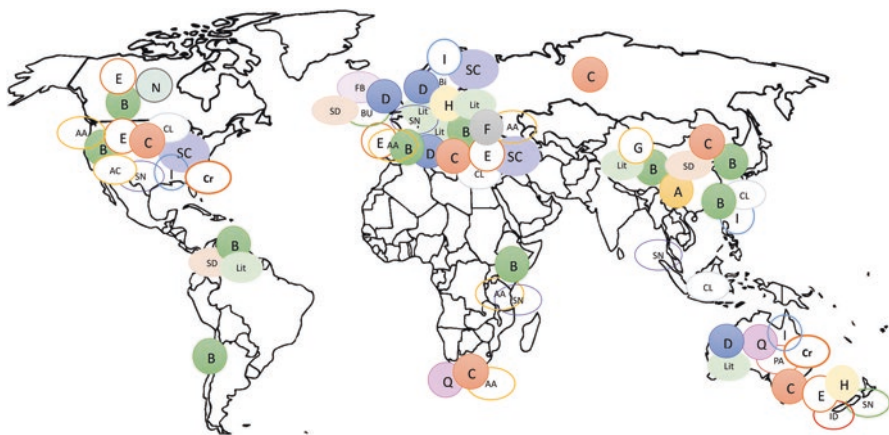


Fig. 2.3 Mapping theories applied in research on PI for the period 2021–2022. (Source: Own elaboration)

- (Bi) Biesta’s (2004) theory on the community
- (BU) Bourdieu’s social theory (Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992)
- (C) Cultural-historical approach – Vygotsky (1926/1997) inspired approach including writings of diverse authors (e.g. Rogoff, 2003; Hedegaard., 2005; Hedegaard & Fler, 2008)
- (CR) Critical theories that highlight power relations, inspired by Foucault’s (1981) analysis of discourse and power and theories of social justice (Fraser & Honneth, 2003)
- (D) Discourse theory – based on approaches of Foucault (1981), Laclau (1995) and Laclau & Mouffe (1985)
- (E) Epstein’s (1986, 1990, 1992, 2001) models of parental involvement
- (F) Fantuzzo’s family involvement questionnaire developed by Fantuzzo et al. (2000)
- (FB) Froebel’s (1912) inspirations
- (H) Hornby’s (2000, 2011) model of PI
- (I) Inductively developed conceptual networks
- (Q) Theories of quality – including modern (Harms & Clifford, 1980; Harms et al. 1998; Howes et al., 1992) and postmodern (Dahlberg et al., 1999; Moss, 1988) approaches
- Narrative theories (N).
- (PA) Theory of practice architectures developed by Kemmis et al. (2014)
- (SC) Social capital theories – inspired by sociological works of Coleman (1988, 1994) and Putnam (2000)
- (SD) Self-developed concepts or scales of PI or new combinations of existing psychological scales
- (SN) Synthetic conceptual toolkits based on diverse literature.

As presented in Fig. 2.3, these theories were employed by scholars from all over the world, including those in Anglo-Saxon countries, as well as the Global South.

In the years 2021–2022, more articles on PI were published than between 2000 and 2010, which shows that interest in the subject had grown all over the world. Figure 2.3 shows the growing geographical spread, with the subject engaging more and more regions of the world and motivating further scientific debate on the collaboration between families and ECEC settings. The growing number of papers – all presented in Tables 2.9 and 2.10 – has also resulted in more theoretical approaches being used, however, with some also being “re-used” and their validity being further confirmed.

Those theoretical perspectives transcending the boundaries between different regions of the world are those that either take into consideration the local socio-cultural context (like the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner and the Vygotsky-inspired cultural-historical perspective) or those that focus on phenomena that are possible to measure and compare regardless of the context, such as academic achievement.

Table 2.9 Overview of the number of articles on PI published in 2021

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Anderstaf et al. (2021)	Sweden	Biesta: theory of those who have nothing in common	Exploration of dilemmas ECEC professionals experience when collaboration with parents in multicultural settings	B
Ansari and Markowitz (2021)	USA	Social capital	Demonstration of home-based and school-based involvement of parents as two possible ways	SC
Bonifacci et al. (2021)	Italy	Literacy theories	Showing how linguistic and numeracy skills of preschoolers as anchored in parental/home numeracy and literacy	Lit
Breitkreuz et al. (2021)	Canada	Human ecology theory	Insight into mothers' hidden work in an underfinanced ECEC	B
Cooke and Francisco (2021)	Australia	Theory of practice architectures	Understanding collaboration with parents as a risk-taking practice and ECEC quality development	PA
De Los Santos Rodríguez et al. (2021)	USA	Own conceptualisation of empowerment	Description of an innovative approach to support and empower Latinx families with preschool-age children and leverages their high use of mobile phones by sharing videos modelling conversations about mathematical concepts	SD
Gedal Douglass et al. (2021)	USA	Developed on the basis of linking EARLY HEAD programme with kindergarten readiness	Shedding the light on kindergarten readiness in a program equalising educational chances	SD
Ekinci-Vural and Dogan-Altun (2021)	Turkey	Epstein	Presenting teachers' perspective and aims connected to PI	E
Farrugia and Busuttill (2021)	Malta	Cultural-historical: Rogoff & Vygotsky; Bronfenbrenner	Showing connection–disconnection between home–school under COVID-19 pandemics	(B) C

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Fenech and Skatebol (2021)	Australia	Social justice theory (Fraser)	Developing just strategies for inclusion: equip for inclusion, entice participation, enable access, engage families – as a way to distinct room enrolment and attendance	Cr
Formosinho (2021)	Portugal	Own, Freire-inspired pedagogies of participation	Showing how schoolification became a parental duty during pandemics and increased inequalities between children	Cr
Gamoran et al. (2021)	USA	Social capital	Measuring if social capital really influences students' achievements in reading and mathematics (no causality was found)	SD
Harris (2021)	USA	Inductive	Showing how confirmation of parental (constructivist) ontologies contributes to parental satisfaction and authentic relationships with ECEC	I
Hu et al. (2021)	Australia	Language development theories	Understanding shared reading experiences at home and preschools; parental and teachers' attitudes and experiences of learning opportunities	Lit
İnce Samur (2021)	Turkey	Literacy	Describing collaborations able to create reading cultures at homes/ECEC settings	Lit
Jacobs et al. (2021)	New Zealand	Literacy	Valuing the linguistically and culturally diverse literacies children carry from their whānau, homes, and communities in bicultural and superdiverse Aotearoa New Zealand	Lit
Junge et al., 2021	Germany	Early science learning and literacies (not related to academic achievement)	Showing contribution of home environments to children's early science knowledge	Lit

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Kigobe et al. (2021)	Tanzania	Hoover-Dempsey	Understanding influence of teacher–parent communication and parental involvement in homework and reading at home on decoding skills, reading fluence and reading comprehension	AA
Kocourková et al. (2021)	Czech Republic	Media education as a theory	Showing form of nursery-home communication on the topic of media education. Highlighting necessity to support teachers' competence	SN
Lau and Li (2021)	Hong Kong	Bronfenbrenner and social networks theory	Parental contribution to the children school readiness in the times of pandemics. The crucial role of wider/ bigger networks of parents in enhancing academic skills, self-management and mental preparation	B/SN
León-Nabal et al. (2021)	Spain	Bronfenbrenner Epstein	Understanding digitally mediated home preschool relationship in time of pandemics	B/E
Lohndorf et al. (2021)	Chile	Conceptualisations of parental skills and school readiness	Showing how socio-economic status, parental beliefs and parenting practices can predict preschoolers' school readiness	AA
Marković and Petrović (2021)	Serbia	Systemic approach Bronfenbrenner Fantuzzo	Highlighting importance of parental satisfaction and parental need of support	B/F/Fs
Menand et al. (2021)	Canada	Reporting child's abuse	Describing factors that influence teachers' support for children/families in cases of violence	SN
Morales-Alexander (2021)	USA	Rogoff, Pushor, anchoring PI as a cultural practice without objectively "positive" or "negative" forms for practice	Showing how socio-cultural approaches enable perception of PI as cultural practice and enable researchers' sensitivity	C

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Murphy et al. (2021)	Australia	Quality related approaches	Understanding (a) parents' experience of collaborative practice, (b) educators' confidence in working with families and (c) educators' perceptions of training needs	Q
Nguyen et al. (2021)	USA	Bronfenbrenner-inspired ow supplemental and collaborative model to enhance early language and reading skills	Effectivity of bidirectional communication trust and empathy in enhancing early language and reading skills	Lit
Obradović et al. (2021)	Not found	Psychological scales of executive functions and self-regulations	Demonstrating that much of parental directive engagement is counterproductive in terms of self-regulation	SN
Oropilla and Ødegaard (2021)	Norway	Cultural-historical	Showing intergenerational practices in ECEC, as practices of sustainability, in times of growing diaspora of generations	C
Peled et al. (2021)	Israel	Parental involvement conceptualised through the use of WhatsApp	Proposing a scale that needed validation and that measured satisfaction, safety network, media usage and decision making	SD
Purola and Kuusisto (2021)	Finland	Social capital	Using social capital index on PI in Finland with long tradition of parental participation in ECEC	SC
Rautamies et al. (2021)	Finland	Trust in educational partnerships	The analysis revealed two critical elements of trust in educational partnership: (1) Child well-being in the daycare centre, and (2) a supportive parent–educator relationship and collaboration. Critical factors in the first element of trust were educators' respectful and good-quality relationships with the child and fair and meaningful pedagogical practices	SN

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Rech et al. (2021)	USA	Epstein Diffusion and Innovation theory	Showing knowledge, persuasion, decision-making, implementation and confirmation in family engagements in ECEC	E
Sadownik et al. (2021)	Australia, Croatia, Denmark, Norway, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden UK	Discourse theory	Parental involvement policies as shaping sustainability practised through ECEC	D
Schock and Jeon (2021)	USA	Hoover-Damsey's bilateral relationships between home-school	This study explores whether four program-level support (benefits, professional development supports, teacher social supports, program-level family involvement activities) are associated with teacher-perceived support from families	SN
Schriever (2021)	Australia	Inductive (related to digital differences between home and educational institutions)	Understanding how early childhood teachers perceive and manage parental concerns about their child's digital technology use in kindergarten	I
Silinkskas et al. (2021)	Lithuania	Reading/spelling theories	Parental reading and spelling as influencing children's development of word reading and spelling skills	AA
Soltero-González and Gillanders (2021).	USA	Socio-cultural, cultural-historical	Understanding the experiences of Latinx parents during COVID-19 pandemics. Findings revealed emergence of more authentic parent-teacher partnerships and parents' extensive engagement in teacher-suggested activities	C

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Sun and Ng (2021)	Singapore	Bilingualism	Demonstration of faster receptive vocabulary growth with English input at homes	Lit
Tang et al. (2021)	Hong Kong	Parental stress	Measuring parental stress connected to children's academic setback (parents with performance goals – higher level of stress)	SD
Uysal Bayrak et al. (2021)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner Vygotsky Socio-cultural learning Parental inventory scale	Exploring parents' role as teachers in daily activities stimulating creativity, teaching learning, and play	C/ SN
Višnjic-Jevtic (2021)	Croatia	Cultural-historical wholeness approach Playing-learning child	Showing social aspects of learning and parental understanding of learning (parents valuing socio-emotional aspects of scientific knowledge)	C
Volk (2021)	USA	Cultural approaches to literacy – spatial turn in literacy theories	Showing how children and families from low-income Latino backgrounds expressed their agency by building on the affordances of their homes, neighbourhoods, and city. Implications for practice include foregrounding children's expertise and creating collaborations between schools and community settings	Lit/Cr
Vuorinen (2021)	Sweden	Inductive development of categories (grounded theory)	How do parents perceive the process of building good relationships with preschool practitioners and its relation for family's choice of a kindergarten	I
Warren and Locklear (2021)	USA	Earlier research on parenting styles and academic achievement	Finding factors of academic success of American Indian students	AA
Wright et al. (2021)	USA	Head start program in relation to families with low SES	Showing stigmatising effect of homelessness and positive influence of meals/ food programmes at school	I

(continued)

Table 2.9 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Wu (2021)	China	Bronfenbrenner Cultural-historical approaches to play	Understanding commonalities in teachers' and parents' perceptions of learning and play	B/C
Yngvesson and Garvis (2021)	Sweden	Bronfenbrenner	Including the perspective of the child in collaboration between the ECEC and parents	B
Zhang et al. (2021)	China	Bronfenbrenner, Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model	Understanding parental beliefs about play's role in children's early development, play practices differentiated by SES of families	SD

Cultural-Historical Perspective

Looking at a few studies in particular, the cultural-historical framework enabled Morales-Alexander (2021) to understand PI as a cultural practice, which again facilitates the perception of many practices of Latino parents in the United States as supportive and valuable for children's all-round development and ultimate school readiness. This theoretical framework thus promotes a deeper understanding of parental practices, and not just their assessment from another culturally established standpoint. Analogical re-perception of diverse home activities as actually supporting children's literacies and parents being factual teachers also appears in the text of Uysal Bayrak et al. (2021). Another important feature of this theoretical toolkit lies in how it enables the exploration of parental perspectives on children's learning (Višnjić-Jevtić, 2021), in particular book-provision programmes (Gillanders & Barak, 2022), or teachers' and parents' co-constructed understandings of learning in play (Wu, 2021). An interesting application of the cultural-historical perspective by Liu and Hoa Chung (2022) traces the effects of fathers' and mothers' expectations and the context of the home environment on children's literacies.

Other articles building on the cultural-historical (context-sensitive) theoretical framework were intended to capture changes in PI during the COVID-19 pandemic. While Soltero-González and Gillanders (2021) identify a more authentic, even digitally mediated form of parent-teacher communication and a greater variety of practices that families create to support children's learning and well-being, Farrugia and Busutil (2021) focus on digital connections and disconnections between home and school during children's remote learning. Guan et al. (2022) focus on how COVID-19 enabled grandparents' involvement in math learning, and thus extended the parental involvement into intergenerational one. In another study, León-Nabal et al. (2021)

Table 2.10 Parental involvement: Articles, intentions, and theories – 2022

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Armstrong et al. (2022)	Australia	Cultural-historical analysis of policy documents	Reconstructing Indigenous perspectives (Yolŋu) on children's learning	C
Bayat and Madyibi (2022)	South Africa	Bronfenbrenner Context of COVID-19 pandemics	Showing supportive/hindering aspect of PI on children's learning in low-income area in Philippi	B/ AA
Bipath et al. (2022)	South Africa	Postmodern approaches to ECEC quality Parental understandings of play	Understanding parental perspectives on play and learning and practices that facilitate it	Q
Birbili (2022)	Greece	Postmodern approaches to ECEC quality and Bakhtin's dialogical perspective	Understanding pedagogical documentation as dialogical meaning-making	Q
Biswas et al. (2023)	Bangladesh	Bronfenbrenner Cultural-historical activity theory Home Stimulation Piaget Partnership	Capturing aspects of PI connected to carer involvements with children in relation to a children book ownership programme	SN
Bonifacci et al. (2022)	Italy	Psychological perspectives on cognitive skills, early literacy and numeracy	Testing a multifactorial model of home activities facilitating cognitive skills, early literacy and numeracy	Lit/AA
Bridges et al. (2022)	USA	Psychological scale on purposeful parenting	Correlation between purpose parenting and supporting socio-emotional development, important for school readiness	SD/AA
Çetin and Demircan (2022)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner Epstein Fantuzzo – questionnaire Coparenting Relationship Scale Role Activity Beliefs Scale Self-Efficacy Beliefs Scale	Capturing role of motivational beliefs in performance of coparenting and PI	SN

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Chen et al. (2022)	China	English language literacy Psychological perspectives on stress + scales	Demonstrating how stress connected to lower socio-economic status is influencing home possibilities to facilitate literacies	Lit/Cr
Cheung et al. (2022)	Hong Kong	Bronfenbrenner Autonomy concept	Parental support of children's autonomy as facilitating academic skills, encouraging learning and school liking	B
Dereli and Türk-Kurtça (2022)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner Epstein Hornby	Capturing dimensions of PI in ECEC during COVID-19 pandemics	B/E/H
Devlieghere and Vandebroeck	Belgium	Critical literature review	Literature review deconstructing the concept of PI in ECEC	Cr
Durmuşoğlu (2022)	Turkey	Epstein	Understanding teachers' perspectives on PI	E
Ejuu and Opiyo (2022)	Kenya Uganda (Ubuntu)	The bio-ecological model of development, by Bronfenbrenner & Morris; Inclusive education perspectives on children with special needs	Understanding the phenomenon of <i>flourishing</i> – as based on home-based education that recognises the family, cultures as valuable, as the first teachers	B
Eliyahu-Levi (2022)	Israel	Bourdieu Narrative research	Giving voice to asylum-seeking parents whose desire to belong to school community disturbed by reality of poverty and work around the clock	BU N
Erdemir (2022)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner Resilience	Following up on an intervention of home-based ECEC for refugee and local children via mothers	B
Gapany et al. (2022)	Australia	Cultural/Critical perspectives Empowering	Acknowledgement and empowerment of Aboriginal families of Yolsu kindship. Acknowledging kindship, clan concepts, cultural knowledge and families as first teachers	C/Cr

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Gillanders and Barak (2022)	USA	Rogoff- and Vygotsky-inspired cultural historical models of literacy	Giving voice to Mexican and American parents participating in a literacy programme	C/Lit
Greco et al. (2022)	Argentina	Bronfenbrenner Concepts of exclusion and withdrawal	Capturing parental beliefs about social withdrawal in preschool age	B
Grobler (2022)	South Africa	Vygotsky-inspired perspective on the importance of the context Disaster management	Insight in teachers' experiences of parental involvement during COVID-19 pandemic	C
Gross et al. (2022)	USA	Fantuzzo Social capital Epstein School readiness	Developing equitable measures for knowledge/ expectations, trust/ communication, home-based engagement	SN
Guan et al. (2022)	China	Intergenerationality in context	Highlighting grandparents' involvement in math learning during COVID	C
He and Thompson (2022)	USA	Epstein	Correlation between family involvement and English learner's outcomes	E
Jayaraj et al. (2022)	Malaysia	Parental play belief scale Engagement in school readiness	Parental attitudes towards play in preschool as parental engagement in school readiness	SD
Kambouri et al. (2022)	UK	Froebel-inspired	Developing parental involvement practices by using Froebel inspirations	F
Levickis et al. (2022)	Australia	Inductive analysis	Understanding parental experience of family engagement with ECEC during COVID-19 pandemics (disruptions, barriers, support, increased parental appreciation of ECEC)	I
Liang et al. (2022)	USA	Home literacy Homework	Parents views on children's learning experiences and homework	Lit

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Liu and Hoa Chung (2022)	China	Vygotsky-inspired perspective on home literacy; gender (fatherhood, motherhood)	Measuring effects of fathers' and mothers' expectations and home literacy involvement on children's cognitive-linguistic skills, vocabulary, and word reading	C/Lit
Liu et al. (2022)	China	Bronfenbrenner	Understanding after-school program staff relationships with mothers – showing that good relationships among adults present in children's lives facilitate their adjustment	B
Luo and Gao (2022)	China	Socio-economic perspective	Examination of how socio-economic status was linked to preschoolers' self-regulated learning through parental educational expectation and home-based involvement in one and multi-child's families	SN/Cr
Luo et al. (2022)	China	Ecological exchange network Cultural-historical perspectives	Insight into virtual home visits experience during the COVID-19 pandemic as an experience enhancing preschool-home collaboration	B/C
McKee et al. (2022)	Canada	Family vibrancy (Epstein)	Using family vibrancy as showing the richness of parental cultural, lingual and other resources	FV
McWayne et al. (2022)	USA	Critical theories challenging power positions in PI	Challenging one way in school partnerships and arguing for home-to-school model	Cr
Mercan et al. (2022)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner STEM and academic achievement	Parental awareness of the importance of STEM as influencing transition to school	B/AA/SN

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Ndijuye and Tandika (2022)	Tanzania	School readiness Academic achievement Socio-economic background creating the basic toolkit	Measuring the role of fathers' involvement in school performance of refugee and local children	AA/SN
Nóblega et al. (2022)	Peru	Scale of PI focused on caregiving and socialisation activities	Validating an instrument in another socio-cultural context.	SD
Özgül and Bayındır (2022)	Turkey	School readiness Academic achievement	Understanding relation between parental involvement and school readiness: the mediating role of preschoolers' self-regulation skills	AA
Pan et al. (2022)	China	Scientific Fitness Literacy	Correlation between families' socio-economic background and children's scientific fitness	SD
Parrish et al. (2022)	UK	Not identified	Parents' and grandparents' perceptions of children's physical activity at home, as knowledge important in the creation of physical activity policies	SD
Puccioni et al. (2022)	USA	Parental beliefs on school readiness	African American parents' beliefs on school readiness	AA
Rabin et al. (2022)	USA	School readiness and psychological perspectives on educational achievement inspired by Duncan et al.	Making school readiness more accessible for Latinx families	AA
Raynal et al. (2022)	USA	Categories based on previous research	Exploring multigenerational engagement in science as supporting children's learning	I
Rey-Guerra et al., 2022	Peru	Bronfenbrenner	Understanding diverse home-based activities as facilitating children's emergent literacies, numeracy, emotional functioning, motor development and executive functions	B/Lit

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Rickert and Skinner (2022)	USA	Psychological theories on self-system (sense of relatedness, competence and autonomy)	Capturing “warm involvement” – role of enthusiasm and parental perception of teachers’ warm involvement	SD
Sadeghi and Sadeghi (2022)	New Zealand	Hornby, Epstein, Hulaja, Ducan, Hedges & Gibbs	Understanding and highlighting the roles of father	SN/G
Sanders et al. (2022)	Canada	Narrative theory	Capturing and understanding experiences of small children’s parents from the time of COVID-19 pandemic	N
Sawyer et al. (2022)	USA	Bronfenbrenner Acculturation theory	Unfolding diverse reasoning for school readiness among im/migrant parents from diverse cultures	B/AC
Sengonul (2022)	Turkey	Bronfenbrenner Bourdieu Coleman	Unfolding which social groups benefit (in the form of academic achievement) out of parental involvement	B/BU/SC
Schörghofer-Queiroz (2022)	Austria	Cultural-lingual context Identity creation Goodall & Montgomery Hornby Superdiversity	Exploring creation of parental identity when being engaged and learning a new language	SN
Shim and Shin (2022)	Korea	Bronfenbrenner	Understanding the networks of parenting among preschool mothers	B
Shinina and Mitina (2022)	Russia	Cultural-historical	Developing a scale building on assumptions of cultural-historical approach, that captures child–parent interactions	SD
Sianturi et al. (2022)	Australia	Review on Indigenous parents’ educational engagement	Tracing the history of marginalised perspective of Indigenous parents	Cr/C
Simons et al. (2022)	USA	No theoretical anchoring	Developing policies to provide the parents with the right information on what the school readiness is	NO

(continued)

Table 2.10 (continued)

Article	Country	Theory	Intention/aim with the article	Categorised as
Sisson et al. (2022)	Australia	Conceptualisations based on the Reggio pedagogy with the use of cultural artefacts that empower new ways	Arguing for the importance of more mutual relationships between parents and educational institutions (two-way street metaphor)	I
Siu and Keung (2022)	Hong Kong	Parental views on play in ECEC settings	Understanding parental perspective on play and enhancing learning through play	I
Syuraini et al. (2022)	Indonesia	Communication/ collaboration/ participation based on earlier research	Capturing understandings and factors of parent–teachers partnership that affect learning outcomes in particular cultural context	SD
Wei et al. (2022)	China	Numeracy and mathematical skills	Showing relevant ways of parental involvement to support development of numeracy and mathematical skills	Lit
Yue et al. (2022)	China	Chinese Parental Involvement and Support Scale for Preschool Children (CPISSPC) to measure parental involvement and support for preschool children.	Developing a scale for optimal measure of parental involvement in the life of a child and spot differences based on socio-economic status and education of parents	SD
Zhang et al. (2022)	China	Bronfenbrenner Attachment Family system	Understanding the family process (also intergenerational) as influencing social adaptation to child-care services	B/A/FS

employed an ecological theoretical perspective to describe the virtual home visits during the COVID-19 outbreak in China that turned out to be supportive arenas for information exchange and socio-emotional support. Cultural-historical theory is also used as a basis for developing a locally sensitive and locally applicable scale for evaluating parent–child interaction (Shinina & Mitina, 2022). A slightly different, albeit close, theoretical perspective (of cultural models) is used by Sisson et al. (2022) to describe the processes of balancing power relations and supporting authentic partnerships between professionals and parents through the activities of co-designing and co-creating diverse artefacts.

Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is another context-sensitive approach that serves as a foundation for articles with a similar focus to the one conceptualised by the cultural-historical perspective. Some of the authors merge these perspectives when describing their own theoretical framework by focusing on the commonalities connected to the importance of the context (Farrugia & Busuttill, 2021; Uysal Bayrak et al., 2021; Wu, 2021). Others, by employing the theory of ecological systems, conduct projects analogous to those administered through cultural-historical perspectives. For instance, by employing the ecological systems theory, Zhang et al. (2021) conducted research on parental play beliefs in a way that was analogical to the project of Višnjić-Jevtić (2021), which explored parental understandings of learning with the use of the cultural-historical theoretical toolkit, while Bayat and Madayibi (2022) closely examined home-based involvement in Philippi during pandemics.

As the child is kept at the centre as a final beneficiary of parental collaboration with ECEC settings, Yngvesson and Garvis (2021) include the perspective and agency of the child in their research. The child's voice is presented through the story constellations of teachers, parents, and children. Through this approach, Yngvesson and Garvis (2021) actively connect the child to the mesosystem of ECEC–family collaboration.

Combined with attachment theory, ecological systems theory enables us to track how intergenerational family-based attachments (with parents and grandparents) factor into and influence social adaptation in an ECEC setting (Zhang et al., 2022). The effects of the mesosystem's collaborations on the child's development can also be traced with the use of Bronfenbrenner's model. For instance, Liu et al. (2022) explore how the relationships between teachers and afterschool programme staff influence the child's adjustment to ECEC, while Cheung et al. (2022) trace how parental support of autonomy and home-based learning activities encourages pre-academic skill development and school liking. However, ecological systems theory can also inspire (analogical to the cultural-historical approach) an understanding of PI as a cultural practice. This is demonstrated in the study by Ejuu and Opiyo (2022), who worked with Ubuntu families and describe a kind of "flourishing" built on recognition and acknowledgement of (intergenerational) family cultures as valuable first teachers.

A quite interesting attempt to embrace the parental perspective is represented by authors who did not apply any particular theoretical toolkit, but rather reported on existing knowledge and developed their own categorial network based on empirical data (i.e., voices of families). Such inductive ways of developing key concepts were used in 2021–2022 to embrace the following:

- (A) Parental perceptions of building relationships with ECECs (Vuorinen, 2021).
- (B) Parental ontologies as a basis for assessing their satisfaction with ECEC services (Harris, 2021).

- (C) Im/migrant parents' beliefs in school readiness (Puccioni et al., 2022; Simons et al., 2022).
- (D) Parental understandings of play (Siu & Keung, 2022).
- (E) ECEC teachers' perceptions and management of parental concerns and their connection to the child's use of digital technology in the ECEC setting (Schriever, 2021).

Unmasking Power Relations

While cultural-historical approaches, the Bronfenbrenner model, or inductive research can be used to challenge the established understandings of PI by exploring, understanding, and valuing diverse culturally based practices, critical approaches trace the power relations and dominating discourses constructing and underpinning the established understandings of PI. For instance, McWyane et al. (2022) unmask the misconceptions and hierarchical power structures that prelude educators from perceiving powerful knowledge about home-based practices and routines (which would enable educational institutions to become more familiar for children of diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds). In this vein, Sadownik et al. (2021) use discourse theory to unmask the implied hegemonies of meaning connected to social sustainability in the parts of the ECEC policy documents that regard parental collaboration. By bringing diverse policy discourses to the table, and thus alternative meanings attached to parental collaboration, the authors were able to represent the silent assumptions underlying the relation between ECECs and families. Such approaches also allow for the representation of discursive changes, as in the context of pandemic, where in the context of Portugal, responsibility for the schoolification of children was placed on parents, which again made the children's education depend on parental resources (Formosinho, 2021). Unmasking such practices and the power relations behind them raises questions of social justice. Fenech and Skattebol (2021) thus employed Nancy Fraser's theory of social justice to explore diverse approaches to including/involving parents.

Awareness of the role of the discursive arrangement that shapes the social practice (of PI) is also present in the theory of practice architectures. Cooke and Francisco (2021) examined the architecture of risk-taking practices in relation to ECEC's collaboration with families, which led to the detection of the cultural-discursive, economic-material, and socio-political arrangements constituting these practices. Additionally, this theory allows us to see the ECEC-family collaboration in a kind of ecology with other practices, which can be considered another way to embrace the wider context of PI.

Collaboration and Social Capital

Theories of social capital are intertwined with research on PI in different ways. These range from helping to assess whether social capital influences students' academic achievement in reading and mathematics (Gamoran et al., 2021; Sengonul, 2022) to measuring the level of social capital in a socio-cultural context (i.e., Finland) with a long tradition of positive parental participation (Purola & Kuusisto, 2021). The relevance of social capital in different kinds of PI (i.e., home- or school-based) is also described, particularly with respect to low-income families (Ansari & Markowitz, 2021). Feelings of trust and safety comprise one of the key dimensions of social capital (Purola & Kuusisto, 2021), which are also explored in another Finnish study showing that trust in educational partnership is constituted by two crucial elements: (1) the child's well-being in the ECEC setting, and (2) a supportive parent–educator relationship and collaboration (Rautamies et al., 2021). A deeper insight into such collaborations and partnerships is done in the study of Syuraini et al. (2022), who develop indicators of successful collaboration based on a wide range of existing research on communication, collaboration, and participation. This creates their starting point for gathering data in the context of Indonesia. Partnerships between families and ECEC are also supported by the models of Hornby (2000, 2011) and Goodall-Montgomery (2014).

Epstein

Epstein's (2010, 2011) theoretical model, as previously mentioned, may be employed with different intentions, whether as a matrix showing diverse aspects of PI (Ekinci-Vular & Dogan-Altun, 2021) or as a means of stimulating teachers' innovations in PI practices (Rech et al., 2021). Combined with Hornby's model, Epstein's model is used in one study to explore and promote fathers' participation in ECEC (Sadeghi & Sadeghi, 2022). Epstein's model is also employed by researchers who build on critiques and suggestions directed towards it. For instance, McKee et al. (2022) explore teachers' engagement with parents on the basis of Preston et al.'s (2018) extension of the model with the notion of family vibrancy, which accounts for "the family's linguistic, cultural, vocational, artistic, social, emotional, spiritual, and ethnic dimensions" as "important, valuable resources, which need to be included in parent involvement discourse" (Preston et al., 2018, p. 549). Such culturally responsive acknowledgements show the openness and potential that Epstein's conceptualisation still has to offer.

Synthetising Perspectives

The practice of synthetising different theoretical approaches and constructing new scales relevant to a particular cultural context is a very interesting phenomenon. While in some countries, such as Tanzania (Kigobe et al., 2021; Ndijuye & Tandika,

2022) or Peru (Nóblega et al., 2022), the researchers adopt or validate the existing Western scales of PI and academic achievement, researchers from other contexts, like Malaysia (Jayaraj et al., 2022), China (Luo et al., 2022; Pan et al., 2022; Yue et al., 2022), and Hong Kong (Tang et al., 2021), developed their own, locally sensitive measurement tools. Creating other theories, like one constructed for empowerment (De Los Santos Rodriguez et al., 2021), also occurred in this body of literature.

Literacies in/of/by Parental Involvement

Theories of literacy depart from different assumptions about (multi)literacies and are thus used in research with different aims. In recent years, studies have measured children's literacies as anchored in parental and home numeracy and literacy (Bonifacci et al., 2021; Junge et al., 2021; Kigboe et al., 2021; Silinskas et al., 2021; Sun & Ng, 2021; Wei et al., 2022), through activities like shared reading at home and preschool stimulation of language development (İnce Samur, 2021; Hu et al., 2021), as well as projects that promote the creation of reading cultures in dialogue and collaboration between home and ECEC settings (Hu et al., 2021). The same theories create a departure point for examining parental perceptions of literacy, homework, and learning experiences (Liang et al., 2022) or participation in home literacy programmes (Gillanders & Barak, 2022). Such a view of literacies has, however, also been criticised as reductionist and narrow (Jacobs et al., 2021), with the suggestion being made to form an alternative, reciprocal partnership in which literacies are promoted through the active use of families' linguistic and cultural resources (Jacobs et al., 2021). Volk (2021) also argues for enhancing literacies by building on the affordances of homes, neighbourhoods, and the broader city, as foregrounding children's expertise and creating collaborations between schools and community settings are crucial for holistic learning and well-being. Such culturally responsive approaches to literacies come either from critical identity theories (Cummins, 2001) or cultural-historical approaches, as in the article by Kajee and Sibanda (2019).

Back to Froebel

An interesting theoretical alternative is presented by Kambouri et al. (2022), who, by building on the Froebelian approach that emphasises “not only the importance families, but the striving for ‘unity’ in an understanding of how practitioners can work collaboratively with families, in the best interests of children” (p. 644), created sessions for families and professionals intended to empower both parts. Combining Froebel's work with their existing knowledge, the authors ended up framing their sessions with the following principles:

1. *Neutrality of power*: The partnership sessions took place outside of school settings.
2. *Respecting voices*: Participants shared their understandings of partnership and identified their own goals using their experiences and the unique nature of their settings and lifestyles.
3. *Reflection*: Participants reflected on their preconceptions of partnerships through sharing experiences and taking part in activities to re-examine how they could further develop their collaboration.
4. *Praxis*: During and after the implementation of the partnership sessions, participants were encouraged to apply their understanding of partnerships in their actual settings.
5. *Voice*: Participants shared their views and opinions in a safe, non-judgmental environment (pp. 644–655).

Narratives and Discourse

Another theory that emerged in only one chapter is narrative theory, which captures experience as a story embedded within the context of a particular culture, society, and economy and their underlying power relations (Bourdieu, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Foucault, 1981). Building on this approach, Eliyahu-Levi (2022) explores the experiences of African asylum-seeker families in Israel and identifies a tension between the family's sense of belonging, the desire to be more involved, and the reality of poverty that turns their days into experiences of working around the clock, which effectively precludes their presence in diverse activities at educational institutions. In their research on family pedagogies/literacies, Jacobs et al. (2021) present families' lingual and cultural practices as counternarratives that challenge the deficit discourse on migrant and Indigenous families. Challenging an established discourse by presenting an alternative surplus of meaning, as created in another context of culture and power, characterises the research employing discourse theory, as in the paper of Sadownik et al. (2021) where the theory is used to "unfreeze" the meanings connected to PI and social sustainability in different policy documents.

Biesta: The Other Community

The last theory appearing in articles published between 2021 and 2022 is Biesta's conceptualisation of community, as employed by Anderstaf et al. (2021) when exploring dilemmas encountered by preschool teachers when working in contexts of cultural and value-related diversity. A conceptual toolkit that helps to enter into and embrace the complexity of engaging with dilemmas is Biesta's (2004, 2006) distinction between *rational communities* and communities that have nothing in common with them, also called *other communities*. Building on Biesta, Anderstaf et al. (2021) understand a rational community as constituted by a common, identifiable language and institutional documents, which also narrows down what is

considered relevant and legitimate to articulate and focus on, and thus excludes those who are not “fluent in the language” (Anderstaf et al., 2021, p. 299) or who do not share the dominant rationality. The other community occurs in relation to the rational one by interrupting and troubling the “rational” and legitimate articulations. It allows one to embrace PI as not only the cultural reproduction of a particular rationality, but also as creating conditions for the other community to come into existence by creating opportunities for persons to be challenged to confront otherness and ask authentic questions, like “What do you think?” and “How will you respond?” (Anderstaf et al., 2021, p. 300). As Anderstaf et al. (2021) conclude, it is in confronting this challenge of meeting the other that one’s unique voice can appear.

Discussion: Aims Facilitated by Theoretical Toolkits

The existing systematisations of theories of PI can be applied when trying to generalise the aims/intentions of the analysed articles. Green (2017) distinguishes between the positivistic, interpretative, and critical epistemologies underlying educational research on partnerships between families and educational institutions. Below, I intend to show how the depicted theories are related to these systematisations and argue in favour of choosing the interpretative and critical ones for the next chapters of the book.

The positivist ambition to provide local and accurate knowledge that allows for certain outcomes to be predicted and controlled reduces PI to measurable causalities and impacts (of what are considered the right activities of the parents) on the academic achievement (of the child). Such an approach shines through the articles mentioned above that take for granted academic achievement as a common goal and operationalise it through the literacies and numeracies desired by schools. In this view, the family’s perspectives and the culturally anchored practices of the supporting literacies are not of interest in themselves, but as activities that can be classified as positive or negative for (the taken-for-granted) future academic achievement. Green (2017) even classifies Epstein’s model as positivistic. The review above shows however that this model can also serve very interpretive and critical aims. In some cases, the simple models can be extended by the empirical data (...), while in other cases the orientation towards academic achievement reduces theories that could serve other goals, such as social capital theory (Coleman, 1988).

As “in the interpretivist epistemology all knowledge and reality are created through social interactions between people and their world, and ... within a social context” (Green, 2017, p. 375), the theories I classify into this group are those that support research on the importance of (contextual) understanding. This understanding may be related to the parental perspective (e.g. Ball, 2010; Bipath et al., 2022; Erdemir, 2022; Hewitt & Maloney, 2000; Murphy et al., 2021; Višnjić-Jevtić, 2021, Zhang et al., 2021), teachers’ perspectives (Durmuşoğlu, 2022; Ekinci-Vural & Dogan-Altun, 2021; Grobler, 2022; Murphy et al., 2021), perspective of the child (Yngvesson & Garvis, 2021), the perspectives of other cultures (e.g. Ball, 2010;

Indigenous: Armstrong et al., 2022; Gapany et al., 2022, Sianturi et al., 2022; or im/migrant: Sawyer et al., 2022), involvement of elder generation (Guan et al., 2022; Raynal et al., 2022) or acknowledging families as first teachers (Ejuu and Opiyo (2022).

Creating context-enabling dialogues and exchanges of meaning, particularly about the goals of partnerships (Kambouri et al., 2022), is in line with this perspective. Those theories that supported such explorations include the cultural-historical perspective (e.g. Armstrong et al., 2022; Gillanders & Barak, 2022; Grobler, 2022), Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (e.g. Ejuu & Opiyo, 2022; Erdemir, 2022; Wu, 2021; Zhang et al., 2021), quality theory (e.g. Bipath et al., 2022), and narrative theory (e.g. Eliyahu-Levi, 2022; Sanders et al., 2022). Their employment shows the practice of PI to be culturally anchored, value-related, and contextual, which could also explain their widespread application throughout the world.

The primary objective of critical theories is to change the order of things (Green, 2017). However, for this change to take place, they need to identify and understand the phenomena and practices that require it. This is done by exploring the conditions for the appearance of diverse understandings. The critical perspective is not satisfied with identifying the mere diversity of family practices; rather, the socio-economic conditions and power relations that helped establish such diversity are also to be examined (Maranhão & Sarti, 2008). As in the research of Eliyahu-Levi (2022), the stories of asylum seekers are connected to the context of poverty, which strengthens their desire to participate, but also blocks the real possibility of their involvement with the educational settings of their children; or in the research of Sengonul (2022) showing that academic achievement as a benefit from PI relates mainly to middle-class children. With the ambitions of shaking up the unjust, marginalised voices and experiences are presented so that mainstream institutions can become more sensitive to perspectives they exclude and oversee (Ball, 2010). In the work of Jacobs et al. (2021), Indigenous lingual and cultural practices are presented as counternarratives to the narrow, taken-for-granted perspectives of early reading and numeracy affirmed in educational settings. Analogical empowerment of multiliteracies and different ways of knowing established in different home cultures takes place in the article of Taylor et al. (2008). Nagel and Wells (2009) on the other hand open the model of Epstein for ways of engagement with educational institutions that is more responsive to meanings and ways of being anchored in Indigenous cultures.

The critical perspective assumes that there is nothing like a neutral position, and that everything serves one or another agenda, whether it be articulated or silently assumed. It may therefore be more ethical for researchers to be transparent about their own normative standpoints. Such a normative commitment is declared in research employing Fraser's theory of social justice when arguing for the inclusion of low-income families (Fenech & Skattebol, 2021), or in the writings of researchers inspired by Biesta's concept of the *other community*, which strongly encourage authenticity and confrontation of the otherness (Anderstaf et al., 2021). Descriptions resisting and challenging the perspectives of "lack" that have been established in relation to some groups may be also seen as the critical ones (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006).

Conclusion: Selecting Theories for the Next Chapters of the Book

Theories that have the potential to effectively account for the understanding of more-than-parental involvement presented in Chap. 1 are those of an interpretative and critical character. It seems that there is a desire for a continuously deeper understanding of both the diversity of perspectives that exists, but also the underlying power relations and discourses “freezing” the meanings connected to parental participation. This means that of the theories presented in the above literature review, the following are to be included:

1. The cultural-historical wholeness approach, which presents PI not only as a cultural practice, but also as an institutional and personal one framed by the existing social apparatus (Hedegaard, 2005, 2009; Hedegaard & Fler, 2008); such an approach embraces diverse more-than-parental relationships and is able to depict important tensions that arise in overcoming the democratic deficit (Van Leare et al., 2018).
2. Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), which suggests that by recognising the child’s being and becoming in the complex ecology of relationships and social systems, there is the potential to embrace the more-than-parental, intergenerational, and political (democratic) aspects of families collaborating with ECECs.
3. The theory of social capital (Coleman, 1998; Putnam, 2000), which considers relationships and access to new interactions as genuinely resourceful ways to enable deeper understandings of more-than-parental involvement; however, its focus on function and “benefit” may exclude the intrinsic value of being together.
4. Models of parental involvement developed by Epstein (1990, 1992, 2001, 2010, 2011) and Hornby (2000, 2011).
5. Partnership and collaboration theories (Colbry et al., 2014; Keyes, 2002; Keyser, 2006).
6. The social theory of Bourdieu (1990; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).
7. The theory of practice architectures (Kemmis et al., 2014).
8. Discourse theory (on ECEC quality) and narrative inquiry (Dahlberg et al., 2013).

Additionally, the posthuman theoretical perspective – or agential realism – is going to be included. As a theory that challenges the taken-for-granted perception of PI as a human–human phenomenon, it has the potential to shed new light on the artefacts being used in culturally responsive ways to facilitate ECEC’s engagement with parents. Moreover, as stated by Rosiek et al. (2020), this theory can account for Indigenous ontologies in terms of acknowledging the agency of non-human elements, which can result in extending the “more-than-parental” into the acknowledgement of intergenerational relationships in the family, as well as a radically relational perception of the materiality that constitutes diverse cultures.

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