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**A New Educational Reform in Israeli High Schools
Affecting Teachers' Motivation and Perception of the
Teaching Profession**

Long Abstract

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Table of Contents

Introduction

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL ASPECTS ON TEACHER MOTIVATION, PERCEPTION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND THE NEW "COURAGE TO CHANGE" REFORM

- I. Theoretical Rationale
 - I.1. Motivation / Motivating Workers
 - I.1.1. Definitions
 - I.1.2. Work Motivation and Theories
 - I.1.3. Needs-Motivation Theories
 - I.1.4. Motivation as a Process
 - I. Teacher Motivation
 - I.2. Perception of the Teaching Profession
 - I.2.1. Professional Identity
 - I.2.2. Teachers' Professional Identity
 - I.2.3. Teachers' Professional Development
 - I.2.4. Teachers' Perception of the Teaching Profession
 - I.3. Teaching as a Profession
 - I.3.1. What is a Profession?
 - I.3.2. Teaching as a Profession
 - I.3.3. Teachers' Status
 - I.4. Reforms in the Israeli Education System
 - I.4.1. Definitions
 - I.4.2. Reform Types
 - I.4.3. Reforms in Israel
 - I.5. "Oz Le'Tmura" (Courage to Change) Reform
 - I.5.1. Reform Goals
 - I.5.2. Reform Characteristics
 - I.5.3. Reform Application and Implementation
 - I.5.4. Teachers' Professional Development
 - I.5.5. Teachers' Well Being

- I.5.6. Connection between the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform and Teachers' Motivation
- I.5.7. Connection between the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform and Teachers' Perception of the Teaching Profession
- I.6. Conceptual Framework
 - I.6.1. Gap in Knowledge
 - I.6.2. Main Theories and Concepts in the Research
 - I.6.3. The Visual Research Model

**II. CHAPTER II:
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY FOR
THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION OF
"COURAGE TO CHANGE" REFORM**

- II.1. Introduction
- II.2. Research Paradigm and the Research Approach
- II.3. Research Aims, Questions, Hypotheses and Variables
- II.4. Research Design
 - II.4.1. Research Stages
- II.5. Research Tools
 - II.5.1. Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview
 - II.5.2. Closed Ended Questionnaire
 - II.5.3. Focus Groups
- II.6. Research Population
- II.7. Triangulation
 - II 7.1. Advantages of Triangulation
- II.8. Validity, Reliability, Generalizability
 - II.8.1. Reliability
 - II.8.2. Validity
 - II.8.3. Generalizability
- II.9. Researcher's Role and Involvement in the Research
- II.10. Data Analysis Methods
- II.11. Ethical Considerations
- II.12. Summary

III. CHAPTER III: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

- III.1. Quantitative Findings
- III.2. Qualitative Findings
 - III.2.1. Content of the Interviews
 - III.2.2. Focus Group
 - III.2.3. Interview with the Chairman of the Secondary Education Teachers' Association in Israel., Mr. Ran Erez
 - III.2.4. Interview with the Minister of Education, Rabbi Shai Piron

IV. CHAPTER IV: DISCUSSION

- IV.1. Discussion of Quantitative & Qualitative Findings
 - IV.1.1. Discussion of Qualitative Findings
- IV. Discussion of the Qualitative Findings
 - IV.1.3. Discussion of Integrative Findings
- IV.2. Discussion of Main Research Concepts
 - IV.2.1. Development of a Definition of Perceptions of the Teaching Profession (and its Constituent Parts) in Congruence with the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform
 - IV.2.2. Developing a Definition of Motivation to Teach Including Reasons for Increased and Decreased Motivation
 - IV.2.3. Discussion of Factors that Help to Raise the Teachers Status Congruent with the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform
 - IV.2.4. Optimal Educational Reform
- IV.3. Summary of the Discussion Chapter

V. CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

- V.1. Factual and Conceptual Conclusions
- V.2. Applicable Conclusions
- V.3. Research Limitations
- V.4. Future Research
- V.5. Research Importance and Significance and its Contribution to Knowledge

References

	Appendices	266
Appendix 1:	Interview with Teachers - "Oz Le'Tmura" Interview	26
Appendix 2:	Research Participation Informed Consent Form	269
Appendix 3:	Questionnaire for Teachers In Israeli High Schools Participating in The "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform	
Appendix 4:	Table of Content Analysis	
Appendix 5:	"Oz Le'Tmura" Interview – Minister of Education	

List of Tables

Table 1:	Content and Process in Motivation (Vidislavski, 2011)
Table 2:	Major Motivation Theories
Table 3:	Work Motivation: The connection between work environment, teachers' perceptions, their motivation and functioning (Vidislavski, 2011).
Table 4:	Stages of Teachers' Professional Development – Different Approaches (Vidislavski, 2008)
Table 5:	Factors Influencing the Teacher's Professional Identity (Beijaardet, Verloop & Vermunt ,2000)
Table 6:	Old and new paradigms of teaching (Cheng, Mok&Tsui ,2001)
Table 7:	Characterization of profession (Beckman ,1990)
Table 8:	Advantages and Disadvantages of the Junior High Reform (Ministry of Education, 2003)
Table 9:	Reform Application Table (Pas, 2012)
Table 10:	Accumulating bonus credits due to assessment
Table 11:	Rewards to teachers
Table 12:	The research stages
Table 13:	Distribution by Index of the "Teaching Behavior" Variable
Table 14:	Distribution by Index of the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform Variable

Table 15:	Teachers who filled out questionnaires
Table 16:	Socio-demographic data emerging from the questionnaires
Table 17:	Participation in "Oz Le'Tmura" reform according to gender
Table 18:	Participation in "Oz Le'Tmura" reform by age
Table 19:	Participation in "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform According to seniority
Table 20:	Motivation for teaching in the beginning of the year and in the end
Table 21:	Teaching Behavior Findings
Table 22:	Findings regarding the perception of the teaching profession variables
Table 23:	One Way ANOVA – Beginning of the year
Table 24:	One way ANOVA – end of the year
Table 25:	Factors and Recommended Implementation for Improving Teachers' status (Ben-Peretz, 2009)

List of Figures

Figure 1:	Maslow's Scale of Needs (Maslow, 1954)
Figure 2:	Motivation Factors according to Hertzberg (Hertzberg , 1959)
Figure 3:	Teacher Motivation – Increasing Workload and challenges (Guajardo, 2011)
Figure 4:	Realized workload and manageable challenges (Guajardo, 2011)
Figure 5:	Psychological focus of teachers' professional development (Fox, 1995)
Figure 6:	Professional focus of teachers' professional development (Fox, 1995)
Figure 7:	Sociological focus of teachers' professional development (Fox, 1995)
Figure 8:	Psychological-Sociological focus of teachers' professional development (Fox, 1995)
Figure 9:	Altman and Katz's Factors which shape the Teacher's Perception of the teaching profession (Altman & Katz, 2001)
Figure 10:	Public Attitude to Teachers – "Yediot Achronot" Newspaper, October 4 th 2013
Figure 11:	The "Ofek Hadash" Model (Ministry of Education, 2008)
Figure 12:	The theory underpinning the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform

- (Friedman, 2003)
- Figure 13: The students as the heart of the reform (Erez, 2000)
- Figure 14: Reform Application (Pas, 2012)
- Figure 15: Teaching as a career (Erez, 2000)
- Figure 16: The research model
- Figure 17: The Model of the Research Population
- Figure 18: Teachers' dropout rates 1995 – 2005 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2006)
- Figure 19: Teacher's Behavior
- Figure 20: "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform – Means
- Figure 21: Comparison of teaching and work quality between the beginning of the year and its end in all groups
- Figure 22: Comparison of wages and work conditions between the beginning of the year and its end in all groups
- Figure 23: The teacher as a person between the beginning of the year and its end in all groups
- Figure 24: Comparison of differences between the beginning of the year and its end in all four groups
- Figure 25: Research Model - What is an optimal educational reform for teachers in the education system?

Abstract

In 2011, a new educational reform was introduced in Israel, known as "Oz Le'Tmura" (Courage to change). The main goals of the reform are: (1) Empowering high school teachers' status; (2) Changing the structure of the teachers' work week. (3) Professional development of teaching staffs. (4) Improving employment conditions and salaries. The researched topic has become most relevant with the implementation of the reform.

The research sought to examine how the reform has influenced motivation to teach and teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession.

The population in this Mixed-methods research consisted of practicing high school teachers and key figures in the education system in Israel. The research tools were (1) questionnaires distributed to about 260 teachers in the beginning and the end of the school year seeking to examine their attitudes to the reform; (2) Interviews with 30 teachers and key in figures the Israeli education system to assess the reform in depth; (3) A focus group with 10 principals leading the implementation of the reform for the fourth year.

The main research findings: (1) The status of teachers in Israel in light of the reform has gradually increased, but there is still a significant gap between the way in which teachers perceive their profession and the way it is perceived by the public; (2) The reform raises motivation to teach among the teachers who are part of the reform; (3) The perception of the teaching profession has changed direction for the teachers in the reform, and we must therefore reformulate it in light of the reform: for subject-matter teachers, homeroom teachers, and stake-holders in the school; (4) The teachers' work conditions improved significantly, and there is general satisfaction among teachers in the reform.

The conclusions are (1) the reform improves the quality of teaching, teachers' professionalism, perception of the teaching profession and teachers' status as they see it; (2) the reform has redefined the factors that shape the perception of the teaching profession and motivation to teach on three levels; (3) The reform has improved the teachers' work conditions and wages and has introduced educational strategic processes in the education system.

Key words: Teachers' Motivation, Perception of the Teaching Profession, Teachers' Status, "Oz Le'Tmura" (Courage to Change) Reform.

Introduction

To repair the world is to repair education" Janusz Korczak

When speaking about the wonders of the world, we have to add the phenomenon of reforms in education. This is a worldwide phenomenon which appears in the headlines once a decade. Numerous studies conducted in Israel and the entire world point at great similarities in patterns of reforms, across countries and cultures.

Numerous studies have investigated reforms around the world and the reasons for their success or failure. In Israel, throughout the years since the State was established, many reforms have been introduced and implemented in the education system from preschool to high school. None of the reforms was defined as successful in changing the teachers' status and making the teaching profession desirable and prestigious.

This led to the idea to conduct this research of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform, which was introduced to the secondary education system in Israel in 2011.

Until 2011, a high school teacher's week consisted of 24 frontal class hours at school and teachers' salaries have been quite low (relative to the average salary in Israel). In 2011, a new reform has been introduced, known as "Oz Le tmura" ("Courage to Change").

The main goals of the new reform are:

1. Empowering high school teachers' status;
2. Changing the structure of the teachers' work to 40 weekly hours including: work with small groups of pupils (no more than three pupils), personal work (with one pupil at a time), team work, professional development and availability to the pupils.
3. Professional development of teaching staffs.
4. Improving employment conditions and salaries.

The research focused on understanding the development of the perception of the teaching profession and what constitutes the motivation to teach. The goal is to find whether the reform causes a change in these perceptions.

The research topic has become most relevant with the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform. It is interesting to examine how teachers cope with the change. Will the reform goals be achieved? Will the teacher's status improve and change once

the wages are increased? Is teacher's motivation only intrinsic, or is the personal encounters and prolonged school day bring about a change in perception and increase teachers motivation to excel, offer higher quality teaching and be devoted to their work. How will all that influence the teacher's status?

Gap in Knowledge

The research focused on a new educational reform in the secondary system in Israel from 2011, and had not yet been studied in-depth to find whether its goals have been achieved. Some of the processes are long-term processes that must be examined over time, and some of the processes can be examined on how they occurred have over the past three school years. The goal of this study was to examine the processes that have occurred since the introduction of the reform.

This study aimed to bridge the gap in knowledge on how the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform affects the perception of the teaching profession and the motivation to teach.

Research Importance and Significance and its Contribution to Knowledge

This research was one of the first conducted on the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform in Israel and examined whether some of the aims of the reform were met after three years of its implementation.

Additionally, this research was one of the few that has examined changes in perceptions of the teaching profession and motivation to teach as a result of the introduction of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

This research is important in and of itself because it is innovative. Its contribution to knowledge in Israel and around the world is its redefinition of perceptions of the teaching profession, motivation to teach and factors to be addressed in order to raise motivation to teach as well as those to be avoided in order to ensure that teacher motivation does not decrease as a result of the new reform.

Its contribution to knowledge in Israel is that understanding all elements that comprise the reform will lead to its optimal implementation in schools that do not yet participate in the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform and will help principals of high schools with fitting and optimal implementation. In addition, the research provided practical recommendations for stakeholders (teachers, principals, the teachers' association and

Ministry of Education) a large proportion of which can be applied immediately and as such improve the execution of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

The research findings and conclusions are relevant to other countries and cultures where there are questions about motivation to teach and teachers' status.

The Research aims were:

- ✓ To examine how the reform has changed the teacher's perception of the teaching profession.
- ✓ To examine whether there has been a change in the teacher's motivation at different stages of the implementation of the reform.

The Research questions were:

1. What are the changes in the perception of the teaching profession that will take place upon the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?
2. What are the changes in the teachers' motivation that will take place upon the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?
3. What are the changes in the teachers' status that will take place during the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?

The significance of this research is in its contribution to knowledge in the field of education and teaching. This research is one of the first conducted on the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform. On a universal level, the research presents new definitions of the perception of the teaching profession, which can be applied in different schools, perceptions of policy on the part of all interested parties with regard to how teachers' status can rise and what can be done to advance this issue.

CHAPTER I: THEORETICAL ASPECTS ON TEACHER MOTIVATION, PERCEPTION OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION AND THE NEW "COURAGE TO CHANGE" REFORM

I.1 Theoretical Rationale

The issue of the status of the teaching profession and the teacher's status is of great significance in the western world and in Israel. Teaching cannot compete with the scientific-technological disciplines, as an attractive profession or in terms of financial

remuneration, and hence, it does not constitute a profession which attracts quality professionals. Teachers' enthusiasm and motivation, their commitment to the students' social and value-related education and to the advancement of their students' academic achievements are necessary conditions for the education system's success (Ben-Peretz, 2009).

To understand the research, two main concepts have to be examined:

1. How is the teaching profession perceived?
2. What is the motivation to teach?

This study engages in the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform that is in the process of implementation in the Israeli high school education system, and went into effect on September 2011.

The "Oz Le'Tmura" was intended, according to the Ministry of Education, to present an opportunity for significant change in different aspects of high school: pedagogical, managerial and on the teachers' conditions of employment. The reform goals are to advance the achievements of the education system for both students and teachers, to promote the schools and enhance the status of teachers.

The four main topics that this research emphasizes are the perception of the teaching profession, motivation to teach, the status of teachers and "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

I.2. Main Theories

A. Theories engaging in Motivation to teach

Evans (1998) pointed out the major reasons for raising motivation among teachers, including: professional ideals, job satisfaction, commitment and meaningful and varied work, and the teacher having the autonomy to perform his or her tasks. Additional factors are receiving positive feedback, involvement in decision making, and the provision of reasonable resources.

Evans (1998) and Arazi (2012) emphasized the important points for raising motivation among teachers and note 12 different categories below:

- ✓ Physical conditions and the availability of resources necessary to perform their primary task, teaching materials, guidance and so on;
- ✓ Feedback, appreciation, recognition, and rewards - not only financial rewards, but also collegiality and support as well as additional responsibility, and

autonomy. This leads to the teachers' positive self-esteem, self-respect and confidence;

- ✓ Using the best learning resources and curricula;
- ✓ Principals should treat them as professionals, and give them the freedom and professional autonomy to reach the goal (set by the principal) in the way they deem the best;
- ✓ Involvement in decision-making;
- ✓ Job security;
- ✓ Social appreciation on the part of factors within and without the school;
- ✓ Good interaction with the students;
- ✓ Professional development;
- ✓ Collegiality
- ✓ Recognition and feedback from inspectorate factors;
- ✓ Teaching and learning school culture.

In addition, Arazi (2012) noted the reasons for teachers' lack of motivation

- ✓ Unbearable workload;
- ✓ Overpopulated classes;
- ✓ An inappropriate work environment;
- ✓ Gender based discrimination.

It is difficult to find a systematic definition of motivation to teach in the literature, which contains all the complex parameters of the teaching profession. Most of the researchers note the factors that enhance motivation, what teachers' motivation relies upon, and what is important in motivation among teachers. Cohen (2011) explained that motivation to teach is the teacher's responsibility to "sell" the most boring knowledge to the student and make it interesting.

Together with the three key researchers, the research will establish the limited knowledge that exists in the context of this concept, and develop a profound definition for motivation to teach, and then use it to generate reasons for increasing motivation and reducing motivation among teachers in the context the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

B. Perception of the Teaching Profession

Darling-Hammond (1987, 1990, 1997, 2000a, and 2005) is a major researcher in the field of the perception of the teaching profession, and through her years of research, we can witness the development in the perception of the teaching profession, the understanding of the knowledge and skills required for teaching, and how it has in the course of history. He has noted that teachers should be able to work within the curriculum, but must know how to make decisions regarding the ways that he can use to reach the set goals by balancing the knowledge of contents and knowledge about the students. To reach these goals, teachers should be trained to combine knowledge, skills, behaviors, values, attitudes, self-reflection and, constant judgment.

Levy-Feldman (2010) listed six main components that make up the teaching of the profession:

- ✓ The component of content knowledge;
- ✓ The component of pedagogical skills that are specific to the field of content;
- ✓ The component of general pedagogical skills, meaning the didactic skills of class management, teaching and learning;
- ✓ The component of the teacher's commitment to the students' diversity and adjusting teaching to this diversity;
- ✓ The component of the teacher's ability to adjust to changes, develop professionally and investigate his or her teaching;
- ✓ The component of the teacher's cooperation with different factors and participation in communities of learning.

Aloni (2005) attempted to define the perception of the teaching profession from the perspectives of a culture, the student's personality formulation, and instilling values.

The teaching profession is a multifaceted profession with a great deal of complexity and a wide variety of roles. It is also a profession that has developed over the years along with the development of reforms in the education system in Israel. When a new reform, "Oz Le'Tmura", was introduced to schools, new challenges were created for teachers, and this, in turn, led to the development of new definitions for the roles of the teaching profession.

C. "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform

Reforms have an important role in the education system. They are required so that it can be adjusted to the changing needs. They constitute a catalyst for its renewal and rejuvenation. They keep the public's interest in it. The "Oz Le'Tmura" reform is a new reform that was introduced to the secondary school system in Israel in 2011 and has been applied gradually

Avner (2004) listed the main goals of the reform:

- ✓ Promoting teachers and the teaching profession
- ✓ Encouraging excellence and quality in teaching and learning
- ✓ Achieving optimal discourse and dialogue among all system participants.
- ✓ Individualized instruction – for advancing learners' achievements
- ✓ Creating a learning and teaching environment that allows for creating conditions for success

Friedman (2003) presented the infrastructure of the schools in the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform and the foundations upon which they rely: referring to teachers as individuals with a unique profession, acquired through unique education, certification and licensing, and a binding code of ethics. The teacher is the linchpin of the process of education and teaching, and therefore efforts to improve teaching and education should focus on the teacher, his or her skills and capabilities. Efforts to enhance the teachers' functioning should focus on providing an adequate work-environment and appropriate and sufficient resources, so that he or she can make full use of his or her capabilities to their fullest at the service of students and their well-being.

According to Erez (2000), the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform is a reform of revolutionary value-based and structural changes in the education system, which will lead to a breakthrough in the status of schools and the status of teachers in society

D. The status of teachers

The differences in status between teachers and other professions may be explained by three theories that explain the relationship between personal resources, social contribution, and social rewards: Functional Theory; Social Bargaining Theory, and Ecological (Environmental) Theory (Ben-Peretz 2009).

- ✓ Functional theory engages in the analysis of the social status of professions according to their contribution to society, which is generally expressed in the importance of the profession and the resources that the professionals offer.
- ✓ Social Bargaining Theory claims that prestige of a profession stems not only from the ownership of esoteric knowledge known only to those involved in it, and from the treatment of critical matters, but also the success of professionals in using their knowledge with high-status clients.
- ✓ Ecological (Environmental) Theory sees profession as a historical concept that is dependent on environmental conditions; therefore the power of a profession is not only due to the nature of the work, but the social organization of the professionals, political and economic conditions and technological innovations.

In Israeli research literature, Ben-Peretz (2009) noted the components of the status, which can be attributed to the three theories explaining the relationship between personal resources, social contribution, and social benefits:

- ✓ **Prerequisites to entering the profession** - the higher the requirements, the higher the status of the profession;
- ✓ **Professional knowledge acquired and possessed by the teacher** – some teaching fields that require particularly complex knowledge, and despite the fact that teachers also acquire professional knowledge and training during their work, the public, which is made up of former students, believes that teaching is a profession that anyone can practice and understand. This lowers the status and image of the teaching profession in the public.
- ✓ **The weight of the field in terms of the economic and technological resources allocated to it** - the larger the resources, the higher the status of the profession that receives them.
- ✓ **Working conditions and benefits associated with the profession** – the better the working conditions and the better the benefits.
- ✓ **Influence on people.**
- ✓ **The target audience.**
- ✓ **Contribution to society** - the contribution of teachers and the teaching profession to society is expressed in the system's success: the learners'

achievements and the system's ability to prepare its graduates for integration into the work-force, the economy and society. Accordingly, failures in national or international tests are perceived as a blow to the system's contribution to society and as harmful towards the teacher's status. There is no balance in the public opinion, between the positive aspect of the contribution to society and failures.

- ✓ **Society's understanding of the importance and necessity of the profession** - there is public recognition of the importance of the teaching profession, but it is not expressed in better teaching conditions and benefits.
- ✓ **An assessment mechanism.**

Glazer (2007) defines the three dimensions that shape the image of a profession in the public-eye, and therefore its status and authority:

1. Coordination between the terms by which any profession defines the problems it seeks to solve as well as the dominant values and culture;
2. The degree of consistency of practice within the professional community;
3. The degree of professional ability to solve problems within its jurisdiction.

CHAPTER II: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND VALIDATION OF "COURAGE TO CHANGE" REFORM

II.1. Introduction

This chapter presents the general principles, methods of action, rules and hypotheses underpinning this research.

Collis & Hussey (2003) define the methodology chapter as the chapter which relates to the overall approach to the research process from the theoretical stage up through the collection of data. In addition, they present the major issues in which the methodology engages: Why were these particular data collected? What data were collected? Where were the data collected? How were the data collected? How were the data analyzed?

II.2. Research Paradigm and the Research Approach

The paradigm chosen for this research is that of mixed methods as it is the most prevalent research approach nowadays (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

In the first research stage, an attitudes questionnaire was handed out to 260 high school teachers– at the beginning of the school year

In the second research stage, semi-structured, in depth interviews were conducted with 30 teachers who were divided into three groups: teachers in the first year of reform implementation, teachers already in the second year of the reform, and teachers in their third year of the reform.

In the third research stage, the questionnaires were administered to the same teachers at the end of the school year.

In the fourth stage, a focus group was conducted with 10 principals leading the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform for the fourth year. In addition, key figures in the Israeli education system were interviewed.

Data analysis in the first stage is quantitative-statistical and allows for generalizations from the samples to the entire population with certain limitations.

In the second stage, qualitative content analysis will be applied in order to identify the major themes which emerge from the interviews. In this stage, it is important for the researcher to understand in depth the emotions, thoughts and deliberations of teachers regarding the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

In the third stage, content analysis will be conducted to reaffirm the research results of the previous stages.

II.3. Research Aims, Questions, Hypotheses and Variables

The researcher is school principal coping with the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform, which is a new reform in the Israeli education system, and which raises various new dilemmas, which will be presented later on, faced with daily management of teachers and different motivations of teachers at different ages, marital status and health, with different seniority from very young teachers to the teachers nearing their retirement.

Accordingly the research aims were formulated:

The Research Aims

- ✓ To examine how the reform has changed the teacher's teachers' perception of the teaching profession.
- ✓ To examine whether there has been a change in the teacher's motivation at different stages of the implementation of the reform.

The current research seeks to add to the limited knowledge which exists in the field of the specific reform, deepen the understanding concerning the ways of assimilating "Oz Le'Tmura" in the 2013-14 academic year and its effects as perceived by teachers. This will be done with reference to a number of important issues that arose from previous studies, which require continued follow-up and research, clarification and expansion from the perspective of the researcher who is a school principal and encounters different situations in the field. Thus two main areas of research were marked: First, teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession; second, understanding the changes in professional positioning and motivation of teachers following the reform. Naturally, the picture emerging from the findings of the present research does not presume to be full or comprehensive, but rather, points to some major trends and insights.

Accordingly, the research questions were formulated.

Research Questions

1. What are the changes in the perception of the teaching profession that will take place upon the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?
2. What are the changes in the teachers' motivation that will take place upon the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?
3. What are the changes in the teachers' status that will take place during the implementation of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform over one school year?

Research Hypotheses

Appropriate research hypotheses were constructed for each research question:

The research hypotheses are as follows:

a. Teaching Behaviors

1. There will be a difference in the quality of teaching behaviors between the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, and its end amongst teachers working in their first year under the reform.
2. There will be a difference in the evaluation of teaching behaviors amongst teachers in accordance with the number of years they have worked under the reform.
3. There will be a difference in the quality of teaching behaviors between teachers working under the reform and those who have yet to join the reform.

b. Perceptions of the Teaching Profession

1. There will be a difference in the perception of the teaching profession between the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, and its end amongst teachers working in their first year under the reform.
2. There will be difference in perception of the teaching profession amongst teachers in accordance with the number of years they have worked under the reform.
3. There will be a difference in the perception of the teaching profession between teachers working under the reform and those who have yet to join in the reform.

c. Motivation to Teach

1. There will be a difference in the motivation to teach between the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, and its end amongst teachers working in their first year under the reform.
2. There will be a difference in the motivation to teach amongst teachers in accordance with the number of years they have worked under the reform.
3. There will be a difference in their motivation to teach between teachers working under the reform and those who have yet to join in the reform.

D. Teacher`s status

1. There will be a difference in the teachers' status between the beginning of the 2013-14 school year, and its end amongst teachers working in their first year under the reform.

2. There will be a difference in the teachers' status amongst teachers in accordance with the number of years they have worked under the reform.
3. There will be a difference in the teachers' status between teachers working under the reform and those who have yet to join in the reform.

Research Variables

The definition of research variables is directly related to the research aims.

Distinguishing types of variables is analytic and relates to the research aim.

The dependent variables in this study are:

- ✓ Motivation in teaching
- ✓ Perception of the profession
- ✓ Teaching behaviors
- ✓ Teachers' status

The independent variable in this research is: participation in "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

II.4. Research Design

The qualitative part of this research is based on semi-structured in depth interviews, which on the one hand, allow for methodical study of the topics and questions considered important and central in the research, and on the other hand, construction of categories and concepts that emerge from the field itself, by maximum opening to points and additional components that the researcher did not anticipate.

The research framework included in depth study of the attitudes and perceptions of teachers, principals and other stake holders in 5 high schools, who have implemented the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform in the first year it was introduced, in the second and third years.

In each school a number of the stake holders were interviewed: the principal, the vice-principal, subject-matter coordinators, teachers, class coordinators, and counselors, all with the intention of learning in-depth as much as possible about the teachers' attitudes, as perceived by the different staff in the same school. Altogether, 30 persons were interviewed in the framework of this study, during the 2013-14 academic year.

The quantitative part of the research includes closed questionnaires for the high school teachers in order to clarify their attitudes towards aspects of the reform according to the research aim, so as to attain a reliable general rule that may allow for explanation and prediction of the phenomenon (Kraus, Miller & Robin, 1983). The

teachers were divided into three groups: teachers in the first year of reform implementation, teachers already in the second year of the reform, and teachers in their third year of the reform. Additionally, a control group of teachers who were not under the reform was examined. The questionnaire was administered twice: once at the beginning of the 2013-14 school year and once at the end of the same year, with the aim of examining whether teachers changed their perception following the change in their job upon joining the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform and all its implications.

Once the results of the quantitative research were obtained an additional questionnaire was devised, for senior experts in the reform including:

The Israeli Minister of Education - In order to give the government's political angle.

The Head of the Teachers' Union - In order to give the Professional Association of Teachers angle.

In order to give the Institutional Angle a control group of principals implementing the reform in their schools was chosen by the Ministry of Education.

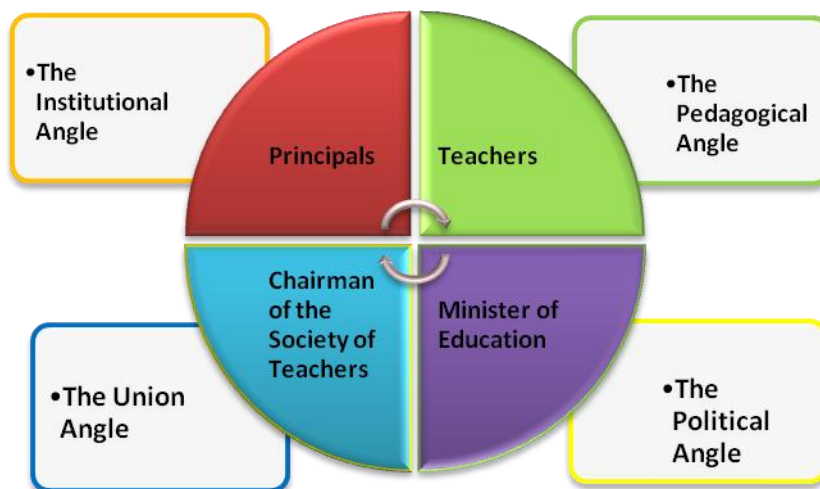


Figure 1 :The Model of the Research Population

II.5. Research Tools

The research tools used in this research include a semi-structured in-depth interview and a closed ended questionnaire.

II.5.1. Semi-Structured In-Depth Interview

For this study, a semi-structured in-depth interview was chosen in order to allow the informants to tell their stories about the phenomenon under study in their own style and language (Shkedi, 2003).

The questions in the interview were set in conjunction with the research goals and the research question, and were constructed based on the parameters that the researcher wished to examine.

II.5.2. Closed Ended Questionnaire

The tool for collecting quantitative data in this research is the closed-ended questionnaire. The common tool used for collecting data is the questionnaire (Bate-Marom, 1986).

Due to the many advantages of the closed-ended questionnaire, it was chosen as a tool for this research. All of the teachers were asked identical questions, the analysis of the data was conducted in cooperation with a statistics expert, and it was easy to compare the teachers' responses.

The questionnaire examined teachers' attitudes, perceptions and behaviors in light of the "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform in high schools. The questionnaire's source is Henrietta Szold Institute (The National Institute for Research in the Behavioral Sciences). The questionnaire was prepared by Prof. Friedman in 2000 when the reform's pilot was launched in 5 schools and he was the head researcher.

II.5.3. Focus Groups

For this research, an entrepreneurial group of 10 leading principals working under the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform - in an optimal manner - both uniquely and worthy of replication were chosen together with the Israeli Ministry of Education. The group dealt with a variety of effective ways of implementing the reform, through the presentation and analysis of models taken from their schools.

II.6. Research Population

The research population consisted of practicing high school teachers in Israel . A representative sample of 30 teachers in the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform was chosen from among them.

The interviewees were chosen according to the division into the following 3 groups:

1. Teachers in the first year of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform;
2. Teachers in their second year of teaching under the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform;
3. Teachers in their third year of teaching under the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

The groups were set in accordance with the stages of implementation of the reform starting in 2011 up through 2014, in order to examine the differences among the groups.

In each group, three sub-groups were formed according to teaching seniority:

1. Young teachers with 1-8 years of experience;
2. Experienced teacher with 9-15 years of experience;
3. Highly experienced teacher with over 15 years of experience.

II.7. Triangulation

There are three types of triangulation in the current research:

1. **Time triangulation** – the data was collected at different points in time in order to identify patterns and trends. This type of triangulation attempts to take into consideration the factors of change and process by utilizing cross-sectional and longitudinal designs (Louis, Lawrence & Keith, 2011).
2. **Methodological triangulation** – examination of the data collected by means of one method through another method. Methodological triangulation involves the use of multiple qualitative and/or quantitative methods to study the program (Guion, Diehl & McDonald, 2011) .
3. **Combined levels of triangulation** - This type uses more than one level of analysis from three principal levels used in social sciences, namely' the individual level, the interactive level (groups),and the level of collectivities, (organizational, cultural or societal) (Louis, Lawrence & Keith ,2011)

II.8. Validity, Reliability, Generalizability

II.8.1. Reliability

Reliability, in the traditional structure, means the possibility of repeating the same research steps and reaching the same results (Yin, 1984). In this research, the questionnaire was administered twice and the same indices were measured in order to strengthen the reliability of the research.

Furthermore, the study was accompanied by statistics expert in order to give maximum reliability to the analysis of the data. The statistics expert helped construct the questionnaire and indices, and followed the research while maintaining its reliability.

II.8.2. Validity

Shkedi (2003) maintains the issue of validity focuses on the question of whether researchers see what they think they see.

The work order was determined as follows:

- A. The research goals were set and the research questions were clarified in congruence with the goals;
- B. The questions were clearly formulated.
- C. The questionnaire was constructed with the statistics expert, in congruence to the research goals and questions, which were based on a pilot study conducted in five schools, written by Professor Friedman.
- D. A correct combination was set for the research strategy, combining quantitative and qualitative research.
- E. The research methods that were selected are capable of handling the research questions and achieving the research objectives.

II.8.3. Generalizability

Generalization is an external validity (the ability to apply the results to other cases, to a different situation, a different time, different methods of measurement, etc.) and is highly emphasized in positivist studies. In qualitative research generalization is less relevant - the goal is to understand one phenomenon in depth.

This research will attempt to generalize from a sample of teachers to the entire population of teachers that will enter the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform in the coming years, while realizing the difficulties posed by a research where the samples are small and generalizability is limited. In addition, it is ultimately the reader who decides if the results of one research have significance in other contexts.

This research used *generalization about the population*, meaning that the generalization was based on the construction of a representative sample and by using reliable and valid research tools the questionnaire was distributed and saved and anonymity of the participants was maintained. Based on the above, we can say that the generalization of the findings of this research to the population is on a good level.

II.9. Researcher's Role and Involvement in the Research

In the qualitative part of the research, the researcher is an integral part of the investigation, and is involved as a participant observer. However, he or she must separate himself or herself from the researched situation in order to rethink the meanings of the experiences.

In this study, the researcher has a direct and profound connection to the research topic. The researcher is a high school principal who has implemented the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform since its first year, and despite all difficulties, the researcher still believes that it will introduce a significant change in the Israeli education system. Some of the interviewed teachers teach in the same school as the researcher, and there is the concern that they will want to impress the researcher and please her, and thus tell her what she wants to hear and undermine the reliability of the research.

In order to overcome this difficulty and try to minimize the researcher's involvement, the interviews were recorded and transcribed, and every time a deviation occurred the researcher took the interviewee back to the original issue, while providing encouragement and saying that feelings and opinions will remain solely for the educational purposes of the research. An additional part of the interviewees are teachers from the same city where the researcher works, and are not directly connected to her, meaning that the researcher found the middle ground between involvement, integration, and empathy and detachment and critical thinking (Woods, 1996).

On the other hand, the researcher has access to the interviewees. She must develop a close relationship with them, one of trust and friendship, identification, sensitivity to their interests, and the ability to appreciate their feelings and cognitive dispositions. The researcher was indeed reflectively involved, created a connection based on closeness and trust, and opened the way to meaningful dialogue by knowing the teachers beforehand and selecting significant teachers who speak freely, and that she respects: teachers who love their job, and find meaning in it.

II.10. Data Analysis Methods

In the quantitative section of the research, descriptive statistics were calculated by a statistics specialist, using quantitative tools on questionnaires that were distributed at two time points (the beginning of the school year and the end of the school year). The analyses included:

- ✓ Calculation of means;
- ✓ Standard deviation of the research variables;
- ✓ Analysis of the sample's structure;
- ✓ Analysis two types of differences - one way ANOVA and t-test analysis of differences between groups

In the qualitative part of the research, content analysis was conducted according to the following 7 stages (Kacen & Krummer-Nevo, 2010):

1. Holistic reading of the data
2. Organizing and focusing data
3. Breaking the data into small units
4. Reconstruction of the data and/or theoretical conceptualization
5. Repeated holistic
6. Verification of findings
7. Writing

After a separate analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data, the researcher combines the two analyses in order to reach conclusions.

II.11. Ethical Considerations

The research process includes many ethical issues (proper and warranted behavior). The ethical issues usually arise around and during the time of conducting the research,

and constitute an important component that demands the researcher's attention while preparing and conducting the research.

The ethical issues focus on the particular study, the specific time, with the specific group, in relation to the question of right and wrong in the conduct of the group or the individual.

In this research, the researcher did the utmost to act in accordance with the rules of ethics (as much as possible). The researcher attained written informed consent of each respondent to be interviewed and each one of the interviewees received a detailed explanation of the procedures.

The researcher asked for consent to record the interview and to those who opposed, she patiently explained at length the reason for the recording and so attained their assent. The researcher guaranteed confidentiality by omitting the name of the interviewee. During the interview, the interviewer respected the interviewee, listened to her, asked only pertinent questions and repeated the respondent's words to reflect what was said.

CHAPTER III: DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The methodology chapter introduced the qualitative and quantitative research tools. The qualitative research part includes two research tools: interviews and focus groups; the quantitative part of the research includes a questionnaire administered to teachers at different stages of their joining the reform. The questionnaire was administered at two time points, the beginning of the year and its end, so as to identify changes throughout a whole year, in conjunction with the research hypotheses. Both the questionnaire and the interviews examined variables from the main four worlds of contents addressed in this research: motivation to teach, teaching behavior, perception of the teaching profession and participation in the "Oz LeTmura" reform (between 0 and 3 years).

III.1. Quantitative Findings

The research hypotheses point at differences created as a result of the teachers' joining the "Oz LeTmura" reform in the three main research measures: motivation to teach, perception of the teaching profession and teaching behavior. Moreover, the research hypotheses maintain that the changes in these measures are ongoing throughout the teacher's activity within the reform's framework. In order to examine these

hypotheses, statistical tests were conducted in the attempt to either confirm or refute the hypotheses. The tests conducted were t-tests for paired samples and one way ANOVA. The findings of these tests are presented in this part of the chapter.

The first hypothesis in all of its parts claims there will be differences between the values identified in the beginning of the year and those identified in its end among teachers who have joined the reform in the research year (2013-14).

To examine this hypothesis, t-test for paired samples was conducted between the beginning of the year and its end. We expected to find a significant difference between the two time points. Following are the result of the analysis.

Table No. presents the findings pertaining to the motivation to teach variable

Table : Motivation to teach in the beginning of the year and in the end

Number of years in reform	n	Beginning of the year		End of the year		t
		M	S.D	M	S.D	
None at all	11	3.99	0.63	3.96	0.64	.38
First year	26	3.84	0.68	3.96	0.58	-0.92
Second year			0.60		0.57	1.75
Third year						1.05

* p< .05. ** p< .01. *** p< .001

The findings in Table No. 1 reveal no significant differences between the beginning of the year and its end for each of the years of joining the reform. At the same time, we can see that for teachers in the first year in the reform, there has been an improvement between the beginning of the year and its end. In other words, during the first year, the reform has a positive influence on the teacher's motivation. In the second and third year, we can see motivation is maintained throughout the year. Furthermore, it is evident that with participants who have not joined the reform, there was a certain decrease in motivation between the beginning of the year and its end. In contrast, no differences in motivation were found between teachers who have joined the reform and those who have not. The mean score for teachers who have not joined the reform was high at the beginning of the year (Mean 3.99), whereas in the end of the year, the

mean score decreased and was identical to that of teachers in the first year in the reform.

The findings presented in this table do not confirm the research hypothesis regarding the differences between the beginning of the year and its end among teachers in their first year of participating in the reform, as the difference is not significant. Nevertheless, the finding supports the direction presented in the hypothesis. In conjunction with the hypothesis, there has been a significant improvement in these teachers' motivation. Moreover, this is the only group of teachers where an increase in motivation was apparent. In all other groups, motivation decreased (3.84 in the beginning of the year and 3.96 in its end). We may conclude that although the hypothesis was not confirmed significantly, the findings do suggest the direction marked by it is right. In other words, each year in the reform, motivation to teach improved in the beginning of the year and is maintained through the end of the year.

In summary of the quantitative findings, it can be stated that:

- A. The motivation of teachers participating in the reform improves the longer they have been participating in it;
- B. No differences were found in motivation between teachers who are participating in the reform and those who have not joined the reform;
- C. In the teaching behaviors category, there is an influence on teachers in all three years for all measures, the most prominent being: individual teaching hours, performing tasks in support hours, attitude to the students and relationships with the staff.
- D. There is a tendency for improvement in the perception of the teaching profession category with teachers in their first year in the reform, regarding most measures examined between the beginning and the end of the year, which testifies to a change in the perception of the teaching profession according to the number of years of participating in the reform.
- E. In the perception of the teaching profession category, there is an improvement in wages and work conditions as the teacher has been more years in the reform. Regarding improving the quality of teaching and the teacher as a person, there is a significant difference among teachers participating in the reform, just as there are big differences among the teacher who have not joined the reform.

- F. Differences were found among the three research variables (**motivation to teach, perception of the teaching profession and teaching behavior**) among teachers according to the number of years in the reform, with most measures that were examined.

III.2. Qualitative Findings

In this chapter, the findings of the two qualitative research tools, which were described in the methodology chapter, will be presented:

- a. Interviews with thirty teachers, divided according to seniority and length of participation in the reform.
- b. Focus group - ten principals from a focus group set up under the auspices of the Israeli Ministry of Education.
- c. Interviews with "key individuals" in the education realm.

III.2.1. Content of the Interviews

During the analysis of the data, four central themes emerged from the transcriptions of the interviews.

- a. **The status of teachers in Israel** including the points of view of the teachers themselves, Israeli society and ways of improving the status of teachers in Israel.
- b. **The "Oz Le'Tmura" reform** including the categories of advantages and disadvantages of the reform, reasons for participating in the reform, recommendations for making the reform more effective and whether the reform will lead to a change in the status of teachers in Israel.
- c. **Perceptions of the teaching profession** including how teachers, students and society in general perceive the profession.
- d. **Motivation to teach** including what raises and lowers teacher motivation.

First Theme: The Status of Teachers in Israel

There is a difference in the way in which teachers themselves and the public view the status of teachers and it is necessary to address and close this gap. Teachers are proud of their standing, but the public perceive them differently.

With regard to ways in which teachers' status can be raised, these include working conditions, pay and responsibility and both the way in which people are accepted into teacher training and certification should be examined.

Second Theme - The "Oz Le'Tmura" Reform

It appears that most teachers participated in the reform in order to improve their working conditions and to be part of their school system. Teachers are satisfied with the reform, with the changes that have been introduced and their enhanced personal terms and conditions. Whilst there are suggestions for efficiencies and improvements, as in all new reforms, a level of satisfaction has been achieved. The interviewees testified that the status of teachers has improved somewhat as a result of the reform and the quality of behaviors in the field has improved.

Third Theme - How the Teaching Profession Is Perceived

This finding is congruent with the research hypothesis as well as the quantitative findings that the perception of the teaching profession amongst teachers who have participated in the reform has improved on a number of significant points compared to teachers who have not participated in the reform, where there is no change.

Fourth Theme - Motivation to Teach

The factors that raised teachers' motivation were identified as follows: positive feedback about their work; students' success in examinations, professional development, job security, belief in their educational way, the ability to listen and solve problems, involvement in decision making and personal curiosity.

Three core subjects leading to a **decrease** in teachers' motivation emerged from the interviews with teachers: organizational, personal and interpersonal factors and issues with the concept of the role.

In summary, analysis of the interviews and in accordance with the research hypotheses it can be stated that:

- a. The reform raises the motivation to teach amongst those teachers who participate in the reform in a number of ways such as salary, closeness to students, professional development.

- b. Teachers find it difficult to define what the teaching profession is and attention needs to be given to extend the understanding of the parameters of the profession.
- c. Teachers who participate in the reform demonstrate a significantly better understanding of the concept of teaching and its parameters whereas those who do not participate in the reform have shown no change in understanding.
- d. The gap between teachers' perception and the general public's perception with regard to the status of teachers is very wide.
- e. **All of the interviewees** believe that the reform will lead to a change in the perception of their profession.
- f. Most teachers joined the reform in order to improve their working conditions, which have indeed been improved substantially, and there is a tendency towards being satisfied, in contrast with teachers who do not participate in the reform and for whom conditions have remained unchanged.
- g. The interviewees testified that there is a trend whereby the status of teachers has improved as a result of the reform and that the quality of teaching behavior has improved.
- h. Motivation to teach can be found on three main levels: the pedagogical level, the level of students and the level of demands of the system.

In conclusion of the qualitative findings, and in accordance with the research hypotheses, we can say that:

- A. The status of teachers in Israel in light of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform has gradually increased, but there is still a significant gap between the way in which teachers perceive their profession and the way it is perceived by the public.
- B. The "Oz Le'Tmura" reform raises motivation to teach among the teachers who are part of the reform.
- C. The perception of the teaching profession has changed direction for the teachers in the reform, and we must therefore reformulate it in light of the reform: for subject-matter teachers, homeroom teachers, and stake-holders in the school.
- D. The teachers' work conditions improved significantly, and there is general satisfaction among teachers in the reform.

In conclusion of the Findings chapter and in correspondence to the literature review and the research questions, three main issues emerged to be discussed in the following Discussion chapter:

- A. Developing the definition of the perception of the teaching profession, in all its variations, in accordance with the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.
- B. Developing the definition of motivation to teach, including the factors that increase and reduce motivation.
- C. Discussion of the factors that will help enhance the status of teachers in accordance with the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform and suggestions for improving the reform.

CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS

V.1. Factual and Conceptual Conclusions

Factual and conceptual conclusions regarding each of the research's variables are addressed: perceptions of the teaching profession, teachers' status and motivation to teach congruent with the research questions.

A. Conclusions Relating to Perceptions of the Teaching Profession

Factual conclusions:

The research findings show that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform contributes to improved quality of the teaching profession and professionalization of teachers. Collegial relationships with other staff members strengthened and enhanced teachers' feelings of professionalism.

Another conclusion was that teachers must be prepared for a different timetable and full working week, just like all other sectors in the economy, especially teachers in their first year of participation in the reform.

Conceptual conclusions:

The key conclusion is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform contributes to improved teachers' perceptions of the teaching profession and the development of teachers who are more professional and emphasize values.

Another conclusion is that the reform provides opportunities for systematic ongoing professional development for teachers with an emphasis on giving them additional skills - advice and training to implement all aspects of individual teaching hours.

The conclusion drawn from this research is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform redefines the perceptions of the teaching profession in high schools.

B. Conclusions Relating to Motivation to Teach

Factual conclusions:

The "Oz Le'Tmura" reform improved teachers' working conditions and salary and as a result their motivation to teach.

Another conclusion is that teachers' motivation remains and increases if they receive effective feedback from their organization. Effective means of providing feedback to teachers must be set up.

Conceptual Conclusions:

A powerful conclusion from the research is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform has led to changes in schools, is concerned with teachers' well being and professional development; it constitutes an impetus for empowering teachers and their becoming experts and as such contributes to raises their motivation to teach.

Another conclusion is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform constitutes an organizational platform for educational initiatives, autonomy, creativity and renewal among teachers thus contributing to raising their motivation to teach.

An important conclusion of the research is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform creates strategic educational processes in the education system and redefines motivation to teach on three levels: pedagogical quality, placing students at the centre and demands of the system.

C. Conclusion Regarding Teachers' Status

Factual conclusion: The "Oz Le'Tmura" reform has improved teachers' status as a result of better working conditions and salary.

Conceptual conclusions: An important conclusion from the research is that the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform advances the teaching profession and professionalizes it.

V.2 Applicable Conclusions

A. Applicable Conclusions for Principals

1. Teachers should be allocated consecutive teaching support hours in their schedule so that they can finish their work during their working hours.
2. It is important to include pedagogical meetings and school events in weekly working hours as much as possible so as to respect teachers' personal time.
3. It is important that every school examines its priorities and sets rules for allocation of individual teaching hours that include: fair allocation of hours to students of all levels, division between permanent and occasional extra-lessons with consideration given to teachers' wishes.
4. It is important that principals clarify to all stake holders what is expected of them so that they can plan their work days accordingly.
5. From the findings that emerged, it is necessary to nurture subject coordinators so that institutional staff meetings are used to structure rich, varied, well thought out and interesting lesson plans together with the pedagogical staff.
6. It is very important for principals to create a legitimate school dialogue about the difficulties caused by the reform and allow some flexibility in its implementation.
7. Too little of the individual teaching hours resource have been allocated to advancing excellence or enrichment groups because the highest priority has been given to raising the number of matriculating students rather than ensuring better quality results and advancing excellence - principals should allocate a percentage of time to pursue this aim.

B. Applicable Conclusions for the High School Teacher's Association

1. Improvements should be made to the reform to make it more flexible so that it will meet the needs of teachers in all disciplines and roles.
2. There is room to create different models for specific subjects (Hebrew language, mathematics, English) or for stake holders who require a different

distribution of hours. This is because there are some subjects that require more individual teaching hours than others.

C. Applicable Conclusions for Teachers: From an analysis of the research findings, the key practical conclusion at teacher level is that it is recommended that they be meticulous about proper time management as soon as they participate in the reform.

D. Applicable Conclusions for the Ministry of Education:

1. Teacher training has not prepared teachers how to use individual teaching hours; they do not have enough expertise in diagnostic processes, managing personal and caring conversations or individualized teaching. It is extremely important to ensure that teacher training is modified to fit the requirements of individual teaching hours.
2. Continue to improve teachers work conditions such as: providing regular food arrangements for teachers, bonuses, additional work corners, suitable place to rest, etc.
3. The question of in-service courses has not received appropriate consideration particularly with regard to the requirements of the reform and there is still no suitable personally tailored program for teachers.

V.3. Research Limitations

Every research study has limitations deriving from constraints that become apparent while conducting the research. In this section, research limitations deriving from its tools, researcher's position population and generalization are presented:

- a. **Research tools** - the research questionnaire was taken from the Szold Institute and constructed by Professor Friedman (in 2000) when the pilot for the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform took place in five schools. Only some of the components of that questionnaire were relevant to this research, which may have resulted in incompleteness. In order to deal with this limitation, the questionnaire was validated by a statistics expert.
- b. **Research population** - 260 teachers across the country responded to the questionnaire. Distribution of the questionnaire was random. In order to reach such a group, there was a problem of them all answering the questionnaire at

two different but consistent points in time. Moreover, the internal distribution resulted in more men than women responding to the questionnaire, which could result in a slight deviation in the findings.

- c. **Researcher's position:** Every researcher, despite best efforts to be objective, is likely to have some involvement in the research. Possible bias in this research may derive from the fact that the researcher implemented the reform in her school, is part of a principals' discussion group and works with them and as such, there is a possibility that the researcher's involvement was high. In order to neutralize the researcher's involvement, efforts were made in advance to carry out a large part of the research in neutral places, outside school and in the evening.
- d. **Research Generalization** - this research is one of the first carried out about the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform with regard to motivation to teach, perceptions of the teaching profession and teachers' status and as such, it is not possible to compare it to other studies. This is also an advantage as it addresses a gap in knowledge in these areas. In order to minimize this limitation, use was made of valid and reliable research tools integrating quantitative and qualitative methods, as presented in the methodology chapter.

V.4. Future Research

This research is one of the first about the reform with regard to perceptions of the teaching profession and motivation to teach. It is therefore recommended that the following studies about the reforms should be conducted:

- a. With regard to teachers - How does the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform affect teacher burnout and what can be done to reduce it?
- b. With regard to pedagogy - What is the place of individual teaching hours in an optimal educational reform and how will it promote better student results?
- c. This research did not deal with parents and as such the influence of the educational reform on all interested parties should be examined.

V.5. Research Importance and Significance and its Contribution to Knowledge

This research is one of the few that has examined changes in perceptions of the teaching profession and motivation to teach as a result of the introduction of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

This research is important in and of itself because it is innovative. Its contribution to knowledge in Israel and around the world is its redefinition of perceptions of the teaching profession, motivation to teach and factors to be addressed in order to raise motivation to teach as well as those to be avoided in order to ensure that teacher motivation does not decrease as a result of the new reform.

Its contribution to knowledge in Israel is that understanding all elements that comprise the reform will lead to its optimal implementation in schools that do not yet participate in the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform and will help principals of high schools with fitting and optimal implementation. In addition, the research provided practical recommendations for stakeholders (teachers, principals, the teachers' association and Ministry of Education) a large proportion of which can be applied immediately and as such improve the execution of the "Oz Le'Tmura" reform.

A unique contribution of this research to knowledge in the realm of universal education is the model, developed by the researcher as a result of the research findings, which suggests what an optimal reform is and how it can be applied. The research presents perceptions of policy on the part of all interested parties with regard to how teachers' status can rise and what can be done to advance this issue. Improving teachers' status is extremely important in other countries and cultures in the 21st century.

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