HOMEWORK – THE HOME AND THE SCHOOL IN ISRAEL: PARENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN HOMEWORK

Bruria Schaedel and Yovav Eshet
Western Galilee College, Israel

Abstract

This study examines parental motivations to become involved in homework. The sample consisted of 1237 parents, of them 493 Jewish and 744 Arabs, of 4th and 6th graders from 10 Jewish and 10 Arab elementary schools in northern Israel. The findings indicate that parental help in homework declines at the upper grades of the elementary schools. Parents' motivations to become involved in homework are not linked with the child's gender, the family's structure (traditional or single parent) or their educational background. Parents become involved in their children's homework because of their perception of their responsibility (role construction), they secure the resources to help the child and believe it will improve his learning (self-efficacy) and as a result of the teachers' initiations to the parents to become involved in their children's homework. The analysis of the research underlines the differences between the Jewish and the Arab parents' perceptions of their involvement in homework, relating them to the cultural and social circumstances of the Arabs being a minority group within the state of Israel. Recommendations are suggested to promote schools' effectiveness in developing mutual trust, respect and communication with parents that will encourage greater cooperation between Jewish and Arab schools and homes.