


Cultural analysis of parents in the exercise of metapar-enting: An integrative review

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2024.006-035>

Mirna Albuquerque Frota¹, Victoria Hellen Silva Gonçalves², Maraysa Costa Vieira Cardoso³, Marília Nunes Fernandes⁴, Evanice Avelino de Souza⁵ and Thiago Medeiros da Costa Daniele⁶

ABSTRACT

Metaparenting is defined as a set of covert processes that result in a more comprehensive understanding of parenting, so that metaparenting consists of thinking or reflecting on one's own parenting practices. The study aimed to analyze the scientific productions about the cul-tural analysis of parents and their influence on the exercise of metaparenting, as well as to identify parental beliefs and relevance in child behavior. This is an integrative review, whose data were obtained from the theme and its main descriptors, which are found on the Health Sciences Descriptors platform, in databases commonly used in scientific research, such as MEDLINE, LILACS, Nursing Database, through the Virtual Health Library (VHL). It was found that there is no magic formula for an inclusive and parental society, but when well directed by the challenges imposed on public policies, they are fundamental in this cultural construction. It is concluded that the association between cultural analysis and metaparenting exerts a signifi-cant influence on children's behavior, contributing to children's emotional and cognitive devel-opment. In addition, the new family configurations involve the dissemination of social values that need greater awareness and support from society. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct research on the subject, seeking to understand the mechanisms that favor child and adoles-cent growth.

Keywords: Family power, Parent-child relationships, Nursing.

¹ Professor and Coordinator of the Graduate Program in Public Health (PPGSC) - UNIFOR.

² Undergraduate student in Nursing at the University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR) - Edson Queiroz Foundation.

³ Master's student in Public Health at the PPGSC at the University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR) - Edson Queiroz Foundation.

⁴ Master's student in Public Health at the PPGSC at the University of Fortaleza (UNIFOR) - Edson Queiroz Foundation.

⁵ Doctor in Medical Sciences from the Federal University of Ceará. Postdoctoral fellow at PPGSC/Unifor.

⁶ Professor of the Graduate Program in Public Health (PPGSC) - UNIFOR.



INTRODUCTION

Metaparenting is defined as a set of covert processes that result in a more comprehensive understanding of parenting and occurs in a variety of ways. It can occur when a mother makes a deliberative decision that her child is too old to be weaned, or when the father tries to determine whether the child's aggression is a problem or a normal stage of development, or even when parents stop and take stock of their children's well-being; when they debate about letting their teenage daughter go to a dance; or when a mother tries to help her shy daughter. In this context, parents are engaged in an abstract cognitive activity that takes into account considerations about the child outside of the ongoing interaction (Holden; Hawk, 2003).

For Holden and Hawk (2003), metaparenting consists of a set of thoughts that parents evaluate their children's education that typically occurs before or after parent-child interactions. It can be said that it is an effort by parents to know what is happening with their children and with the care they are given.

The family is the child's first social group and first form of social relationship. For this reason, it is delegated a central role in people's development, since, for many years, it is the main environment in which the child is inserted and, in addition, it acts as a key or filter that determines the child's openness to other contexts (Papalia; Olds; Feldman, 2009).

Brazilian epidemiological studies indicate that the prevalence rates of children and adolescents with some type of mental disorder range from 10 to 20% and emphasize the urgent need to rethink medicalization. Among the behaviors that risk children's mental health, mapped by the prevention programs promoted in schools, the following stand out: behavioral problems (61.36%), violence (13.64%), sexual abuse (9.09%) and alcohol and drug abuse (6.82%) (Faria; Rodrigues, 2020).

Due to the complexity of family relationships and the importance of understanding the variables responsible for the healthy development of children, Papalia, Olds and Feldman (2009) selected some aspects that can influence this relationship, among which the following stand out: the environment, i.e., the context in which the interaction occurs and the stage of the child's development; the behavior, the actions of the parents in relation to the child's care; and parents' cognitions, thoughts, and beliefs and their influence on children's behavior (D'affonseca; Williams, 2013).

Mills and Rubin (1993) present a model of information processing on parental behavior, in which they present the factors that influence parental behavior: parental beliefs, socio-ecological factors, and personal and social conditions. According to the authors, parental behaviors result from a mixture of the factors presented above.



Thus, the parents' belief about the child's stage of development, the causes of the appearance of a certain behavior, the importance of certain aspects of development and how they should socialize their children will have a direct influence on the discipline strategies they will adopt in their children's education.

Thus, parental beliefs would indirectly affect children's socio-emotional development through the impact on parenting behaviors, which can be proactive (strategies to promote appropriate behaviors in their children) or reactive (strategies to eliminate their children's behavior problems), depending on the goals set by the parents. In view of this, the research is based on the problem: "How do cultural beliefs influence parental behaviors?"

The relationship between cultural analysis and the exercise of metaparenting is relevant for the construction of new bibliographic references so that it seeks to develop new health promotion strategies aimed at mitigating the negative impacts on parenting. It is essential to develop studies that aim to test other methodologies and other variables in order to arrive at a model that better represents the analysis of parental beliefs in the exercise of parenthood.

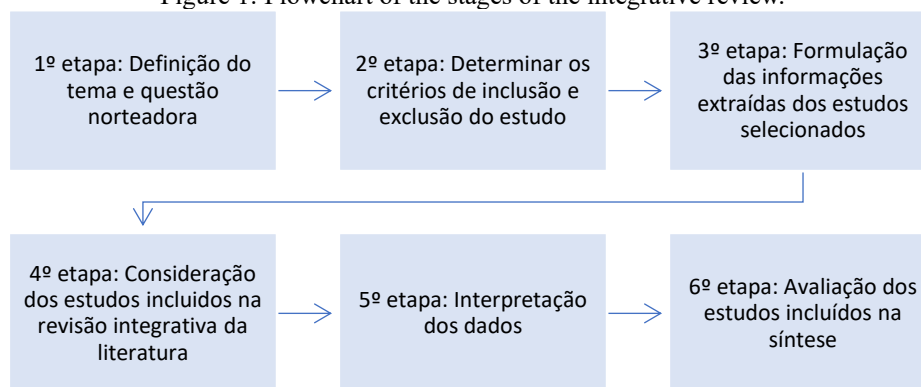
In view of the scarcity of articles and research in the area of metaparenting, interest in the subject and its relevance has emerged, providing subsidies for the development of research that seeks new answers to psychosocial problems.

Based on these assumptions, the study aimed to analyze the scientific productions about the cultural analysis of parents and their influence on the exercise of metaparenting, as well as to identify parental beliefs and relevance in child behavior.

METHODOLOGY

The study consists of an Integrative Review (IR) about the cultural analysis of parents in the exercise of metaparenting. IR is based on scientific knowledge, and is based on the research method that allows the search, critical evaluation and synthesis of the evidence found on the researched topic. In this way, it gathers and synthesizes the findings, found during the search for information in an orderly way, contributing to the deepening of knowledge (Sousa *et al.*, 2017), and is fragmented into several parts.

Figure 1: Flowchart of the stages of the integrative review.



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

The survey data collection took place during the month of July 2023, including publications indexed in the years 2018 to 2023. The data, at first, were obtained from the theme and its main descriptors, which were found on the Descriptors in Health Sciences (DeCS) platform. (MEDLINE), Latin American and Caribbean Health Sciences Literature (LILACS), and Nursing Database (BDENF) through the Virtual Health Library (VHL).

Publications available in full, digitally in Portuguese and Spanish that addressed the theme and were published between the years 2018 and 2023. This is a qualitative study with the following descriptors: Family power, Parent-child relations and Nursing.

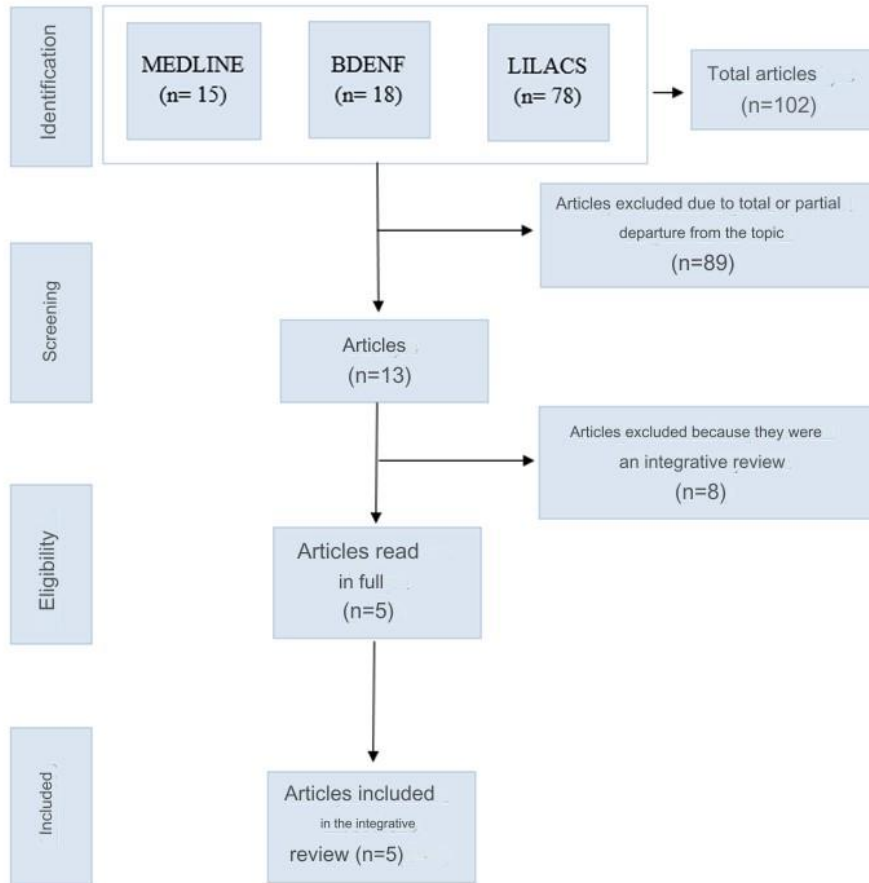
The sum of the excluding factors came from literature reviews, dissertations, theses, duplicate articles, articles not published in full, articles that do not address the theme, publications that did not use the Portuguese and Spanish languages and with more than 6 years of publication. The guiding question is based on the question "How do cultural beliefs influence parenting behaviors?"

The research followed the Copyright Law 9610/98, it was not necessary to be approved by the Ethics Committee, as it is an integrative review.

RESULTS

The initial search carried out in the chosen databases identified 102 articles that used descriptors homonyms to the research. Among these, only five were selected based on the inclusion criteria, the remaining studies were withdrawn because they were consistent with the exclusion criteria, such as: because they were integrative reviews (8), complete or partial avoidance of the theme (89). The five articles read in full permeate and answer the guiding question, some of which are from BDENF (n=1) and LILACS (n=4). Figure 2 outlines the bibliographic findings:

Figure 2: Schematization of the bibliographic search.



Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Chart 1 summarizes the information about the articles used for inclusion in the literature review.

Chart 1: Description of the articles included in this research.

TITLE	NEWSPAPER	YEAR	OBJECTIVE	METHOD
Associations between parenting styles, interests, and career indecision in high school students	<u>Journal of the University of San Francisco.</u>	2018	To verify the relationships between parental styles, professional interests and indecisiveness of adolescents.	Qualitative study.
The Contemporary Family and Its Values: A Look at Parental Understanding	Psychology in Review	2018	Understand the parental perspective regarding the transmission of values to children in the process of educating them.	Qualitative study.
Subjective Theories of Parental Discipline in Parenting Literature	Chilean Journal of Pediatrics	2019	Describe subjective theories present in the recommendations made by physicians and psychologists in parenting books in Spanish about parental discipline.	Qualitative study.
Prejudice and parenting? Experiences of homoaffective couples	Bond Magazine	2021	Investigate the emotional experience of same-sex couples in relation to the prejudice experienced in the exercise of parenthood.	Qualitative study.
Romanticized motherhood: expectations of the post-conception female social role	Current Nursing Journal In Dermis	2022	Understanding how the social construction in which women are inserted can have implications for motherhood.	This is a qualitative, descriptive study.

Source: Prepared by the authors (2023).

Among the five articles chosen, all were carried out in different territories during the period from 2018 to 2023. The selected studies address parenting as the main theme, especially cultural aspects, family configurations in parenting, and parenting educational practices.

DISCUSSION

Children educated with a high level of demand have good performance and competence, obedience and lower rates of behavioral problems. However, high levels of demand can also trigger excessive worry, low self-esteem, and psychological disorders in individuals. While responsiveness is related to more self-confident individuals, with good self-esteem and psychological well-being (Teixeira *et al.*, 2004).

According to Carrasco, Martínez and González (2019), there are conceptions that focus this discipline on a more imposing treatment. Regarding physical punishment, there is evidence available about its negative consequences for the child's development as well as psychological punishment.



Many individual practices and actions of punishment permeate the culture and individual and social values.

According to Hawk and Holden (2006), the education of children is linked to relative factors that effectively practice metaparenting, since it contributes to the development of postures that are necessary for the prevention of maltreatment. The behaviors are grouped in order to define "types" or parenting styles, and two main educational practices have been described as demanding and responsiveness. While demand is a dimension characterized by controlling attitudes and the establishment of rules and limits. Responsiveness is linked to affective behaviors, parents' incentives for their children's autonomy, and the prevalence of dialogue in parent-child relationships. These two dimensions, when combined, characterize four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, indulgent, and negligent (Teixeira *et al.*, 2006).

A combination of parenting with authority, love and limits defined as influencing better self-control, self-sufficiency, initiative and cognitive development, the association of verbal strategy, punishment and non-abusive physical strategies reduces the child's uncooperative and aggressive behavior, and the use of excessively punitive or excessively permissive discipline would lead to a deterioration of the child's health and problems in their behavior (Carrasco; Martínez; González, 2019).

The conceptualization of family, in contemporary times, is comprehensive and constitutes a challenge, especially in the field of scientific research, when it is necessary to include, reflect contexts and influences. In addition, it is necessary to understand the different bonding behaviors, the multidimensional roles and the different constituent elements of the family (Fonseca, 2005; Ponciano, Féres-Carneiro, 2003; Dessen, Ramos, 2010).

For Cacciacarro and Macedo (2018), the traditional family model composed of father, mother, and children has been changing over time due to the changes driven by globalization processes, which have given rise to new parental arrangements in which families are considered the most varied arrangements: single-parent, male and female homoaffective, independent production, resulting from fertilization.

Studies show the existence of new family configurations, formed by single, divorced, lesbian or trans mothers. These women face resistance to the socially prevalent heteronormative model, in addition to all the other difficulties related to motherhood. Thus, the decision to carry out the project of having children confronts a context in which cultural and symbolic values associated with the ideal of forming a true family are at stake (Dias *et al.*, 2022).

Thus, when referring to the transmission of values, it is necessary to consider that the standards can also change and, consequently, the values can be revised, and must be renegotiated by



the couple, as well as the acquisition and experimentation of new roles that imply the exercise of new responsibilities and tasks (Cacciaccaro; Macedo, 2018).

Thus, it can be seen that the results obtained show that the cultural analysis of parents plays a fundamental role in the development of metaparenting, highlighting the importance of considering the specific norms, values and practices of each culture in the context of parenting. In addition, parental beliefs have been identified as influential in children's behavior, shaping family interactions and children's emotional and cognitive development. These findings corroborate previous studies and underscore the need for culture-sensitive parenting interventions and support programs aimed at promoting positive parenting practices and children's well-being. Therefore, in order to advance in this area, it is suggested that there be the development of research that involves the association between cultural analysis, metaparenting and aspects related to the monitoring of child and adolescent growth, in order to understand the mechanisms underlying these complex interactions.

The present integrative literature review limits its scope to the analysis of scientific productions that address the cultural analysis of parents and their influence on the exercise of metaparenting, as well as the investigation of parental beliefs and their relevance in child behavior. Importantly, this research focuses specifically on the relationship between parenting culture, the practice of metaparenting, and parenting beliefs. Such a delimitation allows for a more in-depth and specific analysis of these particular aspects, contributing to a clearer and more precise understanding of the role of parents in the formation and development of children.

Some limiting aspects emerge in the conduct of this integrative review, such as the heterogeneity of the studies reviewed, in terms of methodology, samples, and measures used, which may hinder the synthesis of the results and the generalization of the conclusions. In addition, individual limitations of the primary studies, such as selection bias or lack of control for confounding variables, may have affected the validity of the findings. Given the complexity of the topic, fully understanding all the nuances and interactions of the processes related to parental cultural analysis and its influences on child metaparenting and behavior may have been challenging. Finally, subjectivity in the interpretation of the results should be considered. Acknowledging these limitations is critical for a more accurate assessment and identification of areas for future research.

CONCLUSION

Through this study, it became noticeable that parenting practices have gained new perspectives over the years and these changes have had portions of social changes in recent decades. It is evident that new family arrangements have been spreading in society, and it is also clear that new ways of thinking and educating children have emerged.



The problems encountered refer to the breaking of paradigms that are currently necessary. In view of the challenges involved in the conception of contemporary parenting. In Brazil and South America, the situation is no different, parenting has been presenting new structures and consequently new challenges such as the need for inclusion and equal treatment between genders in society.

The evolution in the importance of the subject not only for parenting as an intrinsic factor, but above all for the socio-cultural development of the country and South America by going through the various paths that cultural values tread in the construction of society. To promote values in modern society, it is undeniable the need to encourage public policies and popular participation, providing greater awareness and greater perception to the population and managers, regarding the reality of parenting, and even cultural roots that dictate unequal behavior, directly influencing the values of an unjust society.

In general, the essence is to present the current situation of parenting in Brazil and South America about the cultural challenges imposed by parenting, and it is hoped to contribute in a satisfactory way to a new look at it. Thus, there is no magic formula for an inclusive and parental society, but when well directed by the challenges imposed, public policies are fundamental in this cultural construction.

It is concluded that the accomplishment of the present study fulfilled its objective. Among the difficulties, the absence of bibliographic references deserves to be highlighted, and the data acquisition stage, which demanded greater dedication, revealing the lack of studies consistent with the reality of the current world.



REFERENCES

1. Cacciacarro, M. F., & Macedo, R. M. S. (2018, agosto). A família contemporânea e seus valores: um olhar para a compreensão parental. **Psicol. rev**, **24*(2)*, 381–401. http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1677-11682018000200002&lng=pt&nrm=iso
2. Carrasco, P. C., Cuadra-Martinez, D., & Gonzalez, C. H. (2019). Teorías subjetivas sobre disciplina parental en literatura para padres. **Rev. chil. pediatr.**, **90*(1)*, 52–59. http://www.scielo.cl/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0370-41062019000100052&lng=es&nrm=iso
3. D'affonseca, S. M., & Williams, L. C. A. (2013, janeiro). Metaparentagem: uma nova possibilidade de avaliar a parentagem. **Psicologia em Estudo**, **18*(1)*, 83–92. <https://doi.org/10.1590/S1413-73722013000100009>
4. Dessen, M. A., & Ramos, P. C. C. (2010). Crianças pré-escolares e suas concepções de família. **Paidéia**, **20*(47)*, 345–357. <https://www.scielo.br/j/paideia/a/WqZF8v53gm5vS9ZTBL5ZG9J/?format=pdf&lang=pt>
5. Dias, T. A., et al. (2023, julho 12). Maternidade Romatizada: Expectativas do Papel Social Feminino Pós-Concepção. **Revista Enfermagem Atual In Derme**. https://docs.bvsalud.org/biblioref/2023/05/1428636/maternidade-romatizada-expectativas-do-papel-social-feminino-p_rBkUTIc.pdf
6. Faria, N. C., & Rodrigues, M. C. (2020). Promoção e Prevenção em Saúde Mental na Infância: implicações educacionais. **Psicologia da Educação**, **51*(2)*. <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/psie/n51/n51a09.pdf>
7. Fonseca, C. (2005). Concepções de família e práticas de intervenção: Uma contribuição antropológica. **Saúde e Sociedade**, **14*(2)*, 50–59. <https://www.scielo.br/j/sausoc/a/WGpvJkq4tm4wmZJbGcMkHGg/abstract/?lang=pt>
8. Hawk, C. K., & Holden, G. W. (2006). Meta-parenting: an initial investigation into a new parental social cognition construct. **Parenting: Science and Practice**, **6*(4)*, 321–334. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/s15327922par0604_3
9. Holden, G. W., & Hawk, C. K. (2003). Meta-Parenting in the Journey of Child-Rearing: A Cognitive Mechanism for Change. In L. Kuczynski (Ed.), **Handbook of Dynamics of Parent-Child Relations** (pp. 189–210). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452229645.n10>
10. Mills, R. S. L., & Rubin, K. H. (1993). Parental beliefs about children's social development. In S. Duck (Ed.), **Understanding Relationship Processes, Vol. 2, Learning about relationships** (pp. 98–117). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
11. Murgo, C. S., Barros, L. DE O., & Sena, B. C. S. (2018, outubro). Associações entre Estilos Parentais, Interesses e Indecisão Profissional em Estudantes do Ensino Médio. **Psico-USF**, **23*(4)*, 693–703. <https://www.scielo.br/j/psuf/a/m577H574fSHBJxgPdVknbSD/?lang=pt>
12. Papalia, D. E., Olds, S. W., & Feldman, R. D. (2009). **Desenvolvimento humano** (10a ed.). São Paulo: McGraw-Hill.



13. Ponciano, E. L. T., & Féres-Carneiro, T. (2003). Modelos de família e intervenção terapêutica. **Interações**, **8*(16)*, 57–80. http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1413-29072003000200004
14. Ribeiro, L. J., & Granato, T. M. M. (2021, agosto). Preconceito e parentalidade? Experiências de casais homoafetivos. **Vínculo**, **18*(2)*, 1–11. http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1806-24902021000200014&lng=pt&nrm=iso
15. Sousa, L. M. M., et al. (2017, novembro). A Metodologia de Revisão Integrativa da Literatura em Enfermagem. **Revista Investigação em Enfermagem**, **21*(2)*, 17–26. RIE21.pdf (sinais vitais.pt)
16. Teixeira, M. A. P., Oliveira, A. M., & Wottrich, S. H. (2006). Escalas de Práticas Parentais (EPP): avaliando dimensões de práticas parentais em relação a adolescentes. **Psicologia: Reflexão e Crítica**, **19*(3)*, 433–441. <https://www.scielo.br/j/prc/a/MpdysFrCD4Yb5MwvRBCPwPf/?lang=pt>
17. Teixeira, M. A. P., Bardagi, M. P., & Gomes, W. B. (2004). Refinamento de um instrumento para avaliar responsividade e exigência parental percebidas na adolescência. **Avaliação Psicológica**, **3*(1)*, 1–12. <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/avp/v3n1/v3n1a01.pdf>