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THE DUALITY IN THE PERCEPTION OF OPTIMAL PARENTING AND TEACHING AMONG “PARENT-TEACHERS”

Abstract:

The study examined the duality in the perceptions of qualities that are necessary for optimal teaching and parenting. The research questions explored what qualities were perceived as necessary for optimal teachers and optimal parents, and the degree of congruence between them. In addition, it focused on the influence of parental and teaching experience on the perception of these qualities.

The research population consisted of 61 respondents, all of whom are teachers and student-teachers who are also parents. The findings of the study attest to a duality in the perceptions of optimal teaching and parenting which is reflected in the overlapping of the qualities perceived as necessary for the two roles. The variables of parenting experience and teaching experience were perceived as unrelated to the quality of "humanistic approach", "professionalism" (for teachers) and assertiveness (for parents).

The fact that the two roles were perceived as separate entities (i.e. one can be successful in one role and fail in the other) by most subjects when asked about their daily practices calls for an active incorporation of this topic into teacher education, as it attests to the confusion student-teachers and teachers experience. It is recommended that the discussion of the two aspects of duality between the two roles (overlapping and conflict) be incorporated in teacher training programs as part of the emphasis on the personal and professional growth of teachers into the teaching profession.

Keywords:

role perception, parent-teachers, ideal teachers, optimal parents, duality

JEL Classification: I23, I29

Introduction

The Hebrew nouns for 'Parenthood' and 'Teaching' are derived from the same Hebrew root (ה.ר.ה/H.R.H) which means to order and command, but also to guide and show the way. Yet, while the role of a parent does not require any training or screening processes, the role of the teacher demands extensive training and screening for the profession of education. There is no unanimous agreement among professionals on the degree of influence the home and/or the school has on a child's education.

One of the most common statements among university graduates undergoing professional retraining courses for teaching is "from the moment I became a parent I felt a desire to engage in education and to realize an old dream of mine". Such statements made me search for the link between these two roles, out of a desire to understand why fresh parenthood often arouses a latent desire for educating.

The role of parenting and the role of teaching are considered "taxing" both physically and emotionally. The teacher often deals with the emotional dimension when it comes to students with a variety of mental complexities and inaccessibility to learning, and has to function not only as a teacher but also as a kind of psychologist and to handle aspects of life that transcend the field of teaching and learning. The role of the parent has never been defined and is derived from the parent's personal perception of the role, and his/her perception of the culture he/she is part of. Parental responsibility is a physical responsibility as well as emotional and mental. The role spans the parent's entire life, whereas the teacher's role is short term and does not usually span more than three years.

This study focuses on the duality in the perception of the role experienced by teachers who are also parents. Two aspects of this duality are examined in depth: Overlapping of the two roles, and clashes between them. It is worthy of mention that this duality in those who engage in children's education has yet to be explored.

The literature review chapters discuss the qualities that emerged in the study with regard to optimal parenting and optimal teaching, namely: humanism, empathy, containment/inclusion, and leadership. Therefore, these chapters were written after the primary data analysis (Phase 1, below).

Literature Review

Optimal Teaching and Optimal Parenting

Qualities of optimal teachers. The literature review conducted by Reynolds and Teddlie (2000) focuses mainly on professional components such as time management, classroom organization, and teaching practices that are varied and optimized. Stronge (2007), and Stronge and Hindman (2003), found six categories of qualities of optimal teachers: *professionalism* (knowledge of content, pedagogical knowledge); *the teacher as a person* (respectful interaction with students, dedication, caring); *classroom management* and *discipline enforcement abilities*; *planning and organization of the teaching materials*; *teaching practices*; and *monitoring students' achievements*. A comparative research study conducted in the United States on

perceptions of students, teachers and student-teachers (Murphy et al., 2004), found an extensive correlation between the 12 qualities that were perceived by the three groups. The qualities that received the highest ranking were: *caring, patience, generating interest, courtesy, and organizational skills.*

In other comparative research conducted in China (Liu and Meng, 2009), the categories of optimal teachers found were similar to those found in the study by Stronge, and Stronge & Hindman (date): The "moral and ethical dimension" is in line with the category "the teacher as a person" in the previous study. This dimension includes patience, consideration of the learners' needs, maintaining rapport with the learners by exercising respect, caring, fairness in grading, taking responsibility for the learners' behavior, and dedication. The "professionalism" dimension and the "professional development" dimension are in line with the categories "professionalism", "classroom management", "teaching planning", "teaching performance", and "monitoring learners' achievements," from the previous study. The study found an additional category for defining optimal teachers that is unique to China, which is "learners' achievements". Another study by Ceyla (2009), found positive Pearson correlation between teachers' professional self-image and the scores they received regarding their empathetic abilities.

Review of the literature emphasizes the importance of integrating the professional and personal aspects in the context of optimal teachers.

Qualities of optimal parents. Many studies on parenting focus on problematic parenting: For example, neglect and abuse (Hooper, 2011). There are conflicting studies about the causal relationship between the type of parenting and its impact on the child (O'Connor and Scott, 2007). Dermott (2012) states that the conclusion about who is a good parent often derives from the understanding of what a successful child is, and hence, the conclusion that his parents must be good parents.

Kachargin (2013) presents in his article the qualities of the good "*competent and supportive*" parent (page 83) in the context of parents to children with learning disabilities. Many of the qualities that he found are so true to all parents, i.e., a parent who devotes time and resources to promoting the child and helps in the emotional and social aspects and not just in the learning aspect. Optimal parents are in fact partners in the educational act and are involved and willing to invest financial resources in all necessary extracurricular assistance. In the analysis, the topic of parental moral responsibility clearly came up regarding the educational, behavioral and social development of their children. The good parent is caring, has cognitive capabilities and is able to understand the child's needs, to identify with the difficulties and contain them. Compared with this "ideal" group, parents of socially-deprived children were found in the study to be dysfunctional, intellectually and emotionally limited, pessimistic and defeatist. Mothers are described as having no emotional stability, as not being mature enough for motherhood, and ambivalent in their love for their children. These parents have limited interaction with their child and are characterized by lack of physical and emotional availability.

The literature shows that unlike optimal teachers, there are no clear-cut definitions of optimal parents. Following is a review of the essence of the qualities that emerged

in the study in connection with optimal parenting and teaching. The reference here is for each quality in general, as well as in an educational context.

The Array of Qualities Emerging from this Study

Humanism. Non-academic definitions of the concept emphasize a belief in human distinctiveness, the value and dignity of human life, human superiority over the other animals, and the idea that human beings are inherently good. In the 20th century, following the horrors of the First World War and the phenomena of genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia, Cambodia, and, of course, the Holocaust of European Jewry, the concept of man was no longer naturally associated with the concept of humanism among philosophers, and was redefined to the point of contradiction of the very concept (anti-humanism) (Zagorin, 2003). Despite this, the element of human dignity and human distinctiveness remains significant in contemporary philosophy, mainly due to the fact that as human beings are the most intelligent creatures and their lives are premised on ethical codes. In addition, they have the capacity to feel and express concern, care, compassion, mercy and love for other humans.

Aloni (2004) argues that universal humanism preserves human dignity. In the spirit of the UN Declaration of Human Rights from 1948, which grants all people the right and opportunity for an honorable life of freedom, well-being and self-fulfillment, optimal educational policy should be premised on open-mindedness, autonomous thinking, respect for other human beings, tolerant and responsible democratic mindedness, acceptance of the other, and education for pluralism and tolerance. Caring teachers are attuned to their students and are mindful of their needs (Noddings, 2003).

It is reasonable to assume that in the spirit of humanism, optimal parents will respect their child, and optimal teachers will respect their students.

Empathy. The ancient origin of the concept comes from the Greek (Pathos = Emotion). Non-academic definitions refer to "*Identification with and understanding of the other's situation, feelings, and motives*", as well as "*The power of entering into the other's personality and imaginatively experiencing his feelings*" (From the Free Dictionary). The term empathy sometimes appears as a concept synonymous with that of "mercy". In psychology, empathy is a psychological process aimed at understanding the experience of the other and is connected with moral development (Hoffman, 2000). Empathetic ability begins during the first months of the infant's life. The infant's first interactions in early life include sound sequences, eye contact and expressions, which are essential to the development of the ability to use symbols, empathetic ability, emotional resonance with the other and self-regulation. All of these lay the foundation for the infant's ability for intimacy throughout life (Feldman, 2007).

The empathetic process includes affective and cognitive elements (Shamay-Zuri, Aharon-Peretz, Perry, 2008). Cognitive empathy is the ability to express understanding of others' internal states and understand their point of view and behavior without emotional involvement and without emotionally affecting the empathy-giver. In affective empathy, there is an emotional response to the experience of the other, which occurs as a result of direct emotional stimulation experienced by the other. Research shows that these are two different neuronal and clinical systems which are expressed differently: Therefore, damage to the affective

empathic system will lead to psychopathy, while damage to the cognitive empathic system will be expressed in autism (Cox et al., 2011). The basic empathetic system is associated with emotional component (I **feel** what you feel), while the cognitive empathetic system requires understanding of different perspectives and viewpoints (I **understand** that you feel) (De Waal, 2007), as well as cognitive flexibility (Decety and Jackson, 2004). Shamy-Zur, Aaron Perez and Perry (2008) found in their research that different areas in the brain are responsible for affective empathy and for cognitive empathy. Smith (2006) argues that human evolution has created two separate systems that complement each other. He offers a model whereby imbalance in the empathetic system is reflected in deficiencies associated with antisocial behavior, autism, split personality and the Williams syndrome.

In addition, both systems contribute to empathic behavior. Empathy is expressed in brain activity: fMRI testing of healthy adults revealed that cognitive empathy takes place in brain areas responsible for social-cognitive processing and self-regulation, whereas affective empathy is related to brain areas responsible for social-emotional processing (Cox et al., 2011).

In Judaism, empathy is "the outpouring of the soul" toward the other, and its essence is sharing grief and expressing sensitivity for another's pain, even if it is not possible to satisfy his/her material needs (Rosenheim, 2003). There is a distinction between empathy (temporarily walking in someone else's shoes), and identification (complete merging with the other). Rosenheim illustrates the difference with a story about one Chabad Rabbi who explained his perspiring in "one-on-one" sessions with his followers, by the fact that he had to remove his clothes and dress in his follower's Hassidic clothing and then change back to his own clothes again, and this arduous activity caused him to perspire. Amit (1997) too, emphasizes the need for parents to maintain their own self while expressing empathy for their child and not reach the state of total merging between the parent's world and the child's.

As in life so it is in education that empathy is associated with teachers' professional and moral commitment to their students (Weinberger and Bakshi 2013). In addition, empathy finds expression in the classroom climate and in the teachers' development as qualitative researchers. The authors (ibid.) employ the term "the complete empathetic act" of teachers by viewing empathy as part of a range of humanistic dimensions, which form parts of the educational act, which eventually aims to develop a "whole" person (Hansen, 2004).

Containment/Inclusion. "The Book of Containment/Inclusion" (Israeli Ministry of Education, 2012) defines the term as such: "*Containment is perceived as the ability to accept emotionally and carry within us the feelings of others, to be empathetic, and responsive to them, to gather inside ourselves contents of their experience, to identify with them, and provide them with a safe zone for expressing sensations and emotions*". Another definition states: "*Containment defines our ability to identify and experience feeling aroused in ourselves, along with feelings aroused in others, as a basis for the process of containment*".

The two definitions above indicate that empathy is a **necessary basis for containment**: One must feel and understand the experiences of others and "reach out to them", and only then and as a result, one can contain what they are going through.

What is the difference between containment on the personal level and containment in education (inclusion)? The following definition (ibid.) emphasizes the principles of inclusion in education: "...*In its practical sense it relates to integrating and advancing the learners in their regular education, expanding the inclusive capacities and providing diverse solutions while taking into account their special needs, and creating the conditions that will help them realize their abilities in various domains.*" The process of inclusion relates to the way in which the system contains diversity among learners and how this translates into addressing differential learning needs. The teacher is expected to understand, feel and show empathy for the academic and social experiences and for the difficulties the student encounters. That is, the ability to understand and sense the difficulty precedes a solution.

In the last two decades, the Israeli education system has been attempting to deal with the issue of inclusion. Research on inclusion in schools throughout the country indicates a complex reality, and a discrepancy between the stated level and the level of implementation. Despite the positive staff attitudes towards inclusion (Author, 2005), teachers report feelings of frustration, mistrust and cynicism stemming from a disproportionate number of diagnosed students (Talmor, in Avishar, Laser and Reiter, 2011). Teachers reported lack of professional and emotional support on the part of principals (Author, 2006). Also, principals do not encourage an inclusive curriculum in the schools for students with special needs (Author, 2007). Contrary to the inclusive policy declared by the Ministry of Education as an educational value, in effect cultural stratification is a prevailing cultural value, and the school system serves as a classifying agent based on accomplishment and achievement (Toval, 2005).

The social significance of inclusion has to do with the following dimensions: Relating to "different-others" as human beings beyond being anomalous; creating egalitarian laws in various aspects of life such as employment, housing, recreation and health; investing in resources for educating the public; abandoning the desire to "normalize" them while respecting their diversity (Author, 2013).

Leadership. Certain researchers regard leadership as a psycho-dynamic phenomenon (Freud, 1938). According to this approach, the leader serves as a surrogate parent (usually the father) who should satisfy parental psychological functions, especially by providing a sense of security. Therefore, the need for leadership comes from a longing for a father figure, which every human being feels from childhood onwards; and in the same way, the "rebellion" in later stages of adolescence takes place with reference to that same father figure. The modern representative of this approach is Kets de Vries (2001). Underlying the theory of psycho-dynamic are two basic premises: 1. It is difficult to change deeply rooted human character traits; 2. Human behaviors stem from their subconscious (Northouse, 2013).

In the first half of the 20th century it was believed that a set of personal traits can be isolated in order to identify potential leaders (Bolden, 2004). This belief was premised on the theory of "The Great Man" according to which leaders excel by virtue of their innate character traits. Kirkpatrick & Locke (1999) represent an approach for assessing leadership by character traits. Research in this field is controversial and some claim that character traits by themselves do not constitute an adequate basis for predicting success among leaders, and that we must examine their actions and their

surroundings (Bolden & Gosling, 2006). Research suggests that leaders differ from most people in a number of character traits, including: drive (which includes motivation, determination, initiative, energy and ambition); desire to lead (not in order to gain power); honesty and integrity; self-confidence and emotional stability; mental capacity and knowledge. There is no evidence for the existence of traits like charisma, creativity and flexibility.

Charisma in leadership was defined by qualities such as the leader being a role model, having a magnetic presence, the ability to create a sense of vocation, the ability to inspire people and convey a sense of optimism (Bass, 1985). Popper (2007) emphasizes the emotional dimension of leadership and argues that leaders considered charismatic were those who did more than anyone to evoke emotions by using images of greater emotional impact, i.e., Winston Churchill, Martin Luther King, and Franklin D. Roosevelt. These leaders were able to harness their audience to their mission and bring about change because they knew how to tap into latent feelings of pride and to empower their followers while generating a commitment based on a deeper and more complex emotional connection.

The above-mentioned theories point to four personality traits of leaders: a dominant and confident personality that influences others; a capable role model; ability to articulate ideology eloquently with an emphasis on morality; setting goals for followers and having the confidence that their followers can meet them (Northouse, 2004).

To what extent is **educational leadership** similar or different from other types of leadership? Tadmor (2009) sees a considerable difference between educational leadership and leadership in any other organization. At the core of educational leadership, in his view, are concepts such as pedagogical understanding and passion, impartation of knowledge that generates meaning, educational vision, love of people, setting a personal example, having the courage to generate change, and emphasis on spiritual, intellectual and/or emotional growth. In his article, Aloni (2004) cites Martin Buber, who stated that there are three conditions that make a teacher an educational leader: the ability to build trust with his students (including openness, empathy, and mutual respect); cultural idealism (realization of meaning and values in everyday life); personality (sets a personal example, displays an ability to remain sensitive, honest, wise, judicious, responsible, with a sense of proportion and self-control). Noddings (2006) argues that an educational leader should be knowledgeable in the goals of education, motivation theories, and practices of professional ethics. A dominant theory on the subject of contemporary educational leadership is "distributed leadership", which grants a connection between leadership, teaching and learning (Leithwood & Riehl, 2005).

The Goals of the Study

The present study focuses on the duality in the perception of the role experienced by teachers who are also parents; those who are the educating figures at home (parents), and the figure of the teacher-educator in the school system. The duality was explored with regard to the qualities of optimal parents and optimal teachers. Therefore, the research questions focus on the relationship between these two categories:

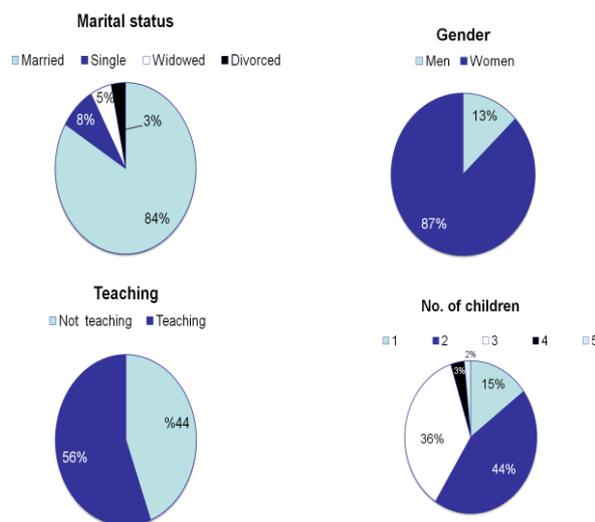
1. What are the qualities perceived as necessary for optimal teachers and optimal parents, and what is the degree of congruence between them?
2. Is there a difference in the perception of the qualities of optimal parents and optimal teachers regarding the subjects' teaching experience and their children's age (parental experience)?

Method

Participants

The study included 61 students in a Teacher Training Program who teach in secondary schools as part of their practical training (or as teachers without certificates). The program which the students are part of (M. Teach) offers a Master's degree in education and teaching, and a teaching certificate in the subject of their expertise. The reason for focusing on students of this program is their relatively advanced age; hence, a significant part of them are also parents. Average age of the subjects: $SD=7.79$; $M=39.82$. Additional background variables are graphically shown below in Figure 1:

Figure 1: Background details



Source: Own adjustment based on background data

It can be seen that the majority of subjects are women (86.9%); the vast majority of them are married (83.6%); most of them have 2 or 3 children (44.3% and 36.1%, respectively); most teach (55.7%) yet a significant percentage do not (44.3%).

Research Design

The questionnaire included five open-ended questions pertaining to participants' perception of teaching and parenting (Appendix 1). Data analysis combined qualitative and quantitative methods in the following way and according to the following phases:

Research question 1.

Phase 1. A qualitative content analysis was conducted on the responses gleaned from the questionnaires, and the qualities of optimal teachers and optimal parents were extracted. All qualities mentioned were grouped into one list regardless of the number of answers written by each subject. This stage yielded two long lists of qualities: those of optimal teachers and those of optimal parents. Then, the qualities were grouped into five categories. The following table details the qualities included in each category (Table 1):

Table 1: Qualities included in each category

Categories of Qualities included in each category, presented randomly
qualities

Optimal teaching

Leadership	Self-aware, expressive, capable of self-criticism, not self-centered, has a sense of vocation, a person of values, sets a personal example, teaches with an emphasis on values, meaningful for the students, charismatic, self-confident, energetic, resourceful and entrepreneurial abilities, empowering and creates a sense of competence among students, motivational, has a desire to bring about change and success, takes responsibility and sees the 'larger picture', displays openness, strong personal boundaries, calm and restraint, responsible for the students' progress, mentally mature, has a high level of emotional intelligence
Humanistic approach	Capacity for containing students and their needs, acceptance of the 'other', empathetic, forgiving, loves human beings and students, dedicated, good interpersonal skills, has a respectful attitude towards students, understands that learning is also a social experience, grants a sense of security and belonging, provides sympathy and support, is capable of imparting knowledge, sensitive and caring towards students and their needs, physically and emotionally available, knows how to listen to students, recognizes processes in the learning environment, understands the students' inner world, creates

a positive and respectful classroom environment

Professionalism Dedication, perseverance, readiness to invest time in lesson preparation and teaching materials, vast professional knowledge, general world knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, investment in "tailoring" teaching to the students' needs, mentoring abilities, ability to deliver material in a clear, hands-on and experiential manner, up-to-date teaching, organization skills, diligence, ability to impart professional content knowledge and values, oral expression skills, clear demands, challenges students to high-order critical thinking, is curious, has a passion for teaching, believes in life-long learning, motivational, understanding of learning processes, is connected to the students' inner world, has the ability to work alone and in a team, ability to access students in their present situation

Assertiveness Sets limits but also knows how to 'let go', is consistent in demands, is able to create a balance between freedom and boundaries, identifies class 'hotspots', is determined and authoritative

Patience and flexibility Curricular and cognitive flexibility abilities, the ability to manipulate changing situations, the ability to "read the crowd" and adjust the instructional planning accordingly, knows how to 'flow' on the personal and professional level, not rigidly set in a particular mindset, patient in relation to challenging students and learning processes

Optimal parenting

Educator figure Clear and consistent in demands, has a long-term educational vision, exemplifies morality and values, leads and lays out a path as a parent, assists the child in identifying natural abilities and strengthening them, guides toward critical thinking, provides tools for life, communicates openness, is able to impart delayed gratification, expresses physical and emotional availability, diligent and willing to invest

Humanistic approach Demonstrates altruism, shows forgiveness and tolerance, shows empathy, openness and sensitivity to the child's needs, is capable of endless giving to their child, shows care and willingness to make concessions to the child, not self-centered, projects dedication, warmth, support, energy, gives the children a sense of security, expresses love and unconditional acceptance, respects children and relates to

them on 'eye level'

Capabilities of a responsible adult	Forgiving, has self-awareness, takes responsibility for their child's physical and emotional maturation over the years, displays maturity and judgment, distinguishes between relevant and irrelevant, takes responsibility for the relationship with the child, has self-control, is involved in raising the child, alert to his surroundings, perceives parenting as a deep and meaningful experience, is able to take criticism, maintains open dialogue with the child and the environment, is resourceful and entrepreneurial, reliable, has a sense of proportionality, restraint and self-control, exhibits personal resilience
Assertiveness	Capable of setting limits but also allowing independence, liberates the child and allows choice while being respectful, ability for persuasion, free from the need to control and criticize, is authoritative
Patience and flexibility	Displays cognitive flexibility and adaptability to the child's needs, recognizes the growth process as an ongoing one which requires patience.

Source: Responses to questions 1&2 in the questionnaire

After the five categories were grouped, the data was coded as follows: Qualities perceived to exist in the choice list of a participant received a score of 0, and nonexistent qualities received a score of 1.

The categories are presented in Table 2 as categories of identical (overlapping) qualities and parallel (similar) qualities, as is explained in the Findings section.

Phase II. A cross-tabulation was performed between categories of qualities emerging from the study as pertaining to optimal parenting, and categories emerging as pertaining to optimal teaching, in order to examine participants' perceptions of the need for the existence of each quality among optimal parents and teachers, as well as to check the degree of congruence between the two selections (that is, those who selected 0/0 regarding a certain quality, but alternatively selected 1/1). The findings are presented in percentages in Table 3.

Phase III. The answers for the following questions were coded:

Is it possible for a person to be considered both a good teacher and a bad parent?

Is it possible for a parent to be considered both a bad teacher and a good parent? (Questions 3 and 4 in the questionnaire, Appendix 1). Scoring was done in the following manner: 1=no; 2=possibly; 3=yes. The attitudes are reviewed by the percentage of those choosing "yes", "no" and "possibly". In addition, their attitudes

regarding the possibility of co-occurrences of the two statements are presented in Table 4.

Phase IV. A qualitative content analysis was carried out on Question 5 in the questionnaire (Appendix 1), which deals with conflicts between the two roles according to the subject's personal experience. The findings are presented in percentages and in quotations from the subjects.

The findings are presented according to the distribution to those categories of qualities that were found identical (overlapping) in the perception of both optimal teachers and optimal parents, and those found parallel (similar), as is discussed in the Findings section.

Research question 2.

Categories of qualities were analyzed according to the two key background variables of the study: Age of the children ("parental experience"), and teaching experience ("professional experience"). For this purpose, two parents' groups and two teachers' groups were formed. Parents' groups by children's age were formed as follows:

- Group 1 - Parents of young children aged 0-6 (45.9% of subjects);
- Group 2 - Parents of children aged 7 and older (54.1% of subjects).

Statistical processing was performed using descriptive statistics due to the relatively small sample size. The results are shown in percentages.

Groups of teachers by teaching experience were formed as follows:

- Group 1 - Teachers with 1-3 years of experience (32.8%);
- Group 2 - Teachers from their fourth teaching year onward (23% of the subjects).
- 44% of the subjects reported that they do not teach apart from their practice teaching.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the qualities perceived as necessary for optimal teachers and optimal parents, and what is the degree of congruence between them?

Phase I. Below is the distribution received according to this categorization (Table 2):

Table 2: The categories of optimal parenting and teaching qualities

Category no.	Optimal teaching qualities	Number of answers received	Category no.	Optimal parenting qualities	Number of answers received
1	Leadership	69	1	Educator figure	38
2	Humanistic approach	131	2	Humanistic approach	110
3	Professionalism	81	3	Capabilities of responsible adult ^a	31
4	Assertiveness	41	4	Assertiveness	43
5	Patience and flexibility	49	5	Patience and flexibility	31
Answers total		371			253

Source: Responses to questions 1&2 in the questionnaire

The categories of qualities were found partly identical and partly parallel in terms of content. The following findings indicate overlap (identical) and parallelism (similarity) in the following categories:

1. There is an overlap (identical qualities) in the perception of parenting and teaching regarding the following categories:
 - a. Humanistic approach (category 2)
 - b. Assertiveness (category 4)
 - c. Patience and flexibility (category 5)
2. Parallelism (similarity) was found in two categories:

Category 1: "educator figure" (parents) vs. "leadership" (teachers): the similarity in the two of categories emerged from the content analysis which showed many common qualities shared by the two categories. Here are some examples:

- "A long-term vision." (parent); "a sense of vision and vocation." (teacher)

- "Identifies natural abilities in a child and fosters these abilities." (parent); "Empowering and creating a sense of competence among students." (teacher)
- "Sets an example of personal morality and ethical values for the child." (parent); "emphasizes teaching of values and sets a personal example for students." (teacher)

Category 3: The "professionalism" category (teachers) vs. "qualities of a responsible adult" category (parents). The specified qualities of a responsible adult reflect the "professional" part in the parental role. The content analysis revealed many common dimensions shared by the two categories. Here are some examples:

- "Takes responsibility for the relationship with the child" (parent); "connects with the student's inner world." (teacher)
- "Is involved and alert to the child's needs." (parent); "is willing to differentiate teaching according to the student's needs." (teacher)
- "Open minded." (parent); "believes in life-long learning." (teacher)

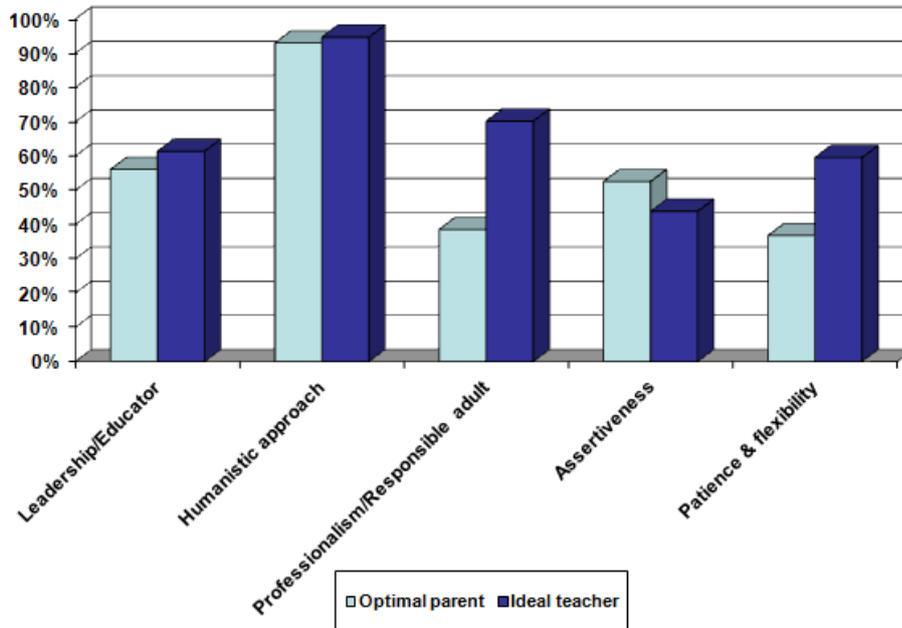
Phase II. Table 3 shows the cross-referencing between qualities emerging from the study for optimal parenting and optimal teaching respectively, as well as the level of congruence between the two choices.

Table 3: Cross-referencing data and congruence between optimal parenting and optimal teaching

Category no.	Categories of optimal parenting qualities	Percentage of subjects selecting this quality as necessary	Categories of optimal teaching qualities	Percentage of subjects selecting this quality as necessary	Percentage of agreement about the necessity of the quality in both parenting and teaching
1	Educator figure	56.1%	Leadership	61.4%	73.7%
2	Humanistic approach	93%	Humanistic approach	94.7%	87.7%
3	Capabilities of a responsible adult	38.6%	Professionalism	70.2%	43.8%
4	Assertiveness	52.6%	Assertiveness	43.9%	63.1%
5	Patience and flexibility	36.8%	Patience and flexibility	59.6%	70.1%

Source: Responses to questions 1&2 in the questionnaire

Figure 2 below visually demonstrates the percentages of those who mentioned each of the five categories of qualities, by distribution in the context of optimal parenting or optimal teaching.

Figure 2: Optimal parenting and ideal teaching

Source: Responses to questions 1&2 in the questionnaire

These data establish the following findings:

1. There is a high degree of agreement among subjects who voted for the presence or absence of a quality among teachers (choice of 0/0 and 1/1). The category for which there was the highest percentage of agreement is "Humanistic approach" (87.7%), followed by "Leadership/Educator figure" (73.7%). The category for which there was the lowest percentage of agreement is "Capabilities of a responsible adult"/"Professionalism": While 70.2% believe that professionalism is a necessary quality of an optimal teacher, 38.6% believe that being a responsible adult is a necessary quality for optimal parenting.
2. A large majority of subjects view the humanistic approach as the underlying foundation of optimal parenting and teaching (93% and 94.7%, respectively). Qualities such as caring, devotion, giving, empathy and ability to contain are the common ground for both of these roles.
3. The category of "Educator figure"/"Leadership" is deemed important by more than half of the subjects (56.1% and 61.4%, respectively).
4. Professional background is perceived as necessary for optimal teaching (70.2%), while for optimal parenting only 38.6% of subjects perceive parenthood as demanding special capabilities of being a responsible adult (parental "professionalism").

5. A surprising finding that emerged was that assertiveness is perceived as more important in the parental category than in the teaching category (52.6% vs. 43.9%, respectively).
6. A higher percentage of subjects perceive the category of "patience and flexibility" as more important in teaching than in parenting (59.6% vs. 39.8%).

Phase III. Table IV presents data on the subjects' attitudes on the following statements:

1. "A good teacher can be a bad parent." (based on question 3 in the questionnaire) and
2. "A bad teacher can be a good parent." (based on 4 questions in the questionnaire)

Table 4: cross-reference between the two statements

Answers	Statement no. 1	Statement no. 2	Cross-reference of statements 1+2
Yes	56.9%	74.1%	44.8%
No	17.2%	17.2%	8.6%
Possibly	25.9%	8.6%	3.4%

Source: Responses to questions 3&4 in the questionnaire

The data establishes the following findings:

- The majority of subjects (56.9% and 74.1%) agree with both statements.
- A higher percentage thinks that a bad teacher can be a good parent than those who believe that a good teacher can be a bad parent. The picture regarding the second statement is clearer, in part, because the percentage of those who chose option 2 (possibly) is very small, which indicates decisiveness.
- A small percentage (8.6%) does not agree with either statement and does not see a possibility that the two statements can exist concurrently.
- The cross-referencing between the two statements shows that almost 45% of subjects agree that the two statements can exist concurrently.

Phase IV. Out of 56 subjects to question 5 (Appendix 1), 44 subjects (78.5%) believed that in their case a conflict exists between the role of the parent and the role of the teacher, while 12 subjects (21.5%) expressed the position that no conflict exists between the two roles. The answers were grouped into content categories and are presented with supporting examples.

The following citations represent those who perceive the existence of **conflict** between the two roles:

1. Inability to set boundaries between the two roles: *"A desire to succeed at school necessitates a great of investment at home which will come at the expense of*

one's own children, or investment in one's own children will not enable giving to others."

2. Feelings of guilt aroused by investment in "other children": *"What really bothered me is that I could not attend important events in my children's life, like the first day of school."*
3. The nature of the teaching profession: *"The teaching profession is demanding, exhausting, demanding long hours of work at home and preparing learning materials, and a meticulous daily management agenda. Sometimes work prevents me from spending time with my child."*
4. Lack of balance as a component of character: *"Lack of balance between the two roles stems from perfectionism and overly high expectations and demands from me as a teacher and as a parent. Only when there is an inner equilibrium which enables you to balance all aspects of life in a resilient and self-loving way, will there be no conflict."*
5. Exposure to extreme states: *"A teacher working with a particularly challenging class may suffer from substantial emotional stress, and when s/he comes home may lose patience with his/her children. Alternatively, having to cope as a parent with an especially challenging child who consumes a great deal of emotional and/or physical resources, may affect his/her role as a teacher."*

The following citations represent those who perceive the two roles as **not conflicting**, but rather as conducive to each other:

- *"Being a parent helped me understand situations in the classroom and understand the place of the parent in the process. Being a teacher helps me understand my own children and provides me with tools for helping them in their studies."*
- *"For me, there is no conflict between the two roles; I love my students as if they were my children, and educate my own children as if they were my students."*
- *"I don't see how my role as a mother can interfere with my role as a teacher, and vice versa. On the contrary, ever since I became a mother, I sense that my sensitivity, love and empathy toward children have grown immensely."*
- *"I don't think there is a conflict between the roles. Teachers have a defined role; they are not the parent and have to respect the students' parents, and not take their place. In the same way the parent is not his own children's teacher."*
- *"On the contrary! The advantage in the fact that the parent is a teacher is that the parent-teacher understands his/her children's needs not only intuitively but also from a professional aspect."*

In conclusion, the findings from Phase II (quantitative analysis) indicated a high percentage of agreement between the qualities in the context of parenting and teaching, and hence no conflict was perceived between the two roles. However, the high percentages (almost 60% and 74%) that believe that a bad teacher can be a good parent or vice versa, and the fact that 45% believe that the two statements can occur simultaneously, indicate that the two roles are perceived as distinctive entities. The citations in Phase IV (qualitative analysis) also indicated a conflict in the perception of the two roles.

Research Question 2: Is there a difference in the perception of the qualities of optimal parents and optimal teachers regarding the subjects' teaching experience and their children's age (parental experience)?

Following is data from cross-referencing between background variables and qualities perceived as necessary for optimal teaching (Table 5) and optimal parenting (Table 6):

Table 5: Cross-referencing teaching experience and optimal teaching

Category of qualities	Group 1 (1-3 years of experience)	Group 2 (4 years of experience and above)
Leadership	85%	50%
Humanistic approach	95%	100%
Professionalism	70%	71.4%
Assertiveness	45%	57.1%
Patience and flexibility	80%	35.7%

Source: Responses to question 1 and background data

The data in the table points to the following facts:

1. Qualities influenced by the teaching experience variable:

1.1 Novice teachers perceive educational leadership as essential for optimal teaching significantly more than veteran teachers do and much more than the overall percentage (61.4%).

1.2 Veteran teachers perceive assertiveness as essential for optimal teaching, much more so than novice teachers.

1.3 Novice teachers perceive patience and sensitivity essential for optimal teaching far more than veteran teachers and well beyond the overall percentage (59.6%).

2. Qualities which are not influenced by the experience variable in teaching:

2.1 Teaching experience does not significantly affect the perception of humanistic approach as a basis for teaching. It is perceived as essential in both groups.

2.2 The perception of the need for professionalism in optimal teaching is not influenced by teaching experience. It is perceived important in both groups.

Table 6: Cross-reference between children's age ("parental experience") and optimal parenting

Category of qualities	Group 1 (0-6 years old)	Group 2 (over seven years old)
Educator figure	55%	42.9%
Humanistic approach	90%	78.6%
Capabilities of a responsible adult	60%	21.4%
Assertiveness	40%	50%
Patience and flexibility	50%	21.4%

Source: Responses to question 2 and background data

The data in the table supports the following findings:

1. Qualities influenced by the parental-experience variable:

1.1 Parents of young children perceive the need for the parent as an educator figure more than parents of older children.

1.2 Parents of younger children perceive the quality of a responsible adult as essential for optimal parenting, much more so than parents of older children, and much more than the overall percentage (38.6%).

1.3 Parents of young children perceive the qualities of patience and flexibility as essential for optimal parenting, much more so than parents of older children.

2. Qualities not influenced by the parental-experience variable:

2.1 Teaching experience barely influences the perception of humanistic approach as a basis for teaching, which is perceived as essential in both groups, albeit in a much higher percentage among parents of young children.

2.2 The children's age does not greatly influence the perception of **assertiveness**, although parents of older children consider it to be more necessary than parents of young children.

The findings of research question 2 corroborated the vital importance of a humanistic approach to optimal parenting and teaching that yielded from research question 1. Rates of selection of this category, as they emerged from the cross-referencing, were the highest by a wide margin of all other categories, in the context of parenting and teaching, alike.

Discussion

The present study focuses on the duality in the perception of the role experienced by teachers who are also parents, regarding the qualities of optimal parents and optimal teachers. This chapter will unfold the main insights:

Research question 1

The semblance between the qualities perceived as essential for the two roles which emerged from the quantitative data, emphasized the overlapping aspect of the duality that exists between the two roles. The qualities that emerged in this study were consistent with previous studies on the optimal teacher (e.g., Stronge, 2007, Liu & Meng, 2009), and some of those known for optimal parenting are in line with the findings of this study, particularly those related to humanistic approach and capabilities of a responsible adult (Kachargin, 2013). The identical and parallel categories of qualities that emerged in the study, and the high degree of agreement among subjects who voted for the presence or absence of a quality among teachers and parents, indicates that the two roles are perceived as intrinsically similar, and ultimately, a teacher basically needs the same qualities necessary at school and for the task of raising his/her own children at home (extensive details in Table 1).

Yet, the discrepancy between "capabilities of a responsible adult" (parents), and "professionalism" (teachers) indicates that the parent's role is perceived to a much lower extent than the teacher's role as requiring a "professional" aspect, that in this study was classified under the "abilities of an independent adult", since it indicates the

difference between what is required of adults and what is required of children. However, it is clear to most subjects that teaching requires professionalism.

However, when asked whether a good teacher can be a bad parent and vice versa, almost 45% of the subjects believed that the two statements can be true simultaneously, and high percentages confirmed each statement separately. From this it can be inferred that despite the overlap in the perception of the qualities necessary for the two roles as shown previously, there is a distinction in the respondent's opinion between the two roles which represent two different entities for them. Thus, a person may fill one role well, but fail in the other. The answers to this question emphasize what separates the two roles in addition to the common denominator revealed earlier.

Later on, the subjects were questioned about the duality of the two roles in the reality of their personal life as parent-teachers. The vast majority sensed the conflict, possibly because they had to explain the nature of the difficulty in the daily practice of the two roles, confront real-life situations, and relate to their personal experience as teacher-parents. This supports further the insights that emerged about the two roles being separate entities.

In contrast to psycho-dynamic theory which is not based on positive and negative traits, the qualities that emerged in the "leadership" category (teachers) created an ideal picture and related mainly to qualities perceived as positive, such as "visionary", "empowering", and "projecting confidence". This supports the "Trait Theory of Personality" (Bolden, 2004), and creates an image of the ideal parent or teacher who is of genuine greatness. Charisma, which is defined as magnetic presence which can create a sense of vocation (Bass, 1985), produces a "super-trait" which only very few people are fortunate enough to have been endowed with. All this positions the "leader"/"educator" on a higher plane, above the average person, and the inevitable conclusion is that not everybody can assume the leader's role in teaching and parenting.

Research question 2

The study revealed that parental experience and teaching experience influence to a large extent the perception of the categories of the qualities necessary for the two roles. Using these data might help us understand the developmental process of novice teachers into the teaching profession, and the process by which parents raise their children.

With regard to **teaching**, the study showed that a "humanistic approach" and "professionalism" are essential for teaching regardless of the teacher's experience. However, as novice teachers find it difficult to adjust to teaching and to system requirements and usually lack confidence, they perceive "leadership" as an essential quality which they lack. The category of "patience and flexibility" too, is perceived by them as more important and necessary than among veteran teachers, perhaps because they first encounter diversity among students, which creates difficulties in their classroom management, and reflects for them again and again how much they need patience and flexibility and how complex the teaching profession is. Veteran

teachers' low rates of selection of "patience and flexibility" may be the result of their exchanging patience and flexibility for assertiveness as they acquire self-confidence.

In a parallel process in **parenting**, it only makes sense that parents of young children need to be an educational model in the early years and demonstrate flexibility in their schedule and willingness to make concessions, more than parents of older children who require less supervision, less flexibility in terms of the parents' schedule, less patience in daily monitoring, and when education becomes generally less intense. In contrast to "flexibility", "assertiveness" is considered essential among parents of older children, who test boundaries more often, than among parents of young children. In the case of parenting as well, a "humanistic approach" is a necessary condition that is not dependent on the child's age, and is more important than "assertiveness" for optimal parenting.

In conclusion, the human dimension was found independent of parenting/teaching experience regarding both roles.

Implications for teacher education

There are relevant implications for Teacher Training Programs due to two main reasons:

1. Teacher training programs nowadays focus not only on pedagogical growth but also on personal growth and on the creation of an emerging professional identity that bears the buds of an educational agenda. 2. A large number of teachers studying in the various retraining courses, including the M. Teach program, are parents, and they often compare class-situations to home-situations with regard to education.

As parents and teachers who function as both see a great deal of overlapping between the qualities necessary for the two roles, it may be helpful to teach them how to "lend" optimal teaching qualities to their parental role and how to "lend" optimal parental qualities to teaching. The fact that most participants perceived what distinguishes between the two roles in addition to the common denominator when asked about their daily practices calls for an active incorporation of this topic into teacher education, as it attests to the confusion they experience.

The introduction of this discussion into teacher education programs will facilitate teacher-parents to separate the two roles emotionally and practically and diminish the clash between them.

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Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Hello,

The purpose of this study is to examine the connection between the role of parenting and the role of teaching among students and teachers. Thank you for your honest answers which will be used **solely for the purposes of this study**. Please send the questionnaire by return email to:

(name deleted to maintain the integrity of the review process)

Personal Information

Age: _____

Gender: 1. Male. 2. Female

Familial Status: 1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced 4. Widower
5. Other

Number of children (private): _____

Children's Age: _____

Is teaching your occupation (beyond training)?: 1. No 2. Yes

If you answered yes, please state the number of years of teaching practice (beyond training): _____

Scope of employment: 1. Third 2. Half 3. Full time

Below are the questions. Please write as much as you need to and without restriction.

1. What are the qualities required from optimal teachers? Please rationalize and demonstrate where possible.
2. What are the qualities required from optimal parents? Please rationalize and demonstrate where possible.
3. Is it possible that a person can be a good teacher and a bad parent? Please explain.
4. Is it possible that a person can be a bad teacher and a good parent? Please explain.
5. Can the two roles come into conflict for you and If so, How? In other words, what could cause each of the roles to interfere with performance of the other?