

PARENTAL IDENTITY AS A PREDICTOR OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF PARENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ETHNIC MINORITY PARENTS

Raed Zedan

Graduate Studies Department, Academic Arab College for Education
22 Hahashmal, 2046, Haifa 3660801, Israel

E-mail address: raedzedan248@gmail.com, zraed@arabcol.ac.il

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2823-2140>

ABSTRACT

Aim. This research aims to examine the contribution of a cohesive parental identity to parental involvement in school and the mediating role of the parent-teacher relationship among an ethnic-religious minority in Arab society in Israel.

Methods. The study follows a quantitative research approach; a valid and reliable questionnaire was administered to 1,045 Israeli Arab parents. A descriptive and SEM statistical analysis was carried out.

Results. A cohesive perception of parental identity was found to be associated with higher levels of parental involvement and higher quality of parent-teacher relationships. In addition, the quality of the parent-teacher relationship was found to be directly related to parental involvement and to mediate the relationship between parental identity and parental involvement.

Conclusions. The findings emphasise the importance of strengthening parental identity and fostering positive parent-teacher relationships as a key means of increasing parental involvement in their children's education, especially in the context of minority groups living in unique social conditions.

Keywords: parental involvement, parental identity, parent-teacher relationship, ethnic minority, Arab society in Israel

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of parents in the educational process of their children is crucial as studies indicate it creates significant impacts on children's behaviour, motivation, achievements, attitudes toward classroom climate, and other factors (Akay & Karadağ, 2019; Desforges & Abouchar, 2003; Emerson et al., 2012; Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020; Zedan, 2021; 2024). Along with influencing their educational identities, parents also play an important role in shaping and forming their children's religious and ethnic identities (Borisenko & Evseenkova, 2022; Rivny'ak et al., 2021; Timar-Anton et al., 2023; Zedan, 2025). Parental influences are themselves shaped by many demographic factors such as income level, number of children in the family, parents' level of education, and other factors (Zedan, 2012). Because of the importance of parental involvement and its decisive role, and despite extensive research on this topic over decades, it is necessary to study the motivations behind parents' involvement, as well as the factors that predict the level and type of such involvement (Antipkina et al., 2018). It is also important to continue research into the factors that may influence parental involvement, especially in ethnic minorities societies with challenging economic, social and political conditions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Parental Identity

Parental identity defined as a mental construct of a person's perception as to the role of a parent, with all its commitments and identification, and is expressed through the level of satisfaction and self-confidence in performing this role (Delmore-Ko et al., 2000; Piotrowski, 2021b). A more recent definition of parental identity indicates that it is considered the degree to which a person clearly identifies themselves as a parent (Schrooyen et al., 2021). There is a difference between becoming a parent and feeling like a parent, and the former does not automatically lead to the latter. Some people have difficulty developing a sense of parental identity, while others develop a very clear sense of their parental identity and of themselves as parents (Riggs & Bartholomaeus, 2023). According to Konrad Piotrowski (2021b) and Piotrowski et al. (2024), parental identity includes three domains: commitment to the parental role, in-depth exploration of the role and oneself as a parent, and reconsidering commitment in the sense of questioning whether the decision to become a parent is a good one. Research (Meca et al., 2020; Piotrowski et al., 2023) has shown that these domains have a negative effect on life satisfaction, which may lead to anxiety and depressive symptoms of parental burnout. In other words, a confused parental identity, with low commitment, and a lot of questioning of the parental role, may lead to low levels

of life satisfaction, along with high levels of anxiety and burnout. This can also lead to lack of interest, engagement and involvement. Raaya Alon et al. (2025) in their study conducted among a religious community, reported a positive association between cohesive parental identity and well-being and parenting behaviour. Other studies have also shown that a formatted parental identity is positively associated with life satisfaction, well-being, and mental and psychological health, and can help better the performance of the parental role (Alon et al., 2025; Piotrowski, 2023; Schrooyen et al., 2021). One key element of a parent's roles is educational involvement.

The essence behind defining parental identity is tied to parents understanding their role in raising and educating their children, which includes understanding its components, exploring it in depth, and committing to performing it as parents (Piotrowski et al., 2023; Riggs & Bartholomaeus, 2023). There also needs to exist a positive relationship between cohesive parental identity, parenting behaviour, and parenting performance (Alon et al., 2025). One of the most important and crucial roles a parent has is involving or engaging themselves in the educational development of their children, they will often decide to involve or engage when they believe they can positively influence their child's education (Zedan, 2024).

Parental involvement is a social and educational process, that is defined as engaging in education-based activities both inside and outside the home, as well as in the classroom when it comes to education, like helping with reading skills and homework, visiting school, meeting with teachers and others (Kelty & Wakabayashi, 2020; Seginer & Vermulst, 2002; Zedan, 2012; 2022). Michael Evans (2011) defined parental involvement in education as parents playing an active role in developing their children's learning by being actively involved in their children's education at school and at home, this meant cooperating together with teachers and establishing a close and good parent – teacher relationship. Parent-teacher relationships are considered essential professional relationships that should be seen as an integral part of the education and teaching process, as teachers and parents must communicate together for the benefit of their children (Lundqvist et al., 2024; Uitto et al., 2021). The quality of the parent-teacher relationship refers to the quality of the relationship between home and school, trust, reciprocity, belonging, support, shared values, expectations and beliefs about each other and the child (Leenders et al., 2018; Vickers & Minke, 1995). Positive parent-teacher relationships are of great importance since they should be seen as educational and social capital (Hughes & Kwok, 2007). A study by Ziwen Teuber et al. (2024) indicated that cooperation between parents and teachers is one of the factors that protect against parental burnout and encourage parents to participate in their children's education. It has been shown by Tianyi Ma et al. (2024) that parenting effectiveness is directly and positively related to the quality of the parent-teacher relationship.

Based on this, it can be hypothesised that a direct effect of parent identity will be found on parent involvement and on the parent-teacher relationship, and indirect effect of parent identity on parent involvement via the parent-teacher relationship. It also

can be hypothesised that a direct effect of parent-teacher relationship will be found on parent involvement.

Demographic Characteristics of Parents

Research indicates that several studies confirmed the effects of socioeconomic status (SES) on the level of parental involvement. Parents with lower SES, and parents with a large number of children are more vulnerable to parental burnout (Mikolajczak & Roskam, 2018; Roskam & Mikolajczak, 2020), therefore may be less likely to be involved with their children's school activities. Gwynne Kohl et al. (2000) and Arthur Reynolds et al. (1992) found that the level of involvement among families with low SES and from ethnic minorities was lower than in families with high SES. Studies (Antipkina et al., 2018; Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Weininger & Lareau, 2003), noted that high-income parents build high quality personal relationships with teachers, which allows parents to be involved. Wendy Grolnick et al. (1997) found that parents with higher education levels are more involved at school and at home, moreover, parents who see themselves as teachers are more likely to be involved in their children's education since they also communicate better with teachers. Low levels of education may become a barrier to effective parental involvement, and poor economic status may also be a major obstacle, as large low-income families often lack the time and money to provide educational and psychological support for their children (Lee & Bowen, 2006). Raed Zedan (2012) also suggests that parents with fewer children show higher levels of involvement in education at home. Pamela Cole et al. (1994) confirmed, according to teachers' reports, that ethnic minority parents showed a low level of participation. A study by Ruth Gaunt and Jacqueline Scott (2017) confirmed that in some ethnic groups, raising children is considered the primary role of women, while the professional role is considered most important for men, so the parental role among women is higher than that of men, starting from birth through to the early years of raising of children. While identity in parents develops towards maturity with age, identity status is at its highest levels and is more pronounced in mothers than in fathers (Fadjukoff et al., 2016; Piotrowski, 2021b), since mothers are often expected to be more involved than fathers (Kim & Hill, 2015) in their children's education.

The Current Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing parental involvement in the education of their children, with the focus on parental identity and the parent-teacher relationship, as well as to identify the impact of demographic characteristics on both. The study hypothesised that (a) there is a direct effect of parental identity on parental involvement and on parent-teacher relationships, and indirect effect of par-

ent identity on parental involvement via the parent-teacher relationship. It also can be hypothesised that a direct effect of the parent-teacher relationship will be found on parental involvement, and (b) that there is a direct effect of demographic characteristics on parental involvement and on parental identity and the parent-teacher relationship.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

Participants

The participants in the study were 1045 parents from various Arab residential areas, towns, and villages within the State of Israel. The following table shows the distribution of families according to demographic variables.

Table 1
Socio Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Demographic variable		N	%
Gender	Male	236	22.6
	Female	809	77.4
Age	20-25	181	17.3
	26-30	53	5.1
	31-35	79	7.6
	36-40	193	18.5
	41-50	369	35.3
	51-60	157	15.0
	up 60	13	1.2
Educational Level	Elementary (up to 9th grade)	59	5.6
	High school without Matriculation certificate	122	11.7
	High school with Matriculation certificate	255	24.4
	Post- High school education	163	15.6
	B.A.	250	23.9
Children Grade	M.A. or up	196	18.8
	7th-9th	502	48.0
Number of Children	10th-12th	543	52.0
	up to 2	222	21.2
	3-4	557	53.3
	5-6	197	18.9
	6 and above	69	6.6

Demographic variable		N	%
Economic Level	Low	144	13.8
	Medium	262	25.1
	Above average	366	35.0
	High	189	18.1
	Very high	84	8.0

Source. Own research.

Procedure

This research was a part of a larger project that includes in-depth research, events, and lectures on the topic of parental involvement, under the auspices of the Committee for Monitoring Education Issues in Arab Society in Israel.

Data was collected by the principal researcher with the help of a group of teachers and educators in the Arab elementary, secondary, and high schools within the Arab community in Israel. The teachers were asked to contact the parents of their students and invite them to participate in the study and fill out the questionnaire. Teachers were instructed to send the online questionnaire link to the WhatsApp groups of their students' parents and invite them to complete the questionnaire. Teachers also encouraged their students to ask their parents to participate by completing the questionnaire. All participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that it would take about 15 – 20 minutes to complete the questionnaire. Participants were told to complete it at their leisure, with the option to opt out or withdraw from the study at any time. To ensure privacy and confidentiality, participants were asked not to disclose their names on the questionnaires or any specific details that might reveal their identity.

Instruments and Data Analysis

Parental Identity

The questionnaire used was the U-MICS-Parental Identity (Piotrowski, 2018, 2020; Piotrowski, et al. 2023) as it relates to the original version (Crocetti et al., 2008; 2010). The version used in the current study consists of 8 items (items 7,8 is negative). For the purposes of this study, the questionnaire was translated (a back-translation procedure was used) from the English-language version into Arabic. All items are responded to on a Likert scale from 1-completely untrue to 5-completely true (e.g., Being a parent gives me security in life; Being a parent gives me self-confidence; I often talk with other people about my child/children). Cronbach's alpha coefficients is 0.755, Cronbach's alpha if Items 7 and 8 are deleted is 0.793. In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results, the goodness-of-fit indices of the scale were acceptable (SRMR

= 0.052; GFI = 0.99; IFI = 0.99; CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.06, CI 90 [0.04, 0.08]), showing good construct validity. The variable “parental identity” was calculated as the average of the participants’ responses, with higher values indicating a strong, cohesive parental identity.

Parent-Teacher Relationship

This questionnaire was built based on questionnaires used in previous studies conducted on parent-teacher relationships (Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Vickers & Minke, 1995). The questionnaire was adapted to measure parent-teacher relationships from the parents’ perspective, including 14 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale (e.g., We cooperate with each other; We understand each other; We trust each other), item 11 is negative. The internal consistency reliability according to Cronbach’s alpha was 0.929, Cronbach’s alpha if Item 11 deleted is 0.958. In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results, the goodness-of-fit indices of the scale were acceptable (SRMR = 0.05; GFI = 0.94; IFI = 0.97; CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.07, CI 90 [0.07, 0.08]), showing good construct validity. The variable “parent-teacher relationship” was calculated as the average of the participants’ responses, with higher values indicating a strong, cohesive Parent-teacher relationship.

Parental Involvement

This questionnaire was built based on questionnaires used in previous studies (Zedan, 2012), and was used to measure the level of parental involvement and its aspects according to the perceptions of the parents themselves. The answers were constructed according to a Likert scale of five levels (1 = very seldom to 5 = always); there were 20 statements describing parental involvement (e.g., When my child asks for help in homework I usually help him/her; When my child receives a bad mark I try to encourage him/her to make a greater effort; I initiate talks with my child’s teachers). The internal consistency reliability according to Cronbach’s alpha was 0.967. In confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results, the goodness-of-fit indices of the scale were acceptable (SRMR = 0.052; GFI = 0.90; IFI = 0.95; CFI = 0.95; RMSEA = 0.07, CI 90 [0.07, 0.08]), showing good construct validity. The variable “parental involvement” was calculated as the average of the participants’ responses, with higher values indicating greater Parent-involvement. Data related to this study is available upon request by emailing the research author.

RESULTS

The results indicated that parental involvement, parental identity and the parent-teacher relationship scores are above the scale’s midpoint among parents (M=3.84-

M=3.86), with significant difference between fathers and mothers in parental involvement ($F(1,1044)=9.04, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.01$) and in the parent-teacher relationship ($F(1,1044)=5.44, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.01$). Mothers reported higher parental involvement levels than fathers did; mothers also reported better parent-teacher relationships than fathers did. A significant difference was also found based on parents' age when it came to parental involvement ($F(2,1042)=41.72, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.074$), parental identity ($F(2,1042)=47.48, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.084$), and in the parent-teacher relationship ($F(2,1042)=29.21, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.053$).

Older parents (over 40) reported a higher level of involvement, parental identity and the parent-teacher relationship. There was also significant difference based on parents' educational level in parental involvement ($F(5,1039)=10.10, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.046$), parental Identity ($F(5,1039)=5.87, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.027$), and in the parent-teacher relationship ($F(5,1039)=6.57, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.031$). Parents with a B.A. degree reported higher levels of involvement than other parents, and parents with elementary level education reported the lowest level of parental involvement. This also applied to parental identity and the parent-teacher relationship. The findings indicate significant differences based on economic level in parental involvement ($F(3,1041)=8.32, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.031$), parental identity ($F(3,1041)=7.04, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.026$), and in the parent-teacher relationship ($F(3,1041)=8.06, p<0.001, \eta^2=0.030$). Parents with high economic status reported high levels of parental involvement, parental identity, and with the parent-teacher relationship compared to parents with a low economic status.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and MANOVA Values Among

Demographic variable (N)		Parents Involvement M (S.D.)	Parental Identity M (S.D.)	Parents Teachers Relationship M (S.D.)
Gender	Father (236)	3.68 (1.01)	3.84 (1.01)	3.73 (0.92)
	Mother (809)	3.88 (0.90)	3.86 (0.90)	3.88 (0.87)
	<i>F(1,1043)</i> (η^2)	<i>9.04***</i> (0.01)	<i>0.09</i> (0.00)	<i>5.44***</i> (0.01)
Age	20-30 (234)	3.37 (1.13)	3.36 (1.14)	3.47 (1.10)
	31-40 (272)	3.91 (0.91)	3.99 (0.86)	3.95 (0.83)
	41- up 60 (539)	4.00 (0.75)	4.00 (0.76)	3.98 (0.74)
	<i>F(2,1042)</i> (η^2)	<i>41.72***</i> (0.074)	<i>47.48***</i> (0.084)	<i>29.21***</i> (0.053)

Demographic variable (N)		Parents Involvement M (S.D.)	Parental Identity M (S.D.)	Parents Teachers Relationship M (S.D.)
Educational Level	Elementary (up to 9th grade) (59)	3.11 (1.11)	3.27 (1.09)	3.25 (1.01)
	High school without Matriculation certificate (122)	3.75 (0.94)	3.81 (0.89)	3.81 (0.82)
	High school with Matriculation certificate (255)	3.79 (1.03)	3.88 (1.03)	3.85 (1.01)
	Post- High school education (163)	3.87 (0.88)	3.92 (0.95)	3.86 (0.86)
	B.A. (250)	4.01 (0.78)	3.96 (0.80)	3.94 (0.76)
	M.A. or up (196)	3.91 (0.80)	3.86 (0.82)	3.93 (0.79)
	$F(5,1039)$ (η^2)	10.10^{***} (0.046)	5.87^{***} (0.027)	6.57^{***} (0.031)
	Children Grade	7th-9th (502)	3.87 (0.92)	3.89 (0.88)
10th-12th (543)		3.81 (0.93)	3.84 (0.96)	3.82 (0.90)
$F(1,1043)$ (η^2)		1.00 (0.001)	0.97 (0.001)	1.69 (0.002)
Number of Children		up to 2 (222)	3.82 (1.00)	3.74 (1.01)
	3-4 (557)	3.87 (0.89)	3.89 (0.88)	3.89 (0.85)
	5-6 (197)	3.81 (0.88)	3.87 (0.89)	3.82 (0.83)
	6 and above (69)	3.71 (1.04)	3.91 (1.03)	3.71 (1.03)
	$F(3,1041)$ (η^2)	0.81 (0.002)	1.58 (0.005)	1.16 (0.003)

Demographic variable (N)		Parents Involvement M (S.D.)	Parental Identity M (S.D.)	Parents Teachers Relationship M (S.D.)
Economic Level	Low (144)	3.54 (1.09)	3.54 (1.11)	3.59 (1.03)
	Medium (262)	3.71 (0.94)	3.79 (0.94)	3.72 (0.92)
	Above average (366)	3.93 (0.89)	3.96 (0.86)	3.93 (0.80)
	High (189)	4.03 (0.75)	4.01 (0.74)	4.05 (0.74)
	Very high (84)	3.89 (0.92)	3.82 (1.02)	3.90 (0.97)
	<i>F</i> (3,1041)	8.32*** (0.031)	7.04*** (0.026)	8.06*** (0.030)
	<i>η</i> ²			
Total (1045)	3.84 (0.93)	3.86 (0.92)	3.85 (0.88)	

Note. *** $p < 0.001$

Source. Own research.

The results also showed strong and significant positive relationships were found between parental identity and parental involvement ($r_p = 0.675, p < 0.001$), between parental identity and the parent-teacher relationships ($r_p = 0.726, p < 0.001$), and between the parent-teacher relationship and parental involvement ($r_p = 0.734, p < 0.001$).

Table 3

Pearson Correlations Among the Latent Variables (N=1045)

	Parents Involvement	Parental Identity
Parental Identity	.675***	
Parents Teachers Relation	.734***	.726***

Note. *** $p < 0.001$.

Source. Own research.

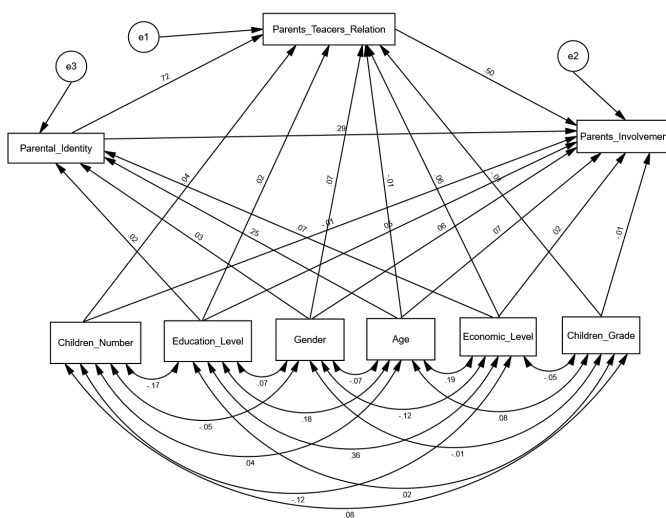
The structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis was applied to test the research model, which hypothesises an indirect path where parental identity, the parent-teacher relationship, and demographic variables (parents' gender, parents' age, parents' education level, parents' economic level, number of children in a family) influence parental involvement through the parent-teacher relationship, indicating a good model fit, $\chi^2(2) = 5.735, p > .05$, $CFI = .998$, $RMSEA = .042$, 90% $CI [.001, .085]$, $NFI = .997$.

The results demonstrated that parental identity had a significant direct effect on parental involvement ($\beta = .29, p < .001$), and parental identity had a significant direct effect on the parent-teacher relationship ($\beta = .72, p < .001$). The parent-teacher relationship had a significant direct effect on parental involvement ($\beta = .50, p < .001$), and parental

identity had a significant indirect effect on parental involvement through the parent-teacher relationship ($\beta = .36, p < .001$). A significant direct effect of age on parental identity ($\beta = .25, p < .001$) was also found. These findings suggest that quality parent-teacher relationships function as a mediator in the relationship between parental identity and parental involvement. Figure 1 illustrates the hypothesised final path model, presenting the standardised direct and indirect path coefficients between the variables.

Figure 1

The Final Structural Invariance Model, Mediating the Relationship Between Parental Identity and Parent’s Involvement Via Parents-Teacher Relationship, with Personal Variables



Note. Standardised path coefficients between variables of the full path model are presented.

Source. Own research.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the current study indicate that parents perceive their parental identity, parental involvement, and the parent-teacher relationship to be at an above midpoint of the scale, with strong positive correlations between them. These findings support previous findings of Zedan (2012; 2022), which indicated a moderate level of involvement among Arab-minority population in Israel. Recent research (Zedan, 2025) indicates that some ethnic minorities see education as leverage or as means of raising their economic and social status in society. As these ethnic minority parents become aware of the power of education, they, in turn, show greater interest, involvement, and invest-

ment in their children's education. This would then motivate them to raise their level of commitment to education. These realisations could also be due to faith and belief that pursuing academic education and obtaining a university degree is an effective means of achieving social advancement at the personal level and provides individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to societal development (Brayboy, 2005; Zedan, 2025).

Parents' understanding of their true role is clearly demonstrated by their level of concern and the kinds of relationships they build with their children's school and teachers. Positive parent-teacher relationships are of great importance and are an educational and social capital (Hughes & Kwok, 2007; Ma et al., 2024). Cooperation between parents and teachers is one of the factors that protect against parental burnout and encourage parents to participate in their children's education (Teuber et al., 2024). Parents' understanding of their role as parents, their belief in their responsibility towards their children, and their duty to raise them influences the quality of their relationship and cooperation with teachers. It also plays an influential role in parental engagement. In addition, student performance levels increase when parents and teachers work together (Ellis et al., 2015).

The results of the current research are not consistent with the results of research conducted among different ethnic minorities. Studies (Cole et al., 1994; Kohl et al., 1994; Moles, 1993) have shown that parents from ethnic minorities demonstrate a low level and quality of involvement, according to teacher reports. This is due to a lack of motivation to cooperate with teachers and the school, a lack of interest in their children's education, a poor appreciation of the importance of education, and a feeling that they are unwelcome, ignored, and marginalized by the school (Evans, 2011; Geenen et al.; 2001; Ishimaru et al., 2016).

Hence, parents realize that through their involvement and strengthening of their relationship with the school, they work to build and format a cohesive educational identity for their children. Active involvement leads to academic achievement, higher academic performance, intellectual engagement, goal setting and learning objectives, educational and occupational aspirations, and motivation (Rouland, 2017; Wentzel, 2021). Educational attainment and academic success are important outcomes of a cohesive educational identity (Negru-Suptirica, 2024) and play a pivotal role in fostering social leadership and improving socioeconomic status, particularly among less developed minorities (Abu-Saad, 2023; Brown, 2006).

Research suggests that higher educational attainment can reduce occupational and economic disparities between majorities and minorities, enabling marginalised groups to achieve societal gains in political resources (Assari & Bazargan, 2019). Individuals with lower socioeconomic status and minorities often strive for high academic success to ensure their societal integration (Priest et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential for ethnic minorities to pursue higher education, build a strong educational identity, and maintain a positive attitude toward education to bridge socioeconomic

and educational gaps with the dominant majority. Hence, minority parents' awareness of the importance of their role in raising and educating their children is considered a decisive and life altering factor.

This explains and confirms the findings of the current research model that positive perception of parental identity leads to high levels of parental involvement, as well as with quality parent-teacher relationships. Similarly, quality parent-teacher relationships also lead to high parental involvement. It is also important to emphasise the current research's results, which found that quality parent-teacher relationships function as a mediator in the relationship between parental identity and parental involvement.

Isha W. Metzger et al. (2020) found that racial and ethnic identity influences the development of educational identity. This is especially true among minorities, as families aspire to achieve academic, social, and economic success through education. This will enhance and encourage greater involvement and build quality relationships with teachers, ensuring cooperation and inclusion.

Parents' awareness of their role and their adoption of a cohesive parental identity is the basic factor in performing their role and carrying out their duties well. Alon (2025) found positive relationships between cohesive parental identity, parenting behaviour, and parenting performance, as helping parents decide to get involved or engaged when they believe they can positively influence their child's education, and when they perceive that their child and the school wish them to be involved (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1997; Ma et al., 2024). In other words, when their relationships with their child's teacher is good then parents feel their involvement is welcomed. Thus, we have seen that parental involvement increases when they are aware of their role and believe in the importance and positive impact of their involvement, and when they are welcomed at school and their relationship with teachers is good. This is what parents will continue to do because of their absolute belief in the importance of education for their children and its necessity for their progress and attainment of good positions and status in society.

Parents in the Arab ethnic minority society of Israel take great efforts to monitor their children and strive to help them meet their educational needs at all levels of education, from the basic stages of compulsory and non-compulsory kindergarten through to the end of secondary school. This is due to their belief in the importance of education and knowledge for career advancement and obtaining prestigious positions and jobs. Many parents provide educational opportunities for their children outside the State of Israel. Studies indicate that thousands of students have studied various disciplines, most notably medicine and law, in numerous countries (Haj-Yehia & Arar, 2020), which is extremely expensive.

As for the differences found between participants according to demographic variables, the most notable one was that mothers reported higher parental involvement levels than fathers did. Mothers also reported better parents-teacher relationships than fathers did. The rearing of children in the Arab society is considered the primary role of women, so the parental role among women is higher than that of men, starting

from birth through to the early years of raising of children. While identity in parents develops towards maturity with age, identity status is at its highest levels and is more pronounced in mothers than it is in fathers (Fadjukoff et al., 2016; Piotrowski, 2021a), as Sung won Kim (2018) found that mothers are generally more involved than fathers when it comes to the upbringing of children.

It was also found that educated parents with academic degrees had higher levels of involvement than parents without academic degrees or whose education stopped at the elementary level. This also applies to parental identity and to the parent-teacher relationship. It is consistent with previous studies (Grolnick et al., 1997) which found that parents with academic degrees are more involved at school and at home. Moreover, parents who see themselves as teachers are more likely to be involved since they also communicate better with teachers.

The findings also indicate that parents with high economic status reported high levels of parental involvement, parental identity and with the parent-teacher relationship compared with low economic status parents. This finding is supported by many studies (Cucchiara & Horvat, 2009; Weininger & Lareau, 2003) that noted that high-income parents build high quality personal relationships with teachers. These relationships help facilitate information exchange and allow parents to intervene and participate in making sound decisions about their children's emotional, social, and academic needs and progress (Antipkina et al., 2018). Jung-Sook Lee and Natasha K. Bowen (2006) mentioned that low-income families lack the time and money to provide educational and psychological support for their children.

LIMITATION

Although this study contributes to the research literature in this area, its findings are limited in their generalisability to all parents. This is due to its focus on a specific ethnic minority with significant cultural and religious diversity. Furthermore, the subjective measures used in the study may have overestimated or underestimated the variables assessed among the study sample. Furthermore, it would have been beneficial to include interviews with some participants in order to gain a deeper understanding of the unique situation Arab parents face with the Israeli education system.

CONCLUSIONS

This study contributes to the development of theories related to understanding parental identity and its impact on parental involvement in their children's educational process, through the relationship between them and teachers, among the Arab minority in the State of Israel.

The findings indicated that Arab parents perceive their parental identity at an above average level (above the midpoint of the scale). The same can be said for parental involvement, and the parent-teacher relationship, as the results also indicated strong positive correlations between them. It was also found that positive perceptions of parental identity lead to high levels of parental involvement, as well as with quality parent-teacher relationships. Similarly, quality parent-teacher relationships also lead to high parental involvement.

It is also important to emphasize that this research has found that a quality parent-teacher relationship functions as a mediator in the relationship between parental identity and parent's involvement. In the context of the Arab ethnic minorities in Israel, it may be due to faith and belief that attending academic education and obtaining a university degree is an effective means of achieving social advancement at the personal level and provides individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to societal development. Arab parents' understanding of their role as parents, their belief in their responsibility toward their children, and their duty to raise them influences the quality of their relationship and cooperation with teachers. It also plays an influential role in parental engagement. In addition, student performance levels increase when parents and teachers work together. The results of the current research are not consistent with the results of research conducted among different minorities. This may be due to the unique nature of the Arab minority in Israel, which faces numerous challenges at the social, political, economic, and academic levels. Education is considered the most important leverage and tool for confronting these challenges.

DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data is not publicly available due to containing information that could compromise the privacy of research participants.

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