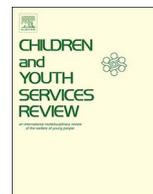




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Parental involvement among Jewish and Arab parents: Patterns and contextual predictors

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the motivational factors of Jewish and Arab parental involvement (PI) in a multicultural city in Israel. Participants were 473 individuals comprised of 54.6% Jewish and 45.5% Arab parents of primary school children. Findings indicate that Jewish and Arab parents most often become involved at home as a result of their children's invitation. Arab parents show higher involvement in school and the community than Jewish parents. We will elaborate on the cultural differences that affect the motivational factors of Jewish and Arab parents to become involved in their children's education.

1. Introduction

Parental involvement (PI) is perceived as the sum of activities parents perform with their children in the context of learning; for example, attending school ceremonies, assisting their children with homework assignments, participating in parents' boards and other education-enhancing activities. Epstein (2001) distinguished between PI activities at home and in school. Her comprehensive model encompasses typologies such as *parenting, learning at home, communication, participation in decision making, and volunteering and participation in the community*. Each of these foundations deepens the partnerships among school, family, and community.

The contributions of PI to students, parents, teachers, and the community are highlighted in the literature. Hill and Taylor (2004) found that PI affects students' achievements, reduces violent behavior at school, and improves the school's reputation among the educational staff and the entire community. Recently, some authors (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Whitaker, & Ice, 2010; Walker, Wilkins, Dallaire, Sandler, & Hoover-Dempsey, 2005) have investigated the influences on parental involvement in terms of psychological variables, such as parents' perceived competence, their perceptions of parenting, and the extent to which invitations from the school, teachers, and students motivate their involvement in their child's learning (Kerr, Stattin, & Ozdemir, 2012).

The following study examines the motivational factors of parents of primary school children who represent the diverse national, cultural,

and socio-economic levels of Jewish and Arab parents in a multicultural city in Israel. In this study, motivational factors for PI include family demographic factors (i.e., parental education, family size, child's gender, SES, culture); parental motivational factors (e.g., parental self-efficacy); invitation from others (the school, teacher, and child); and community involvement factors (for example, activist groups, steering committees, arranging community events).

Studies on parental involvement (PI) in education at home, in school, and in the community have underscored the gains to their children's social, emotional, and academic learning. However, in comparison to the wealth of research regarding the impact of parental involvement on children's academic or social outcomes, much less is known about what motivates parents to become involved in their children's education at home and in school, while even less is known about parental involvement in the community (Niia, Almqvist, Brunberg, & Granlund, 2015). Furthermore, we are interested in examining parental involvement in education from a wide range of perspectives, adding to parental involvement at home and in school, parents' motivation to get involved in the community. One of our objectives is to correlate parents' involvement in the community and examine whether this link inspires parents towards greater involvement in school. This correlation between parental involvement in the community and in school was not examined in previous studies (Goodall & Montgomery, 2014; Sonnenschein, Stapleton, & Metzger, 2014). Therefore, we believe that this correlation - together with a comparative examination of Jewish and Arab parental involvement and the

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diverse economic, cultural, and educational levels of both populations - may add new perspectives to the existing research on parental involvement at home, in school, and in the community in Israel and other educational systems. In this study, we addressed several research questions. The first question focused on what motivates parents to become involved in their children's education at home, in school, and in the community. The second question asked whether parental background characteristics such as culture, gender, education, and occupation effect parental motivation decisions to become involved in their children's education at home, in school, and in the community. Finally, we asked if Jewish and Arab parents are similarly motivated to become involved in their children's education.

Researchers interested in the sources of influence relating to parental involvement first examined *family characteristics*. For example, it appears that parents who are more educated also tend to be more involved in their children's schooling than single parents and parents with low education levels (Deslandes, Potvin, & Leclerc, 2000; Dornbusch & Ritter, 1992; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994). Parents with few children participate more in home monitoring, but the family's size does not seem to affect participation in school (Dauber & Epstein, 1993). Mothers who work outside the home are less inclined to be involved in their children's school; however, this does not indicate diminished participation in the home (Dauber & Epstein, 1993; Eccles & Harold, 1996).

Others have examined the characteristics of children and adolescents as sources of influence at the level of parental involvement. Parents display different involvement levels in their sons and daughters' school life. Parents are generally more nurturing and restrictive towards daughters, but may discipline their sons to a greater extent (Deslandes, 2001, 2012; Eccles & Harold, 1996). In addition, parents' involvement in education varies according to their economic status, education, culture, and ethnicity (Wong & Hughes, 2006).

2. The theoretical framework of this study

The theoretical framework of this study is based on two constructs. The first psychological construct of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997), and of Hoover-Dempsey, Wilkins, Sandler, and O'Connor (2004), is grounded in the following combined social learning theories: Bandura (1997) social cognitive theory; Rogoffs (1990) sociocultural theory; and Vygotsky (1978), who suggested that parental beliefs and social contexts could influence parental motivational decisions to become involved in their children's learning at home and in school (Whitaker, 2011). Accordingly, this study will deal with the following inter-personal variables: role construction; self-efficacy; and invitations from the teachers, the school, and the child to become involved in education, as presented in the studies of Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997) and Walker et al. (2005).

2.1. Role construction

An important internal factor, influenced by parents' beliefs about their child's development, and their ideas about their roles in their children's education (Deslandes & Bertrand, 2005; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

2.2. Self-efficacy

One's abilities to produce sincere outcomes (Bandura, 1997); relates to parents' high expectations of themselves to be of help in their children's learning process. Parents with higher efficacy levels are more involved in their child's education (Grolnick, Benjet, Kurowski, & Apostoleris, 1997; Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, & Brissie, 1992; Shumow & Lomax, 2002). Role-construction and self-efficacy are important in influencing parental motivation to become involved among various socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicities, and students' academic

achievement levels (Barile et al., 2012).

2.3. Invitations to the parents to become involved

Invitations from the children themselves, the teachers, and the school all serve to encourage actual PI. *An invitation from the child himself* - The child's invitation derives from the child's own desires for parental assistance with academic work, and for parents' presence and/or participation at school functions (Balli, Demo, & Wedman, 1998; Epstein & van Voorhis, 2001). *Invitations from teachers* - Teachers' invitations to parents encourage PI; the teachers request the parents' engagement in the child's learning and their constructive responsibility in various school activities (school events, projects, and festivities), help with homework, and invitations to participate in workshops for parents.

3. Key trends in the school-parent relationship in Israel

Since 1948, with the establishment of the State of Israel, Jewish and Arab schools have functioned as two separate educational systems under the administration of The Ministry of Education (MOE) in Jerusalem. Jewish schools educate the majority of Jewish children - 80% of the total K-12 children's population; the main language of instruction in these schools is Hebrew. The Arab population in Israel - Muslims, Druze and Christians (20%) - study in separate Arab schools and their language of instruction is Arabic.

PI in Jewish schools. The school-parent relationship has gone through a number of distinguishable phases. During the first phase, since 1948 and until the 1970s, the dominant approach to teacher-parent relationships was one of separation (Lavenda, 2011). During this phase, the school was perceived as the main socialization agent, instilling the Hebrew language and Israeli-Jewish culture among new immigrants (Pasternak, 2003).

The government's educational policy was one of equality, providing unified education for all. The majority of the parents were new immigrants who had either survived the Holocaust or Jewish refugees from the Arab countries. The state policy was based on the "melting pot" concept, and completely ignored the students and their families' cultural background (Raichel, 2008). The common conception among teachers was that students' parents (particularly immigrants from Arab countries) could not support their children's studies, due to cultural and spiritual poverty and a low level of education. Many new-immigrant parents felt the patronizing attitudes of the native Israeli teachers. In response, they distanced themselves from the school, oftentimes developing hostility towards both it and government institutions, in general (Friedman, 2011).

Since the 1970s and 80s, the relationships between educational institutions and families have expanded and intensified, as well as the relationships between schools and communities (Noy, 1995). In the 1980s, due to educational reforms and a pluralistic policy adopted by the MOE, schools were given managerial autonomy. This neoliberal ideology focused on the students' achievements, rather than their socioeconomic background. These processes took away teachers' power, and the school became a service-provider for its "customers" - the parents. However, the declining status of teachers further discouraged parent-teacher collaboration (Resnick, 2009).

At the beginning of the 21st century, parents with high socioeconomic status began to gain leverage over the educational system (Swirski & Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009). In some ways, the policy that allows active participation and free choice for parents has been beneficial. For example, parents fought to integrate students with special needs into the public education system. Parents' status was enhanced, and they demanded better education for their children. Specially designed schools, such as democratic, entrepreneurship, technological and arts schools were established, due to parents' growing involvement in education. PI created a higher awareness in the educational system, the

schools, as well as both teachers and the parents, about the importance of including parents in the education process (Pasternak, 2003).

Nowadays, parental–school relationships are still characterized by a mutual feeling of distrust (Addi-Racah & Aviv-Elyashiv, 2008). Eden (2001) maintains that parents have indeed become active clients who inspect and scrutinize school achievements and activities. So much so, that in recent years teachers have argued that excessive parental involvement is one reason for the declining level of teaching, since it undermines their work.

The Arabs in Israel mainly reside in small villages in the center of the country and the north and were, for the most part, uneducated and poor (Al-Haj, 2005). According to Pasternak (2003) and Raichel (2008), the organization of the Arab schools was authoritative in nature. All decisions were made by the principals, while parents were distanced from the schools (Arar, Abramovitz, Daod, Awad, & Khalil, 2016).

Over the last two decades, however, cultural and economic changes in Israeli-Arab society, influenced by Western culture, have caused growing numbers of Arab women to attend institutes of higher education (teacher training colleges and universities) and join the job market (Smooha, 2005). Arab parents now try to assume a more active role in their children's education at home and in school. These changes have increased families' demands for quality education for their children, as education is increasingly perceived as an opportunity towards upward mobility and their children's improved economic and social status. As such, parents are more motivated to become involved in their children's education (Al-Haj, 2005).

The MOE's neoliberal reforms have likewise increased the participation of affluent and educated parents in both the Jewish and Arab educational systems (Swirski & Dagan-Buzaglo, 2009). Nonetheless, many Jewish and Arab teachers still perceive their role as superior to that of parents, concerning the children's education, particularly among low SES parents (Lott, 2003).

4. Parents' involvement in the community and schools

The second construct relates to parents' involvement in the community and in school (Boehm, 2008). This includes: parents' perceptions and beliefs about their involvement in the community, barriers and obstacles that hinder their involvement in the community, and various activities that encourage their involvement in the community.

As mentioned above, this study aims to present a wide array of community participation among parents (Maynard, Gilson, & Mathieu, 2012). We can distinguish three forms of citizens' participation at the local level. The first form relates to the direct contact of the individual citizen with the authorities and community organizations (Thomas & Melkers, 1999). Another issue that relates to community activities is the source of its initiative to ordinary citizens (grassroots movements). This type of involvement is achieved through community organizations such as neighborhood committees and non-profit organizations (Portney & Berry, 1997). Either way, there is agreement that the independent, collective participation of citizens within the framework of community organizations is a very effective means of promoting local democracy (Seligson, 1999; Putnam, 1993).

The third form of collective participation is Mobilization Participation, which refers to the joint activities of citizens in which the activity itself is initiated by the authorities and organizations (Plein et al., 1998). Mabileau et al. (1989) observe a similar system - that of Descending Mobilization - characterized by the initiative and control of the joint organization. Another form is characterized by increased participation - Ascending Mobilization - where citizens are organized within the framework of community organizations opposite local government. This form is generally characterized by greater participation and civil control, while the decreased participation of residents is characterized by the increased control of organizations over citizens who wield no real power or influence.

5. Outcomes: parents' home-based and school-based involvement practices

Researchers have often divided parents' involvement in education into two subtypes: *home-based* and *school-based* (Christenson & Sheridan, 2001). *Home-based involvement* is generally defined in the literature as interactions that take place between the child and parent outside of school (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997). These behaviors usually refer to parents' helping their children with homework, reviewing for tests, monitoring the child's progress, and talking about what happened at school. *School-based involvement* activities generally include activities such as attending a parent-teacher conference, observing the child in class, watching the child's performance during school activities, and volunteering to assist in the child's classroom learning and social activities at school (Fishman & Nickerson, 2015; Grolnick, 2015; Seginer, 2006).

6. A brief overview of the Arab population in Israel

The Arab population numbers about 1.81 million people, 20.8% of the total population. They are divided based on class and religion: Muslims (84%), Christians (8%), and Druze (8%) (The Israeli Central Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Israeli Arabs have their own traditions and practices; they identify both with the modern culture of the Western world, as well as their own national identity (Smooha, 2005; Zidan et al., 2012). About half of the Arab population lives in small towns and villages of < 20,000 citizens. Approximately 100,000 Arabs live in six mixed cities, defined as "cities with a significant Arab population living alongside a Jewish population" (Haj-Yahia, 2000).

Education in Israel is compulsory for all children grades K-12 under the supervision of the Ministry of Education. Jewish and Arab school systems are completely separate entities. Jewish schools educate the Jewish children - 80% of the total K-12 children population; the main language of instruction in these schools is Hebrew. The Arab population - Muslim, Druze, Christian and Bedouin (20%) - study in a separate Arab K-12 school system and their language of instruction is Arabic. Each educational system implements its own curriculum, under the supervision of the Ministry of Education (MOE), observing its own individual cultural and religious traditions, and celebrating its own religious and national holidays (Agbaria, Mustafa, & Jabareen, 2015; Haj-Yahia, 2011).

7. Method

7.1. The schools

Participants were Jewish and Arab parents of children attending two Jewish and two Arab primary schools, which varied in their ethnic and socio-economic representations, as well as in the number of students, in a northern multicultural city in Israel. Analyzing the research sample showed differences between Jewish and Arab schools, in addition to in-group differences, such as internal differences in Jewish schools on the one hand, and in Arab schools on the other. For example, School A is a Jewish school situated in an affluent, secular Jewish neighborhood. The parents enjoy a broad, high-level SES. The school's population numbers 470 pupils. In contrast, School B is also a Jewish school, but it is located in a working-class, low SES Jewish neighborhood. The majority of the school's parents hold low-paying and temporary jobs. Some of the parents are Israeli-born, while others are immigrants from the Former Soviet Union (FSU) and from Ethiopia. Many of the immigrant parents are not fluent in the Hebrew language and have had a difficult time adjusting to life in Israel. The school numbers 190 pupils.

Regarding Arab schools, School C is located in a predominantly Arab neighborhood. The parents' socio-economic status is the low-to-middle income brackets. The school numbers 215 pupils. School D, also

an Arab school, is located in a mixed Jewish-Arab neighborhood. This is an economically disadvantaged part of the city, with very high unemployment levels and many social problems. A great majority of the parents are unemployed and in many households the fathers are in prison on criminal charges. The school numbers 359 pupils. Classes are held every day into the afternoon hours in order to provide a positive framework for the children; the children also receive a hot lunch.

7.2. Procedure

Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the Chief Scientist at the Ministry of Education in Jerusalem, the Research Authority of the University of Haifa, and the Haifa District Ministry of Education's regional head.

In the three schools - A, B, and C - the school principals attached a letter to the parents along with each questionnaire, explaining the purpose of the research and urging parents to voice their opinions in the questionnaire. The questionnaires were then distributed by the home-room teachers, and parents were asked to return them within one week. At the Arab School D, where the majority of parents are illiterate, social workers from the Haifa Municipality Welfare Department personally administered the questionnaires. The social workers set up personal appointments at the homes of parents who agreed to participate in the study, and then read and explained the questions to each of them. It is important to stress that the social workers who met with Arab parents from School D were not their case managers. We chose to collect data this way because it was the only way to reach out to these parents. A total of 120 questionnaires - 33% of the school's student population - were returned in School D. In the other schools, the return rate of the questionnaires was 39%. Parental participation was anonymous and voluntary; neither participants nor the schools were rewarded monetarily.

7.3. Measures

All study measures were adopted from the published scales of Walker et al. (2005) and Boehm (2008), and the parents' personal details were added. The questionnaire was translated from English to Hebrew and Arabic, and then translated back into English, to ensure its validity. The questionnaires were first administered as an experimental model to 8 parents in each school. Expert judges from the Education and Social Studies faculties at the University of Haifa then analyzed the parents' answers, checking for clarity and validity. After minor adjustments, the Hebrew and Arabic questionnaires were administered to the Jewish parents and the Arab parents.

Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with the following statements related to parental motivational factors for involvement on a 6-point Likert scale from 1 to 6 (1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree), with higher scores indicating more frequent occurrences or more agreement with attitudes about the construct. The first construct included five scales based on Walker et al.'s (2005) questionnaire:

- (a) *Parental role construction* ($\alpha = 0.88$). This scale included 8 items, such as: "I believe it is my responsibility to explain tough assignments to my child". *Parental self-efficacy for helping the child succeed in school* ($\alpha = 0.83$): This scale included 6 items, for example: "I know how to help my child do well in school".
- (b) *Parents' perceptions of general invitations from the school to become more involved* ($\alpha = 0.86$). This scale included 6 statements, such as: "Teachers at this school are interested and cooperative when they discuss my child".
- (c) *Parents' perceptions of specific invitations from the child to become more involved* ($\alpha = 0.78$). This scale included six statements, such as "My child asks me to help and explain things regarding his homework".
- (d) *Parents' perceptions of specific invitations from the teacher to become*

more involved ($\alpha = 0.86$). This scale included six items, such as: "My child's teacher asks or expects me to help my child with homework".

The second construct, *Involvement in the Community* is based on Boehm's (2008) questionnaire and included the following three scales:

- (a) *Parents' involvement in different stages of planning* ($\alpha = 0.97$): A criterion comprised of seven items, each describing a different stage of the planning process, this scale was constructed on the basis of the social planning literature (Boehm, 2002, 2008; Laverack & Labonte, 2000). The respondents were asked, "To what degree, in your opinion, should parents participate in each of the following stages of social planning processes?" Examples of the items are "definition of needs/problems in developing programs"; "identification of alternative modes of action for programs"; and "evaluation of the activity of programs in the community".
- (b) *The schools' commitment to the community* ($\alpha = 0.90$): Based on a criterion that examines community organizations' social responsibility to the community (Quazi, 1997), a measure was adapted to examine the social responsibility of educational institutions towards the community (Boehm, 2008). The measure included four statements, such as "It is a moral duty of the school to participate in community activities".
- (c) *Barriers to parents' involvement in the community* ($\alpha = 0.89$): This scale was developed on the basis of the barriers to volunteer activity presented by Boehm (2008), following the John Hopkins' Comparative Nonprofit Project. In addition, in accordance with the reviewed literature, the criterion was adapted to examine the cost to school team members, in terms of the sacrifices they make by being involved in the community. The scale comprises five factors that hinder involvement. The respondents were asked "to what degree do each of the following factors limit activity in the community?" Examples are: "school activity requires detachment from community activity" and "the time required for activity as a school team member does not enable activity in the community".

In addition, the questionnaire also included items related to the respondents' economic and social situation. These items referred to the parents' nationality, age, gender, level of education, employment, family type (traditional two-parent or single-parent), immigrant or born in Israel, religious practice, and number of children in the family. (The nationality variable was entered in the regression analysis as a single block. Likewise, the remaining SES variables were entered as a separate block).

7.4. Outcome variables: parental involvement practices

These scales, based on Walker et al. (2005), assessed the types of activities that parents are involved in with their children - at home and in school. A six-point response scale, ranging from 1 (never), to 6 (on a daily basis) was used to assess these types of involvement. Each of these scales included 2 items:

- (a) *Parental involvement at home* ($\alpha = 0.88$). For example: "Someone from our family speaks with the child about his day at school".
- (b) *Parental involvement in school* ($\alpha = 0.86$). For example: "Someone in our family attends special events at school".

8. Results

The respondents included 473 parents: 54% were Jewish and 46% were Arab. Approximately 77% of the respondents were mothers. The average age of the respondents was forty years of age. Nearly 81% were born in Israel; 11% were immigrants from the former USSR; 2% were from Ethiopia; and 6% were immigrants who have lived in Israel for the

Table 1
Parent involvement among Jewish and Arab parents: patterns and contextual predictors.

Variables	N	Range	Mean	S.D.	Reliability	t
Parental involvement at home	Jews	252	1.00–6.00	4.25	1.25	0.86
	Arabs	210	1.00–6.00	4.33	1.54	0.91
	Total	463	1.00–6.00	4.29	1.39	0.88
Parental involvement in school	Jews	252	1.00–6.00	2.23	0.93	0.78
	Arabs	209	1.00–6.00	2.89	1.58	0.88
	Total	461	1.00–6.00	2.53	1.30	0.86
Parents' role construction	Jews	257	3.62–6.00	5.20	0.51	0.71
	Arabs	214	1.00–6.00	4.61	1.17	0.92
	Total	471	1.00–6.00	4.93	0.92	0.89
Parental self-efficacy	Jews	255	1.00–6.00	4.92	0.69	0.88
	Arabs	214	1.00–6.00	4.72	1.15	0.94
	Total	469	1.00–6.00	4.83	0.93	0.92
The schools' invitation to the parents	Jews	255	2.40–6.00	4.88	0.70	0.79
	Arabs	213	1.00–6.00	4.82	1.05	0.90
	Total	468	1.00–6.00	4.85	0.88	0.86
The child's invitation to the parents	Jews	252	1.00–6.00	2.75	0.99	0.66
	Arabs	209	1.00–6.00	3.15	1.53	0.80
	Total	461	1.00–6.00	2.93	1.29	0.75
The teachers' invitation to the parents	Jews	252	1.00–6.00	1.74	1.13	0.84
	Arabs	409	1.00–6.00	2.61	1.64	0.83
	Total	461	1.00–6.00	2.14	1.45	0.87
Parents' involvement in different stages of planning	Jews	247	1.00–6.00	1.91	1.32	0.98
	Arabs	212	1.00–6.00	2.13	1.38	0.97
	Total	459	1.00–6.00	2.01	1.35	0.97
The schools' commitment to the community	Jews	247	1.00–6.00	4.72	0.98	0.89
	Arabs	209	1.00–6.00	4.96	1.26	0.90
	Total	456	1.00–6.00	4.83	1.12	0.90
Parents' barriers to community involvement	Jews	246	1.00–6.00	3.21	1.26	0.72
	Arabs	209	1.00–6.00	2.59	2.59	0.83
	Total	455	1.00–6.00	2.92	2.92	0.78

last 20 years. Nearly 21% had a primary school education; about 32% completed high school; while 40% had a secondary-level trade certificate or a university degree. Only 5% of the Jewish parents and 45% of the Arab parents reported having only a primary school education. Almost 36% of the Jewish parents and 6% of the Arab parents had a B.A. degree from a university or college. Among the participants, 21% of the Jewish parents and 1% of the Arab parents had an M.A. degree from a university or college, while 5% of the Jewish parents had a Ph.D. degree. Overall, Jewish parents were more educated than Arab parents.

Nearly half of the respondents were employed and had a full-time position: 70% of the Jewish parents and 32% of the Arab parents were employed. About 79% of the Arab parents and 25% of the Jewish parents said they were religious. The average number of children per family was three; Arab families were larger ($M = 3.69$) than Jewish families ($M = 2.71$; $t_{(0.95,466)} = 7.81, p < 0.01$).

The means and standard deviations for parental involvement at home and in school are presented in Table 1.

All in all, both Jewish and Arab parents are more involved at home than in school. The highest scores in parental motivational factors were given to parental role construction, self-efficacy, the school's invitation to become more involved, the school's commitment to the community, and the child's invitation to the parents to become more involved. The lowest scores were given to barriers to parental involvement in the community, teachers' invitation to the parents to become more involved, and parents' involvement in different processes related to community matters.

Separate regression analyses for Jewish and Arab parents were conducted to analyze parental involvement at home, in school, and in the community, introducing first individual and family characteristics as control variables, followed by the other variables (Stepwise).

The literature indicated a different pattern of school and community

Table 2
Hierarchical regression coefficients predicting Jewish parental involvement at home.

Model block	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Participants' gender	-0.074	-0.076	-0.136*	-0.131*
Participants' education level	0.009	0.049	0.036	0.024
Participants' employment	-0.048	-0.050	-0.078	-0.069
Family structure	-0.072	-0.025	-0.026	-0.019
Number of children	-0.114	-0.088	-0.101	-0.096
Born in Israel	0.143*	0.102	0.062	0.095
Religiosity	-0.032	-0.032	-0.006	-0.019
Parental role construction		0.263**	0.111	-0.154
Parental self-efficacy		0.044	0.081	0.100
The school's invitation to parents			0.016	0.018
The child's invitation			0.413***	0.416***
The teachers' invitation			-0.057	-0.060
The community involvement process				0.001
Difficulties related to community involvement				0.023
The schools' involvement in the community				-0.136
R ²	0.044	0.121	0.247	0.261
F	1.43	3.26**	5.75***	4.88***

N = 258.

* $p < 0.06$.

** $p < 0.05$.

*** $p < 0.01$.

**** $p < 0.001$.

involvement between Arab and Jewish parents. In this study, we merged two main theories: One is Epstein's theory and the other is Hoover-Dempsey's theory. The merging of these two theories allows us to examine motivational factors of parental involvement in schools.

8.1.1. Hierarchical regression of Jewish parental participation at home

Table 2 shows that Jewish mothers' participation with their children at home ($Beta = -0.131$; $p < 0.05$) and the dominant variable for parental motivation is the child's invitation to the parents, their request for help ($Beta = 0.416$; $p < 0.001$). These variables explain 26% of the variance [$R^2 = 0.26$; $F_{(14,244)} = 4.88$; $p < 0.05$].

8.1.2. Hierarchical regression of Jewish parental participation in school

The results of this table indicate that Jewish single-parent families ($Beta = -0.125$; $p < 0.05$) are motivated to participate in school.

The dominating variable is the teacher's invitation ($Beta = 0.292$; $p < 0.01$), followed by parental self-efficacy ($Beta = 0.246$; $p < 0.01$), the child's invitation to his parents ($Beta = 0.207$; $p < 0.01$), and parental involvement in the community ($Beta = 0.159$; $p < 0.05$). These variables explain 31.6% of the variance [$R^2 = 0.31$; $F_{(14,244)} = 6.34$; $p < 0.001$] (Table 3).

8.1.3. Hierarchical regression of Arab parental participation in the home

According to this table, Arab mothers with higher education ($Beta = -0.160$; $p < 0.05$) are more motivated to participate in their child's education at home.

The dominant variable is the child's invitation/request for his parents' help ($Beta = 0.332$; $p < 0.001$). This explains 45% of the variance [$R^2 = 0.45$; $F_{(14, 211)} = 6.86$; $p < 0.001$] (Table 4).

8.1.4. Hierarchical regression of Arab parental participation in school

The dominant variable in parental motivation to become involved in the school is their perceptions about involvement in the community ($Beta = 0.354$; $p < 0.001$), followed by the teacher's invitation ($Beta = 0.231$; $p < 0.01$), and the child's invitation ($Beta = 0.218$; $p < 0.05$). This explains 36% of the variance. [$R^2 = 0.36$; $F_{(14,211)} = 5.99$; $p < 0.001$] (Table 5).

Table 3
Hierarchical regression coefficients for predicting Jewish parental involvement at school.

Model block	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Participants' gender	-0.086	-0.087	-0.127*	-0.112
Participants' education level	-0.070	-0.048	-0.062	-0.080
Participants' employment	0.038	0.038	-0.011	-0.022
Family structure	-0.147*	-0.115	-0.122*	-0.125*
Number of children	-0.022	-0.004	-0.012	-0.012
Born in Israel	0.035	-0.002	-0.009	0.022
Religiosity	-0.091	-0.090	-0.080	-0.071
Parental role construction		0.0183*	0.035	0.045
Parental self-efficacy		0.086	0.248**	0.246**
The school's invitation to the parents			-0.071*	-0.179*
The child's invitation			0.218**	0.207**
The teachers' invitation			0.344***	0.292***
The community involvement process				0.159*
Difficulties related to community involvement				0.070
The schools' involvement in the community				-0.040
R ²	0.045	0.098	0.293	0.316
F	1.44	2.56*	7.20***	6.34***

N = 258.
* *p* < 0.05.
** *p* < 0.01.
*** *p* < 0.001.

Table 4
Hierarchical regression coefficients for predicting Arab parental involvement at home (Boehm, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Model block	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Participants' gender	0.163*	0.047	0.028	0.028
Participants' education level	-0.185*	-0.257***	-0.160*	-0.160*
Participants' employment	0.090	0.015	0.059	0.060
Family structure	0.003	0.001	0.006	0.002
Number of children	-0.075	-0.044	-0.010	-0.014
Born in Israel	0.016	-0.012	0.010	0.016
Religiosity	-0.130	-0.088	-0.044	-0.054
Parental role construction		0.288**	0.092	0.091
Parental self-efficacy		0.220*	0.118	0.118
The school's invitation to the parents			0.144	0.123
The child's invitation			0.343***	0.332***
The teachers' invitation			0.145*	0.031
The community involvement process				0.038
Difficulties related to community involvement				0.007
The schools' involvement in the community				0.075
R ²	0.081	0.268	0.444	0.452
F	2.09*	6.68***	10.73***	6.86***

N = 215.
* *p* < 0.05.
** *p* < 0.01.
*** *p* < 0.001

9. Discussion

In general, the findings show that the level of parental involvement in school was relatively low for both Jewish and Arab parents. In addition, teachers' invitation for parental participation in school activities was also rather low. Despite this, concerning involvement at school, differences between Arab and Jewish parents were found. Parents from the Arab sector tended to be more involved in school activities. Moreover, the findings indicate that Arab parents perceive fewer barriers to community involvement (compared to Jewish parents), facilitating their transition from active involvement in the community to school activities. This finding is also supported by the literature (Lavenda, 2011), which revealed that in junior high and high schools,

Table 5
Hierarchical regression coefficients for predicting Arab parental involvement at school (Boehm, 2008; Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005).

Model block	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Participants' gender	0.057	0.025	-0.001	-0.019
Participants' education level	-0.113	-0.131	-0.031	-0.019
Participants' employment	-0.012	-0.034	0.004	0.009
Family structure	-0.021	-0.021	-0.022	-0.028
Number of children	0.060	0.069	0.107	0.057
Born in Israel	0.004	-0.003	0.008	0.036
Religiosity	0.056	0.068	0.122	0.074
Parental role construction		0.073	-0.072	0.085
Parental self-efficacy		0.062	0.021	0.007
The school's invitation to the parents			0.054	0.046
The child's invitation			0.271**	0.218*
The teachers' invitation			0.306***	0.231**
The community involvement process				0.354***
Difficulties related to community involvement				-0.096
The schools' involvement in the community				0.063
R ²	0.027	0.040	0.262	0.364
F	0.65	0.76	4.75***	5.99***

N = 215.
* *p* < 0.05.
** *p* < 0.01.
*** *p* < 0.001.

Arab parents tend to develop more positive attitudes towards community involvement, in general and, as a result, tend to be more involved in their children's schools. These positions probably lead to behaviors that reflect involvement and positive thoughts about these activities. The literature shows that Arab parents are actually more involved in the schools where their children study, but usually as a result of the teachers' inviting them to school to discuss problems experienced by their children (Seginer, 2006). As a result, Arab parents feel that the school and its teachers judge them and perceive them as parents who are "not good enough". Hence, these parents come to school more and become more involved (Grolnick, 2015; Seginer, 2006).

One of the most interesting findings is that self-efficacy level was ranked lower among Arab parents, in comparison to their Jewish counterparts. This finding is in line with previous literature indicating that parents from higher SES communities and mainstream culture tend to have higher self-efficacy levels (Lowe & Dotterer, 2013; Murdock, 2013). However, involvement at school was higher among Arab parents, in comparison to Jewish parents. This finding requires additional examination in order to learn more about the nature of self-efficacy among Arab parents in Israel and its correlates. Perhaps the reason for this finding is that teachers in Arab schools invite parents to school mostly to report on problems related to discipline issues or the non-preparation of homework. Thus, these invitations and subsequent meetings between parents and teachers actually serve to hinder parental motivation and involvement in Arab schools (Seginer, 2006).

Another potential factor that might encourage parental involvement in the Arab sector may be related to the fact that Arab parents perceive their children's success in the school system as a significant factor in their children's chances for future social mobility and increased socio-economic status and social class (Cohen, 2006). As a result, Arab parents invest time and effort in their children's education, in order to ensure that their children's futures will be better (Swick, 2009).

Another major finding emerging from this study is that mothers tend to be more involved than fathers in both populations (Jewish and Arab). This finding is also supported in the literature (Dumont et al., 2012). These studies indicate that mothers tend to be more involved in their children's studies, both at home and in school. However, Schaedel et al. (2015) showed that there are some differences in the involvement patterns of Jewish and Arab mothers – Arab mothers are more involved at home (than Arab fathers), and Jewish mothers are more involved

both at home and in school (than Jewish fathers).

Other findings show that children's invitation to their parents was ranked higher among Arab parents, in comparison to Jewish parents. The same pattern was found regarding the teachers' invitation to the parents. According to the literature, in schools populated with students from a higher SES level, schools and teachers' invitations tend to take the form of school events, parents' meetings, celebrations, and so on (Lavenda, 2011). In addition, parental involvement tends to occur in relation to children's misbehavior and/or failure to fulfill school requirements (Avvisati, Gurgand, Guyon, & Maurin, 2014). Either way, our findings were somewhat different from previous studies, which showed that among the Jewish population, children and teachers tend to invite parents to become more involved in school events, in comparison to the Arab population (Lavenda, 2011). However, in our study, we found a different direction, according to which Arab children and teachers were found to be more inviting than Jewish children and teachers (Gross, 2013; Sharabi, 2014). In order to minimize the barriers perceived by Arab parents, the school staff (principals and teachers) should encourage mutual involvement - not only by informing parents about children's behavioral problems, but also through the shared planning of school events, celebrations, and so on.

Two rather surprising findings showed that parental involvement in different stages of planning, as well as schools' commitment to the community, were ranked higher among Arab parents, in comparison to Jewish parents, and the differences were statistically significant. It is possible that Arab parents see their communities as more important than they are in the eyes of other minority groups or the greater society, such as the Jewish parents in Israel (Lavenda, 2011). Therefore, they rely more on internal communal resources. In addition, it is also possible that teachers invite parents to various stages of school activities - thus showing a greater commitment to their community - as a means of strengthening it. Findings also show that Jewish parents have more barriers than Arab parents regarding community involvement. Studies show that Western society is characterized by higher individualism and lower community coherence (Smootha, 2005). This may explain why Jewish parents invest their personal resources directly in their children, while Arab parents feel more committed to their community.

9.1. Research limitations

The current study has several limitations that may have affected its results. One major limitation stems from the fact that the research questionnaires are attitude questionnaires, and all questions posed to respondents are based on subjective self-reports, which may induce emotional bias or social desirability. Furthermore, there was no control group with which to compare the respondents' results. Further attention should be given to the ethical issues that may exist in this study, since some of the research participants consisted of illiterate parents who required assistance in reading the questionnaire.

9.2. Research implications

We suggest that in future studies related to parental motivational factors regarding their involvement in education in Israel and other countries, parents' perceptions should be based on both qualitative and quantitative data. We further recommend that future research will expand our examination regarding the mutual relations between teachers and parents among other groups, and also in middle and high schools in Israel, in order to analyze whether teacher-parent relations vary according to the child's development. These future studies may require employing both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

9.3. Practical implications

The Ministry of Education should allocate funds to raise awareness about the important role of parents in their children's education. In

addition, schools should be encouraged to strengthen parental involvement either in the general population, among different groups, and in low-income families. These efforts could help schools to empower parents to acquire the necessary skills needed to further advance their children's growth.

Within the school, principals should maintain an organizational climate that encourages parents' involvement at schools. This climate could increase teachers' awareness about parental involvement, and as a result - their willingness to invite parents to various school activities.

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