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Syncretism in Heterogeneous Teachers' Rooms

by

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Abstract

In heterogeneous staffrooms diverse teacher workforce is found: teachers favoring conservatism and traditional teamwork forms and innovative teachers integrating novel teamwork forms. Thus far, the research centered on several types of collegial relations and defined a collaboration continuum, from weak to stronger forms. Similarly, the studies focused on several likely scenarios developing in the teamwork between traditional and modern teachers: a gap-inducing dominance of pedagogical innovation in a heterogeneous staffroom that undermines the traditional teachers' group, and, alternatively, traditional teachers' disinclination to identify with modern teachers and adherence to conservative teamwork. This pioneering study defines the third possibility: heterogeneous staffroom evolving from opposition and conflict into coping and compromise toward syncretism. Through the syncretic process, teachers change and adapt, get closer to the other's worldview, and adopt new teamwork forms aligned with school norms. The qualitative method chosen for the study examines traditional and modern teachers' and principals' perceptions. The research tool is an open semi-structured interview. The sample represents the entire teacher and principal population of the south of Israel. In total, 60 teachers and 20 principals were interviewed. The study's findings demonstrate that collegiality forms, previously defined as weak, are perceived as strong, meaningful, and conducive to teamwork in heterogeneous staffrooms. A professional learning community is also a platform for creating a syncretic process between teachers and administration, wherein teachers adapt to each group's differences and develop an inclusive, flexible, open, reconciled syncretic culture – a prospect of agreed-upon teamwork.

Keywords: traditional teachers, modern teachers, school principals, syncretism, teamwork, heterogeneous teachers' room, qualitative research

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In honor of the senior teachers who brought with them longstanding traditions, and in honor of the outstanding teachers of our time.

Each one of us is a link in the chain of Israeli creation that enables creativity in our lives in the sphere of education.

Together, in this wonder of a mix, we are creating the soundtrack of education in Israel, which is a truly magnificent tribe of brothers and sisters.

Teachers of yesterday teach children of today the material of the future.

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CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION

INTRODUCTION: SYNCRETISM IN HETEROGENEOUS TEACHERS' ROOMS

The school staffroom is not merely a room but rather a mirror, reflecting relationships in teamwork or their absence. Heterogeneous teachers' rooms contain many disagreements, misunderstandings, conflicts, and clashes on various issues, including the teamwork forms and characteristics.

Despite the advantages of cultural diversity in the work of heterogeneous staff, disagreements exist between traditional and modern teachers on the issue of teamwork forms. For them, any form of teamwork is a daily reality wherein they have to function while facing challenging and very substantial challenges.

Teamwork in teachers' rooms can be perceived as forced and contrived, with fixed and rigid regularities, damaging the teachers' autonomy and judgment and indicative of the administration's mistrust toward them. Teamwork can also be perceived as organized and planned and adapted to the school culture of trust, respect, and understanding to the extent that would allow for new structures and arrangements to advance it.

The syncretic model as a conflict-management tool can assist heterogeneous teachers' rooms in teamwork, agreed upon by all teachers and the principal. According to the syncretic model, mutual influences develop gradually because cultural contact is a reciprocal process, wherein all groups, maintaining interactional ties, are given to change with the mediators' help. According to the syncretic model, the dominant group's cultural values – the principals' group – might also change, resulting in compromise, adaptation to several *organized* teamwork types, and prevention of coerced and contrived teamwork. These will be integrated through negotiations based on mutual compromise and adaptation.

The current study's goal is an in-depth examination of traditional and modern teachers' and principals' preferences concerning teamwork types and tracing the changes in teamwork forms, occurring in each group: from weak forms, such as individualistic culture, solitary work culture, balkanism; through stronger forms, namely, collegial work, professional learning community, *storytelling*, and *a good colleague*.

In addition, this study will explore which types of teamwork are agreed upon by all groups. The study examines the contribution of the syncretic model, as a heterogeneous staffroom conflict-management tool, to the teamwork approved by both the teachers and the principal. Moreover, it explores the principal's role in generating a consensus on a teamwork form in the heterogeneous teachers' room, and how a syncretic process can affect the situation in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

The present study examines a subjective concept (preference for teamwork forms). Therefore, as a research method, the qualitative paradigm was chosen that enables us to listen to teachers' and principals' individual voices and allows for a profound understanding of their complex behavior. The study's population comprised state elementary school teachers and principals in the south of Israel. This population represents the three different sectors existing in the state education system of the Negev (the Jewish schools, subdivided into state secular and state religious schools, and Moslem-Bedouin schools). The primary research tool in this study is an open semi-structured interview. The interviews aimed to reveal and understand how the respondents experienced, described, and interpreted teamwork in their unique terms.

The study's practical contribution is twofold: it contributes to both theoretical and practicable research areas. Firstly, the study contributes to the theory on teamwork types because it reexamines the teamwork formed defined as weak in the academic literature. The present study's novelty lies in its view of

the *storytelling* and *good colleague* collegiality form as a strong form, significant for the teacher community and conducive to the advancement of a structured and stable syncretic process in heterogeneous teachers' rooms. Secondly, this study contributed to the research of the *contrived collegiality* and *organized collegiality* concepts and the implications of choosing a specific teamwork characteristic for teacher-principal interactions. Thirdly, the current study divulges a broad theoretical and practical knowledge about the syncretic model in a distinct context, wherein it can serve in conflict management in heterogeneous teachers' rooms. This model was investigated in the context of immigrants in the process of absorption in contrast to the receiving side, but never in the context of the teachers' room.

Lastly, this study can be used in guidance and counseling of both novice and experienced principals in their work with teaching staff, conflict management in heterogeneous staffrooms, and building a functioning teamwork form. In addition, it can be most beneficial for novice and experienced teachers alike and in-training teachers who might misinterpret specific processes established within the walls of the teachers' room.

Furthermore, the study is practically significant for teacher-and-principal- training academic institutions because it adds enforced and contrived work forms to their agendum along with planned and organized work forms and the implications of choosing these forms. Said institutions can use the study to train educators in identifying the components of teachers' needs in teamwork when adopting the syncretic model that predicts success in conflict resolution between traditional and modern teachers. Training staff in this issue will raise the awareness of the challenge that heterogeneous staffrooms present and equip teachers with practical tools and effective strategies in coping with this challenge.

This paper includes four parts: the first part, introduction, surveys the literature in the field. In this part, we will present the theoretical framework that focuses on weak and strong teamwork forms, on characteristics of teamwork in teachers' rooms – organized-planned and enforced, and contrived. Also, the first part includes the theoretical survey on the syncretic model and its contribution to heterogeneous staffrooms containing modern and traditional teachers.

The second part of the paper presents the methodological aspects. The qualitative paradigm, the most appropriate paradigm for the current study, will be explained. The second part describes the sample and the sampling method, the research method (in-depth interviews that reveal the subjective meaning teachers ascribe to teamwork forms and teamwork characteristics in the teachers' room), the research procedure, the interview analysis method, and the author's place as a researcher employing the qualitative research method

The third part of the paper presents the study's findings – seven themes. The nature of qualitative research allows for a wealth of findings. Indeed, the present study bears extensively on enforced, organized, and planned teamwork forms, on teamwork types favored by traditional teachers, modern teachers, and principals, and on integrating a syncretic model in conflict resolution in heterogeneous teacher rooms. Also, this part presents teamwork forms in a spirit of the syncretic model inherent in compromise and adaptation between all the groups.

The fourth part of the paper will present a summary of the findings, and within it, a discussion will be held, based on the previous studies, on the conclusions we reached. The paper concludes with stating the study's empirical and practicable significance, including suggestions for further research, and practical suggestions that could assist

the decision-makers and the education system employees in all matters related to traditional and modern teachers' work on building mutual agreements in choosing the teacher's room teamwork form.

The researcher, who comes from the field of education, is an elementary school principal from the Southern District in Israel. He founded and managed a bilingual school comprising Jewish and Muslim teachers and students – a heterogeneous bilingual community. The researcher chose the subject of the study due to the challenges he faced in leading heterogeneous teachers' rooms in the schools he managed, and due to his desire to integrate a model that will help achieve mutual agreements in the heterogeneous teachers' room through compromise and adaptation of all its participants.

CHAPTER ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1. Heterogeneous Teachers' Rooms and the Challenge They Present

In heterogeneous staffrooms diverse teacher workforce is found: from teachers leaning toward conservatism and traditional work methods and up to innovative, tech-savvy teachers who prefer modern forms of teamwork and integrate information technology and communication into their work (Levi & Baratz, 2016; Rotem & Avni, 2008, 2009).

Little (1996) claimed that most of teachers' emotions stem from their relations with colleagues, principals and other adults, and from the occurrences in the classroom that involve their students. Similarly, Nias (1989) asserted that most negative feelings do not arise from interactions with students, but rather from interactions with other adults, particularly colleagues; teachers described negative emotions emerging from their interaction with peers. Thus, out-of-classroom factors significantly impact teachers' feelings, especially the factors the teacher interacts with on the basis of status distinctions.

The academic literature demonstrates that variance in staff members affects the staff performance. Numerous approaches and different viewpoints can contribute to optimal teamwork; however, excessive ethnic and gender difference might be detrimental and lead to negative consequences. If the difference is in expertise and skillset, it will have a positive impact on the team performance. The heterogeneous structure of the school staffs is more beneficial for the performance and innovation enhancement, than the homogeneous structure (Drach-Zahavi & Somech, 2011).

Moreover, in case the human diversity in a team is based on the professional aspect, the team members' more diverse fields of knowledge and expertise will apparently

enrich the team with more perspectives, and with the ability to integrate those into the overall effective and more innovative performance in their work (Kearney et al., 2009); all of the above is contingent on the team members' willingness to integrate different perspectives into their work, and on whether they are open to hear and be exposed to other ideas. Furthermore, teams composed of people with mutually complementing abilities and with different areas of expertise increase their chances of solving complex problems or of generating innovative ideas (Paulus et al., 2001).

Conversely, the difference between the team members might be detrimental to the team productivity. This type of difference is related to demographic factors, such as religion, ethnicity, race and gender. Thus, inasmuch as people tend to be drawn to those they deem similar to themselves, the team composed of people of different demographic backgrounds is likely to engage in limited collaboration, leading to low teamwork effectiveness (Jackson et al., 1995).

Lack of intercultural harmony in the team's immediate social environment causes team members of other cultures to immediately perceive ideas raised in a specific culture as unsuitable and to dismiss them. This impairs creativity that requires combining ideas from different cultures (Chua, 2013). However, it is important to know that intercultural harmony per se does not warrant creativity under any circumstances.

Disregard of cultural differences damages teamwork and impedes the possibility of cross-fertilization between team members. Multiculturalism holds a great potential for cross-fertilization; yet, in order to realize this potential, we must attend to multiculturalism considerately and sensibly, not let it take its own course. While the advantages of cultural versatility are manifest in the global teamwork, it will not occur instantly, but rather after a relatively lengthy period of collaborative work. This is

because the work of mutual coordination between team components needs to be done first, so that members can act as a true team – and some time will pass until they arrive at coordination. Until that occurs, we must watch out for the thorns of versatility, lest they should hinder the effort to arrive at coordination. Hence, these thorns must be addressed in due time (Shimoni, 2014).

As stated, staffrooms comprise both traditional and modern teachers, as well as experienced and new teachers. According to Frankel's study (2010), teachers in the beginning of their career have numerous concerns, due to being still unknown in the teachers' room; they feel rejected by different groups within the teachers' room (Frankel, 2010).

There are vast differences between experienced and novice teachers. Experienced teachers possess substantial knowledge that usually stems and develops from experience and from tenure of their position. This knowledge will be apparent in "code words", unfamiliar to novice teachers and, therefore, difficult for them to interpret and to understand. It is impossible to acquire such knowledge through passive presence, because this knowledge is built through active engagement in the discourse. Hence, the new teachers might feel that they do not belong, or as outsiders.

In the teachers' room we can certainly chance upon complex encounters, charged with problems of intergenerational or professional gaps, where each side examines and criticizes the opposing one. Many high-ranking senior teachers create - whether deliberately or not - a covert partition between themselves and the new teachers in order to protect their privacy; the novice teachers find it difficult to get around it. Even so, interaction between senior and young teachers is absolutely vital (Ben Peretz & Schonmann, 2013).

Teachers' room is the place where significant professional learning occurs, where teacher, - mainly, beginning teachers, - begin to understand the professional significance of their work, the professional characteristics of the vocation they have chosen to pursue. In this setting novice teachers soon begin to understand the quality of the professional interactions required of them (Hunter, Tinning, Flanagan & McDonald, 2011). Thus, the teachers' room is perceived as an important space that merits a more profound examination of the occurrences within its walls, because it is the place wherein learning can be beneficial for both new and experienced, traditional and modern teachers.

Strayhorn (2010) wrote extensively on what he called *cross-cultural misunderstandings*; in his opinion, they are unique to the heterogeneous teachers' room. Thus, for instance, a conflict might arise due to sensitivity to one cultural value and negligence toward another. Misunderstanding can occur also as a result of the difference in meaning that different groups ascribe to the situation, developing in the teachers' room. Another situation Strayhorn describes is *cultural disequilibrium.* It is a situation wherein one participant experiences *cultural shock* caused by another participant's behavior or interpretation. Strayhorn claims that attributing interpretation and meaning is a fertile ground for conflicts, negotiations, resistance and generalizations (Strayhorn, 2010).

Consistent with Asher's view (2007), heterogeneous teachers' rooms should serve as an arena, on which one can talk about anything, because that is a place where stereotypes and prejudice are widespread. The teachers need to be allowed to replace the silence spaces with active and challenging discourse. Strayhorn believes that the dialogue between the teachers' identities must be active and constant (Strayhorn, 2010).

1.2. Traditional and Modern Teachers

This study, as stated, deals with the relations between modern and traditional teachers in the staffroom. In the professional literature modern teachers are depicted as leading innovational pedagogy by means of innovative instruction tools, including instruction models, differential responses, new instruction methods and new alternative evaluation tools. These teachers are described as those who significantly changed concepts, attitudes and personal conduct following the introduction of innovative technologies into the school. They are characterized as teachers who initiate and implement innovative teaching and learning processes through wide use of the web-based environment (Wadmany, 2017). The 21th century instruction is more than acquisition of knowledge in one discipline (Mishra & Mehta, 2016). Skills of the higher order, such as critical thinking, creative problem solving, teamwork and communication, became vital to the success of the modern society. It becomes more and more obvious that the most important element in modern pedagogy in the realm of education is not only teachers transferring knowledge and students receiving it. In this era, teachers must teach their students how to deal with concepts and how to interpret evidence and ideas; how to think and act as leaders, and, finally, how to create distinct insights and valuable knowledge for the good of the society (Mishra & Mehta, 2016).

Within the perception of the need in instructional change the concept of innovative pedagogy was defined. It means combination, unification and integration of the three main pedagogical processes in the field of education: creation of innovations, their achievement and application. In other words, combination of development, monitoring and integration of innovations (Stukalenko et al., 2016). Innovative pedagogy is a new way of teaching that - unlike the pedagogy widespread today – surprises students. It

stems from the reflection that it is pedagogic, intellectual, creative, psychological and continuous. It shapes itself gradually, by means of highly influential multi-layered process, related to audience and to discipline or technology. Put differently, pedagogical innovation is suited for change that it defines as a deliberate action, aimed at presenting something original in a given context. It is pedagogical, as it seeks to significantly improve students' learning in the situation of interaction and interactivity (Walder, 2015).

Traditional instruction is seen as dull and routine, compared to modern instruction, described as learning accomplished through a technology-supported, shared-adventure approach (Wadmany, 2017).

The modern teacher acquires new skills she would not need in traditional instruction, including technical skills required to operate technological tools available in the school and digital literacy skills (Wadmany, 2017). Additional skills are necessary in the spheres of management and organization of learning through the use of technological tools, of assessment of learning in the digital environment, as well as expertise in facilitating discussion and distance learning (Kameshel-Bell, 2001; Halevi, Colander, Hurvitz & Balvin, 2008).

As a result of the development of technologies and of changes arising from it, modern teachers understand and implement teaching skills and tools that will enable their students to cope with a dynamic technological environment, that was not always accessible in the education system in the past (Gal, 2019).

The difficulty in integrating information technology also relates to the teacher's attitude toward change. The diffident traditional teacher is on the one end of the continuum, further along the continuum the inquisitive teacher is found; and on the other end of the

continuum is the leading modern teacher – who believes in change, is able of leading the process of implementation in the school and of being supportive of the teachers in need of assistance (Kochavi, 2010).

Traditional teachers are characterized as those who fear or are anxious about technology, or as personally predisposed to stalling in adopting innovations (Selwyn, 2003). Also, traditional teachers' response reflects ideological protest against the technology, and their preference for traditional ways of life (Turkle, 1984).

Modern teachers are not deterred by the necessity of constant learning and staying up-to-date; however, they exhibit a need for supportive frameworks that would guide them along the path. Also, they understand they should perform learning in teamwork and in collaboration with other teachers in the school (Wadmany, 2017).

1.3. Teachers of the Southern District

The education of the Southern district of Israel can serve as research field for exploration of multicultural issues and of the syncretic model, because it is composed of numerous and diverse groups: ethnic, national, religious and cultural. Currently, the national interest is central and apparent, and, perhaps, the most acute of all other sociological sections. As has been indicated, the Bedouin and the Jewish children study in separate educational structures – the Arabic and the Hebrew – from kindergarten and until high school graduation. It is only in higher education institutions that Arabs and Jews study together; this situation can summon a fertile and productive multicultural encounter and, moreover, serve as an opportunity of a different and positive experience for the Arab students, the experience of inclusion, dissimilar to what they have experienced prior to it.

Jewish teachers teach Hebrew as a second language in Bedouin schools, whereas

Bedouin teacher almost never teach in Jewish schools.

The Bedouin population of the south of Israel has characteristically low scores in both

the socioeconomic and education *Meitzav* tests[1]. Student dropout before graduation is a

serious impediment to development and advancement in the society. These youngsters'

earning potential is considerably lower in comparison with high school graduates; their

chances of moving forward, of entering academic studies and of earning adequately are

nonexistent (Abu Saad, 2016). In effect, the high student dropout rate perpetuates the

inferior social position of the Bedouin society in Israel; this phenomenon necessitates a

thorough examination of the causes and possible solutions (Abu-Asba et al., 2013).

In the Bedouin sector, found at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder in Israel, the

youth are expected to begin their working life at a young age, not necessarily continue

to higher education studies; therefore, many students leave school in order to help

support their family (Abu Saad, 2016).

There are significant gaps between the Jewish and the Bedouin schools of the Southern

district in Israel, manifest in educational resources, in almost total absence of budget

for the establishment, acquisition and operation of computer labs, libraries and sports

facilities in schools (Belikoff, 2014).

The Bedouin students' dependence on school as the source of their nurture, personal

growth and full realization of their inherent potential is considerably higher. The

students of characteristically weak background are more sensitive and vulnerable to the

poor physical conditions and are apparently positively influenced by improved

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[1] Annual standardized external tests on socioeconomic status and academic achievement in Israeli
schools

physical conditions. The educational physical environment, as well as educational resources accessible to the students, impact both the school climate and the educational outcomes (Belikoff, 2014).

The dropout rate among the Bedouin students of the Southern district is higher than among the students of the Jewish sector; moreover, it is higher than the dropout rate in the entire Arab sector (Muslim Arabs who are not southern Bedouin, Christian Arabs, Druze and Circassians). This data is not surprizing in light of the fact that the Bedouin sector of the south of Israel is considered to be the poorest sector in Israel. Also, notwithstanding the vast transformation that began in the past and is still continuing in the present, the Bedouin society in the south of Israel is still characterized by strong components of tribalism, adherence to the traditional and collective values, and, in case of conflict, of prioritizing preservation of traditional values over acquisition of education (Abu-Rabia-Queder & Weiner-Levi, 2010, Al-Karinawi, 2010; Abu Saad, 2016; Sharabi, 2014).

The socioeconomic status of the Bedouin society and the observance of traditional values can certainly be the key factors explicating the phenomenon of student dropout from school (Abu-Asba et al., 2013).

In the past decade numerous programs were developed, aimed at making learning environments into need-supportive environments (Aelterman et al., 2014; Cheon, Reeve, & Song, 2016; Su & Reeve, 2011).

The premise of the universality allows to initiate these and other similar programs among teachers and students of the Bedouin sector as well, and to expect significant results (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015). However, follow-up studies should strive to attain a more profound understanding with regard to the distinct characteristics of support for

teachers and students' needs in the Bedouin sector. For example, support for the sense

of affiliation on the part of novice teacher from the Bedouin sector leads to outcomes

different from those experienced by novice teachers in the Jewish sector (Kaplan &

Madjar, 2015). Another example emerging from various studies shows that freedom of

choice is seen as a pivotal strategy for generating the sense of autonomy among those

who grew up in the western individualistic culture; however, it is less meaningful for

the Bedouin youth who were raised and nurtured in a traditional collective society that

does not sanctify individualism but cherishes cooperation and group fraternity instead.

These young people undergo a strong autonomous experience when it becomes

possible for them to realize their will without a conflict with their immediate

environment, and not necessarily when they are allowed to choose (Katz, 2003; Katz &

Assor, 2007). These cultural differences must be considered in the development of

programs aimed at supporting teachers' or students' needs.

Furthermore, the Bedouin in the Negev are required to live without infrastructure and

services, such as connection to the central power grid of the country, roads, public

transportation, garbage disposal and municipal representation, and education and

school systems that do not meet the population's needs. Worst of all is the absence of

possibility to ask for building permits; hence, the all the houses are made of tin – one

of the cheapest materials – and are always in danger of demolition. People of the Arab

population of the Negev feel severe frustration. The leadership is frustrated, as it fails

to bring the state to allow the community to live in dignity. The adults are frustrated

because they cannot pass on either property or culture or means of living to their

children. The young are frustrated because they have to face the discriminating

economy and the education system that creates no opportunities for a life of success

and dignity. It follows from the motives in the policy to transfer the land in the use of Arab-Bedouin citizens to the government; that is done by means of maximal possible concentration of Arab-Bedouin population (without seeing them as partners with equal rights both in the spaciality and in shaping their future (Raanan, 2019).

1.4. Conflict Management in Heterogeneous Teachers' Rooms

The arena wherein the teacher is found nowadays is replete with conflicts. Teachers are required to cope with complex ethical, social and emotional issues (Kozminski & Klavir, 2010).

Team is a group of people required to rely on group collaboration, if each member wishes to reach optimal success and achieve the goal (Dyer, 1987). This definition relates to the central conflict existing in every teamwork, between the individual's and the group's needs. It asserts, seemingly paradoxically, that the individual's usefulness is expected to grow in light of the team's success. Actually, teamwork centralizes its members' strengths so that its overall effect is greater than the sum of each individual's results (Dor Chaim, 2012; Dyar, Dyar & Dyar, 2013).

This definition reinforces the fact that team is a distinct and new entity, different from the sum of its components.

According to Magen-Nagar and Steinberger's study (2016), most interpersonal conflicts among the school teacher group fall within the sociocultural realm. It appears that teachers are troubled by sociocultural situations or by interpersonal relations between entities operating in the school: students, parents, peer teachers and the principal. The teachers' interviews, conducted in said study (Magen-Nagar & Steinberger, 2016), also yield the description of conflicts as conducive to a fertile

discourse in the context of learning, and to the improvement of the organizational quality; but might also induce stress, anger and even alienation.

Back (2013) asserts that collaboration and dialogue can deepen the understanding of conflicts. Developing ties with a peer teacher fosters self-confidence, enables active engagement and contributes to the process of professional identity consolidation (Chong et al., 2011; Olsen, 2008).

Paradoxically, the desire to avoid confrontations exacerbates conflicts in the teachers' room. The teaching staff will begin to feel affiliation and acceptance only following their members' sharing their feeling of rejection with each other and the feeling of being acknowledged as legitimate. Fear of rejection at the school causes teachers to avoid sharing their hardships and distress because they risk rejection exposing their authentic thoughts and feelings (Dor Chaim, 2018).

1.5. School Principal's Role in Heterogeneous Teachers' Rooms

The school principal is the absolute authority in the school; they hold a wide range of responsibilities (Reeves & Burt, 2006). One of the principals' central areas of responsibility is competent day-to-day conflict-management on issues of daily work routine, decision-making, absences, employee turnover, and more (Barda, 2015). The principal holds two key functions: (a) building a collegial and supportive work environment that learns and grows from the community practice; (b) supervising the teaching staff and organizing the teachers' professional development processes (Avney Rosha, 2008).

Principals build a management team and foster the intermediary leadership, locating and identifying people suitable to lead the school teams being the principals' "casting" responsibility, unique to their job (Hackman, 2002).

The principal's refrainment aggravates the tension among teacher groups (Dor-Chaim, 2018). We must not shy away from or evade conflict; but rather examine it, attempt to profoundly understand it, and acknowledge it as part of life (Dor-Chaim, 2018). The literature on psychoanalysis does not view the conflict in the teachers' room negatively but as a motivational force for change, creativity, and development. Also, psychodynamic organizational approaches see the phenomenon of discord in an organization as a force that can lead to productivity, innovation, and creativity in work (Rioch, 1970). The principals should cease to recoil from conflict and search for ways to explore its significance, acknowledge it and live with it. That way, anger, frustration, and lack of satisfaction prevalent among teachers may be viewed as opportunities for growth, change, and innovation, not only as a threat and a peril (Dor Chaim, 2018).

In the Japanese tradition of *kintsugi,* it is customary to mend broken pottery pieces with gold. Thus, they see breakage lines as a unique part of the item's history that supplements its beauty, the message being that conflict or fracture is a natural part of life, not the end of it.

Furthermore, the multicultural dimension in the school holds an inherent potential for conflict outbreaks among the educational staff. Hence, in the multicultural dimension, the principal needs to transfer pedagogical knowledge and be competent in conflict management via *culturally-sensitive intervention* (Haelion et al., 2018).

A heterogeneous school principal must be alert and sensitive to both the distinct and silenced voices in the staffroom. They must provide room for clear meanings, but also allow for situations of ambiguity (Haelion et al., 2018).

Strayhorn maintains that the issues of communication or silence are critical because they embody power gaps. Teachers experience speaking and speechlessness as

manifestations of obligations and rights. Therefore, we must be sensitive to situations

of "overtalk" or "silencing" (Strayhorn, 2010). He posits that the leadership must be

especially sensitive in examining who becomes empowered or weakened by

discussions on the issues of gender, ethnicity, or race. Similarly, silencing specific

contents also poses indirect reference to what is allowed and prohibited in the teachers'

room; and creates an opening for misunderstandings and misguided interpretations.

Difficult conversations in heterogeneous teachers' rooms, as Strayhorn described them,

necessarily give rise to teachers' reflective experiences. Therefore, being a professional

who works among different cultures means, frequently, being a master acrobat,

walking a tightrope while learning how to avoid falling and crushing (Ben David,

2009).

The principal who does not support the creation of social relations between peers

remains indifferent to disagreements and conflicts emerging in the teachers' room and

inhibits developing conflicts by intervening and creating feuds within the staff which

will evoke negative emotions toward themself (Bernstein, 2006).

1.6. School Principal's Role in Leading Teamwork

The development of teamwork in the school largely depends on the principal's

actions (Fullan, 1991; Nias et al., 1989). The improvement of the school is inherent in

the principals' willingness and ability to take part in team development and to

determine that their task is to change professional practices, beliefs and understandings

among the school employees while at the same time pursuing predefined goals

(Fielding & Schalock, 1985).

According to Hackman (2002), the leadership has many functions in leading and

developing school teams:

First, establishing structures and regularities for teamwork and allocating time and knowledge resources necessary for the development of the staff and the achievement of the goals they set for themselves. The teaching staff cannot function optimally if the schedule for meetings is not established in time and anchored in the system.

Second, the principal's example of continuous learning as a way of life through involvement and participation in the professional learning processes of teacher teams in the school.

Third, locating and identifying the people suited to lead school teams. The coordinator function transcends the "performer" skills of coordination and organization and requires an ability and an interest in leading the learning processes.

Fourth, creating clarity regarding the staff's composition and powers, joint-team tasks, and well-defined goals requiring its members to work together to achieve them and share responsibility.

Fifth, shaping and developing the school culture of collaboration and conscious responsibility shared by all the students, characterized by relations of trust and openness, recognition of the teams' efforts and achievements, and celebration of their successes (Hackman, 2002).

A team leader significantly influences what transpires in the team, including the measure of creativity, knowledge sharing, solution of the problems assigned to the team, its members' actions, and the team's level of commitment to the organization (West, 2012). The team leader needs to steer toward a pleasant and emotionally attentive work environment so that the team becomes more efficient, creative, collaborative, mutually supportive, and, consequently, capable of successfully coping with their complex tasks. The team leader must ensure that the team is composed of qualified people needed to perform the team tasks and train the team to accomplish

their tasks. Training includes direct interactions with team members aimed at helping them to coordinate the work effectively to perform the task (Oplatka, 2015). Team leaders' impact on the emotional climate of the team is meaningful. They should serve as a model of optimism, self-confidence, enthusiasm, and attentiveness to the team members if they wish to encourage the team to put effort into the realization of the tasks assigned to them. Team leaders must know how to cope with fears that might sprout among the staff members (West, 2012). Dispersed leadership facilitates the establishment of high-performance teams in the school – encouraging each team member to feel like a collaborative leader (Goodall, 2013).

Moreover, although team teaching is a collective skill, it requires strong leadership, whose purpose is to shape and develop the team. Leaders committed to solving problems and dealing with conflicts effectively should also commit to learning the skills that will enhance the team's ability to recognize their potential for organizational learning. Leaders should prevent occurrences of defensive dialogue and teach the team members how to use a dialog properly (Oplatka, 2015).

1.7. The Secret is in the People

Too often, the school improvement procedures focus on searching for a miracle cure – new programs, new directives that will change the school appearance, novel study materials, changes in the timetable, innovative methods of reporting student achievements, etc. Nowadays, we recognize that it is people who drive change. Education authorities attribute most of their results to human resources; common sense compels us to focus on nurturing this human resource, central to any improvement effort. Ernst Boyer (as cited in Sparks, 1984) pointed out:

> When you talk about school improvement, you're talking about people improvement. That's the only way to improve schools unless you mean painting the buildings and fixing the floors.

But that's not the school, that's the shell. The school is people, so when we talk about excellence

or improvement or progress, we're really talking about the people who make up the building (p.

9).

Emphasis on people is the most effective way of changing any organization. It can

be argued that organizations do not change; only people change. An organization can

transform only when a sufficient number of its employees change (Fullan, 1993).

If this premise is correct, and the human aspect is, indeed, the key to improvement, the

principal's essential role is to facilitate the creation of conditions allowing employees

to develop and thus enable the school to achieve its goals more effectively. One of the

central aspects of school improvement lies in the principals' willingness and ability to

take part in team development and determine that their task is to change professional

practices, beliefs, and understandings among the school employees while striving to

achieve a predefined objective (Fielding & Schalock, 1985).

1.8. Learning about the Concept of Workteams

The research literature speaks of two principal dimensions of teamwork: (a) task

performance, i.e., processes related to goal achievement, performance methods, work

distribution, work organization, decision-making, and performance assessment via a

feedback process; (b) relationships, i.e., the human component in teamwork that

includes interpersonal communications channeled into team members' expression of

feelings and opinions - both regarding themselves and their peers (Ayalon, 1989;

Griffin & Ebert, 2010; Dor Chaim, 2011).

A team is composed of two or more people who depend on one another in their work

for a defined period, and whose purpose is to accomplish shared tasks related to the

goals of the organization they work in (Colquitt et al., 2011). The number of team

members suggested in the literature is approximately ten; however, the literature also

documents teams of two and up to 25 members. Although, large-size teams lose many advantages of teamwork (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993).

Oplatka (2015) distinguishes between workgroups and work teams. Groups are perceived as clusters of two or more people, engaged in reciprocal action and interdependent, who join together to achieve a specific goal. The workgroup members interact first and foremost to share information and reach decisions that will help each member to perform their share of responsibility. In contrast, work teams create positive synergy through a shared effort. An individual's effort contributes to a higher level of performance than the team individuals' combined input (Robbins & Judge, 2012). We can consider the team to be a specific type of group. Work teams are distinct in that the interactions between team members are more profound than in a group, and they revolve around defined tasks. Hence, team members are interdependent regarding receiving data, and materials and taking actions necessary to fulfill the tasks for which the team members congregated (Colquitt et al., 2011). Moreover, the shared commitment to the task implementation distinguishes a group from a team. Without committing, the group functions as a gathering of individuals, whereas a commitment turns the group into a strong unit of collective performance. Put differently, groups evolve into teams when the leadership is shared by all, the responsibility is collective, the group develops its goal or mission, problem-solving turns into a lifestyle, and the effectiveness is evaluated via shared team products (Hughes & Terrell, 2007). Oplatka (2015) relates several central characteristics of work teams:

Clear purpose: Given that team members are supposed to implement specific changes, they must define the shared team goals and mission, i.e., the team's raison d'etre.

Outcome orientation: Work teams are oriented toward creating a specific product or service and, therefore, need feedback on their action; namely, team members should know to what extent their work contributes to their organization's goals.

Interdependence: Team members depend on each other in attaining shared goals; they are professionally interdependent. Without collaboration, the team will not fully achieve its goals.

The team's lifespan: Teams are supposed to exist for extended periods – at times, a year at a minimum – to create teamwork. Otherwise, we deal with *ad hoc* teams only, not characterized by most of the issues further discussed in this section.

A certain level of autonomy: Team members enjoy autonomy given to them by the organization's management in conducting their work and the processes occurring within the team. However, work teams are part of the broader organizational social structure and should act by the norms and rules of the organization (Oplatka, 2015).

In reality, the development of work teams is far from being linear, given that, in many cases, teams are formed without a clear understanding of what the team's actual goals are and how to achieve them. It is important to remember, though, that work teams will form only in schools where teamwork is valued, whereas the schools that emphasize hierarchical authority and clear-cut boundaries between taught disciplines enforce teams that tend to fail in their work (Benaya, 2017).

1.9. Cultures of Collaboration and Teamwork

Rosenholtz (1989) distinguished between two types of school culture: "moving" and "stuck". "Stuck" schools have characteristically lower achievement scores. In such schools, teachers considered teaching technically easy; they typically worked independently and rarely asked for help. In contrast, in "moving" schools, teachers deemed instruction difficult, repeatedly asked for help, and never ceased to learn how

to teach. Collegial support and communication boosted their confidence and convictions regarding the teaching methods and learning.

In "moving" schools, the premise is that teaching improvement is a shared, not personal, enterprise, and analysis, evaluation, and experiences of sharing with peers are the work conditions that allow teachers to improve (Rosenholtz, 1989).

Numerous studies validated Rosenholtz's seminal work. Collaborative schools are more successful than individualistic. Teachers working in collaborative professional cultures tend to achieve better results than teachers working alone (Fullan, 1999).

Ben-Peretz and Schonmann's study (2013) yielded evidence of a close link between the social function and its impact on professional collaboration, communication channels between teachers, interpersonal relations, and the school climate in general. The study showed that most teachers understand the connection between the supportive atmosphere in the teachers' room and the improved quality of personal and professional relationships in the school, regardless of academic achievement levels.

The connection between teachers' perception of the staffroom and student achievements appears to be a two-way connection: reinforcing the social function in the teachers' room will allow the developing teachers' professionalism - leading to higher student achievements - and, going forward, will strengthen the social function per se in the teachers' room (Ben Peretz & Schonmann, 2013).

According to Judith Warren Little (1990), collaboration is limited to assistance which occurs only when expressly requested, and an unexamined and unexpanded pool of ideas that reproduces and reinforces the status quo. In her opinion, teamwork will eventually advance improvement by exploring challenging ideas concerning the practice, although other types of collaboration might serve as its preconditions.

Little asserts that the secret lies in the successful synchronization of the formal and informal aspects (Little, 1990). If informal collaboration is left to run its course, it might become unstable and unfocused. In contrast, if no attention is devoted to informal elements of the collaborative culture in the school, collaboration might become embarrassing, unnatural, and even burdensome.

According to Jennifer Nias (1989), personal and professional lives need to be combined and fused - via open expressions of gratitude, sharing, and discussing ideas and resources. Collaborative cultures are found in every aspect of life in the schools that enjoy them: in gestures of courtesy, jokes, glances that convey sympathy and understanding, hard work and showing personal interest in the school corridors and outside the classroom, acceptance, and merging of personal and professional life, supportiveness, open expression of gratitude, and the sharing of ideas, and resources (Nias, 1989).

In Nias's view, collaboration is not made of projects, specific events, meetings, and bureaucratic directives. A collaborative culture is made of qualities and approaches disseminated routinely daily through the relations among the staff. Help, support, trust, and openness lie at the heart of these relations; however, there is a commitment to attribute value to people as individuals and to appreciate the group to which the person belongs (Nias et al., 1989).

In collaborative cultures, teachers do not reconcile with failures and do not fear them; instead, they expose and raise them for discussion to get help and support without wasting time and energy on insecure defensiveness. A collaborative culture requires a broad agreement regarding educational values; however, it tolerates disagreement and, at times, even actively encourages it within its set boundaries. Schools with a

collaborative culture are characterized as places wherein hard work, profound and shared commitment, dedication, group responsibility, and a sense of pride in the institution develop (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1999). Interpersonal trust among staff members facilitates collaboration, reduces the need to monitor one another's behavior, and unites the members around the belief that other staff members will not do them wrong.

In this situation, staff members are ready to take risks and be in vulnerable positions. Yet, trust in the team cannot exist without the prevalent climate of trust in the organization (Robbins & Judge, 2012).

Furthermore, collaborative cultures recognize the teacher's mission and provide her with space to express herself. The examination of values and cultures is not an isolated event but a continuous process encompassing all the school domains. The goals do not only hold distinct characteristics but also gain most of their strength through their shared development with other peers (West, 2012).

Collaborative cultures cherish individuals and individualism because they appreciate people on their own merits and the way they contribute to the group. Collaborative cultures build social and, consequently, also professional capital in the school community. They accrue and disseminate knowledge, ideas, aid, and assistance that help teachers become more effective, strengthen their confidence, and encourage them to be more open and actively engage in the effort toward change and improvement (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

Collaborative cultures respect and revere the teacher as a person. Staff members willingly share some aspects; leaders also are encouraged to do so. Uncertainties are manifested, and personal circumstances are examined, such as disease, loss, and

individual hardships. The individual is not assimilated into the group but realizes themself through it. In the culture of active collaboration, the purpose, and the personality – the essential elements of teacher aptitude – are fully manifested and develop in positive directions (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

Little (1990) outlined a collaboration continuum - from weak through strongest forms: four variants of collegial relations between teachers. The first three are relatively weak forms of collegiality: (a) scanning (cursory glance) and storytelling (exchange of ideas, anecdotes, and gossip), (b) aid and assistance (upon request, usually), (c) sharing (materials and teaching strategies) and (d) working as a team – when teachers teach, plan or explore teaching methods together – the strongest collaboration form.

Thus, collaborative cultures are generally more effective than noncollaborative cultures. However, not all forms of collaboration are of value. As stated, the professional literature claims that it is best to avoid certain collaboration forms because they entail a waste of time, and their impact is limited. Other collaborative cultures are intermediate stations to get through on the path toward more ambitious forms of collaboration.

a. Collegiality

Little (1982) investigated the essence of collegial norms in depth. She asserted that the term "collegiality" is vague and thus difficult to conceptualize. Ideologically, it is founded on the anticipation that each interaction that breaks teachers' loneliness will enhance, this way or another, the knowledge, the skills, the sense of judgment, or the commitment they make in their work; and will lead to the improvement of the collective ability of groups or institutions (Little, 1990).

Cunningham and Gresso suggested a synonym for collegiality – community:

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> When people have a sense of community, they belong and have pride in the group... Some of
> the characteristics of a collegial group are honesty, trust, loyalty, commitment, caring…
> Collegiality is characterized by the amount of open and honest interaction within the group and
> a clear and quick understanding of what group members are saying… Collegiality exists when
> each member feels free and encouraged to participate, and when members feel that they share
> equally in influencing the group (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p. 99-100).

The community members' ability to better understand each other is linked to the system of shared norms developing over time. The norms in teachers' rooms develop in the daily interaction between teachers. The norms of speech, dress, and function in routine activities can be viewed as norms of collegiality. People who maintain connections within a group tend to agree in areas related to interactions between them. Norms can also be concealed, implied, and hard to identify. The more explicit, clear, and lucid the norms are, the easier it is for new teachers to join and integrate into the staff. The perception of the norms as a system of unwritten laws and expectations of specific behavior provides the framework that explains some of the difficulties, dramas, and tensions that might unravel in teachers' rooms. Thus, a norm is a way of behavior, implicitly or explicitly accepted in a specific reference group; any deviation may be interpreted as criticism and an attempt to change or resist it (Ben Peretz & Schonmann. 2013).

Different studies demonstrate that collegiality reduces teacher turnover – one of the phenomena caused by burnout and thus increases the teachers' belief in their abilities, improves productivity, aids in finding meaning in problem-solving, and better coping with situations of uncertainty (Robinson, 2015; Ham, 2011; McClure, 2008).

Furthermore, it is safe to claim that collegiality improves teachers' job satisfaction. A different study found a substantial difference between levels of teacher burnout based on collegiality characteristics, such as relationships with colleagues and the principal (Koruklu, Feyzioglu, Ozenoglu-Kiremit & Aladag, 2012).

In their book, Cunningham and Gresso (1993) state that "…collegiality is the basis for group spirit and the bonds that holds a group together, allowing it to achieve extraordinary success. Once team spirit develops, the power of the team will work in almost any situation" (p. 111).

Robinson (2015) defines collegiality as a range of behaviors that reflect caring and concern for other people. Collegiality also includes work through collaboration. Bergman and Stein Cohen (2018) found that a high level of collegiality reduces teacher burnout. That means that the teacher with a stronger sense of collegiality will experience less burnout and vice versa. In his study, Firstater (2012) established a link between burnout and reciprocal relations among peer teachers and the level of collaboration or alienation. Blazer's (2010) and Malach-Pines 's (2011) studies established that coping with burnout is possible through maintaining sound social support networks, while Lavian-Hillel (2012) indicated that teachers who suffer less from burnout work effectively with their peers (Lavian-Hillel, 2012).

Teachers who feel that they belong to their community, know that they execute projects of great significance in cooperation with their colleagues, experience success in the process, understand their current work and plans, - will exhibit a stronger collegiality degree, feel confident, and less burnt out. Such teachers will serve as positive role models for their students and peers. A teacher who does not experience burnout feels part of the group and contributes their best to students. Such teachers will

offer their students diverse teaching, adapted, inspiring, and higher quality. Such teachers can embrace more students and guide them to higher achievements (Bergman & Stein Cohen, 2018). Collegiality in teachers should be considered crucial because it provides them with opportunities to elevate their professional level, delve deep, and become more flexible in their work (Little, 1987; Dumai, 2006). Shared collegiality has many advantages as a facilitator in the continuous collaborative work process that may lead teachers to examine their teaching methods, thus nurturing pedagogical innovations (Grimmet & Crehan, 1992).

b. Balkanization

Also, "balkanized" staff may develop in schools. Teachers create discipline-based subcultures and thus feel more affiliated with the community of peers teaching the same discipline than the school community in general. The subculture depends on the professional and the physical proximity within the school walls when the staffroom of same discipline teachers and its classrooms are adjacent. Teachers of the same discipline produce their own social norms that affect the types of discourse developing in such groups (Grossman and Stodolsky, 1995; Grossman et a., 2000). The phenomenon of discipline-based subcultures or stratification between different disciplines and subjects can suppress the creation of a general interdisciplinary professional learning community (Louis & Kruse, 1996; Ailwood & Follers, 2002).

Cliques, characterized by *balkanization*, are not limited to conservative teachers. Innovative teachers' groups who view themselves as more advanced than their peers can also differentiate themselves in ways pivotal for the overall school development (Fullan, 1999).

Cultures characterized by *balkanization* are well-known from life in high schools due to the structure on which the high school is founded – a structure of orientations or disciplinary divisions. However, they can also be found in elementary schools. The most common form of *balkanization* in elementary schools resulted from allocating teachers to separate divisions. In Israel, for example, there is a division of elementary school into first through sixth grades, junior high school – into grades seventh through ninth, and senior high school – into tenth through 12th grades. In addition, elementary schools have a young division - kindergarten through second grade. Studies determined that biased teachers often gather into subgroups that hinder a broad school acceptance of a specific practice and block open discourse that might eventually lead to the school's general perspective (Nias et al., 1989).

Prevention of balkanization involves creating a community of teachers whose experiences and commitments are not limited to the classroom, the division, or several individuals' issues but include the entire school and thus help prevent unnecessary gaps or duplication of learning when students transition from class to class. The goal is to relinquish the concepts of "These are my students", and "Those are yours…" for collective responsibility: "These are our students" and transition from the language of external control focus to the language of broad overall commitment (Benaya, 2017). Other studies on balkanization containment yielded additional strategic measures that could foster collective responsibility: discussion of samples of students' work, freeing up teachers who teach the same or different grade levels to enable them to meet up and strategize together, asking teachers to substitute for colleagues teaching a different grade level, so that teachers of higher age grade, for instance, could learn and recognize the significant challenges of in teaching younger children (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

c. Professional learning community (PLC)

Shirley Hord (2004) coined the term "professional learning community". He intended for it to be a place wherein teachers jointly examine the possibilities to improve the practice in areas of importance and, subsequently, actively apply what they have learned. In a professional learning community, members jointly examine their knowledge and discuss it to promote professional development and improve their expertise and their students' achievements (Goldstein et al., 2004). The community members have a shared vision; they support each other and work as a group and in collaborative teams to fulfill their vision and achieve shared goals (DuFour et al., 2006). Teachers in a professional learning community meet regularly, examine the connection between the practice and their students' learning products, analyze the teaching and learning processes, reach conclusions and make changes, to improve their instruction and their students' learning (Blanga, Landler-Pardo & Shachar, 2011).

In the broad sense of the concept, a professional learning community can occur in various and diverse settings, e.g., math teachers' community gathering regularly for shared professional learning, school principals' community studying together management problems, a community of inspectors and principals (at the regional level), and so on.

The staff that comprises a professional learning community in the school can be the whole staffroom or specific subject teachers' group, homeroom teachers' staff, interdisciplinary staff, and any other school team working to achieve defined goals. A professional learning community can have different and diverse focal points: instruction and learning, curriculum, social issues, student involvement in the community, etc. A learning community's composition will depend on the central issues in their work.

A professional learning community is anchored in the perception of the school as a "learning organization" wherein "everyone is learning", and the learning is not only the students' lot but rather a key component in the professional development of the teachers themselves (Birenboim, 2009; Senge, 1998).

Bersin's study (2018) shows that learning makes us feel better, compels us to move forward, empowers us, and causes teams to become more involved in what they do and succeed. The "heavy" learners compose seven percent of the employees in organizations. They learn for more than five hours per week; they and the organization only benefit from it. Heavy learners are more productive, successful, involved, and even happier in their work than their peers. The chance of them taking a new responsibility at work is higher by 23%, and their reports on the meaningfulness of work are higher (48%). They report greater joy from work (21% more than their colleagues); moreover, they are less stressed out (47% gap) (Bersin, 2018).

The academic literature cites several models of professional teacher communities: continuous learning, subject-oriented, shared interest, and online. One conclusion drawn from the survey of the research literature on PLCs is the absence of a single unifying and universal definition of the concept; instead, various definitions represent different perceptions and approaches (Bolam et al., 2005; DuFour, Eaker & Many, 2006; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Notwithstanding the difference in definitions, all definitions share a reference to the school teacher learning community, focused on peer learning. Community members share educational vision, values, and norms and work collaboratively as a collective enterprise (King & Newmann, 2001). They constantly examine their work through reflection and comprehensive learning that facilitates growth and development (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Stoll & Louis, 2007). They

engage in constant reflective dialogue that critically examines their practice against the goals they set for themselves. They collect and analyze data and evidence regarding the links between their teaching practice and their students' products of learning, reach conclusions based on the findings and implement changes to improve their teaching and their students' learning in the classroom (Birenboim, 2009).

As stated above, the professional learning community is considered the strongest form on the continuum of collaboration and collegiality relations among teachers (Little, 1990).

Teachers' room is the optimal place for building such communities; naturally, they provide an opportunity for the teacher to develop professionally, socially, and personally. Through social contacts, experience-sharing, and the shared memory of the school events, the teachers build the communal knowledge of their work (Benaya et al., 2017).

1.10. Noncollaborative Cultures

The professional literature refers to three forms of noncollaborative cultures: (a) absence of teamwork, (b) solitude, and (c) individualistic work.

Teaching is one of the most isolated professions, among the last professional occupations, which in many periods justified working alone (Rudduck, 1991). The most natural state for the teacher is not collegiality but rather professional isolation, devoid of sharing with their school colleagues. The isolation provides teachers with some measure of protection in their work with students and parents. Also, it disconnects them from explicit feedback critical for their performance evaluation and efficiency improvement. However, teachers who work in isolation often receive feedback via formal periodic evaluations, but these evaluations are typically irregular

and do not facilitate constant improvement in their performance (Hickcox et al., 1988). In isolation, feedback within the classroom is limited to the experiences of a single teacher, their sole interpretations, and motivation to integrate improvement or lead processes. Research showed that schools that do not support change and improvement are characterized by teachers working alone, students' low achievements, and interlinked uncertainty and isolation (Rosenholtz, 1989).

Organizational factors (e.g., aggressive organizational culture) may contribute to the employee's solitude due to the climate of distrust, suspicion, and fear detrimental to relations between work peers and even contribute to seclusion and disassociation (Rabin et al., 2017). According to Wright's study (2005), several organizational factors impact the employees' solitude: fear within the organization, lack of communal spirit, status differences between employees. These factors had a generally negative effect, contributed to employees' seclusion, and decreased levels of their job satisfaction. Occasionally, the senior management suppresses the expression of alternative opinions by imposing sanctions on honest expressions of criticism for fear of losing control, competition, and damage to the manager's authority (Rabin et al., 2017).

The atmosphere of isolation in the workplace generates professional alienation in teachers and principals. They do not praise each other and seldom express support and recognition of others' positive efforts. Strong norms of self-reliance, on their side, can even trigger a negative response to a teacher's successful performance (Rosenholtz, 1989). In solitude, teachers can learn very little from their colleagues; hence, they are not in a position that allows them to try and improve. Isolation and individualism constitute a powerful combination that cultivates educational conservatism. They prevent access to opportunities and generate pressure that accompanies new ideas.

Such narrow experiences lead to "safe" and risk-free forms of teaching that do very little to facilitate student achievements. When external demands are imposed on schools and teachers, the latter feel isolated and powerless in the face of pressures and decisions they did not make and often do not understand. This powerlessness gnaws away at the teacher's confidence in their ability to shape their students' education (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

The literature attributes solely negative consequences to teachers' professional solitude, such as damage to professional performance (Dussault & Thibodeau, 1996; Rosenholtz, 1984), professional burnout (Tam, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1996; Gavish & Friedman, 2003), low rates of reciprocity (Smith & Scott, 1990; Garber, 1991; Bakkenes et al., 1999) and lack of sense of affiliation (Ganz, 2003; Firstater, 2012).

According to Dan Lortie (2002), there is a strong link between isolation and individualism that prevent teachers from accessing new ideas and classroom conservatism. Teachers are hesitant to work in collaboration because they are afraid to share their successes and failures lest they appear as trying to impress.

Teachers are reluctant to share new ideas with other teachers for fear of others attributing them to themselves. Senior or novice teachers hesitate to ask for help lest they appear incompetent. When teachers repeatedly use the same approach - although it does not work - all such tendencies fundamentally curtail development and improvement because they limit access to practices and ideas that can offer better ways of performance. These tendencies institutionalize conservatism and individualistic work (Lortie, 2002).

Many researchers who investigated individualism blamed the teachers for its very existence (Flinders,1988; McTaggart, 1989; Little, 1990). Other researchers defined additional reasons for the individualism:

a. Architectonic factors: separate or mobile isolated structures. These architectonic characteristics can generate individualism and make joint work difficult for teachers. Isolation and individualism do not depend solely on the schools' physical structure. They are deeply rooted in teaching practices and cultures (Fullan, 2017).

b. Teacher evaluation: Often, the very figures who helped the teachers would eventually judge them. In this case, collaboration is designed to promote supervision and control. In many teachers' initial experiences, assistance was tinged with judgment and sometimes disguised. Teachers' reflection on evaluation processes yielded the common factor: unpleasant encounters with an evaluation that appeared as a revelation of humiliating attitude by those supposedly providing help, such as the teacher's tutor, subject coordinator, principal, and supervisor (Brookhart & Moss, 2015). Hence, teachers often associate help with judgment and collaboration - with control; thus, isolation and individualism become defensive weaponry, guaranteed protection against inquiry and intervention (Smith, 2006).

Individualism among teachers does not stem from arrogance and self-confidence and is not a product of indecision and fears on the teachers' part. Lack of confidence arises from the fear of a negative assessment or the situation wherein teachers do not receive any feedback. Lack of self-confidence is one of the causes of teachers' need for self-preservation (Lortie, 2002).

c. High expectations and scruples: Teachers set high expectations for themselves, unattainable in their work with vaguely defined boundaries. Hence, the teacher job

description extends to and encompasses social and emotional objectives in addition to academic goals. Although the expectations are defined and understood in obscure terms – up to hard and virtually impossible to meet – many dedicated teachers strive to abide by them, more frequently than in other professions. Teachers' work is open and nearly unending. Given enough time and energy, we can always revise and improve lesson plans, review reading texts, go through additional texts before the trimester's end, give students more individual attention and be diligent about homework assessment (Flinders, 1988). Pressure and teachers' lack of time (Flinders, 1988), high expectations, and uncertainty lead to the perception of collegiality as risky (Fullan, 1999).

1.11. Teamwork Characteristics: Enforced Teamwork Alongside Guided Teamwork

The professional literature distinguishes between enforced and contrived teamwork administratively imposed by principals and guided or planned teamwork. In *contrived collegiality*, collegiality and cooperation are enforced from above, generating rigidity and inflexibility detrimental to judgment - the keystone of professionalism, and professional capital. That is a breach of the fair judgment principles - the core of professionalism in teaching. Such collegiality and collaboration are unavoidably shallow and short-lived (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

The academic literature offers numerous examples of enforced teamwork developing under the banner of the culture of collaboration. Different kinds of trust relationships among colleagues do not only encourage but also compel teachers to work together to improve their practices and generate enforced collegiality (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990). An example of imposed teamwork is the demand for regular class teachers to meet up with special education teachers - at a set time and regularity, even when they have

nothing to discuss (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017). Moreover, other studies showed that teachers are indignant about the school administration's coercion to perform various tasks, such as participation in advancement courses irrelevant to teachers or daily use of a biometrical attendance clock activated by a fingerprint (Avgar, Berkovich & Vigiser, 2012). Excessive adherence to regulatory power mechanisms (e.g., presence hours[2], daily report submission, and imposed advancement courses) is more damaging than effective (Avgar, Berkovich & Vigiser, 2012). According to the professional literature, planned collegiality creates a system of formal bureaucratic regulations emphasizing the focus given to shared planning, consulting, and other forms of joint work. Principals initiate teacher teamwork, formally arrange discussions, and fixed regularities, safeguard *planned collegiality* at the school, facilitate a closer rapport between teachers, and nurture collaboration, learning, and skill and expertise improvement.

Planned collegiality is designed to help successfully implement novel external approaches and techniques to create a more responsive and supportive culture in the school (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017). It might be valuable in creating more consistent relations of collaboration and teamwork between teachers. It is the way to build a connection with teachers on which principals can build effective teaching practice based on informal elements of recognition, trust, and support essential for community creation.

The academic literature does not view collaborative culture as a spontaneously occurring process; planning is an essential condition for all collaborative cultures. Typically, a certain level of guided or even imposed organization is necessary for their initial establishment. Wise organization of the daily schedule frees up suitable people

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[2] In Israel's school system 'presence' time is teacher's required time at school, dedicated to meetings and work, not teaching. It is similar to the notion of 'preparation time'.

so that they can plan together. Correct timing, an opportunity to plan together, the encouragement of teachers to work together – all these create adequate conditions for the emergence of collaborative cultures (Fullan, Hargreaves, 1999). Organized collegiality can serve as a springboard to more profound forms of collaboration. Moreover, when used to alleviate, not in an overbearing form, planned teamwork can serve as a starting point and a necessary step toward building collaborative cultures that have focus and depth. However, it cannot serve as an appropriate surrogate for cultures themselves because they take time, patience, and skill to develop and grow (Klette, 1997). The setting for teamwork is the basis for creating permanency and stability – without these, meaningful professional learning will not be possible. A distinct teamwork setting is a vital necessity. Such a setting ensures steadiness and confidence, conveys seriousness and commitment, and includes structuring the frequency and duration of meetings, annual planning, and each separate meeting planning. Fixed and stable regularities serve as a platform that allows for significant learning.

Structure generates process: Optimal learning processes can occur only when the structures that enable them are preserved – fixed time schedules, appropriate frequency, comfortable physical conditions, etc. (Benaya, Jacobson & Zadik, 2013). Furthermore, established structures and regularities for work in teams and allocation of time and knowledge resources are necessary for staff development and set goal achievement. The staff cannot work optimally if the schedule for meetings is not arranged in time and anchored in the system (Hackman, 2002).

1.12. The Term Syncretism

The semantic origin of the word *syncretism* can be traced to ancient Greece, as far as we know. In ancient Greek, it meant a combination and reunification of different

groups. In its initial use, the word syncretism referred to the Cretan communities who, while often warring, would join forces in times of need to fend off a mutual external enemy (Stewart & Shaw, 1994).

Syncretism relates mainly to fields of religion and ritual, wherein elements of two historic traditions blend or maintain reciprocal relationships. Syncretism contains a process of convergence of art and traditions as part of the interaction between different religions, or different traditions within the same religion. Syncretism is a fusion of various religious traditions and practices (Sharaby, 2002; 2016).

Syncretism signifies the process of change in the personal or group identity and its outcome. It is part of the negotiations between identities in the situations such as conquest, trade, emigration, religious dissemination, and interethnic marriages (Sharaby, 2016).

As a result of syncretism, religions, and cultures have evolved; they adopted and integrated external elements and ideas. In the syncretic process, the ruling class exerts significant influence over the ruled. The process of change is generated chiefly in the ruled society, and thus traditional cultures and societies evolve into modern societies. That is why the debate on syncretism operates in terms of tradition and modernity.

1.13. Tradition and Modernity Create Syncretic Process

Tradition as the past phenomenon transitions into the present, and a generation passes it down to another. It includes art, texts, thinking patterns, material objects, technological methods, symbol and imagery systems, linguistic expressions, etc. The fact that tradition passes from one generation to another does not make it normative. Tradition becomes normative only when the society accepts it, and it thrives and constitutes part of its operation and faith. It is the past within the present; it is part of it, much like recent innovations (Shils, 1981).

Tradition does not remain in its original form over the years but changes through an intergenerational transition process. However, tradition appears unchanging to its beneficiaries because they belong to the tradition and identify with it (Shils, 1981). Traditional society is founded on knowledge and values instilled in it from the past. Yet, tradition is evolving, while the change is not acknowledged and, as such, is not validated (Katz, 1978). Some researchers wrote about internal change stemming from a change in social structure, whereas others wrote about a change that results from external contact with a different culture (Shils, 1981).

To a large extent, changes in tradition are related to the syncretic model. Syncretism is the acceptance of the exogenous tradition created through pressure from external society. In the past, the political, military, and financial power of foreign culture bearers, and its perception by the controlled society as a supreme intellectual culture, were the factors of change in the local culture (Shils, 1981).

The widespread use of the terms *tradition* and *modernity* as polar concepts in the theory of social change ignores the social reality that reveals a broad range of alternatives (Gusfield, 1973; Sporupski, 1976). However, we must not view traditional institutions and values as an impediment to modernization. Traditional and modern forms do not have to be contrary because tradition is not a uniform body of values and norms, and it is not a homogenous social structure. The diverse contents of traditional societies impact the acceptance, rejection, or integration with modern forms (Gusfield, 1973).

Tradition and modernity are not separate systems; they often reinforce one another. The old, therefore, does not stagnate or disappear but rather is constantly renewed; the change becomes an integral part of the tradition, and the new, the present.

Modern institutions and values do not weaken tradition but integrate it into the old system and interpret it. Innovative technological developments help disseminate the tradition in other communities and social classes. It strengthens the traditional social structure and makes the believers more devout. The aspiration to be modern and the will to preserve tradition – are two ideological aspirations that are not always conflictual because the aspiration for modernity is dependent upon tradition and sustained by it. The effort to turn the shared traditional culture into a foundation of national identity and consensus resulted in a synthesis between tradition and modernity (Gusfield, 1973).

For example, in the Israeli Andalusian Orchestra, traditional and ancient Andalusian music fused with contemporary music was created in a consolidated (but not rigid) ongoing and dynamic process of syncretism. It reflects the total fusion of traditional and modern orchestra instruments and different music styles when we hear the Andalusian "Nova" alongside modern songs played every day on the radio. To reach such a challenging musical outcome, we must create intercultural bridging wherein both societies that came into contact have changed (Aharon-Gutman, 2008).

The old in the Andalusian orchestra does not disintegrate. It reintegrates instead, and variations of traditional and modern music are created. The result is a process of bridge-making, compromise, and transformation also generated among the orchestra members. The syncretism existing in the orchestra was carried out consciously and deliberately, with no coercion or resistance, but rather out of genuine love of music and creation. That great love for music created an openness to change and various challenging musical styles of other cultures. It generated the communication between the two societies in one Andalusian orchestra. It is possible that without the great love of music, enforced and passive syncretism would have taken place without the

meaningful affinity for such a unique musical ensemble. In this coming-together process, music of different types, its integration, and interweaving between the old and the new, the agreement is fluid, characterized by sincere openness.

The repertoire of the ensemble's concert program attests to the interweaving and integration of modern music with traditional. Alongside the soloists who represent traditional music, famous and leading artists of Israeli music come up on stage. Along with hymns, they sing contemporary songs heard on the radio every day. This process is equal to intercultural bridging between music styles, but mainly between musicians: Arabs and Jews, immigrants and native Israelis, and young and more mature musicians.

Within this heterogeneity, we can find musicians who play in the orchestra using sheet music and experienced musicians who do not, due to practice and memory learned and passed on from generation to generation for centuries. The ensemble instruments can also testify to intercultural bridging: western classical music instruments alongside a traditional Andalusian ensemble, whose members play classical eastern instruments. Interaction between members of the orchestra demonstrates significant cultural bridging. High social cohesion, appreciation, and respect for each member are the values ingrained in the foundation of the relationship between the orchestra members. The fusion of authentic Andalusian music, represented by the veteran musicians, with contemporary music is performed flowingly, not by coercion. The desire to be modern, on the one hand, and retain tradition, on the other, is what generates intercultural bridge-making in such a heterogeneous orchestra. There is an implied agreement among the members that aspiration for musical modernism is dependent upon tradition and even supported by it. In this unique orchestra, an integrated syncretic process was created, dynamic and fluid, of genuine compromise. This syncretism in the orchestra,

occurring consciously and deliberately, proves how much the orchestra members are willing to do to create global music. The love of music inspired the communication between the two cultures in one orchestra (Aaron-Gutman, 2008).

1.14. Syncretism-from-above and Syncretism-from-below

In some cases, *syncretism-from-above* emerges as occurred between Christians and Africans. Influenced by Christianity, Africans began believing in the existence of Jesus and Satan, yet continued to believe in magical powers and sorcery and saw the Christian Satan in the witches of their faith.

The Africans equated their religion to Christianity and explained it in Christian terms. That led to a new comparative level of thinking concerning the traditional religion. The Africans ascribed new interpretations to some Christian concepts; these concepts then transformed. Syncretism-from-below was created wherein the Africans synthesized the local religion and Christianity in their own way in keeping with their interests. Thus, a distinct - and different from the two original cultures - version of Christianity emerged (Meyer, 1981).

In the process of adapting and getting closer to the core at the cultural level, syncretism-from-above is created: a change in the high culture that integrates elements of the absorbed culture for political motives, mainly. Concurrently, syncretism-from-below is also created: a change in the low, absorbed culture – in the selection process with the central elements preserved in its identity while others are espoused. This combination, creating a new cultural identity, often forms the minority's survival strategy or even a strategy to gain a place in the center (Sharaby, 2009).

Sharaby (2016, 2018) examined the celebrations of *Saharana* of the Kurdish Jewry (2018) and *Mimouna* (2016) of the Moroccan Jewry, marked on the first day after Passover. The mobility and institutionalization of traditional practices in contemporary

Israeli life legitimized ethnic symbols of this kind in the public domain. For example, the participation of the heads of state, their aid in budgeting, and assistance with organization demonstrate that the public space is changing, wherein syncretism-from-above is taking place. That is, also the majority's, the absorbing group's cultural values might change under the influence of the minority group (Sharaby, 2016; 2018).

The dominant group no longer defines *Israeliness;* it takes shape in encounters with various identity alternatives. Ethnic celebrations based on old traditions are an example of a successful mediation between a distinct cultural identity and the collective Israeli identity (Kimmerling, 2001).

However, along with the mobility of the Saharana Festival from the periphery to the center via breaking and closing social and cultural boundaries, a consistent process of tradition's interpretation and renewal developed within the festival. It is syncretism-from-below: the selection and fusion of traditional and modern components that involves processing, interpretation, and adaptation of traditional symbols and customs into the new culture and the adoption of novel contents (Sharaby, 2016, 2018).

In the Saharana celebrations, more novel traditions sprouted and became part of the ancient tradition, namely, various exhibitions and linking the celebrations to national events. The two concurrent processes of syncretism-from-above and syncretism-from below describe the development of the Saharana Festival in Israel: the mobility toward the center and the interpretation of the tradition signify renewal (Sharaby, 2016; 2018).

Gvion's study (2005) on ethnic cuisines in the Israeli society offers another example of syncretism-from-below. She states that immigrants have to adapt their eating habits and the structure of their meals to those of the absorbing society. The immigration process requires, to some extent, a departure from the native/original cuisine and its adaptation to the conditions of the new country and local culture. Second-generation

immigrants become open to the dominant culture and integrate authentic home cuisine into their daily life and holidays in a symbolic way. Third and fourth generations of immigrant families feel sufficiently confident and rediscover their roots and home traditions. They do not carry their parents' trauma; they see the home culture as an exotic ornament to add to their daily life. Immigrant societies tend to develop the ethnic economy; this is why immigrant-owned restaurants are opening. The restaurants appeal first and foremost to immigrants of the same culture. Alongside the familiar food, they offer nostalgia, longing, and communication in the mother tongue. Subsequently, the restaurants integrate the absorbing population as well. Occasionally, the dishes are modified to cater to the clientele outside the ethnic community. Ethnic food can transform and serve as a place of encounter between an ethnic group and the general population (Gvion, 2005).

1.15. Flexible, Fluid, and Dynamic Syncretic Process

The created syncretic process is not rigid and consolidated; it is fluid and dynamic. We can trace the evidence of that to Africa, where gods, once identified with a specific saint, were subsequently identified with a different saint. Some adaptations disappeared, while others remained ubiquitous. Many forms of syncretism exist, and tribes adopted different measures and forms of syncretic relationships. For example, in some tribes, the Catholic and the African altars were placed at a great distance, indicating the symbolic distance between the saints and the African gods. In other tribes, though, ritual elements of both religions were located near each other or even combined. It expresses the total fusion a deity and a saint have undergone in believers' consciousness or imagination; thus, the African gods were identified fully with their parallel Catholic saints (Bastide, 1978).

Among the Africans, no problem concerning identity arose owning to syncretism. Whether their deities had African or Catholic names was not significant for them because these deities were pure spiritual powers. The Africans believed that in the beginning, there were only African gods who died and rose from the dead and became Christian saints in an evolutionary process. Therefore, the spirits of an African god and a Christian saint were one in their eyes (Bastide, 1978).

Thus, syncretism is created primarily due to the invasion of colonial countries into "the third-world countries". Ethnic religions, which have no founder or a holy book that constitutes a codex, are permeable to syncretic processes. The absence of a book to refer to facilitates the rise of cultural anomalies, as the African religions demonstrate. Moreover, we can say that the resulting syncretism often assists in the cultural survival of central ethnic traditions (Prandi, 2000).

Syncretism is a continuous process of social change occurring between two cultures that come into contact. The phenomenon of syncretism is likely to happen when two traditions and symbol groups are parallel in the same society or when a synthesis occurs, and they integrate into one symbolic system. The syncretic process of integration, adaptation, and adoption of the external normative system occurs mainly in the ruled society.

The old in this society does not crumble; it becomes reintegrated, and variations of traditionalism and modernity emerge. The process leads to compromise and transformation also in the dominant society. It is an unavoidable price it must pay when it imposes itself on local culture (Sharaby, 2002).

An example of a flexible, fluid, and dynamic syncretic process can be found among the youth of Ethiopian origin nowadays, as opposed to the period of the fifties and the sixties. The Ethiopian youth of today do not wish to renounce their unique ethnic

characteristics, particularly in the encounter with "the others" – the Israelis who are supposed to be identical and yet emerge as very "different" from the immigrants. Ethiopian adolescents participate as fully as possible in Israeli life. However, in parallel, they develop new models of ethnic legitimization. When Ethiopian youngsters encounter modernity and secularism, they become more and more aware of their Black identity among the absorbing white population. In other words, they rediscover they are Black (Anteby-Yemini, 2003).

In recent years the phenomenon emerged of many young men of Ethiopian origin traveling to Ethiopia and back. Some visit relatives, others travel for healthcare treatments, some accompany their father or other family elders, yet others go for recreational travel after the military service or during their university semester breaks. A growing number of young entrepreneurs take business trips to import products to Israel – clothes, food and music, and videotapes. As a rule, most trips are done in small groups of two or three, of brothers, cousins or close friends. None of them travel to Ethiopia to settle there; all trips are for tourism, recreation, or business (Anteby-Yemini, 2003).

The "travel culture" has turned part of the Ethiopian populace into a transnational population. These young people return to Israel with "covers", "remixes", and full "live shows". The mere distribution of video and music from Ethiopia impacts the restructuring of the "old homeland" image. It is also manifest in the idealization and the cultural adoption transmitted through video films from Ethiopia (Anteby, 1998). Through these travels, cultural exchanges and distribution of new identity models become possible, offering these new citizens of Israel a different reference and different images of "self" and of "the other" (Anteby, 1998).

As a result of the syncretism and the fusion of old Ethiopian songs with modern rhythms, different music was composed with which adolescents identify. Modern disco rhythms injected into ancient Ethiopian melodies caused adolescents to prefer this music. In addition, Ethiopian youths travel to the "old homeland", and the distribution of Ethiopian live shows created a culture of adoption and integration of external elements and ideas. In this case of a syncretic encounter, modern music has a vast impact on Ethiopian music, and the process of change has mainly occurred among young adolescents. The controlled society - the Ethiopians who have been traditional concerning music until now - becomes increasingly modern under the syncretic encounter. Tradition and modernity meet in a syncretic convergence and blend anew. It is evident in the innovative covers and remixes that the young adolescents of Ethiopian origin favor.

In addition, African American or Rastafarian dress and hairstyles, listening to reggae or rap music, dancing in African nightclubs, and wearing international Black symbols or Rasta colors – all award a new status to a significant portion of the Ethiopian youth in Israel. These models inspire a sense of empowerment as a black minority in a white community. However, Ethiopian immigrants have no other ethnic options other than identifying themselves as Black because their skin color immediately distinguishes them from the Israeli population. In addition, conflicts with the rabbinic establishment severely undermined their Jewish identity. However, the assertion is that the identification with the Blacks should be an answer to these youths' feelings of separation and class segregation. In their perception, affiliation - even imagined or fictional - with a transnational community and the assumption of the African American identity, restructured in terms of the Black Jewish ethnicity, gives value to their self-state. This affiliation becomes a strategy of self-presentation; it enables them to belong

to the urban youth and modernity and be Black at the same time. Therefore, the ethnicization of the color turns "the Blackness" into a structured, social, and political strategy for the presentation and positioning of the racial identity within a white Jewish society (Anteby & Yemini, 2003).

The new identity and ethnic models that Ethiopian adolescents chose that we addressed thus far have, at times, the characteristics of an *imagined community* (Anderson, 1983) because the Ethiopian Jews are not seen as part of the global black diaspora in the international discourse. There is no territorial structure for affiliation, only membership in an imagined world for their collective identity. This identity is confined to the field of symbolism and imagination because the phenomenon per se exists beyond Israeli borders.

In an encounter of Ethiopians with foreigners, no syncretic process occurs because each group dances to the sounds of black music separately; no group contributes to or benefits from another group. Moreover, no one rejects their unique cultural characteristics and adopts another culture, and no one relinquishes their cultural identity. As stated above, except for spending time together in a club and dancing in separate groups to the sounds of the same African music, nothing else occurs. In contrast to theories of pluralism and multiculturalism, the syncretism theory does not accept the model of different, separate cultures existing side by side when each group retains its identity and central characteristics. Instead, it claims that in the social reality, ethnic groups cannot preserve their original traditions. The symbiosis between religions and cultures is unavoidable in their core values, too.

In an encounter between the Ethiopian and the Black Hebrew youth or migrant workers, no mutual influences are created (except for dress and hairstyle) because the groups do not interact.

Instead of a syncretic process of mutual influences and significant interactional ties, a "melting pot" is created due to the uniformity and assimilation evident among Ethiopian adolescents in clubs, migrant workers, and Black Hebrews of Dimona - uniform clothes, hairstyles, dance moves, and recreational activities. Regarding the identity of each group in a dance club, uniformity is occasionally substituted by a "salad bowl" in which all different adolescents retain their identity. So do the Ethiopian adolescents who hang out in the club.

1.16. Intentional, Conscious, or Enforced Syncretic Process

Syncretism can be carried out intentionally and consciously (Shaw & Stewart, 1994), through various means, including coercion (Kempf, 1994). Moreover, syncretism is not necessarily passive; indeed, sometimes, different societies adopted elements from both cultures according to their interests. The encounter between societies - especially in the initial stage - led to a reversed process, anti-syncretism, when local inhabitants resisted the alien culture because they strove to preserve their original culture (Shaw & Stewart, 1994).

However, usually, despite their resistance to change, local rituals were syncretized and absorbed elements of both cultures. The church itself sometimes induced a state of anti-syncretism when it revoked local features from catholic holidays after a period of shared religious culture (Mosse, 1994).

These examples highlight that the syncretic process is dynamic and that passage of time can dull or enhance the recognition of syncretism.

Agents of change, generating communication between the two societies, facilitate the development of the syncretic process. The representatives of the ruling society fill this role: researchers, merchants, soldiers, farmers, missionaries, and others who come into contact with the local society.

It is safe to assume that syncretism was caused by the mobility that drove people, armies, or missionaries outward, away from their countries. The local population - its political or educated elite, as a rule, - attempts to moderate local traditions and modern universal traditions and serves as a catalyst for change (Ferme, 1994).

Studies on syncretism in the ancient or modern colonial context show a significant link between the concept and the religion of worship. However, it becomes apparent from the studies that it is hard to separate syncretism from the socio-cultural aspect, given that retaining religious beliefs is part of social behavior (Shaw & Stewart, 1994). Thus, a cultural process was integrated into religious syncretism, and thus the dynamics of social relations and change came into being.

The *Mimouna* celebrations in Israel serve as an example of an intentional syncretic process. Public officials and reporters view the *Mimouna* as a folksy holiday and folklore, i.e., "low culture". However, the ever-growing scope of the celebrations, a growing number of celebrants who are not of North African descent, and the participation of public figures have gradually led to its institutionalization and broad public recognition as a national holiday. At the beginning of the 1970s, the Mimouna was recognized as a working day of choice for civil service employees. The holiday gains promotion and generous institutional funding at the municipal and state level and in all the relevant subdivisions. Typical state symbols, such as IDF and Police, combine forces in the celebrations and organization; state media channels report on the festivities from the field and broadcast special programs. In addition, central state figures have supported and participated in the celebrations: IDF Chief of Staff, State Comptroller, judges, and ambassadors. The integration of these apolitical representative figures into the celebrations institutionalized the Mimouna and granted it official recognition.

The assimilation of Mimouna and additional *Mizrahi* aspects into the Israeli fabric of life and its timeline represent the changing relationship between the Mizrahi people and the Israeli collective, the fringes and the center, "high culture" and "low culture". The result of the politics on Mizrahi identities is, similar to the case of Mimouna, indicative of an absorbed, low culture not being necessarily as weak as it appears; it can integrate into the hegemonic culture and even influence it (Heilbronner, 2004). This conclusion is also relevant regarding immigration situations and immigrant cultural characteristics that can permeate the core culture and change it, as occurred in the American society in the wake of the Mexican immigration to the U.S. (Huntington, 2004; Alba & Nee, 2003).

In contrast to other approaches, this perception empowers the absorbed and does not view them as merely passive in the absorption process (Gordon, 1964). It does not necessarily predict the cultural absorption of ethnic immigrant groups but views the immigration process as an ongoing negotiation that might yield achievements for an ethnic minority group. However, we must not speak of a marginal group's "victory" but a continuous struggle for power, voice, and identity structuring (Cicurel, 2005).

In the process of getting closer to the core at the cultural level, not only syncretism-from-above is created, i.e., the change in the high, the dominant culture that assimilates elements of the absorbed culture -

out of political motivations, mainly, but also the syncretism-from-below – changes in the low, the absorbed culture in the process of selection while preserving central elements of its identity and adopting others. This combination, giving rise to a new cultural identity, often forms the minority's survival strategy and even a way to access the center (Sharaby, 2002; Leopold, 2004).

Intentionally and unintentionally, the revival of the Mimouna holiday in Israel entailed

adaptations and interpretations of traditional symbols and customs, their modification

to the new culture, and espousal of foreign contents. As it is based both in the earlier

historical and cultural context and in the current context, the Israeli version of

Mimouna, similar to other ethnic celebrations (Goldstein, 1985), hybridizes the old and

the new and negotiates between the different elements (Sharaby, 2002).

The syncretism created in the case of Mimouna shows that the cultural system is a

dynamic arena, wherein power struggles occur, as well as relationships in negotiation

between "high" and "low" cultures (Heilbronner, 2004); and the boundaries between

them are not fixed (Shields, 1992). The binary division into "absorbers" and

"absorbees", "Mizrahi" and "Ashkenazi", "East" and "West", "tradition" and

"modernity", becomes blurred. The boundaries confining the identity (Gurwitz, 2007)

become blurred; it is redefined as a more fluid and elusive concept (Sharaby, 2002).

Also, the categories of "center" and "periphery" are redefined, and the social

conditions encourage the change in shifting the boundaries and their definition

(Lamont, 2000).

Thus, in the patterns of the Mimouna holiday in Israel, syncretism was created from

the start – the blending of different cultural traditions and ethnic mixture creating a

new cultural tradition dissimilar to the source cultures (Sharaby, 2009).

1.17. Intercultural Bridging

Cultural bridge-making plays a meaningful role in the adaptation process of

immigrants/new arrivals and their integration into the host or the absorbing society.

Bridging, as the word implies, creates a gateway to mutual understanding in an

intercultural encounter between immigrants/new arrivals and the absorbing society

representatives. Intercultural encounter is not only the admission to a world of

unfamiliar norms, structures, coping methods, and codes; it is also an encounter with people living in this culture and representing it to immigrants. In intercultural transition, various misinterpretations between the immigrant and the absorbing society representatives arise. The bigger the cultural differences between them, the more frequent the misunderstandings between the groups (Berhanu, 2006).

Intercultural bridging is a process of promoting a multicultural society. As part of this process, its participants engage in fair collaboration and reciprocal relations that encourage the members of the different cultural groups to strengthen their sense of belonging and identification with the mother groups. The concept of integration is commonly employed to describe a situation wherein different ethnic identities and cultures gain equal value and equal recognition within a broader social framework. Integration and intercultural bridging oppose the concept of assimilation which means abandoning the minority's culture for the dominant. The assimilation processes take away the immigrant groups' customs and traditions and reset their cognitive and emotional system, adapting them to the majority's system of values, norms, and behaviors. We can view *multiculturalism* through different perspectives, such as ideological, structural, or demographic. The ideological facet of the multicultural approach is symmetry and recognition: mutual respect between different cultures and symmetrical attitudes toward them. At the individual level, this refers to the belief in the people's right to evaluate and develop identity components that stem from their original or their parents' culture (Peri, 2007).

At the national level, this refers to the perception of cultural difference not as a threat to solidarity but as a national resource that should be nurtured as a source of internal enrichment of the society through reciprocal relations and constant dialogue between the different cultural groups within it. That is the distinction between the multicultural

approach and *separatism* (Sever, 1999). The structural aspect relates to fairness in the distribution of power between different groups in the society: what is the scope of the policy and mechanisms in place that would prevent or revoke cultural deprivation/discrimination and would guarantee equal chance and equal opportunities to the members of these different groups (Sarup, 1986).

The third aspect, the demographic perspective, relates to the difference manifest in the heterogeneous structure of the society. The first two perspectives relate to how cultures attempt to cope with managing the diversity within them. The role of social bridging changes according to the goals – from data collection research promoting programs suitable for the immigrant population to intervention in conflicts and building a bridge of mutual understanding. Bridging allows us to build a connection between the immigrant population and the new society through the systematic imparting of knowledge, information, and behavioral skills appropriate to mainstream society. One of the anticipated outputs of intercultural bridging is the weakening of prejudices and shattering of veteran Israelis' negative myths about immigrants. Many people expect that the very nature of the direct, unmediated contact of veteran Israelis with immigrants will bring about this change. However, it is often not enough. The commitment to be vigilant against detrimental myths and stereotypes and foster change amongst the staff is highlighted in the training and guidance of mediators that include discussion of various methods for such work (Peri, 2007).

Human diversity in workplaces is typical of the past two decades in the U.S. The effort to create think teams and work teams diverse in terms of ethnicity and gender is rewarding for companies and corporations in more than one aspect. It enhances thought openness and an ability to generate creative ideas in think teams, leads to a more profound knowledge of population sectors and groups that are not part of the

mainstream society. Also, it allows for a more appropriate approach and, by adding new populations, expands the recruitment pool of employees and talents. Proper integration of employees from excluded groups is the right thing to do in social and economic terms. It is one of the finest examples of no contradictions existing between socioethical and business motivations, and this is what makes this fields interesting and growing (Matan, 2018).

There is an apparent connection between the measure of human diversity in companies and corporations and the level of innovativeness and originality of ideas generated within them, eventually leading to financial achievements. (Matan, 2018).

1.18. Mediation in Conflicts of Cultural Differences

In a society composed of diverse groups of different origins and cultures, any universally provided service may not be equally accessible if it is designed and delivered uniformly – according to the dominant group's characteristics of accessibility, as a rule. In such situations, there are groups (particularly immigrants) with lesser access to relevant resources such as participation in decision-making committees and forums, social networks in which information flows about opportunities and development trends, information about rights, obligations, services, advantages, and shortcomings of educational institutions, alternative solutions to problematic situations, entities to call to submit a complaint, etc. To prevent immigrants' temporary marginality from becoming permanent, the concept of multiculturalism must be significant also in the ideological and structural-political sense: mutual respect for different cultures, and policies promoting diversity and multiculturalism. Intercultural bridging is instrumental in the facilitation of these two aspects. However, multicultural bridging should not serve as a temporary function but

as a function that should be established in the system and developed professionally

(Peri, 2007).

1.19. Between "Melting Pot", Multiculturalism, and Pluralism

The conventional sociological model of the research into immigration to Israel

presents traditional and modern societies as dichotomous concepts; the basic premise is

that in an evolutionary process, traditional society should adapt to modern society's

social structures and norms through desocialization and resocialization processes

(Eisenstadt, 1954).

The assumption was that traditional society is stagnant and always looks solely to the

past. Modern societies were perceived as conscious of the temporal dimension,

whereas traditional societies - as supposedly outside of time in their consciousness. In

the anti-modern approach, the tradition was perceived as the complete opposite of the

presentist (focused on the present) and dynamic modernity (Shoham, 2017).

Eisenstadt (1954) defined migration as a physical transition of an individual or a group

from one society to another. Migration also has numerous social changes in store. In

the migration process, three variables should receive attention: the immigrant's

motivation, the physical aspect, and the social changes that reshape the immigrant's

social field. As a rule, immigrants disconnect from most of their roles in the previous

society and the primary reference groups in which they were active participants. As a

result of the desocialization process, wherein the immigrants change their values, they

feel insecure and frustrated. To overcome these feelings, they must undergo a process

of transformation and resocialization (Eisenstadt, 1954).

Adaptation to the new social structure is contingent on new immigrants' learning new

roles, changing their group values, and active participation in the absorbing society

through identification with its values and symbols. The less the immigrant stands out in

the new environment as a person of separate identity, the fuller their absorption.

Therefore, internalized absorption is dependent on immigrants' internalization of new

behavioral patterns and their distribution in the absorbing society, losing their identity

in the process. That is not an instant process, and in many cultures, a pluralistic

structure develops wherein ethnic immigrant groups retain a certain degree of separate

identity (Eisenstadt, 1954).

a. Melting Pot

The structural-functional paradigm viewed society as a structure of cultural-ideological

cohesion whose role is to preserve the status quo and advocated the "melting pot"

absorption policy. Different researchers saw the Israeli society as a monolithic

structure, wherein the traditional groups should assimilate through cultural

homogenization (Weintraub & Lissak, 1964; Bar-Yosef, 1968; Eisenstadt, 1972).

Consistent with their opinion, absorption and merging of Diaspora communities would

occur only when the immigrants from Muslim countries rejected their distinct cultural

characteristics and embraced the modern Israeli culture.

Also, these researchers saw the absorbees' suitable elite and adolescents as significant

agents of change who can inspire a process of group change among immigrants in the

financial, technical, and ethical realms.

In their studies, different researchers explored the processes of change and continuity

among the absorbees (Shoked, 1977; Deshen, 1964). However, their premise remained

structural-functional; they defined the absorbees' structural social development toward

modernization with the modern leadership playing a key role in this process. Neither

did they refer to the absorption process as a reciprocal process nor discuss the reverse

possibility wherein an absorbing society changes and adapts to the immigrant social

structure and traditional norms.

Several researchers presented a position that raised a possibility opposite the Melting Pot: the absorbing society adapting to the absorbees' orientation (Weintraub, 1954; Weingrod, 1966). Weingrod (1966), broadening the discussion on this subject, maintained that cultural contact is a process of reciprocal change wherein all groups maintaining interactional relations can change. Through social change, the absorbees adopt new behavior forms and social ties; however, the absorbing society is affected as well, and changes occur within it.

Weingrod (1954) demonstrated what he termed as "institutional adjustment" of the absorbing institutions resulting from their cultural contact with the absorbed. From a policy of nonintervention with the absorbed, the institutions changed and reinforced their guidance, supervision, and effective control of the absorbees and made them low-status citizens, reliant on the state. Therefore, the idea of reciprocal cultural influence proposed by Weintraub (1954) and Weingrod (1966) does not suggest a process in which the absorbing institutions would be willing to accommodate the absorbees, understand them and attempt to reach a compromise with their cultural tradition. Instead, the goal and the outcome of *institutional adjustment* were to strengthen the absorbing mechanism's power and impose its norms on the absorbees. Social and anthropological research did not examine the issue of the encounter between the two social groups, only the willingness of the absorbed group to assimilate into the absorbing society. Also, conflicts were perceived as part of the absorption process, not as distinguishing marks of a fundamental social conflict (Sharaby, 2002).

Thus, the "melting-pot" concept viewed absorption as a process in which immigrants abandon their old traits and together create a unified image. The premise was that immigrants must adopt the absorbing culture's values, becoming one unified nation. The considerations behind this approach were moral and practical. The country

absorbed immigrants from different countries and needed a unifying Hebrew culture

for the immigrants to accept. The absorption planners assumed that this approach met

the immigrant needs because they could move forward only if they adapted themselves

to the customs, language, and values of the country's society (Shapira, 2001).

b. *Multuculturalism*

The formation of minority groups retaining separate identities occurs out of choice and

a desire to preserve their identity, or due to the difficulty to integrate into the absorbing

society. This reality, characterized by a considerable increase in distress and poverty,

has direct implications for the educational system. The latter is required to cope with a

heterogeneous and multicultural student composition in the school and, subsequently,

with a wide range of pedagogical challenges, from the challenge of language and

speech, through challenges of contents and culture and up to study and achievement

challenges (Ben-Peretz, as cited in Michaeli. 2012).

The studies stressed that the absorbed person him or herself - especially those arriving

from Muslim countries - should change their old patterns and adapt them to the social

and cultural norms of their new country. Reference to Muslim immigrant traditional

values as old patterns (Eisenstadt, 1973) undoubtedly carries a negative connotation:

the traditional societies should strive to achieve, in an evolutionary process, the level of

the modern Israeli society's development.

Multiculturalism, however, is the approach that emphasizes the importance of

acceptance of different cultural identities, especially in immigrant-absorbing countries.

Consistent with this approach, different groups preserve their native-country identities,

customs, beliefs, and language and, at the same time, are unified in their national

loyalty to the absorbing country (Bashir et al., 2016).

The transition from the melting-pot approach to multiculturalism reflects a transition from the culture that puts the nation in the making and shared national values in the center to a culture that focuses on the individual and cultural difference/diversity. Regarding the State of Israel, this transition reflects tolerance toward the existence of several cultures in the country out of the recognition that the unifying factor between the different groups is the consensus on the democratic regime and governmental institutions (Bashir et al., 2016).

Therefore, the goal is to create a new and homogeneous country out of an understanding that the immigrant society is composed of diverse cultures.

c. Pluralism

The pluralist approach (Smooha, 1978; 1984) maintains that a sociological model of assimilation of different groups in a "melting-pot" process should not be applied. Instead, a pluralism model should be introduced wherein each group retains distinct cultural characteristics. This way, society will become more tolerant; it will grow into a culture of different identities.

For pluralism to occur, there has to be a "social and cultural mandate for a plurality of differences and even support for it… [And, mainly, encouragement] of social and cultural diversity" (Adler & Blass, 2000). The existence of pluralism is contingent on tolerance. Acceptance of the different and respectful attitude toward them, their views, and way of life - notwithstanding the inconvenience and lack of agreement - while avoiding verbally or physically violent responses in moments of disagreement and avoiding exertion of governmental authority regarding positions of criticism (Peri, 2007).

1.20. Syncretic Studies

For the first time, the current study proposes a different sociological perspective on syncretism for analyzing teamwork processes in a heterogeneous teachers' room in an encounter between senior, young, traditional, and innovative teachers. Eisenstadt viewed absorption as an evolutionary process in which traditional immigrants must, through socialization, discard their distinct cultural characteristics and embrace the modern Israeli culture. In contrast, the syncretic model indicates that in immigration, traditional groups do not necessarily relinquish their cultural identity.

Also, the syncretic model, contrary to sociological perceptions developed in recent decades, does not consider relations between various groups in the country - different social and cultural identities, or the controlling and the controlled - as unavoidably conflictual that either worsen or develop toward pluralism.

The theory of syncretism, contrary to theories of pluralism and multiculturalism, also does not accept the model of different, separate cultures existing side by side while each group continues to retain its central identity and characteristics. Instead, the theory claims that in the social reality, ethnic groups cannot preserve their original tradition, and the inevitable symbiosis between religions and cultures permeates their core values.

In the initial period of the encounter between groups, conflicts emerge - hallmarks of a meaningful social and cultural conflict. However, mutual influences develop gradually because cultural contact is a reciprocal process in which all the groups having interactional relations can change assisted by mediators, and also the absorbing society can adapt to immigrant values (Sharaby, 2002).

Therefore, this research is a case study contributing to the understanding and the analysis of the outcomes of the encounter between different teacher groups in a

heterogeneous staffroom. The new sociological discourse, emerging from the syncretic model, is the discourse of tolerance and compromise; it indeed presents a solution to conflicts between cultures in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

This study is a monograph on the teachers' room that demonstrates that, through conflict, a distinct model has developed in teachers' rooms, deviating from its original format and developing according to the syncretic model. The theoretical framework of syncretism is displayed here for the first time as an additional sociological model for the analysis of processes of collaboration, teamwork, and the encounter between traditional teacher community and modern society. In this model, as opposed to the existing sociological and anthropological studies, a traditional teacher community does not necessarily forgo its cultural identity, but neither can it preserve its original tradition in its entirety. In the wake of the cultural encounter, mutual influence develops between innovative and traditional teachers while the two normative structures evolve with mediator help.

The theoretical contribution of the syncretic model lies in expanding the discussion about the active aspect of the choice of tradition and its defiance in the face of modernity, and the syncretic model view of the dialogic interpretation between the members of the traditional community as a manifestation of resistance and subversion (Stewart & Shaw, 1994).

CHAPTER TWO: EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Research Questions and Objectives

2.1.1. Research Questions

In this study, we will address the following questions:

a. How do traditional teachers, modern teachers, and principals characterize teamwork in heterogeneous teachers' rooms (organized, planned, enforced, contrived)?

b. Which teamwork types do traditional teachers and modern teachers prefer? Which teamwork types do both groups agree upon (from weak to strong forms: collegial, solitary, individual, professional learning community)?

c. What is the contribution of the syncretic model as a conflict management tool in heterogeneous teachers' rooms concerning a teamwork form that all the teachers and the principal accept?

d. What is the principal's role in the heterogeneous teachers' room in facilitating an agreement on teamwork types?

e. How can a syncretic process influence the current state of the heterogeneous teachers' room?

2.1.2. Research Objectives

The current study's objective is to investigate in-depth traditional and modern teachers' and principals' preferences concerning teamwork types and to track the changes in teamwork forms occurring in each group -from weak forms such as individualistic culture, solitary work culture, and balkanism through strong forms, namely, collegial work, professional learning community, *storytelling*, and *a good colleague*.

In addition, the study will examine which types of teamwork are agreed upon by all groups. The study will examine the syncretic model's contribution as a conflict management tool in heterogeneous teachers' rooms in teamwork accepted by all teachers and the principal, the principal's role in generating agreement on teamwork types in the heterogeneous teachers' room, and how the situation in the heterogeneous teachers' room can be influenced through a syncretic process.

2.2. Method

2.2.1. Research Design

This is qualitative empirical research. It is empirical because it is based on facts and evidence in the field. Empirical research objectives are to collect data and formulate general laws that will explain the relationship between phenomena and predict their occurrence (Geva, 2011).

The qualitative research strategy is to study people where they are and as they go about their routines (Rist, 1982). Qualitative research involves the collection and considerate use of various empirical materials: case studies, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, cultural texts, and products, as well as written, historical, visual, and interactional texts. All said materials can describe, for instance, moments and meanings of routine and crisis in people's lives.

Empirical researchers employ a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices striving to achieve a better understanding of the matter under study. However, there is an understanding that each practice makes for a different perception of the world. Thus, there is often an obligation to employ more than one interpretive practice in each study (Tzabar-Ben Yehoshua, 2016).

The data collection process in qualitative research occurs in any environment that allows people to tell their stories: at their workplaces, homes, and any other appropriate

location. Constructivist-qualitative research design is naturalistic in that the researcher does not attempt to influence the research environment and subjects. Naturalistic inquiry abandons the fixed treatment/outcome emphasis of the positivistic controlled scientific experiment and embrace*s* the view of the research process as determined by research dynamics (Patton, 1980).

This pioneering study on teamwork syncretism in heterogeneous teachers' rooms does not attempt to corroborate an existing theory but offers a new one instead. Hence, the constructivist-qualitative paradigm was chosen, characterized by a holistic approach to the phenomenon under study that enables researchers to understand phenomena and situations as complete entities (Shkedi, 2003). Consistent with this paradigm, the research process was planned per the grounded theory that enables the researcher to organize the data structurally, ascribe meaning to the findings, and interpret them in the context of the inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Qualitative research posits that the most powerful way to understand people is to observe, talk, listen and participate with them in their natural environment. To achieve this goal, the researchers may employ various specialized non-mathematical techniques and make minimal, if any, use of quantitative techniques (Strauss, 1978). Constructivist-qualitative research is inductive in that the researchers attempt to understand the situation while attending to multiple data and without imposing pre-existing understandings on the research setting. Open interviews and observations yield categories for analysis, and the researchers learn to understand organizing patterns existing in the world under empirical study, not from pre-defined research hypotheses. Qualitative researchers go out, listen and observe how people perceive and interpret their world. We can develop meaningful hypotheses following data collection, i.e.,

after establishing contact with people in the field through interviews or observations

(Paton, 1980).

Each qualitative research method reflects the world differently, to some extent. The

combined use of several approaches attests to the researcher's intention to give more

than one interpretation of the object under study. The diversity allows us to present

multiple realities concurrently, not some objective reality. The idea of many personal

and cultural reality structures forms the basis of the qualitative concept. A plurality of

viewpoints calls for a holistic approach that offers no possibility of excluding isolated

variables from the general context (Tzabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2016).

Moreover, qualitative research is a context-dependent activity that places the observer

in the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Qualitative research comprises a series of

material-interpretive practices that make the world visible. These practices change the

world by turning it into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews,

conversations, photographs, recordings, and self-reminders. At this level, qualitative

research entails an interpretive naturalistic approach to the world. Thus, qualitative

research explores phenomena in their natural contexts with minimal possible

involvement seeking to understand or interpret phenomena regarding meanings that

people construct for them (Tzabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2016).

2.2.2. Research Population

The research population comprises 60 teachers and 20 principals in state

elementary schools in the south of Israel. Women constitute more than two-thirds of

the principals' population (14 women and six men).

The teacher population consists of educators with minimum qualifications of a

Bachelor's degree in Education (B.Ed.) and a teacher's certificate.

Both principals' and teachers' age range is between 30 to 62 years old.

All the principals participating in the study represent the three different sectors existing in the State education system of the Negev area (Jewish schools, divided into state secular and state-religious schools; and Moslem-Bedouin schools).

2.2.3. Research Sample

We used a nonprobability sampling method performed with the participants available in the field of study. The sample consisted of 80 staff members: 20 principals and 60 teachers. The teacher sample included 38 female and 22 male teachers. Each interviewed teacher had at least two-year work experience at their school and three years and more in the education system.

The principals' group included 14 women and six men with managerial experience ranging from one to 18 years. The age range is 30 to 62.

One held a Ph.D.; two principals had B.Ed., and 17 other principals had master's degrees: ten held M.Ed., and seven had M.A. in various disciplines. Eight principals rose to directorial positions from within the school staff, while 12 others had been school or other educational institution administrators, not teachers. Three of the principals founded the schools they lead today. One principal served as an education inspector in the Southern District. All the teachers and principals participating in the study lived in the south of Israel and therefore belonged to the Southern District Division of Israel Ministry of Education.

The participant teachers and the principals came from municipal, regional and rural – *moshav* and *kibbutz* schools.

Table 1 *Demographic data of the research population*

Category	Age Group	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
		Principals		**Teachers**	
Age	30-35	2	10%	20	33%
	35-45	5	25%	22	37%
	45-55	10	50%	10	17%
	55-62	3	15%	8	13%
Education Degree	M.A.	17	85%	15	25%
	B.A.	2	10%	45	75%
	Ph.D.	1	5%	-	-
	Teaching Lincense	60	100%	20	100%

Position at school	Specialization	Freq	%		Freq	%
	Grammar	10	50%	Homeroom teachers	50	83%
	Mathematics	5	25%	Specialized teachers	10	16%
	Nat Sciences	5	25%	Teachers holding various positions at school	43	71%

Experience	Principals' years of experience	Freq.	%	Teachers' years of experience	Freq.	%
	0-1	3	15%	0-10	20	33%
	2-10	10	50%	11-20	25	42%
	11	7	35%	21-25	12	20%
				25+	3	5%

Category		Freq	%	Freq	%
		Principals		**Teachers**	
Sector	**Bedouin**	5	25%	20	33%

Jewish Secular	10	50%	20	33%
State Religious	5	25%	20	33%

School characteristics:	*Innovative in curriculum and work environment*	
	Moslem-Bedouin Sector	40%
	Jewish Sector Secular	70%
	Jewish Sector State Religious	65%
Leading School Themes:	*Sustainability, Environment, Healthy Life Style, Student Leadership, Art and Science*	

2.2.4. Research Instruments

The primary research tool employed in this study is a semi-structured open interview. In-depth semi-structured interviews consist of a planned set of questions, given to changes depending on the dynamics that develop with the interviewee. The goal of the interview is to attempt to understand the interviewee's system of norms, beliefs, and motivations (Wimmer & Dominick, 2000).

The semi-structured interview allows the researcher to ask the interviewees uniform questions consistent with the interview plan and add pertinent questions that emerged in the interviews (Merriam, 1998).

The interview was selected as the primary research tool because it enables the researcher to collect data directly from the primary information sources – the informants (Fontana & Frey, 2000); thus, the researcher can "understand others' experiences and the meaning they attribute to these experiences. (Shkedi, 2003).

The interviews were designed to reveal and understand how the respondents describe and experience the teamwork and how they interpret it.

An open semi-structured interview is the most appropriate research tool for the size of this study sample and method because it allows for the most exhaustive discovery and description and helps fully reveal the existing differences among the respondents. In interviews of this type, key questions are predetermined, although not their presentation order; more questions emerged during the interview within the context, with the respondents' answers occasionally leading to spontaneous questions (Tzabar-Ben-Yehoshua, 2001). The interviews intended to reveal and understand how respondents describe, experience, and interpret the innovative and traditional forms of teamwork in their unique terms. Thus, the researcher could map the participants' positions and perceptions (Shkedi, 2003).

Furthermore, in-depth semi-structured interviews - similar to in-depth structured interviews - are methods that tackle problems with influence measuring and problems with analyzing causal links (Munck, 2004). In-depth semi-structured interviews, as opposed to structured interviews, award the informants the right to raise additional issues for discussion (Moyser & Wagstaffe, 1987). This openness generates new insights and provides a complex set of data, parts of which can serve to either validate or refute hypotheses. Semi-structured interviews are not conducted according to the preplanned sequence of questions. These interviews are based on the ethnographer as the research instrument, and they move along the continuum, starting from casual conversation to direct questions. As a rule, informal interviews are more important for research than structured interviews held when the researcher seeks to expand the population under study. Spending time in the field enables the researcher to obtain information from people who do not wish to participate in a structured interview but are ready to speak freely with a neutral, interested listener. People who give lengthy

face-to-face interviews will often insist they are too busy to fill in a short questionnaire

(Tzabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2016).

In interviews that resembled conversations, the participants were asked to tell their

stories and present their opinions. The interviews focused on several subjects:

knowledge of the personal background, history of the teamwork in the teachers' room

and the teamwork positions as perception, respondent's affiliation with team groups

and their role in them, safe climate that facilitates the creation of collaborations and

teamwork, connection to various forms of cooperation and teamwork, and

understanding the relationship between traditional and modern teachers within this

context, the principal's role in teamwork, and syncretic work processes in teachers'

room team.

2.2.5. Interview Structure

The first part of the interview consisted of an inquiry about general information on

the school team and the teacher's professional experience. The teachers were then

asked questions about routine behaviors in the school teamwork. Having completed

this part, they provided examples of teamwork.

Once the inquiry was completed, the researcher introduced the teachers and the

principals to the concept of syncretism and discussed with them opportunities for

maintaining such behaviors in teamwork management. Then, the principals and the

teachers were asked to give examples of behaviors that could be considered "modern

teamwork", in their opinion.

Examples of the research questions posed to the principals:

What is the frequency (regularity) of your group members' meetings for teamwork? Do

you provide regular and fixed times for teams' meetings? Are the meetings scheduled

in advance or spontaneously? What is your view of the principal's participation in the

teamwork of different groups? In your opinion, what are the advantages of the heterogeneous structure of the teams? What are the disadvantages? (see Appendix 1).

Examples of the research questions posed to the teachers:

In your view, what are the basic and the necessary components of teamwork? (What factor, in your estimation, must be maintained?) What role do you usually fulfill in teamwork? What topics do you deal with in teamwork? (see Appendix 2).

This interview structure – a general inquiry about principal's types of behavior and then a discussion focused on syncretism - enabled principals and teachers to distinguish between behaviors expressing mutual influences, compromises, and adaptation and behaviors expressing resistance and lack of agreement.

Also, the principals and the teachers were able to attribute their examples to syncretic processes or add more examples. Introducing and explaining theoretical concepts unfamiliar to the research participants and then discussing them is accepted in qualitative research (e.g., Snell & Wong, 2002).

Furthermore, the structure enabled us to gain a broad and profound understanding of the teachers' and the principals' perceptions of traditional and modern teamwork patterns.

2.2.6. Procedure

The study was conducted in the 2017-2018 academic year. The initial application to the schools was made via telephone or a contact person (general inspectors for elementary and high school education in the Southern District). We conducted 90-minute teacher interviews at various *Pisgah* (professional development for in-service teachers) centers. Upon their consent, 30 to 60-minute interviews with principals were held at schools. The researcher audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews, and data

collection continued as long as the researcher obtained new information from the interviewees (Shkedi, 2003).

The schools participating in the study belonged to the Southern District and were formally recognized and supervised by the Israel Ministry of Education.

Schools in the south of Israel (from the city of Ashdod to Eilat) were chosen because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher.

The interviewees were sampled according to the purposeful sampling method. Through this sampling method, the researcher seeks out participants with specific characteristics or qualities and focuses on selecting informants who represent in the best way the population from which they were chosen and who can teach us about the phenomenon we explore (Mason, 1996; Shkedi, 2003). In this sampling, the researcher considers the study's goals and chooses a sample accordingly (Coyne, 1997). The most important guiding principle in this sampling is maximal diversity. The researcher sought to include people who represent the widest variety of perceptions within the range defined by their goals (Higginbottom, 2004).

Per these guidelines, the most conspicuous pitfall in purposeful sampling would be to choose a sample that is not sufficiently diverse to represent the known existing variance in the population, or the studied phenomenon. This purposeful sampling was required to include participants from all the groups, at least: modern and traditional teachers alike and a variety of principals, to make inferences regarding interactions or relations among them. Moreover, the sample must include as much diversity as possible in each group.

Such informants have several characteristics that make them suitable for the study's objectives. Some teachers and principals were chosen for this study because they came from very heterogeneous staffrooms and were highly sensitive - the two qualities

supposedly characterize suitable informants (Fetterman, 1989). Also, they needed to feel comfortable about answering questions and be able to answer them and convey their experiences through them. Finally, they had to be ready to fully devote the required time to the purpose of the study. The last point becomes critical, chiefly in studies with more than one research stage or when informants may get "tired" and even fear overexposure.

The search centered on teachers and principals leading different and diverse teamwork forms until a thorough picture of the researched phenomena emerged. The names of most interviewed teachers and principals were kept confidential per their request. Before the study, the researcher held pilot interviews with key persons - four teachers and two principals, and multiple informal conversations aimed at understanding the local context of the phenomena under study and better formulating the questions for subsequent interviews. As stated, the researcher transcribed the interviews and numbered the different documents of the interview transcriptions.

The researcher's obligation was to obtain the participants' consent to the interview and the publications of its findings, ensure that they knew the interview topics and that the interviewing would not distort the spirit or the content of what the respondents said, protect the participants' anonymity and prevent exposure of the identifying details (Seidman, 1991).

All the participants signed informed consent to participate in the study and an ethical procedure document that allowed us to use the information they provided. The informed consent aims to ensure that each participant has evaluated the viability of participation in the study and decided to participate (Howe & Dougherty, 1993). The participant's consent to participate is valid if compliant with the following terms: (a) the consent was obtained based on complete and relevant information regarding the

study's objectives and procedures, and an examination of the chances and risks that the

participant's consent implies, (b) the consent was given voluntarily, without any

pressure or coercion, (c) the researcher acted within the framework of the consent and

did not deviate from it (Tzabar Ben-Yehoshua, 2016).

Therefore, informed consent serves to preserve the individual's autonomy. It is central

to the ethics of the entire study and generally is statutory (Tzabar Ben-Yehoshua,

2009).

2.2.7. Data processing

As stated above, all the interviews were recorded and transcribed

with *oTranscribe* software. Data analysis was performed per Strauss and Corbin's

method (1990). We carried out a separate content analysis for each interview based on

this approach. Common categories from all the interviews and the relations between

the examined categories were then identified. The analysis was carried out "bottom-

up", i.e., from the data collected from the interviews, each interview separately, to

formulating the themes.

The data were analyzed according to thematic analysis. The researcher focused on the

topics that arose from the informants' words. The analysis transformed the text into a

window into the human experience that reflected the informants' feelings, thoughts,

beliefs, and opinions.

Thus, data analysis is a process of arranging and structuring the collected data to

interpret and understand its meanings (Shkedi, 2003).

Categorization, a basis of data analysis, is founded on grouping segments of

information that seemingly relate to the same phenomenon. Categorization is based on

classification and is performed by breaking down the data to understand their meaning.

A division into categories is based on the themes repeated or emphasized by the

interviewee. This process was conducted by comparing different bits of information to find points of commonality, differences, and linkages between them (Shkedi, 2003).

The first stage of the analysis is called Open Coding described as initiating work on a puzzle. In this stage, the themes found in the data become apparent to the researcher, and piecing them together to form a complete picture begins. The process will manifest in the subsequent stages (Strauss & Corbin, 1990 as cited in Shkedi, 2003).

In this stage, the researcher coded each interview and conducted open coding. The unit of analysis in the open coding stage was the utterance, consisting of a sentence or a paragraph that provided the context for the informant's words. For instance: "teamwork between modern and traditional teachers", "syncretism", "compromise and adaptation", "heterogeneous teachers' room'" and "reciprocal influence".

The second stage of the analysis is called Axial Coding, in which the researcher still coded each interview separately. At this stage occurs the assembling of categories defined in the previous stage as they are constantly being refined. In addition, a more precise definition of the categories is achieved in the process of transition to headlines that express a central idea of several grouped categories (Tzabar Ben Yehoshua, 2001). In this stage, 'the mapping analysis' (Shkedi, 2003), the researchers examine the categories created in the initial analysis and search for connections and relations. This analysis seeks to find links between the categories - on both the horizontal and the vertical axes, at several levels of categories and subcategories. In articulating these connections in ways that explicate the researched issues and events, the mapping analysis provides the basis for descriptions and explanations meaningful for the phenomenon under study (Shkedi, 2003).

In this stage of the mapping analysis, it is possible to examine and repeatedly analyze the same data, as long as new issues are identified that can be categorically expressed

(Shkedi, 2003). The examples of categories are: "enforced teamwork", "perception of teamwork meaning among teachers and principals", "gaps in perception of traditional and modern teachers' status", and "a professional learning community as a syncretic process of compromise and adaptation".

The third stage of the analysis, Selective Coding, aims to further strengthen the internal validity of the findings by condensing the data appertaining to each category. It is done through the accumulation of all coded data according to the existing categories (Tzabar-Ben Yehoshua, 2001). In this stage, the researcher first coded each interview separately and then attempted to find points of similarity and difference that can condense different interviews around the researched theme.

Shkedi (2003) points out that selective analysis is a process that follows, and is based on, mapping analysis. Through this process, the categories are organized into a storyline by focusing on the central and then secondary categories related to it.

In constructing central categories, the researcher uses categories created in the mapping analysis and searches for the theme, issue, or major problem in the researched phenomenon to select *the core* category. The core category has subcategories that are essentially its properties.

Following selective coding, the core categories that form the "storyline" were selected. These categories construct the research findings, as stated below.

The interviews yielded consolidated and apparent central themes from the descriptions of the teamwork between traditional and modern teachers. All interviews paint a complex picture of teamwork from different perspectives: principals', traditional teachers' and modern teachers'.

2.2.8. Ethics

During the interviews, we exercised rigorous caution concerning the asymmetry of power relations created in the interview interactions and the fact that the researcher, a school principal from the Southern District, might influence the respondents' answers. The researcher' was a member of the Board of Directors of the School Inspectorate in the Northern Negev, and this fact presented a key to the research process. It merits mentioning that the researcher does not wish to claim total objectivity or distance between him and the research field.

Due to the qualitative research characteristics, especially the assumption that the research objectivity is not possible (with emphasis on "pure" subjectivity leading to lack of trustworthiness) and that the researcher himself is one of the primary research instruments (Tzabar-Ben Yehoshua, 2001), the perception guiding this researcher is the aspiration to understand the complex phenomenon through emphatic yet neutral, in terms of judgment, insight. We strove to treat the data and the phenomena free from the influence of the researcher's personal opinions and moral judgment. In light of this, and due to the researcher's intimate knowledge of the phenomenon, more opportunities and accessibility were available to him to obtain information from the respondents, and that was instrumental in his gaining a profound understanding of the research subjects' feelings and perceptions, and the relationships between them.

CHAPTER THREE: RESULTS

This chapter will focus on the findings organized according to the open-coding stage, wherein the researcher coded each interview. The themes from the data were identified, and blending them into a complete picture began. In the stage of axial coding, a more accurate definition of categories was done while transitioning to titles that express the central idea of several grouped categories. Also, the researcher carried out a mapping analysis to examine the categories he created in the initial analysis and searched for connections and interactions between them. In the third analysis stage of selective coding, the researcher reinforced the internal validity of the findings; the central categories were selected - the components that form the study's findings, as presented in this chapter.

From the interviews, seven clear and consolidated themes dealing with the descriptions of the teamwork between traditional and modern teachers emerged. The interviews formed a complex picture of teamwork from the perspectives of principals, traditional teachers, and modern teachers.

As indicated, the teachers interviewed in the present study are traditional and modern teachers.

Modern teachers are portrayed as leading innovational pedagogy utilizing innovative instruction tools, including teaching models, differential responses, new instruction methods, and novel alternative evaluation tools. They are described as teachers who amended concepts, attitudes, and personal conduct following the introduction of innovative technologies into the school. Modern teachers initiate and implement innovative teaching and learning processes through wide use of the web-based environment and the utilization of the educational potential inherent in the second-generation internet tools (Web 2.0) (Wadmany, 2017).

The professional literature distinguishes between the traditional teacher who sees their role mainly in passing the knowledge and tends to minimize the use of technological tools, and the modern, tech-savvy teacher, who views their role as a moderator and a leader of active learning processes, combined with computer and communications technologies (Rotem & Avni, 2008; Levy & Schrire, 2015). Traditional teaching methods are considered dull and routine compared to modern teaching described as learning accomplished through a technology-supported, shared-adventure approach (Wadmany, 2017).

The diffident traditional teacher is on the one end of the continuum; farther along the continuum is the curious teacher, and on the other end of the continuum is the leading modern teacher – who believes in change, is able of leading the process of implementation in the school and of helping the teachers in need of assistance (Kochavi, 2010).

Furthermore, while the traditional teacher is expected to have a good command of three knowledge bases – pedagogical content, educational system, and instruction and learning management; the modern teacher is depicted as specializing and adept - apart from the three above-named areas - in the technological body of knowledge, integrated into the traditional knowledge bases (Mishra et al., 2009). Modern teachers acquire new skills they would not need in traditional teaching, e.g., technical skills required to operate technological tools available in the school, and digital literacy skills: knowledge of the information-rich environment characteristics in general and the Internet in particular (Internet-based research, data search, organization, and retrieval, etc.) (Wadmany, 2017).

The heterogeneous teachers' room can evolve from the state of opposition and conflict between traditional and modern teachers into a state of coping and compromise,

developing toward syncretism, leading to the creation of the blend of the traditional and modern teamwork patterns with two behavioral forms and the organization operating alongside each other.

Syncretism is a variation of tradition and modernity, merging the old and the new and creating a new tradition. Syncretism is a continuous process of social change between two cultures that come into contact and change (Sharaby, 2018). The phenomenon of syncretism is likely to occur when two traditions and symbol groups are parallel in the same society or when synthesis occurs, and they integrate into one symbolic system. A syncretic process of integration, adaptation, and adoption of the external normative system ensues mainly in the ruled culture. The old in this culture does not crumble; it reintegrates, and variations of traditionalism and modernity are created (Sharaby, 2002, 2018). The process results in compromise and transformation, stemming from the change occurring in the traditional teachers.

As a result of the change in traditional teachers, the tradition did not remain in its original form; it blended with new values. Therefore, the syncretism in heterogeneous teachers' rooms has not eroded the old pattern; it integrated it into the new structure, and the conflict between traditional and modern teachers resolves through compromise. In fact, from this point of difference and strangeness, - and sometimes marginality, alienage, and suppression, - the importance of building processes of collaboration and inclusion is strengthened, enabling people to exercise influence in their lives and on the environment (Agmon-Snir & Shemer, 2016).

Compromise and adaptation are the building blocks at the heart of the syncretic process; they guide the mutual influences among the traditional and modern teachers in teamwork types.

The in-depth interviews and the analysis of the policy documents yielded seven central themes that depict the encounter between the populations.

The first theme relates to the discussion of the willingness to uphold teamwork according to the need, not regularities imposed by school administration on all teacher groups, traditional and modern alike.

The second theme dealt with traditional teachers' preference for professional solitude out of conscious choice and the individualistic culture in their work. The modern teachers attested to being content with collegial teamwork. This theme revealed the lack of willingness of the traditional and modern teachers to engage in teamwork.

The third theme deals with the gaps in the perception of teamwork meaning, between traditional teachers, modern teachers, and school principals and the causes of these gaps.

The fourth theme refers to the issue of gaps in the perception of teachers' status between traditional and modern teachers and the causes of such gaps.

The fifth theme relates to the teachers' substantial need *to tell stories* in the teachers' room - about the principal, parents, work, their strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and successes. In their view, that is teamwork at its best in that it provides them with support and assistance.

The sixth theme is common for both modern and traditional teachers. It posits that the central feature characteristic of a *good colleague* is the ability to be supportive towards colleagues; a good colleague praises and supports them wholeheartedly and thus helps them advance their professional reputation.

The seventh, additional, central theme yielded a solution to conflict management in heterogeneous teachers' rooms and teamwork conduct. Per this theme, syncretic

processes, based on compromise and adaptation, further manifest themselves within the framework of a professional learning community.

3.1. The First Theme: Existence of Teamwork in Teachers' Room

The theme dwells on the discussion of the willingness to uphold teamwork when necessary, not per regularities imposed upon all teacher groups by the school administration. Traditional and modern teachers alike share this feeling toward mandatory regularities. Some respondents referred to the timeframes of the imposed regularities and expressed countless grievances against the fact that these regularities overlap with their presence hours.

The theme is divided into two components:

3.1.1. The Need Stemming from the Teaching Staff

Flexibility, prevention of mandatory regularities, trust in teachers and their judgment, and allowing them autonomy by the school administration.

Both traditional and modern teachers noted that teamwork was dictated by the school administration and imposed on them.

The modern and traditional teachers perceive many staff meetings scheduled by the school administration as inefficient, held only to appease the school administration. This observation goes right through traditional and modern teachers' words.

In the teachers' opinion, this situation generates burnout, bitterness, despair, and passivity among traditional and modern teachers alike, as the following words of three teachers of each type indicate:

> **M.C. 1 (traditional teacher)**: During a workday at school, every minute counts, and there is no time to spare. No teacher wants their time wasted for nothing. Many times, I find myself in unnecessary regularities held just to appease the school administration. The staff and I understand and know that the meeting is pointless and serves no purpose.

Instead, we could do things we don't get to. If only they would trust us, they'd allow us to set the regularities according to our needs. Quite often, we sit with the staff just to please the school administration and waste precious time. You feel that they force unnecessary regularities on you and you stand helpless. The silence of consent hangs in the room. It's obvious to all of us that we sit there without any worthy purpose and waste our precious time.

T.S. (modern teacher): From year to year I feel that every presence hour is utilized for stuff dictated by the school administration, without asking for our opinion on what matters and what matters less. For any opening-up in the schedule, the administration allots guidance, grade homeroom teachers' meetings, specialized teachers' meetings, and the leading staff meeting. There is not a minute left for yourself. And then the achievements get low and the workload becomes insane. There is no minimal flexibility to decide what is right for you, for your students, for the grade staff, or the staff specializing in a certain subject. You are forced to participate in all the meetings, even when it's absolutely unnecessary. Not always there is a stage for a discussion. Instead of channeling and improving the teamwork, you are forced to sit with staff groups only because the administration decided so.

A.S. (modern teacher): I am a member of the math staff and the OEC (optimal educational climate) staff. It happened in the past that the schedule for both groups' meetings completely overlapped. Two teamwork meetings at the same time. I knew both were irrelevant for that week, for I wanted to sit with specialized teachers in preparation for the upcoming parents' day.

N.C. (traditional teacher): There is organizational rigidity in teamwork management. The planning is dictated by the administration without the teachers' input…

M.A.-S. (modern teacher): It's obvious to us that regarding teamwork the administration does not see the broad picture and the changes in it. Instead, it holds to the routine as the source of predictability and the feeling of control, providing it with a sense of security. It impairs teamwork in that teachers are unable to manage and lead independently.

Y.**S. (traditional teacher)**: The principals will not allow for minimal flexibility in teamwork planning and do not let us schedule work in teams according to our needs. And thus, they don't challenge or intellectually stimulate the teachers. They don't inspire the teachers' room to follow them and are not considered meaningful leaders. Some of the teachers I know are quite embittered as a result of managerial behavior such as this.

In their interviews, both traditional and modern teachers emphasized the loss of their presence hours through regularities imposed by the school administration. The following are six examples of it:

M.S. (modern teacher): From year to year, the feeling is that the prepping time is possible only at home, never at school. This is because for all presence hours at school they schedule sittings and meetings with teachers. We fail to prepare for the day after. Most teachers do so at home. That causes significant burnout, and the time is not managed properly. You feel that your time at school is "drained", and they expect you to put in more working hours at home. It's not up to us to decide on how to distribute our *presence hours*. The administration made the decision on what was important without consulting us. It happens all the time.

T.M. (modern teacher): All our presence hours are booked for staff meetings. I am jam-packed. I understand the workload, but our presence hours are for meeting parents, filling out forms, and grading tests. In the end, everything gets postponed and follows me home. I pay for it by the loss of my precious free time.

P.Z. (modern teacher): The administration does not grasp the meaning of the presence-hour. The presence-hour is the teachers' to use for work as they choose. It's high time the teachers are given the trust they deserve, not dictated what to do in the time allocated for them.

A.E. (traditional teacher): The administration treats our presence hours with inflexibility. Instead of letting us decide, at our own discretion, how to best use the hours, they force teamwork assignments and topics upon us. They expect us to accept the things as obvious. Without objection.

E.E. (traditional teacher): I feel that my judgment on the issue of presence hour management is irrelevant. If it were, they would take our consideration into account. Consideration is part of our profession. It derives from it, in fact. As long as there is no room for our judgments, it is a grievous statement, in my opinion.

E.T. (traditional teacher): As long as they impose on us what to do with our presence hours, we will continue to feel we are mistrusted and our opinions don't count. It is a terrible message to the teaching staff.

In addition, the traditional and modern teachers emphasized in their interviews the feeling of lack of trust on the administration's part, following fixed regularities regarding teamwork and the rigidity of the said regularities:

A.S. (modern teacher): This toughness heightens the teachers' feeling they are mistrusted. The moment the teacher does not participate and is excluded from the planning process for her teamwork, she views it as a statement of distrust.

M.K. (traditional teacher): Our principal is very centralized, she demands an update for every detail, event, or change. If the meeting is postponed or shortened, she wants to know about it. She does not approve of any change, and before every step, we need to get permission. This situation turns the principal into a 'bottleneck' that stalls the work.

A delegation of duties is apparently out of question. The message is she doesn't rely on the teachers' room. Most of us feel this way.

N.D. (modern teacher): A teacher who wants to skip the staff meeting needs the principal's permission. In general, he doesn't allow it and insists on full attendance. This is true this year and was so the previous year, too.

Interviews with traditional and modern teachers yielded descriptions of the situations wherein school administration coerced teacher teams to deal with a specific issue in a staff meeting, but that issue was incongruent with the needs and priorities of the teacher team. The teachers unanimously reported that, in many such cases, they responded to the school administration's demands by creating a *subversive strike.* The following are four examples of this:

A.M. (modern teacher): Many times, the administration requests to hold a teamwork meeting on a specific issue. We raise our eyebrows, failing to understand why this very subject is relevant at this point, not other more burning issues. We work for five minutes on the issue as required by the administration, tick it off and move on to a more pressing matter.

A.H. (traditional teacher): Often, when it happens, and the administration coerces us to work on some subject in teams, we sit and grumble for the whole session. In the end, we don't discuss anything. We bide our time in a subversive strike.

S.H. (modern teacher): The moment they force us to work on a specific subject, it's met with very hard feelings, so much so that none of the staff members are prepared to do any task.

A.L. (traditional teacher): The priorities of the school administration don't always match those of the teaching staff. At times, the workload is very heavy, and we prefer to

address the burning issues of that week and complete urgent tasks. When there is a lack of congruence, we choose to focus on what's pressing for us. We do so covertly, not to evoke anger in the principal.

3.1.2. The Need Stemming from the School Administration

Creating opportunities for teachers to collaborate at school, creating more stable collaborative relations among teachers (fixed regularities), preventing group acquiescence, broadening the teacher base for collaboration, and focusing on working together. School principals, in their interviews, justified planned (imposed) teamwork as a means of creating opportunities for different teachers to work together at school and creating more stable collaborative relations among teachers:

A.**M**.: Fixed and defined regularities must be a part of the school organizational culture. The regularities for teachers generate from the school's goals and aims. The teachers receive the regularities and get prepared for them. It's clear to all that without organized regularities, the teachers wouldn't sit together, and teamwork wouldn't happen. The regularities present an opportunity to plan, consult, learn, teach, experience, and succeed. Teachers get to know each other in various and diverse group settings. In my view, this is part of the school principal's job. Even if it seems inflexible and forced - the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. When does an opportunity arise for teachers of different disciplines to sit together? As a rule, teachers of a certain subject uphold teamwork, but the moment a regularity for all is scheduled, it is a golden opportunity.

M.**C**.: More diverse opportunities for teamwork between different staff working groups in the teachers' room will facilitate the development of a mutual language with clearly defined and shared goals and aims.

T.H.: Full collaboration is to be built on fixed regularities of the staff groups. Each staff group holds a separate weekly meeting, and all the groups meet once a month. This way, close collaboration between all of them is facilitated.

H.H.: Work collaboration and teamwork are sacred duties, in my view. All the teachers in my school know each other and often meet in workgroups during this year. This way, a heterogeneous work team is created and solidified.

The view that justifies planned (imposed) teamwork as a means to prevent acquiescence and to prompt teachers to *step out of their comfort zone*, emerges from the interviews with the principals, as is evident in the following examples:

A.V.: Complacency, one of the conspicuous characteristics of teacher behavior in groups, is the primary factor in mistakes of this type. Teaching staff are interested in preserving the team solidarity and are, therefore, reluctant to become 'moaners' stalling the whole group. Doubts are held back. Isolation might escalate the problem, too: there are staff groups that withdraw into themselves, dismiss any suggestion of error in their decisions or plans, distance themselves from potentially resistant teachers and even insist that these opponents are unprofessional. Complacency can take root in the staff and develop into excessive confidence. The real danger in teacher groups lies not in the authoritarian rule but in the silent complacency that grows into exaggerated confidence. Not all groups fall for traps that group thinking sets for us. Yet, when it occurs, it is hard to identify from within. For example: In Grade Six classes, although it is not acceptable to form class groups anew since they are bound for junior high school, the specialized teachers and the counselor raised the issue of immense difficulty in class management, achievement improvement, and educational climate promotion. The homeroom teachers were complacent, and overconfident in their self-assurance. They told themselves that reassembling classes is not appropriate for additional transition to high school since it will make for a tougher adaptation in high school. This complacency carried on until

after the holidays. Eventually, it was unavoidable, we split the classes and reassembled them because we had no choice…

N.T.: To prevent complacency and expand collaboration between different teachers I oftentimes break their routine work patterns. I divide the teachers into small groups, capable of creating a broader range of ideas and giving the whole group additional perspectives. I also invite external specialists to give their expert opinion to shake up the group dynamics in meetings to prevent complacency. Also, I allocate limited preset time to hear minority opinions and to nurture a work climate that encourages people to voice their honest opinion to add alternative, vital viewpoints to the discussion.

B.L.: I experienced firsthand how, many a time, a good and qualified teacher group becomes complacent regarding a student, whose situation escalated. The group assumed they made the right decisions in his respect, however, the solutions he received were more of the same remedy and failed to help him. Once the group sat for a meeting with the school treatment group, more significant options were provided for him that succeeded in saving him. This is the reason for the existence of planned regularities for all homeroom teachers with the school treatment team.

Furthermore, the analysis of the principals' interviews indicates that they perceive their position holistically, with all the complexity of the notion of teamwork management: the activity and the people involved in it (educational staff in general) are their responsibility, whether the activity takes place in their office and their presence or without them. The following are several representative examples:

A.S.: The responsibility to maintain regularities involving the school principal and the groups and the groups between themselves is the principal's responsibility.

S.A.: School principal leads the learning and instruction processes in the school. To advance and develop teaching, learning, and evaluation processes, he must lead the teamwork in the best way – to plan, advance, and improve it from time to time, to broaden and cultivate it continuously. It is the exclusive obligation of the principal.

S.L.: I make an effort to attend the important meetings and do everything to sit in the sensitive meetings. There are groups that I intensively follow. And there are groups I follow and supervise extensively. That is my responsibility as a principal.

R.B.: The principal can't attend all group meetings, but the overall responsibility is his to bear all consequences included. He must know what is happening in each teachers' work team whether he is present or not. He must also know what happens in the meeting held outside the school, and there are many such important meetings. Minutes of the work team meetings must be on the principal's work desk at any given time as documentation of the processes he is advancing.

3.2. The Second Theme: Teamwork Models in Teachers' Room

This theme is divided into three subthemes:

3.2.1. Culture of individualism

This theme relates to the traditional teachers' assertion in their in-depth interviews that relationships with other adults are not central to the teachers' psychological world. Teachers' teamwork can be built sufficiently on individualism. Teachers are capable of best work without active assistance from their colleagues because teacher-teacher interaction does not fulfill a critical role in their professional life. Interviews with traditional teachers revealed their distinct and deep dedication to their students, and therefore, naturally, their relationships with other adults derive from and are secondary to it. These teachers do not nurture the 21st-century skills in their

students and do not create combined interdisciplinary learning. The following are three representative examples:

> **R.M.**: I enjoy working with students and bringing out the best in them. I'm dedicated to the assignments and enjoy giving and nurturing my students. The bond with them is my goal. Interactions with others are less important, in my view. Many teachers forget or don't understand it. I am here for the children, not for the teachers. The teachers are grown-ups and can manage on their own. I can manage and enjoy working on my own.

> **S.A.**: I love working with my class as a homeroom teacher and achieve wonderful results, in every aspect. I do not need broad teamwork. I reap the harvest without it, anyway. Professional teachers achieve great productivity on their own.

> **M.M.**: You direct most of your effort to the student group. The school is for them. I don't need teamwork to succeed with students. A professional who knows how to do their job manages on their own.

In their interviews for this study, traditional teachers stated that they consciously choose professional solitude. They enjoy working alone; in their case, physical isolation is a choice. They view professional solitude as a positive matter, more so as a condition for creativity and inspiration, distinctiveness, freedom, personal and organizational efficiency, and organizational intimacy that fosters the interpersonal relations with the students and their parents. The following are four representative examples:

> **Y.S.**: I enjoy getting to know each and every student deeper, succeed in reaching each child and each parent, delve deeper into the problems, and find solutions leading to success. That is the essence of the teaching and education work.

> **A.E.**: My creativity is evident in all its glory when I work alone, by myself. There is nothing more authentic than that. My uniqueness is evident as a result of my work.

Everything I bring to the classroom is part of myself and part of my inspiration and uniqueness. My educational concepts are set in in all of this.

E.E.: After so many years, I have finally arrived at the understanding that meaningful work efficiency will find expression in hard individual work only. Each person works in their classroom with the students and their parents. Each one, in their little patch of Heaven, cultivates their educational work to greatness, exercises influence, and facilitates processes. That is the path to the achievement of organizational efficiency.

A.G.: In my educational and pedagogical work I need to be tuned in to the children at any given moment. I am always facing students. I chose to enter the path of education and shape the journey of that much significance with the children. I wish to be available, to pave the way for all the students, all the time. I must adapt to the critical transformations, taking place in society. Hence, I am with them out of choice at any given moment, and not in any other setting that wastes my time.

In-depth interviews with traditional teachers show that their preference for individual work exists due to the diffusion of responsibility ("hitchhikers") in the group and the takeover, by one or two members of the whole process, occurring in the group. The following are several representative examples:

N.A.: It is obvious to me that teamwork is quite rewarding. However, there are groups where dynamics work like magic, and each group member gives of themself and their strengths, and then there are groups in which the members don't get along, some are 'hitchhikers' who don't contribute to the team effort. When it happens, you simply look for a way out of the group and prefer working independently.

S.A.: It happened more than once that in the homeroom teachers' group, we divided the work so that each member knew what work they were responsible for. One-half of the homeroom teachers didn't prepare what they'd taken upon themselves to do, and the other half worked hard for all the members. In the end, I had to prepare material and instruction units instead of the homeroom teachers who had promised but didn't deliver.

It was not a one-time occurrence. It burns you out completely. You both waste your time planning and distributing work and end up working hard because you have trusted someone to do his share of work, but he has failed to deliver. You get annoyed and angry for nothing. What is all this worth?

A.T.: I witnessed how horrible the work in teacher groups can be. The willingness to help others often derives from the desire to feel in control of the process in the work environment and be seen as an expert in specific fields in the colleagues' eyes. This desire compels those employees to divert their resources to unnecessary tasks that reinforce the positive feeling they derive from offering assistance to their colleagues and the status they gain as a result. No one in the group succeeds in reigning in the teacher who decides that theirs will be the final word, he is the one who wants to plan, execute, and evaluate, and they will not allow for any other initiative or suggestion to the group to be made. In such cases, it's better to work alone than with someone who wants to run the whole world.

L.A.: At times, the group is controlled by one or two teachers. They are the only people who speak, make decisions, and give instructions. I won't sit with such a group and certainly won't participate.

3.2.2. Absence of Teamwork

In the interviews for the present study, traditional teachers explained that they prefer not to engage in teamwork due to a lack of support and backing from the school administration. The administration does not offer them support when they face difficulties and does not back them. On the contrary, the administration tends to blame them and criticize their work. Therefore, they prefer to work in their classroom, away from the criticism, the parents, and the administration's complaints. Also, these teachers indicated a lack of support and trust from their team peers which might turn out a double-edged sword. The following are several representative examples:

M.K.: I prefer to steer clear of any colleague in the teachers' room: today she is a friend, and tomorrow she turns against me in front of the school administration. Today I no longer trust a single teacher on the team.

A.Ch.: Peers can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they can help you, yet on the other, they can ruin the years' worth of your educational work.

E.L.: The moment a parent complains about an event involving their child, the administration sides with them and blames you, the teacher. That is the reason for my preference not to work in a team. I take responsibility for what I and I alone do.

Y.S.: My comfort zone is my classroom. It is also a safe area. Here, in my classroom, I disconnect from gossip, smears, disloyalty, and lack of support from the administration and the team peers.

A.E.: Our trust relations with the administration are destabilized. Therefore, I prefer to work alone, by myself, without peers whom I wouldn't be able to trust fully.

For many of the interviewed traditional teachers, their solitude in the classroom overshadows all relationships within the teachers' room. The interviews reveal that traditional teachers are very lonely in their work. These teachers are all the time alone with the children in their classroom. When they are in the teachers' room, they feel the loneliness and absence of support from the school administration which does not always know or understand their work, does not always want to help, and, indeed, does not always help. This closed-off position of a classroom is one of the factors in the traditional teachers' solitude. The loneliness gets exacerbated when the teacher is unable to solve problems alone. The following are four representative examples:

A.H.: Teachers might feel very lonely in the classroom and the teachers' room, even when these are filled with teachers and students. At times, the loneliness is a product of a lack of support from colleagues or school administration. The feeling that you are alone in the battle impacts your mood and your lonely situation in this battle.

B. Y.-A.: My bitter experience taught me that I'd rather face the work and the challenges alone. This way, the information about my abilities, and, mainly, my shortcomings, or failures is not passed on. Anyway, the administration does not offer support when you have problems. Moreover, they blame and criticize your work if students' parents complain. Therefore, it's best to stay away from all the others teachers, work separately and enjoy being alone. There are many convenient and healthy benefits in the 'alone'.

B.G.-A.: Loneliness is an inner state of a person, not the external. No matter where the person is in the physical reality of the universe, they will or will not feel lonely depending on their inner state. They might feel lonely in a crowded city and, in contrast, not feel lonely when alone on a lonely island.
I've felt lonely in the battle for many years because I know I won't get support in the face-off between the school administration and the teachers, for example. Thus, I prefer to stay away from gossip, disloyalty, and lack of support. I know I can't solve the problems, so loneliness is preferable for me.

S.T.: I trust myself and my educational work. I love working alone and take responsibility for my performance. In the past, I had my share of experience in a different form of work, more group-oriented, with dependence on each other. This didn't prove right to me, and I suffered immensely from frustration.

3.2.3. Collegial Teamwork.

In their interviews, modern teachers expressed a significant need for collegial teamwork. According to them, such teamwork unifies group members, facilitates the creation of a mutual language, and assists teachers in developing teaching, learning, and evaluation processes. Several teachers raised the issue of assignment distribution in the group, and a strong affiliation with the group, to the point of esprit de corps. Teachers of this type can equip their students with the skills necessary to meet the 21st-century demands, as is evident in the following three examples:

L.M.: With the English staff, each meeting is extremely important. For years we've been maintaining significant teamwork that advances all of us.

Building partnership is a meaningful part of the ongoing work. The staff is a part of me, and I am a part of the staff. It is like a family with a common language. I feel I contribute and partake. We share the materials, construct new instruction models, write tests, prepare alternative evaluation tools, assignments for different comprehension levels, and new vocabulary lists, and provide and receive updates. Recently, we have jointly organized work centers and learning environments. From my viewpoint, this is teamwork at its best, where each member actively collaborates. My colleagues are like a family to me. We are friends outside the school, as well. It is a friendship for life.

S.H.: The math staff is one of the most significant at our school. First of all, we are one big family, including a few homeroom teachers who also teach math. But the core is math teachers for all grade levels. We attend family events of the fellow staff members, indulge each other on birthdays, and enjoy personal encounters after school, too (when we find time for it). The work of the math staff is incredible. We create open-class lessons, lesson plans, evaluation tests, and various performance indicators. We have a distinct work distribution that makes our work easy. One writes tests, another creates learning environments, and the third prepares a lesson plan or an instruction model. We

all enjoy exchanging materials. We help and support each other, chiefly our homeroom teachers, who teach other disciplines in addition to math instruction. It is a winning team we are talking about here. I see no need for any additional or different type of teamwork. I am a math teacher and belong to the math staff. That is the way I see it.

T.B.-Ch.: I have been a member of the school's social involvement and education staff for a decade. With each passing year, we expand the social initiatives so that each student has an abundant choice of formats for social involvement: Golden Age homes, Children-at-Risk centers, Children's wards at hospitals, and more. Thanks to the teamwork, we've nurtured strong culture at school, that is growing and expanding. All these thanks to the teamwork of the social involvement staff. The satisfaction is enormous, and with it comes esprit de corps. Everywhere in the city, you hear about the social involvement we've created at our school. The satisfaction is tremendous, as is the pride to be a member of the team that succeeded in leveraging meaningful social involvement in the community with such success.

Traditional teachers indicate their preference for collegial work because it provides personal support, broadens their knowledge, and facilitates work distribution in the disciplinary and the didactic fields. Traditional teachers described it best in their interviews, as is evident in the following examples:

D.D.: I am a member of the linguistic education staff at the school. One of the most significant aspects of the group, for me, is that I give and receive constant support. Every person must get support from their friends and, likewise, offers support to those who need it. Emotional support, for me, is to know I can lean on my fellow teachers if the road becomes tough and branches off. Support can take the form of assistance in any matter related to pedagogical or didactic areas. Our meetings are informative. Each member contributes experience and knowledge. These are passed around and, on our

table, a great bulk of knowledge gets accumulated - disciplinary and didactic. It constitutes tremendous support for each staff member who needs advice, an answer, or assistance in the correct processing of a teaching model and its proper implementation in practice.

K.B.: Our math staff teamwork is always based on assignment distribution. There are responsible for test writing, teaching units, lesson plans, and differential responses, including material for A-students. Try to imagine a simpler activity, like a holiday dinner. In this task, too, there is role distribution (product purchase, guest invitations, meal preparation, and table arrangement). That is precisely what takes place in our group. Work distribution that creates great expertise. Each of us enjoys the fruit of others' work and becomes an expert in the field he leads in mathematics.

 A.A.: In my opinion, one cannot become an authority without collaboration with the staff that holds regular meetings, raises challenging issues, solutions; creates, shares, enhances, examines, experiences, dives into the depths of the subject matter, extracts pedagogical principles and constantly creates new pedagogical and didactic materials.

3.3. The Third Theme: Perception of Teamwork by School Teachers and Principals

The third theme refers to the gaps in the perception of teamwork meaning among traditional and modern teachers and school principals and the reasons for these gaps. A general agreement was observed among the traditional and modern teachers regarding the most basic and essential teamwork components. However, it emerged that differing definitions influence the gaps in the formulation of the cause for the phenomenon of the traditional teachers' resistance to opening the classroom doors for open lessons (and for videotaping) constructed at a team level to advance instruction, learning, and evaluation processes, as the research indicated. The revelation of this

foundation of primary worldview gaps presents the basis for understanding the conflictual relationship subsequently revealed in the study that included the feelings of hostility and embitterment on the traditional teachers' part and the feelings of guilt, condescension, and paternalism on the modern teachers' part; these feelings impact syncretism processes, including the anticipated adaptation and compromise between the groups. Another distinct example emerged: grading tests of unfamiliar students unfamiliar to the teacher. The theme is divided into three subthemes:

3.3.1. External Factor Intervention in Student Test Evaluation

In recent years, a concept implemented by teachers' guidance counselors and inspectors has been in existence that calls for a change in test evaluation so that each teacher grades the tests of their colleague's students. It is argued that this work form ensures a reliable, fair, and equitable testing procedure: each teacher grades the tests done by the students they do not know or teach, and thus their evaluation is unbiased by their familiarity with the students. Teachers' guidance counselors claim that with this method, evaluation becomes purer, more objective, unaffected by the familiarity and bond built between a teacher (the evaluator) and a student (the evaluated). Once an evaluation is complete, the teachers might share evaluation experiences and share with the student's teacher the strengths and shortcomings that the evaluation revealed, at the class, group, and individual levels.

The perception of test evaluation by the teacher who does not teach the students as alienated, pointless, even intrusive, damaging, and indicative of mistrust on the school administration's part emerges from the traditional homeroom teachers' words. The following are two representative examples:

M.A. (homeroom teacher): The homeroom teacher knows her students better than any other educator. She recognizes their difficulties, relates to her students, and links their written test answers to additional evaluation tools. I think, only their teacher can grade the student's tests. Once the tests are handed to someone else, the encounter between the teacher and the student is affected. It is precisely what I don't want to happen. When it is not I who has graded my students' tests, I can't relate to the comments or remarks by the teacher who graded the tests when the students approach me with questions. There is something in the students' answers that derives from my personal encounter with them, discussions in class, the meetings, ours only. Another evaluator is not familiar with the class milieu, and thus the students' answers become too objective, alien even. The severing of the bond between my students and myself occurs when I don't evaluate their output. One of the points of teacher-student connection is realized through an evaluation of their output. After the teaching and learning processes are complete, the evaluation process takes place. It is a meaningful encounter with the students. Why should this experience be taken away from the teacher who has led the process? Why shouldn't the teacher, who completed a meaningful process with her students, be involved in their end-product?

M.R. (homeroom teacher): I can say that test grading by another teacher is indicative of the school administration's mistrust of the teachers. Regarding testing as an evaluation tool, we are obligated to grade tests in strict compliance with the performance indicator. Therefore, the teacher has no reason to abstain from grading the tests she's conducted. Teachers are required to form consciousness in evaluation since it involves a closed quantitative evaluation tool, not an open output for qualitative evaluation. There is no room in evaluation to correlate the product to the variables such as motivation, inner abilities, objective difficulties, and so on. The staff knows how to do this, and the coordinators always clarify the rules before testing.

Many teachers associate test evaluations with the administration's mistrust. Teachers look forward to grading their tests. A teacher who wants to swap grading tests with another teacher can do so. However, they cannot coerce all the teachers and aggressively demand them to do so. In case the school administration doesn't trust the teachers, they should follow a fair and straightforward process and speak about it openly with the teachers.

In their interviews, some traditional teachers pointed out that test evaluation is not followed up by a discussion between the teachers. That means, in their view, that the process is unnecessary. Furthermore, these teachers indicated that evaluation by an external factor often evokes mistrust in the evaluator by the homeroom teacher, as seen in the following examples:

M.K. (homeroom teacher): After the evaluation (I have graded another teacher's students' tests, and she has graded those of mine), we exchange the tests and the summary datasheets. No discussion of her insights from the tests follows. I find myself screening the graded tests inquisitively, examining her remarks, and trying to figure out how I would formulate remarks to the student I know better. I would do it with a more personal approach to avoid hurting his feelings, not because the teacher is insensitive but because I know him more closely.

Y.S. (homeroom teacher): Quite often, this work method evokes unnecessary conflicts between teachers. No one likes interference in his work. As long as it is internal tests, there is no reason to hand the students' tests to an outside teacher. The hand that imparts, teaches, and guides is the hand to evaluate. Full stop!

In contrast, the perception of students' test evaluation by a different teacher who does not teach them as a painless process emerges from the interviews with modern homeroom teachers.

These teachers relate to this method as a *purer* and more objective evaluation tool and the test indicator as a working tool providing the evaluator with objectivity in grading. The following are representative examples:

L.S. (homeroom teacher): The performance indicator for test assessment that we use includes criteria that constitute the terms each student must meet to succeed. The indicator is based on standards specifying which level to qualify for according to the criteria. It consists, as a rule, of a scale of points each student can earn, consistent with the quality of performance. These are termed set points. Each set point is described in the indicator, and at times even the markers that constitute evidence of the point accumulation are specified as well. The indicator ascribes to each characteristic its significance in the grade. Therefore, there is no reason for teachers to abstain from evaluating the tests by the students they don't know. On the contrary, this way, we are more objective and can avoid letting our feelings interfere due to our knowledge of the student.

S.A. (homeroom teacher): Only this way objectivity is maintained. The data gathered by this method are most exact and reflect the students' abilities precisely. We've got here data precision and reliability.

V.D. (homeroom teacher): With this method, I, as a homeroom teacher, hand out the tests, free of the parents' and students' expectations to round off a grade or an assessment. The grade a student obtains is their precise performance on the test. Nothing is more precise, and it makes it easier for us as subject and homeroom teachers.

3.3.2. Open- lesson Hosting and Evaluation

Conducting open lessons in research, training, and professional development is not new. It has developed significantly in recent years following the efforts invested in

understanding the teaching, teacher knowledge, classroom dynamics, various subject

matter areas, etc. Recent years' studies point to the possibility of effective use of open-

lesson planning in a group setting, and of an open lesson assessment by educational

teams in an open pedagogical discussion as an opportunity for teachers' professional

learning, but, at the same time, indicate the limitations and even risks involved.

Some traditional and modern teachers unanimously defined assessment of open lesson

performance as a painful, judgmental, rough, and threatening experience. Yet, they

described lesson planning as a significant and empowering learning experience within

the team, with each participant in the group contributing and benefiting in the process,

raising their questions and doubts, and, at the same time, imparting their experience

and skills. Thus, planning turns into a group effort where all teachers participate and

get exposed to teaching methods, materials, insights, and pedagogical principles. These

studies are in line with other research findings on shared team-based pedagogical

planning. The following are several representative examples:

> **M.S. (traditional teacher)**: Every teacher who hosted an open lesson in front of the
>
> class, with a principal, inspector, and subject counselor in attendance, comes out with a
>
> rough experience she'd rather forget. As a rule, the lesson is planned and structured in
>
> collaboration with the counselor in teamwork with the subject teachers, and thus the
>
> desired teamwork takes place where each member helps shape lesson contents. It serves
>
> as an opportunity to learn from the collective experience of all the teachers in the group
>
> and create a lesson outline or an instruction model shared by all. The complicated part
>
> comes at the end of the lesson - the lesson assessment stage. This part leaves the teacher
>
> who hosted the lesson with scars. The lesson assessment is conducted disrespectfully,
>
> dismissing meaningful segments of the lesson structure. The criticism turns rude and
>
> unpleasant. All this occurs in front of the colleagues who have attended the lesson and

participated in the lesson planning. The feeling is that they put the spotlight on the teacher, and, instead of instructive and inspiring, the discussion becomes threatening and offensive. Moreover, the inspector writes up a report on the lesson that specifies the points for correction and improvement. It is not learning but hurting experience. That is why none of the teachers welcome guests into their classroom for an open lesson. Even when we as teachers go through a learning process in teamwork, we will forgo the humiliating experience of the lesson assessment format.

S.A. (traditional teacher): Instead of the assessment process based on the willingness to nurture the teacher, create success and development, and aimed at guidance, improvement, and empowerment, they spar with her over things she omitted due to stress. One can always find points for improvement, yet we get drawn to dissatisfaction. Teachers invest days and nights in collaboratively planning an instruction model or a lesson outline, and in the end, the performance doesn't meet the expectations. Instead of being reflective, the discussion turns threatening. We do enjoy working together as a team and planning an open lesson. Collaboration within and between the groups is maintained, and we all benefit immensely from it. It is a pity that, in the end, we are left with a bitter aftertaste because of the lesson assessment experience.

D.M. (modern teacher): If I am asked to host an open lesson, I'll refuse. In the light of what I know of my fellow teachers' experiences, there is no reason for me to agree to such an experience. The thing is similar to a surgery in an operating room. There will be comments on anything you say and do in the lesson, cynical and disrespectful remarks. I will not consent to that.

A.M. (modern teacher): Assessment of the teaching practice in an open lesson can be devastating and humiliating if done unprofessionally. Unfortunately, both the inspectors and the principals err in their conduct of the assessment. These errors cause significant teacher absenteeism due to *sickness* or personal reasons - anything to forgo the

humiliating experience. The harm is often done in front of your colleagues who have
observed your lesson. Anyone would rather forgo such a derisive attitude.

3.3.3. Open- Lesson Videotaping and Analysis

The use of lesson videotaping for teachers' professional analysis holds tremendous
potential. Many principals implement this tool at their schools to improve instruction
and learning. Recent studies point out possibilities for effective use of lesson taping for
teaching improvement and limitations and risks involved. Lesson videotapes serve as a
chief source of information on the teaching work that allows for the advancement of
the pedagogical discussion through teacher learning from lesson videotapes. The
videotaped lessons are an effective tool for presenting teaching practice, and, as such,
they might provide learning opportunities for teachers (Borko, 2004).

In the interviews, traditional teachers voiced their refusal to host a videotaped open
lesson to analyze and extract pedagogical principles at the team level. The tension
associated with the use of lesson videotapes for teaching assessment and with such use
for professional development was distinct in the interviews. Traditional teachers
expressed their categorical objection to open lesson videotaping, in which, in their
opinion, the use of a camera influenced the processes occurring in the class, including
the instruction and learning process. In addition, these teachers expressed their
disapproval of the modern teachers' consent to cooperate in the matter, as emerges
from the following examples:

> **R.M. (teacher)**: I don't understand the need to bring the camera into the classroom. A
> camera in the classroom may impact its progress and, at times, even disrupt learning
> processes. The students suddenly behave differently; curiosity changes their behavior.

The performance changes and the camera makes for a different image of the class and the teacher. Quite unnecessary, in my opinion.

N.C. (teacher): Once the camera is in the classroom, the students' reactions change, and the teacher's behavior changes accordingly. Any conversations, discussions with the children, and the approach to the children – all look and sound artificial and unauthentic. Absolutely unnecessary.

M.K. (teacher): Both the teacher and the students have a right to privacy, and lesson videotaping might infringe upon it. The teacher community in our settlement is small, and the teachers are easily identifiable. The feeling experienced by some of the teachers, who volunteered to be videotaped, is one of *disgrace*.

K.B. (teacher): There are teachers in the team who will love to host an open lesson and will even agree to have it recorded. I don't understand it. The moment a single teacher consents, the administration expects more teachers to agree to it. I will not permit videotaping. Sorry.

D.D. (teacher): There are teachers on our staff who prefer to please the administration and to consent to a videotaped open lesson. That leads the administration to believe that they can ask all of us to agree to lesson recording. We pay a price because of a few teachers.

Alongside this objection, other reasons for modern teachers' opposition to lesson videotaping become apparent. In the interviews, these teachers conveyed the ethical dilemmas of lesson recording and their influence on the staff in the teachers' room. They expressed the fear, not of the assessment per se, but the unfair public judgment because of lesson videotaping.

In their interviews, these teachers disclosed that they did not watch the end-product and that it was made public without their consent; they received a low evaluation for the videotaped lesson not because of the quality but rather because of the focus of filming. Furthermore, the videotape was distributed in communities not included in the consent, thus violating the teacher's privacy. It is evident in the following examples:

B.L.-A. (homeroom teacher): Teaching is a total profession – teachers are totally committed to an open lesson - particularly when it is recorded. Yet, they are evaluated based on a limited number of specific issues. The teacher feels judged as a person each time, and the consequences of such assessment might be far-reaching, way beyond the professional level. Lesson recording and assessment, especially a summarizing risk-loaded assessment, might damage the teacher's self-confidence and authority, two factors necessary for good teaching.

S.H. (teacher and coordinator): At our school, several lessons were videotaped. Before each videotaping, multiple problems would arise. The videotaping and the underlying factors challenged us all. All entities involved in videotaping agreed that the teacher should be aware of the criteria for assessment, both the assessment process and the schedule for assessment and classroom videotaping. When an assessment or videotaping for professional development is at issue, any effort will be pointless if the teacher does not have faith in the process. The protection of the teacher's privacy is essential for maintaining their trust. It means that every video of the teacher's lesson must be guaranteed to get solely into the hands of the people he trusts, whether it is the teacher, their counselor, or the teacher community. In the end, at our school, the recorded lesson was uploaded on the internet. The teacher was appalled. He experienced a bitter disappointment.

M.S. (teacher and coordinator): Before videotaping in class, the decisions must be made on whether to use a stationary or professional camera operator's service and whom to focus on - the teacher or the class? It's clear to all that each choice will influence the end product. The choice of the focus is supposed to reflect the purpose of the recording. For example, when the purpose is professional development, the focus of recording must be aligned with the focus of development. When the purpose is the identification of student behavioral patterns, the camera must focus on them. The focus on an improvement of the teacher's ability to present ideas suggests the camera's focus on the teacher. If the purpose is an improvement of student-teacher interaction, the focus must be on both. The camera operator videotaping the lesson might film the students and the teacher in an unprofessional manner, so whoever watches the video afterward might be misled in his assessment, depending on the angles of videotaping. The teacher in the video might get a low evaluation for his lesson, not because it wasn't good but due to the focus of the lesson recording.

P.Z. (subject and homeroom teacher): Novice teachers or teachers inexperienced in videotaping are sometimes unaware of how their practice looks to the outsider. The recording entity's ethical responsibility is to show the videotaped material to the teacher and obtain their consent to distribute the video among entities the teacher approved of as documentation recipients before recording. These measures are not always implemented. The teacher is not familiar with the received output, and it gets distributed to all. And then there is no way back.

3.4. The Fourth Theme: Teachers' and Principals' Perceptions of Themselves and Other Teachers

In this theme, we addressed the issue of gaps in the perception of traditional and modern teachers' status, the causes of these gaps, and the principals' perception of both teacher groups. These gaps are the basis for understanding the conflictual relationship

discovered in the study between traditional and modern teachers, and its significance for syncretic processes is vital.

The theme relates to the issue of the shared life in the teachers' room, its function, and each group's place in the internal relationship system at the school. Furthermore, it points to the probability that modern teamwork evokes ambivalent feelings among senior teachers.

This theme is divided into five subthemes:

3.4.1. Modern Teachers' Perception of Themselves and Others in Teamwork

In the interviews with the modern teachers, their initiative and zeal are highlighted, in contrast to the traditional teachers' passivity. This distinction between senior teachers as objects incapable of an initiative and the modern teachers as change-making subjects goes right through the words of the modern teachers and emphasizes the gap between them and the traditional teachers:

> **T.S. (teacher)**: I am constantly looking for ways to modernize and lead pedagogical and ethical innovative initiatives. This year, for my classes, I expanded project-based learning (PBL). The students researched authentic disciplines, learned to ask questions, find information, process, and merge it with new knowledge. They presented their work in a session in front of teachers and students. We won a regional prize in the digital clip category. I enjoy seeing the spark in the children's eyes; learning becomes filled with pleasure. I use innovative assessment tools and up-to-date instruction models. It is a pity that other teachers don't catch my passion and are stuck behind. Their students remain in the same place with them. It is a sad thing to observe.

> **A.S. (teacher)**: I see myself as an initiator and an innovator. I want to fly high and far, enrich my pedagogical-educational ideas, and create ideas to challenge myself. I constantly dream of developing high quality innovative, and future-oriented educational

products. I think it was Walt Disney who said that if you can dream something up you can do it. I believe it. People who dream are, in my view, initiators looking forward and making change. I want to be part of this group.

B.K. (teacher): As a math teacher, it is important for me to cultivate more advanced teaching and learning. I've built an arsenal of tasks at several levels that lead to the same mathematical principle, and in every lesson, I advance differential instruction and thinking development of the high order. I emphasize mathematical thinking and develop it with the students in class. With the staff, we've assembled a binder for developing mathematical reasoning and justification for student use. We've created a set of games for private tutoring hours. We've built a set of assessment tasks for second through sixth grades and created a learning environment that supports students with difficulties. Another initiative that we want to develop in the course of this year is A-Level math groups. To promote these pedagogical initiatives, one requires willingness, motivation, and a love of the profession. Not all the staff members are willing and driven to lead qualitative pedagogy. I am considered *obsessed*.

S.A. (teacher): The significant initiatives that are taking shape we lead from the planning stage to the performance and evaluation stage at the school. Sometimes, it seems that, instead of cultivating additional initiatives, we are fighting for their implementation in the face of other teachers' resistance.

L.M. (teacher and social education coordinator): At every opportunity, I promote and develop my initiatives and those of the students from the Student Council for Active Social Involvement in the Community. Assistance to the Golden Age Home for the Elderly, assistance to the risk-group students, visits to the children's ward at the hospital, and more. Not all the teachers on the staff accept these moral initiatives with enthusiasm. The practical success of an initiative depends on teachers who serve as agents of change. Sometimes, the students are more willing than the teachers. At times

the teachers are dragged into projects and don't lead the initiative. That is very unfortunate.

S.H. (social involvement coordinator): Every year, I modernize, taking on new social and ethical initiatives. It provides the drive to work, curiosity and challenge. I don't give up on novel social and ethical projects that prove exciting for all of us. I make an effort to create new collaborations and interactions with new organizations to advance community involvement. I am a person of connections and enterprise. I see no place for passivity, rather, positivity and leadership, full speed ahead.

M.A. (teleprocessing coordinator): I see the pedagogy that I lead as innovative and up-to-date. In teaching and learning processes, I utilize digital tools that allow me to help construct learning processes and fruitful interaction development between teachers and students and promote 21st-century skills. As a coordinator, I counsel teachers on how to integrate tools that allow for collaborative discourse and discussion, tools to create illustrated images, tools assisting in translation and spelling correction, tools that enable creating a questionnaire and sharing it via a link, etc. Not all teachers cooperate, and it's clear to me that not all of them integrate these tools. I always feel that I speak to half of the teachers only. The other half has been lagging for a long time.

Modern teachers speak of the desire to change the perception and the school image, make parents believe in the school and love it, and change the culture and the local discourse to contain fewer claims of deprivation, bitterness, and *obsolete* perceptions. They believe that their arrival, backed up by ideology, faith in the power of the place, and the truth, will to make a change, help realize the potential to create meaningful teamwork.

Modern teachers see in their teamwork maintained out of choice a chance for a change in perception and the image. Faced with the negative image, modern teachers see

themselves as those whose choice to lead the teachers' room and whose initiatives might change the image and the reality. The following are representative examples taken from the interviews with modern teachers:

Y.A.: The ties with the parents at the school are important, in my view. Developing connections with them is a process built and shaped in the course of the year. When parents are not pleased with a few teachers, they say they are not satisfied with the school. Therefore, it's important to build connections, interactions, and collaborations with the parents' community. Several subject teachers and homeroom teachers on the staff succeed in forging strong ties with the parents' community. It is possible to hold discussions on the matter on the floor of teacher meetings and build a collaborative plan for strengthening ties with the parents' community. Such a plan may assist us all in building up appropriate parent-teacher relations.

C.M.: The teachers' room is perceived in the broader community as somewhat obsolete in that it does not use digital tools and computerized materials widely. The school is equipped with computers, projectors, and teleprocessing tools to use in the teaching and learning processes. When we all use more computerized materials in an educated manner, we will change the image of the obsolete teachers' room employing irrelevant tools to that of an innovative and invigorated teachers' room.

B.K.: The positioning of the school in the community is of great importance. The school must serve as a meaningful anchor in the community and a safe place for all who enter it. Once it is seen as meaningless and irrelevant, it loses its place. We, as teachers, must do everything to position the school as a genuine anchor in the community.

M.S.: I feel that at the school where I work there is no esprit de corps. The teachers don't enjoy saying they belong to this school. The school teachers don't believe that team's importance is greater than an individual's. In teachers' rooms, conflicts and hard

feelings often occur as a consequence of teachers' commitment to their assignments. At times, teachers perceive their assignments as personal, separate, and distinguished from the team assignment. Thus, alienation is created instead of esprit de corps, and rather than become a part of each individual's identity, the team is perceived as hostile. If we change that, and the teachers' room becomes a cohesive entity, the feelings of connection will emerge, fellowship, and esprit de corps. Our strength is in our alliance. I feel that it is our role in the team; we are the agents of change.

S.A.: We are in the lead; we are part of the school leadership. Therefore, it is our responsibility to advance change at the school. We must put aside the arguments and move forward. We will help those who feel deprived to raise their head and work in cooperation. We are capable of that. Everything depends on us.

The modern teachers reported that they associate traditional forms of teamwork with self-awareness, feelings of incapability, inferiority, despair, burnout, and passivity among traditional teachers, as is evident in the following examples:

S.H.: Part of the staff is burnt out and old-fashioned. They always get angry with me because I initiate and diversify with innovative and updated material. Then I am reprimanded by other teachers. They are afraid too that they will be required to get up-to-date and upgrade their teaching and learning processes. I use video clips and hold computerized quizzes as part of a summary of a study unit. I am willing to share the materials I've created with other teachers, but their displeasure is with the fact that I constantly create and upgrade. It is the traditional teachers' fear. That they will be required to rise to the threshold that I constantly raise.

A.M.: At times, I feel that these teachers, with all due respect, have given up. They express a lack of ability and willingness to work together. They are ever under the impression that they can't do the assignments they consider unnecessary.

B.L.-A. (teacher and homeroom teacher): I sense that teachers feel inferior. However, they exude condescension, conceit, cynicism, disrespect, callousness, self-righteousness, or relentlessness toward other teachers. But deep inside, I am sure, they feel the loneliness that breeds inferiority.

A.M. (teacher and coordinator): Traditional teachers use obsolete assessment tools. Instead of utilizing alternative creative assessment tools, they expect me to work as they do and write a test once a study unit is complete. In my view, student products, such as writing a reflective diary or product exhibition, are more enjoyable and challenging, both for the teacher and the student. Most arguments are about ways to cancel out young teachers' creative ideas. I cannot remain passive and teach in old-fashioned ways. This gap frustrates modern teachers at any given time, and the situation turns unbearable.

D.M. (teacher and coordinator): I feel that progress and the need for innovation and upgrading bring the traditional teachers to despair. Their inability to catch up with the pace is quite remarkable. You can't use ten-year-old lesson outlines to teach the generation of students who's got flickering screens in their hands. The lessons of yesteryear cannot be today's lessons. It was not said for nothing that 'yesterday's teachers teach today's students the materials of the future.

V.D. (teleprocessing coordinator): Leading a staff that includes traditional teachers is a trying and complex issue. To expect them to integrate digital tools into lessons. I demonstrate how to weave computerized materials into lessons and discover a gap so big - between them and myself. Their fear of a computerized environment paralyzes them. They fail to connect to digital tools because of their fear and apprehension.

3.4.2. The Traditional Teachers' Perception of Themselves and Others in Teamwork

The modern teachers defined the traditional teachers' chief problem as a negative internal and external self-image, whereas the traditional teachers named concrete problems linked to burnout barriers, workload, and mental fatigue that turn teamwork into conflict traps the modern teachers want to escape. In the traditional teachers' view, these resistance barriers connect to other blocks in the areas of burnout and work overload, as emerges in the following examples:

R.M. (subject and homeroom teacher): In recent years, the workload has grown unbearable. Each assignment becomes more and more demanding and complex. Conversations with the parents wear me out. Forms to fill out get piled up without any regard for us, and everyone is eager just to complete an assignment and move on to the next one. Many a time, I am unable to decide what is more important and what is less, what is the right order of priorities. There is no time to talk or help. The assignments are to be completed here and now and handed over to the school administration. Amid all this chaos and stress, they ask us to meet up in groups and work. They must realize that one thing comes at the expense of the other. You cannot both sit with the staff and perform assignments. There is hardly any time to work individually, yet they expect us to work in groups.

L.A. (teacher and coordinator): Following many years of working in the classroom, mental fatigue takes its toll. This is a natural signal the body communicates when it feels its resources have been depleted. It is this fatigue that triggers argument traps for us in the teachers' room.

D.D. (subject and homeroom teacher): When we settle into a routine at school, we begin to do things out of habit and not through observation. The immediate significance is that we cease being "in the moment", but, as more time passes, switch into an 'autopilot' mode and stop thinking about the work itself. Then, naturally, we no longer

feel the experience of the educational work. I work in an environment of stress and cynicism toward teacher colleagues; teachers around grow tense; the bureaucracy becomes insufferable – and that is why I, as a teacher, feel burnt out.

K.B. (teacher and coordinator): We work under an incredible workload. One cannot sit in a meeting for hours. The assignments await, and we have to meet the scheduling demands. Not every matter should be the subject of a group meeting that starts but never ends.

A.A. (subject and homeroom teacher): Lately, I've come to realize that arguments in the teachers' room result from the daily work overload that grows exponentially. A work-related burnout doesn't help, either. The system presses and stresses out all of us.

A.H. (subject and homeroom teacher): In teamwork, I feel chronically tired. The meetings are very long and last way past the allotted time. More and more talk, without deciding on working and action methods. Each attendee wishes to pass a message and raise ideas, and so I see no light visible at the end of the tunnel.

B.Y. (subject and homeroom teacher): Sometimes, staff meetings are scheduled one after the other. If a teacher is a member of two groups, she may attend a meeting from start to finish and move on to the next one. It is exhausting and takes up time. Sometimes, I would get invited to two meetings that overlap. I attend the meetings that are important to me. Don't bother pointing out the mistake to the school administration. The workload is too heavy.

S.T. (teacher and coordinator): In some meetings, arguments never cease. Each member wishes to voice their opinion; each pulls the discussion in their direction. Sometimes, the school administration stands helpless in the face of our disagreements. We agree to disagree with each other, and that is it. And thus, the meeting is adjourned. The traditional teachers associate modern teachers' teamwork methods with separatism, obstinacy, need to compete, willingness to advance innovation and change compulsively and obsessively, and the feelings of misrepresentation, aggressive marketing of

educational initiatives, and alienated enthusiasm for teamwork, as becomes evident in the following examples:

 A.L.: In every staff meeting, we experience the uncompromising stubbornness on the part of the modern teachers. Stubbornness in itself is not necessarily negative; it might speak to their diligence, perseverance, etc. Yet, we felt that each seemingly solvable issue was addressed strictly according to the plan they presented. It is impossible to work with such inflexibility. They cannot make an individual decision on each matter and behave as if the last word is theirs.

K.A.: Modern teachers create alienated interactions in which they let you feel they understand more and are more successful. Alongside the alienation, I have failed in signing up for their ideas. It seems as though we deal all the time with pretenses under which they market their ideas. Other than false pretenses, there is no morality or qualitative pedagogy there.

K.K.: These teachers are competitive. One cannot trust them since they want to prove themselves. Even when you give them the material you've created, they will claim it's theirs. More than once, I shared material with a teacher only to find out that they signed their name on it as the author. Competition might lead to conflict among teachers when obstruction and restriction of resources might cause tension. However, if only the modern teachers understood that conflict might contribute through learning and the creation of qualitative discussion, the competition would become a catalyst for innovation and improvement. But that is not the case.

S.S.: Modern teachers do not understand that success does not necessarily stem from the competition. People can achieve noble goals without competition, and, in most cases, competition is not required. An attempt to arrive at good performance and compete with the other are two separate notions. The goal of teamwork is to achieve better performance.

A.R.: The modern teachers are busy marketing their initiatives and successes. That is what they are interested in. At times, there is a wide gap between what they declare and what they do in practice. In teamwork as well, arrogance is constantly manifested. There is no modesty and no humility in their work.

T.A.: Not all people like the marketing aspect. We feel we had rather devote our time to educational work. If we don't market our extensive work in class, it does not mean the work doesn't occur. We don't need to shout it out, it is meaningful for our students, and this is what counts more than anything else.

M.H.: The modern teachers constantly seek this segregation. They wish to present constantly separatist programs that, in effect, are reflected in the routine work we carry out at the school and in collaboration with the parents and the school administration. And, certainly, they would always make sure that segregation is manifest in pedagogical and learning tools integrated into the classes they teach.

T.A.: The modern teachers will always present themselves as more creative, more up-to-date, more relevant than we are. At any given moment, they create misrepresentation, market themselves and not the school, separate their work instead of integrating it into the existing work, and are alien and distant from us all.

3.4.3. Ethnic Identity: Us and Them

In this theme, also the ethnic identity emerges: "Us and Them". The theme focuses on the distinctions between the two populations, the role of ethnic identities and hierarchies, and their formation before and during the encounter of the two groups. Supposedly, ethnicity does not mark the distinctions in the encounter between the traditional, modern, experienced, or young because experienced teachers can also be innovative. However, ethnic identity does not necessarily relate to the origin but rather to the identities and roles that different players adopt. Ethnicity, in many cases, is a product of conflicts and interests and is the medium through which groups advance

their shared interests (Kachtan, 2013). Traditionalism is presented as a normative ideal, labeled by modern teachers as less good, and required to change. Concurrently, this labeling fortifies a resisting ethnic identity.

Therefore, the terms *modern* and *traditional* do not refer solely to the teachers' status but also to images, identities, and the entirety of worldview, the way of life, the hegemonic language, and culture, as opposed to the marginal. This description highlights the gap between these teacher types. The gap is fraught with feelings of frustration by traditional teachers characterized as a population in need of assistance, a weak population that requires image improvement, and modern teachers' help and support. Despite the diverse ethnic composition of the innovative teachers, they are viewed as "zealous"; the term zealousness is used to describe modern teachers who appear to have adopted the discourse of the dominant group.

Modern teachers avoid interaction and distinguish themselves from traditional teachers. Moreover, they create privileges for themselves, unavailable to the minority groups, thus further aggravating the segregation (Lees, 2016; Mumm, 2008). The traditional interviewees see in innovative teachers a strong, hegemonically bored" group that gets privileges along with the support from the administration that sees innovatory teachers as creating opportunities for traditional teachers, as emerges from the following examples:

> **S.S**.: Modern teachers can sometimes dance attendance on the school administration, satisfy all their requests, thus proving they can always meet their demands. They are more available and accessible than the rest of us. They volunteer to do the work of all the teachers and prove they can do anything; everything is simple and easy for them. What we view as complicated and complex for us they see as a simple task. The administration supports them and considers their assistance significant.

E.A.: This teacher group is seen as bored. We all have ideas and love innovation, but they seem to have no boundaries. They get excited over every idea, even when it is inapplicable to daily practice. Exaggerated enthusiasm is not suitable for rational and smart people. Not every initiative is befitting the school and its uniqueness. Not every idea is suitable for the parent, student, and teacher population. Their enthusiasm might be destructive if it is not reined in.

T.A.: Modern teachers don't know how to handle a classroom. There is no order and discipline in their classes. They deal with a thousand and one things at the same time. Students use it to their advantage in the classroom when they see that the teacher is preoccupied. All possible discipline problems happen in their classroom. After class, their classrooms look filthy and messy. Abominable lack of order. Students are standing, some are sitting improperly. Everything seems in chaos. They are weak in class management.

M.H.: I recognize the phenomenon of these teachers getting anything they ask for from the school administration. The moment they ask for equipment to be ordered, the administration rushes to fulfill their request. If they need flexibility and assistance, the administration goes along. They receive preferential treatment and assistance that the administration is reluctant to offer all other teachers. Support and assistance they get from the administration are evident in the small details, such as changes in the schedule for their benefit and budget allocation to the initiatives they raised in the teachers' plenum.

T.E.-A: I feel that some teachers have no desire to collaborate with us. They look down on us and emphasize the gap between us and them in each meeting. They are always more understanding, more experienced, and use more innovative teaching methods. They get creative and document everything they do via photographs and video clips. I have never sensed a willingness to share and get closer on their part. They always give you a cold and alienated look and let you know their superiority.

In the interviews, traditional teachers describe their status in the teachers' room community as teachers without a voice, seeing without being seen, contrary to the status of modern teachers. They attempted to convey their heavy feelings, given the administration's preference for modern teachers over traditional ones. Moreover, they seek - through different means - to preserve the gradually diminishing rights of their status while modern teachers' status is strengthening and to break the walls of silence in the teachers' room about the discrimination between the two groups. In their interviews, these teachers expressed their feeling of class discrimination (classism) in the total sense of the word. The following are several examples:

P.N.: In many cases, I feel voiceless, a transparent teacher, and the discrimination towards us on the administration's part is quite noticeable. We are not favored compared to modern teachers. The administration would consult with them first and, perhaps, afterward, with us. They forget we, too, have a say and surely more experience. Our rights are preserved and protected against the principal's shenanigans.

A.N.: Voiceless teachers are invisible teachers, this fact instills fear, anxiety, and vulnerability in them. I explained repeatedly to each teacher community that I am a teacher with seniority, and my rights are substantial. I won't let any teacher infringe upon my rights, especially not some young teacher. The moment I recognize an attempt to hurt my rights, I turn to my affiliation group, let them know, and draw strength from the group. Tomorrow, the same thing could happen to them. Therefore, unionizing is essential and even crucial.

A.E.: The feeling that you are insignificant or less significant is outrageous. Most teachers share this feeling. A person who is made to feel that way feels they don't belong. Without feeling one's own significance, there is no affiliation.

In their interviews, traditional teachers describe their need to give their energy, talents, and abilities to the collective – the broad school community and depict the gaps between this perception and that of the modern teachers. The following four examples convey the traditional teachers' viewpoint on the gap:

M.A.: Traditional teaching concept was prevalent in the fifties. The principle of the concept was "How can I contribute to the system?" Modern teachers don't speak like this today. They are preoccupied with themselves and their success. Surely, not with their contribution to society or the community.

K.B.: We are willing to contribute ourselves to the system. The modern teachers have a spark in their eyes, yet it stems from personal, not communal or societal motives. There is no consideration for the general public, mostly for themselves.

M.R.: Modern teachers won't talk to you about their contribution to society. They talk about their contribution to themselves. We grew up with the perception that the collective was important – the person's contribution to society, the community. Modern teachers don't' think of it. It's far from them.

S.T.: Traditional teachers will never forget the collective. They will always examine their contribution and will wish to make it bigger. It is their responsibility to society. That was customary in the 1950s in Israel. That is something that always accompanies us in our educational work.

In their interviews, traditional teachers asserted that, although using digital tools is welcome and meaningful in teaching and learning processes, it should supplement the traditional teaching practice, not replace it. In their opinion, they are not the so-called *technophobes.* For pedagogical reasons, they favor the selective adoption of digital technologies. The following are several illustrative examples:

T.A. (teacher): Make no mistake, not myself nor the rest of the teachers struggling with the computer and the tablet are driven by resistance to technology. We are not old-fashioned or disconnected and not afraid of change as they try to paint us. I recommend, for pedagogical reasons, selective adoption of digital technologies.

S.T. (sciences coordinator): We are not technophobes. Adopting technological innovations in the service of teaching will not make teaching better; it is apparently an irreversible process and, therefore, is pointless to resist.

B. Y.-A. (homeroom teacher): I recognize a lot of problems stemming from the overuse of computerized tools: the inconvenience of prolonged reading from the screen, problems in the distance reading from the screen, the difficulty to shift the eyes from one line to the next, the distribution of the text, the inconvenient lack of physical dimension to the text, and more.

K.K. (teacher): Fast typing is ineffective in, say, learning to read and write or memorizing material for a test. The advantages of writing by hand are also obvious in children taking their first steps in academic literacy. Through writing by hand, they understand the concept of the letter in the word and learn to recognize letters and distinguish between handwritings.

M.H.(teacher): Writing by hand is a more difficult skill than typing, and it may evoke rejection – typing allows you to reach a higher pace, and, in summarizing a lesson, typing enables you to closely follow the pace of speaking.

T.A. (teacher): Children and Screens… The interaction in front of the screen is damaging to the children, disconnects them from each other, and separates them. The children don't talk anymore on the sports ground, on the lawn, or on the phone. The phone does not ring. They are all texting in silence.

K.A. (teacher): I admit that a computerized environment allows teachers to impart knowledge more effectively. But what about the absence of broadband connection to ensure fast simultaneous browsing for all the students, the absence of strategy concerning risks and dangers of radiation, and the slow pace of project implementation? And technical glitches. Half a lesson is wasted on assisting a few children who have failed to activate something for a moment.

A.H. (homeroom teacher): The use of technology in education will be done in addition to the traditional teaching, not as its replacement.

B.G.-A. (homeroom teacher): I'd be happy for them to use technological means if they indeed teach the children the skills they cannot obtain from regular books – and right now, that is not the case.

In addition, modern teachers see traditional teachers as "worn out", "technophobes", "faltering" in using digital tools in teaching and learning, and as "resistance creators". The following are several illustrative examples:

B.K. (teacher): They create resistances that need a closer examination to resolve them. One of the main problems is that most teachers today belong to a different generation. History teaches us that what does not change stagnates and ceases to exist. It is true regarding the traditional teachers as well.

T.S. (teacher): What doesn't change might perish. The school and its teachers are supposed to adapt to the reality of life and match children's proficiency in the digital language. There is a lot of convenience and effectiveness in technology.

A.S. (teacher): Adopting new technology in the service of teaching and learning represents the teachers' adaptation to the new era. Teachers who don't adjust suffer from emotional environmental blocks that should be removed.

M.S. (homeroom teacher): They are hesitant and terrified. Some are even technophobes, irrationally fearful of technology. The introduction of technology is a complex matter that requires great courage; it forces the teachers to change their teaching approach

T.M. (teacher): They are old-fashioned and not up-to-date, scared and panicky about connecting a computer to a projector. They must adapt to the systems; the children do such things in seconds.

P.Z. (teacher): The use of technology in teaching and learning is excellent. Not utilizing it in our times is uncommon.

S.A. (homeroom teacher): It seems that these teachers suffer from technophobia – fear of technology or a personal tendency to defer adopting innovations. These teachers' resistance reflects ideological protest against the non-sensory character of the technology and preference for the traditional way of life.

N.D. (teacher): The traditional teachers' arguments against using a computerized learning environment are mostly irrational.

L.M. (teacher): Digital technology has obvious advantages. Reading to learn from the digital books bolstered positive attitudes toward reading in general and a desire for free reading among young readers and school-age children.

Y.A. (homeroom teacher): The use of tablets and computers, in general, offers a stronger and more meaningful connection between the children's and the school worlds. The only way to bridge the gap between the school in its present form and the students' home is school computerization.

A.M. (teleprocessing coordinator): The traditional teachers must realize that the frontal format, with the teacher posed in front of the class, has outlived its usefulness, and it is

possible classroom learning is not necessary any longer. The classroom assists the teacher in enhancing the knowledge that already exists anyway: they are not the factor imparting the knowledge from the books.

D.M.: The traditional teacher must understand: we, the teachers, are not the source of knowledge anymore. What we know, any student can google in seconds. We are here to stimulate thinking.

V.D.: The teachers who resist computerized material are missing the didactic voice.

3.4.4. Principals' Perception of Traditional and Modern Teachers in Teamwork

For school principals, experienced teachers' central problem is their negative image and low self-esteem. On the one hand, they hide their inherent potential and prevent teamwork from happening. On the other, they hinder the chance of those who participate in teamwork to make changes in their lives. However, a change in the image that school principals take part in might elevate the teachers' room. The staffroom gets accomplished through the admission of a qualified and entrepreneurial population that will affect the necessary change, of which the traditional teachers are allegedly incapable. The perception of the modern teacher as an agent of change and a role model for the traditional - experienced - teachers also emerged in the principals' interviews, along with the significance they attribute to their teachers' room, as is evident in the following examples:

L.A.: Modern teachers are considered innovative, motivated, and up-to-date; they constantly develop and modernize professionally. They are active, energetic, very creative, and not afraid of mistakes and failures. Some of them have limited experience, but they possess passion and the will to succeed.

Y.P.: Modern teachers lead qualitative pedagogy, including instruction, learning, and evaluation processes implemented through innovative and updated tools. They use innovative instruction models and questions of higher-order thinking. They profoundly influence their students and inspire other teachers on the staff. Their presence at the school is highly significant.

R.B.: Modern teachers know how to market their work outwards, express their excitement over each performance and constantly create new successes for themselves and the school.

P.M.: Modern teachers constantly study, develop new learning strategies and skills and challenge themselves. The dialogue with them indicates their first-rate educational leadership abilities.

S.P.: Modern teachers are reflective regarding the processes they undergo and their performance. They employ critical thinking and introspection; maintain self-judgment and self-control processes over their educational or instructional work. Critical observation turns their teaching into rational cognitive work. Moreover, such an observation prevents impulsiveness, routine repetition, or work performance that is purely technical in form. Therefore, these teachers commit mistakes and correct themselves, are open to new ideas, and apply judgment and control to their experience while considering the links between their determined goals and actions. As a principal, I know that the most effective way to introduce changes into teaching practices is to develop the skills of reflection in the teachers.

K.A.-D: At the beginning of each year, I make a mapping of the modern and the traditional teachers for myself. Two lists to which I assign all the homeroom teachers in the teachers' room. Then I assign homeroom teachers according to the mapping: two modern and two traditional homeroom teachers for each age grade. The goal is to create

feedback and cross-fertilization between the two groups. I expect modern teachers to lead. There is definitely much to learn from traditional teachers. It all depends on their motivation.

H.P.: The modern teachers are the school middle leadership. The middle leadership plays a vital role in the school leadership and is a key to the school's success and realization of meaningful change processes. It is clear to all that strong middle leadership at the school is predictive of success in a range of aspects related to school improvement. Thanks to these teachers, the school can succeed and achieve the accomplishments it deserves.

S.A.: I define them as the school spearhead. They are the school leadership both in times of crisis and in daily routine. They are the significant force that constructs the educational and pedagogical work at the school.

3.4.5. The Teachers' Room Perceived as a Place of Catharsis

Principals' interviews point to the general perception of the teachers' room as a place where a cathartic process occurs: the process may be interpreted as typical behavior of *grumbling* and commenting on problems that no one is prepared to tackle to make a change as is evident in the following examples:

Z.S.: Teachers tend to complain and raise multiple problems constantly. Most of the complaints that reach me are related to the workload. The complaints are about the lack of support on the parents' part, discipline issues, and challenging students. At times, complaints regarding the teachers' rights infringements are voiced. Today, teachers are very protective of their rights.

L.N.-M.: Teachers complain about monthly plans they need to submit every month, and multiple forms regarding students they need to fill out during a week. Not always time is managed in the best and most effective way, Therefore, I organized an advancement course on time management and "time robbers" – factors that drain our precious time. From my experience, it is important to let teachers vent their anger and express frustration and fears. I can tell that a lot of teachers stuck to the level of complaining and didn't actually deal with the reality to introduce changes into daily practice.

T.H.: The teachers' room is a place where the teachers customarily blow off steam. It must be allowed to happen. In most cases, it's just whining and complaining. Beyond that, there is no willingness to change or remedy something.

A.V.: In my first year as a principal, I addressed each teacher's complaints and tried to understand them. I considered ways of solving the problems. Today, I understand that, in any situation, the teachers will complain, and it will remain so at any given moment. To make a change and solve problems, you need the desire to fix problems in the first place. I haven't recognized a genuine willingness to amend, only a wish to grumble.

3.5. The Fifth Theme: *Telling Stories*

In-depth interviews revealed many teachers' substantial need to "tell stories" in the teachers' room: about the principal, the parents, the work with its strengths and weaknesses, challenges and successes. They speak of their willingness and need to feel safe in the staffroom and tell their personal stories without fear. These stories are part of what they experience at the school, in the classroom, and beyond. Through storytelling in the staffroom, the teachers invite their peers to join in the discussion, consulting, confrontation and clarification. This way, they emerge more immune and calmer, having shared their troubles with their friends. Retelling the story enables the

teachers to step aside from their personal stories and observe their work from outside. As a result, their professional knowledge and experience expand significantly. This theme is divided into two subthemes:

3.5.1. What Do Stories Tell?

In their interviews, traditional and modern teachers tell stories of what is happening at school in teacher, parent, and student communities, of instruction, learning and evaluation processes, and of their personal life outside of school:

> **E.L. (traditional teacher)**: The discussion focuses mainly on school matters: subject materials, teaching and learning materials, tests, instruction models, replacement of materials, coordination with subject teachers and other teachers of the same grade level, conversations regarding a student with difficulties, their family, and more. I admit that sometimes we gossip about a teacher or some other person employed at the school. We talk about everything. About what's on our mind, or what causes us to get angry, laugh, and feel hurt. In most cases, it is "stories" about the school work: arguments between teachers, between administration and teachers, difficulties that emerge regarding challenging students, problems with different parents. "Stories" surface about teachers from other schools in the community and principals from our district division.

> **S.H. (modern teacher)**: Stories emerge all the time in the teachers' room. Teachers love talking and telling stories about the school and outside experiences. Often, stories about the physical conditions of working in the teachers' room surface: no appropriate budget allocation for printing and photocopying. Coffee supply that runs out exactly when you feel like coffee, teachers who don't clear their cups off the tables, and more. From here on, the story canvas grows and enfolds the stories of the physical conditions in the classrooms: faulty projectors, broken laptops, classrooms without air-conditioning, and filthy hallways. I'd say that after some whining, discussion ensues about policy

directives, announcements, memos, plans to submit, forms to fill out, etc. We talk about everything.

M.H. (traditional teacher): Most of the conversations in teachers' rooms center on school and school-related matters. In most cases, we talk about teachers' rights, vacations, pay conditions, promotions, holiday resorts, and bookings for shows and films, subsidized by the Teachers Association. We talk about exhibitions, museums, traveling abroad, holidays, and holiday preparations. We discuss professional development, interesting advancement courses, fascinating lectures, good book recommendations, or swap great recipes - for baking, mostly. How much can we talk about school? There is life after school.

A.M. (modern teacher): I feel that eventually, all conversations turn to the topic of education. In what way can we instill values in the children? Is the teachers' room ethical? What path does it need to follow to become more ethical and principled? There are conversations about personal reflective processes that teachers undergo and share with the staff. It is hard to impart values; this is the issue we often struggle with in the teachers' room and discuss constantly. These conversations fascinate me. Each teacher brings in their cases and scenarios from the field. The narrative that centers on day-to-day classroom management is a meaningful subject for discussion in teachers' rooms. All teachers face the same dilemmas: How long can we exercise restraint? When is it appropriate to mete out punishments? Should we make do with collective punishment? How will punishments change negative behavior? The teachers' stories on the subject captivate me; they affect all of us - all who enter the classroom to teach.

A.H. (traditional teacher): There are many conversations in the teachers' room around stories about teachers and school administration. Conversations about teacher interactions emerge all the time. The staff consists of subgroups; each subgroup often steers in a different direction. The discussion centers on the principal's attitude toward

the subgroups. Who gets preferential treatment? Who will get the position of

coordinator? The principal's attitude toward the teachers on the staff is also a topic for

discussion. Who gets indulged, and who gains no concessions? Who is forgiven, and

who is treated particularly harshly? Also, the teachers' reactions to the principal's

behaviors are discussed. Who shows self-restraint, and who answers back? Who

escalates the argument, and who crosses the boundaries, just like our students?

3.5.2. Reasons to Tell Stories

Many teachers see the teachers' room as a place where they can find opportunities

to apply judgment to the issues of teaching and curriculum and reflect on social and

moral educational goals. The teachers want and need to share their stories with their

colleagues and deepen their knowledge of others' approaches so they can learn from

their lessons and the way they navigate a workday. It is evident from the interviews

that the teachers' room is the appropriate place to share these stories with colleagues:

R.M. (traditional teacher): Teachers bring to the teachers' room their professional

work stories, "secret stories" that they can tell other teachers. How I succeeded with that

same challenging student who is all over the place and no teacher succeeds in making

them sit down and learn. Or, how I coped with the parent who never stops complaining

about the school, yet, cooperates with me and even appreciates and honors my work.

"Reliving" their stories enables the teachers to observe their work from the outside and

enrich their professional knowledge. Teachers need others to engage in conversations

where stories can be told, reflected, heard in different ways, retold, and relived in new

ways. Out of many stories, genuine and meaningful learning is created. From the

scenarios, the situations, the cases, and the insights that the teachers learn and

internalize. That is the right way of learning - from other teachers who have had

practical experience conveying their personal stories to the teachers' room.

K.**B. (traditional teacher)**: It happened many times that exposing and sharing her story in the teachers' room helped calm that teacher down. The teacher managed to calm her emotions by sharing her story in the teachers' room. Through the story she told, she could distance herself from her personal story and look at it from another perspective, thanks to her colleagues' responses in the staffroom. More teachers participating in the discussion express their opinions, consider the matter and offer multiple interpretations. The story even can be relived in a new way; thus, the teacher gets tips on how to react if a similar event occurs or how to behave to prevent a similar occurrence.

S.Y. (traditional teacher): Teachers' room is the place where teachers vent frustrations on different matters – salary and work conditions, results of teacher union struggles, reforms, keeping up with material coverage, the race of testing, the steamroller of grading, *Meitzav*[3] tests, Discipline problems in class, absenteeism, impudent students, lack of support from the administration, equipment shortages, shortage of hours, parents' complaints, and on, and on… These complaints open the door for discussions of problems in the teachers' room, and the development, jointly or independently, of coping techniques and insights from collegial conversations. Therefore, this air venting is critical. I feel I am getting some air in the teachers' room.

Teachers claimed that cultures of teacher collaboration provide support and assistance through mutual experience to solve current problems of educational work. The interviews reveal that *storytelling* is a form of teamwork, significant in every sense of the word.

A.N. (traditional teacher): I receive a lot of support in the encounters in the teachers' room. I can vent out anger and stress, share my deliberations, and raise a problem and solutions that I consider appropriate. There is much-accumulated knowledge and

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[3] Meitzav Tests – annual standardized external achievement tests in Israel

experience in the teachers' room. The staff provides advice and support, embraces and lends an ear, and responds appropriately. Many voices, many answers to a single question. But beyond the answers, you get a hug and broad support. You know you are a part of the family. And at times when your frustration seems total, you see the eyes and hear voiced frustrations similar to yours, and you realize that your friends are on the same side and face the same problems. All of a sudden, you get a chance to cheer up because "a problem shared is a problem halved".

H.S. (modern teacher): Collaboration originates in teachers' essential need to share their experiences with people of their position and status. When a teacher senses that the teachers' room is a safe place where they can voice their opinions and feelings on work-related problems, dilemmas, and challenges, then collaboration with other teachers will generate great support for that same confused and worried teacher. Their affiliation group embraces them and gives them the strength and the drive to carry on.

Teachers stated that telling stories in the teachers' room created a social encounter, enabling the teachers to unburden themselves of their concerns and, thus, return to their regular lives strengthened and feeling better and lighter.
Telling stories is a means to cope with the situation, not through an attempt to change it, but rather by accepting and reconciling with it. Based on the interviews, it becomes evident that while teachers grumble about the problem, they nevertheless do not attempt to change the situation; they merely accept it, and grumblings help them to accept and come to terms with the situation:

M.K.: We love to grumble. The staffroom is the most significant house of grumblings. Each teacher grumbles from the place where it hurts her most, but only this way do we get reconciled and accept the situation. That's our way to plunge into our reality.

M.S. (modern teacher): We grumble on and on, and soon enough are back to ourselves and our order of the day.

T.M. (modern teacher): Anger and tensions are diluted with laughter and humor. This way, we put things into perspective. Along the way, we discover that the problem is not as big as we initially thought it to be. The question is: through which glasses do we view things, and under which angle.

A.L. (traditional teacher): The demands, initially perceived as exaggerated, turn out to be simpler and clearer for all of us after a full day's work, in the course of which we've met up in the teachers' room and analyzed in a friendly conversation the extent of our ability to accomplish the tasks we received.

3.6. The Sixth Theme: *The Good Colleague*

The good colleague is a good peer who positively affects teachers' professional lives. From the interviews we conducted with both traditional and modern teachers, it emerges that the key quality of a good colleague is the ability to feel sympathy, encourage, and support their colleagues. The good colleague, in their view, is not envious of their colleagues' successes. On the contrary, they praise them and support them wholeheartedly, thus helping them promote their professional reputation. Collegial support and encouragement are more significant for them than getting actual help with lesson preparation or professional problem-solving. Therefore, support and encouragement are social acts that positively affect professional work and allow it to occur. A lack of support and encouragement is damaging to every teacher's work. It is one of the factors in creating social cohesion in the teaching community. The teachers perceive "good colleague" norms as a condition for a united and consolidated teacher community in the staffroom. Hence, it is essential to profoundly understand the

significance of the "good colleague" concept among teacher communities within the framework of a continuous process of growth and fostering of interpersonal relations in the teachers' room. Teachers consider it meaningful to be affiliated with a supportive and consolidated teacher group and feel part of that group.

The theme is divided into three subthemes:

3.6.1. The Good Colleague's Characteristics from the Teachers' Perspective

In their interviews, traditional and modern teachers articulated *the good colleague* qualities:

> **T.M. (modern teacher)**: In my opinion, supportiveness and encouragement are most significant in teaching. The power of support, encouragement and kind words is clear to all in the teachers' room. There are two sides to supportiveness by a fellow teacher: The side that offers a kind word and the receiving side. As a rule, it is easier to criticize than praise, but if we pay attention, we can easily nurture the ability to sympathize, support, and encourage our fellow teachers. This is what a supportive teacher does with ease. For this to happen, minimal consideration is required that creates the awareness of the importance of supporting the other. Naturally, we also need to understand how support, encouragement, and praise influence the recipient. A staff colleague willing to show support seeks opportunities to offer a word of encouragement and says those words sincerely and cordially.
>
> Sympathy, support, and encouragement are something you give of yourself; it does not require a special effort, yet, it causes someone to feel very meaningful and appreciated, reinforcing their self-confidence and self-image. A supportive teacher offers praise at every opportunity, and is proud to belong to the teachers' group; they smile broadly, wholeheartedly, and lovingly.
>
> **S.A. (traditional teacher)**: A supportive teacher is optimistic in their attitude, positive, and loyal to their peers. They are inclusive and sensitive to the environment, open and

flexible in thinking. They are aware of themself, their environment, and the processes occurring at the school, and exhibit high emotional intelligence in their environment.

3.6.2. The good colleague's contribution to the teachers' room

The good colleague's contribution to the teachers' room in general, and the teachers in particular, is apparent in the modern and traditional teachers' interviews:

S.A. (modern teacher): Complimenting is one of the greatest gifts we can give ourselves and others. The ability to compliment a fellow teacher enables you to experience their success with them, and when we encourage and compliment, we support others and ourselves, thus, all the teachers benefit from it.

To compliment or show support is a means to develop awareness creatively and lovingly. For me, it is the right way to get to the bottom of the matter because then I can focus on authentic values. I touch upon the essence of the things and thus express my respect and gratitude and encourage growth and empowerment.

Whether we look inside or outside, the effect of a compliment always starts and ends with us. For example, if I acknowledge another teachers' positive influence on me, in doing so, I reinforce the sensitivity and appreciation and deepen the *channels* of acceptance within myself, thus validating my inner values. This process supports our further development. When we acknowledge the teacher's qualities and support their growth, we receive the good in them. Complimenting, supportiveness, or a professional opinion given to a colleague sustain our qualities and those of the others, thus helping expand and spread the light around.

We all have moments in life when we feel supported and encouraged if someone compliments us from the bottom of their heart. It is possible that at such moments we felt insecure, yet someone from the outside saw our potential and reassured us in our moment of weakness.

The faith and the compliment coming from the other helped us navigate through the crisis. Like any gift from the heart, a compliment is also a boomerang that comes back to us. When we praise the other, the good comes back to us with greater might. I know of many ways to offer compliments and give my attention. All of us must be attentive and open to giving and receiving. Sometimes, a look, a smile, or even a little word can make all the difference. Being attentive toward the other is a way of showing support as well. The ability to praise, support, and encourage enables us to apply the principles of the universe here and now. Not always things need to be said out loud. We can do that between ourselves without words.

N.A. (traditional teacher): As teaching staff, we can give ourselves reinforcements and compliments in different ways; we can offer words of praise and encouragement to our friends, subject teachers, and homeroom teachers. It will be beneficial for all of us. We should all try to imagine what the quality of our life would be like, if each one of us devoted time and thought to support, encouragement and praise; to strengthening the other from the place of giving, love, and respect for the very essence of our being human. The change starts, as always, from within. When I praise - I empower, strengthen and encourage; I develop my innate creativity and nurture my own sensitivity. My heart fills with love, and experiences more and more of the beauty around me, gently passed to the other in the belief that it is the way of giving and receiving to create change, however small, in the technological world, developing in giant steps, yet alienating in terms of interpersonal communication. Supportiveness and encouragement are a gift to both the giver and the given. In the teachers' room, you are never alone; there are always interactions that assist and advance; some are "transparent" and don't get the required visibility. When you praise teachers from a place of true sincerity, you are reciprocated with appreciation – both from those who receive your praise and those witnessing it. This way you gain their cooperation for the future.

P.Z. (modern teacher): To praise a teacher is to appreciate them, see the best in them, and let them know, in words or by actions, that we are happy for the good in them. There is goodwill in supportiveness, a wish for others to feel good, succeed, enjoy themselves, and do well for themselves. Support and sympathy encourage expressing faith in a person and their ability to succeed and be contented. Supportiveness is different from complimenting or appreciation, though both include recognition of something good in the other, their talent, and behavior worthy of appreciation and admiration. Yet, they hold no desire to wish them well. Support and encouragement are the opposite of envy and pettiness. While complimenting and expressing appreciation allow us to see the good in others, we do not want them to succeed. Quite the opposite – the envy and the pettiness might lead us to ruin for others the good in their lives.

3.6.3. The Good Colleague's Supportiveness as a Way to Cope with Burnout

Traditional and modern teachers communicated in their interviews that *good colleague*s' support, collaboration, and positive social interactions with them alleviate burnout. The following are several representative examples:

A.H. (traditional teacher): When you have a traveling companion, the path becomes simpler and shorter. Each impediment turns into a challenge, not suffering.

A.T. (traditional teacher): True partners make the educational work a shared goal. A true friend's support on rough days strengthens and gives the power to carry on in the face of the obstacles in the way.

A.S. (modern teacher): The sense of capability expands when you have a true partner in the educational work. All tasks prove to be simple when there is someone at your side.

A.M. (modern teacher): If there is someone to hear you out, relate to your difficulties, and offer advice –it is the gain for you. It will help you in your hard times to soar high and not dwindle.

3.7. The Seventh Theme: PLC as Teamwork Syncretic Process of Compromise and Adaptation

The seventh additional central theme revealed a solution to conflict and teamwork management in heterogeneous teachers' rooms. Syncretic processes of compromise and adaptation are evident in the PLC framework.

In general, a PLC is a group of professionals who collaboratively examine and discuss their professional knowledge and work to improve their students' learning (Birnbaum, 2009). In a PLC, teachers meet regularly, study the connection between their practice and their students' learning products, and analyze teaching and learning processes (Blanga, Landler-Pardo & Shachar, 2011).

They share accounts of what occurs in their classrooms, observe their colleagues' work and reflect on it, discuss students' works, unique difficulties, and ways to tackle them (Benaya et al., 2013).

In their interviews, the teachers and principals alike stated that PLCs positively affect teamwork improvement. A recognition of the significance a PLC stems from the modern pedagogical perception that describes the learning – any learning – as a process taking place in a sociocultural context.

From the interviews with the traditional teachers, it's evident how their participation in a PLC generates connections, networking, collaborations, compromise, and constructive discourse with the modern teacher groups.

In a professional community, teachers share with colleagues their knowledge, reexamine and develop the professional knowledge base distinctive to their school.

Thus, their learning there exceeds that of staff advancement courses in the form of lectures or workshops. It grows from interactions between teachers within a discourse community.

The theme is divided into three subthemes:

3.7.1. Sharing Practical Knowledge from the Field with Colleagues in the Discourse Community

In their interviews, traditional and modern teachers with experience in PLCs pointed out the significant sharing of knowledge in such a community. They described creating an area of knowledge-sharing while feeling that they contribute to and benefit from each session.

> **S.S. (traditional teacher)**: One of our goals in a PLC is to develop the teachers' ability to research our practice and conceptualize it. It is also about the teacher's readiness to open their work to constant scrutiny and high conceptualization skills that are not taken for granted and require work and patience.

> **P.A. (modern teacher)**: I participate in a math teachers' group that serves as a professional community of people with common backgrounds (professional, grade level, etc.) from different schools in the region: state schools, state religious schools, Jewish and Arab schools alike. We meet regularly. The meetings are conducted in an intimate, positive, and happy atmosphere, with the energy of creativity, collaborative thinking, and willingness shared by all to stir positive change and orientation toward goal achievement. The group members tell of events and experiences in their work in math classes: present lesson outlines, describe their teaching methods, and listen to their colleagues' perspectives. They give and receive ideas, advice, insights, and thoughts. The group leader and the teachers, in turn, raise issues they are concerned with, such as the development of mathematical thinking, creation of strategies for A-Level geometry and math students, adjustments for students with learning gaps in math, and unique

instruction models and more. Our group learns together with the group leader and understands him profoundly. We consider the relevance of his methods and the ways they can be integrated into the classroom. Every group member comes out of the meetings with practical insights for learning and teaching and, after classroom practice, shares their experiences with the group for further learning and conclusions.

All the group members are satisfied with the professional development and improvement in the classroom and the group's feeling of belonging and collaboration. With time, the teachers in the group overcome their loneliness and begin opening up and sharing all their problems with the group. We place on the table problems from our pedagogical practice, our class management and math class management practice - issues we all cope with. We are all aware we can learn from colleagues and see ourselves as group members, learning and working in collaboration.

M.A. (traditional teacher): Teachers who work in language education of first to sixth grades get together for PLC meetings on the subject of linguistics. The group includes first-grade teachers of reading and writing acquisition and those teaching language and linguistics to all grade levels. In these meetings, sharing of vast professional knowledge with colleagues occurs, derived from the discipline. The focus is on student learning and the connection between teaching and learning.

We collaborate in analyzing student work - from written products, reading journals, written assignment drafts to the final product. As a team, we hold discussions on specific students, those who are not fluent or accurate in reading, students with low linguistic register, students with difficulties in text processing skills, students with difficulties in linguistic skills at the level of text semantics - local and global. All this is to examine the congruence between the teaching techniques and these issues and ways to advance them. From here, we move on to exploringing, as a team, how we know the students actually internalize what we teach them. We jointly plan lesson outlines and tests in light of our defined goals.

We analyze the teaching and the concepts that form its basis. We learn, plan and apply new and up-to-date teaching methods. Gradually, the team develops a mutual concept and understanding of the optimal instruction. Each meeting is a whole world in and of itself: you share your knowledge and leave with immense new knowledge.

L.M. (modern teacher): I take part in a PLC for social and ethical education at school. It is a community of homeroom teachers of first through sixth-grade levels. In our first session, we defined the norms of discourse and decided we would bring to discussion any significant issue we can all learn from. The level of trust and collaboration among the team members and the ability to contain diversity and cope with disagreements and conflicts constructively have evolved from meeting to meeting after we asserted that these would be our values across the sessions.

Trust is a critical issue where one person's efforts' success depends on a contribution by others as well. In the school context, optimal improvement of educational climate, improvement in feeling safe, growth of social involvement, and meaningful social education, including contribution to the community, all require a collective effort, and the success of each aspect, at least partly, depends on others' effort and talents. A PLC where high trust and mutual and professional respect prevail creates a safe space conducive to educating, teaching, and professional self-development. It serves as an emotional and professional 'security network' against unsuccessful experiences. In a classroom education environment, unsuccessful experiences occur all the time. Anger outbursts, physical violence, verbal abuse, boycotts, and bullying on students' part - all these are sensitive scenarios every educator routinely copes with and keeps the experience to themself. When educators share with others what occurs behind the closed doors of their classrooms, the process to trust is set in motion. Trust and sharing are reflected in the norms of listening, the ability to experience and err as a necessary part of learning, a respectful attitude toward different viewpoints, and specific and practical ways to resolve disputes.

Building mutual trust is achieved through cultivating respect toward the other, personal attention, and decentralization of power. Another manifestation of trust in a relationship among homeroom teachers in a group is sharing: educators' shared decision-making, integrity, and personal examples regarding the work done in their classrooms. I feel I can share our school models of community involvement, including a challenge program that I lead for at-risk children and am ready to deal with different opinions and explore educational approaches and methods different from mine. We discuss what is going on in the classroom and share with our colleagues the involvement processes that we lead in the classroom, and the students' learning processes. Together, we share what traditionally is perceived as personal knowledge. Trust relationships and collaboration centered on learning and professional development make the difference.

N.D. (teacher and modern language coordinator): I participate in a teacher community learning from analyzing students' learning and thinking work products. Usually, a student's thinking process is invisible to other students, the teacher, and even the student himself. Having made the thinking process visible, we began to understand what and how our students learn. Thus, we can see not only what students understand, but also how they understand it. When we realize what our students think and feel and what their misconceptions are, we can use this knowledge to support them in the learning process. When teachers begin to pay attention to thinking and implement it, they and their students become aware of the thinking process. It becomes clearer, more tangible and real - something you can talk about, explore, advance, challenge, and learn from. The essence of visible thinking is thinking routines. It is a system of thinking tools that teachers and students operate in the classroom while thinking of the learning material. One of the important components of the teacher community I participate in is learning from students' work products.

Since it is highly significant in invisible thinking to document the students' thinking

process, and their thinking and learning work products are displayed on the classroom

walls, our group extracts a lot from these products analysis in our learning sessions.

3.7.2. Reexamination of Professional Knowledge and its Development in the Discourse Community

In their interviews, teachers described how, through sharing knowledge in a

professional learning community, new knowledge is developed in a discussion

community, thanks to collaborative teamwork between the traditional and the modern

teachers:

L.A. (traditional teacher): In the group, we create new shared knowledge that develops

in the teacher community and is further consolidated and empowered by colleague

teachers who share similar experiences. We develop mutual responsibility for our

knowledge base that grows and takes shape from session to session.

A.M. (modern teacher): I will give an example of how new shared knowledge is

created in our group. We discuss common dilemmas and learn collaboratively from

experience. One of the group participants presents their dilemma along with the data on

the causes of the dilemma vital for understanding it. They describe what they have done

up till now in an attempt to resolve the dilemma. As participants, we listen. Once the

dilemma is presented, the participants can ask clarifying questions. They ask questions

regarding the issues that have emerged during the presentation and need clarifications to

better understand the the presenter's dilemma and approach. That is the stage of

informative questions without taking a position or attempting to help with advice. In the

stage that follows, we focus on identifying conflicting values – this stage is an integral

part of the dilemma definition. We identify more than one value. Afterward, we present

alternatives to the solution – this is a brainstorming stage where we ask: what are the

available options for action by the person facing the dilemma? What are the

consequences of each actionable option – positive and negative? The premise is that good judgment is always a judgment picked from a range of options. Many times, we act in a certain way only to regret it afterward. However, in the moment of the act, we don't see other options. Hence, the more we explore other options, the more educated the judgment. It is the stage of knowledge condensation and expansion. We dive into the knowledge made accessible to all the team members by the participants themselves. Then comes the judgment stage – in a normal situation, the judgment is personal, but in the group debate, judgments will likely be different, diverse, and reflective of multiple opinions. In the end, we tackle the question: "What now? What conclusions have we arrived at as a group? What are the consequences, and what are the misgivings?

D.D. (traditional teacher): I participate in a professional learning community group for teachers in language education. One of the goals we raised derived from the teachers' dissatisfaction with the quality of students' writing. The questions raised in the course of the discussions included: How to achieve written products of higher quality? What writing processes do we, as teachers, need to advance and cultivate to obtain more significant work products from our students? The group's goals were: to refine the teacher's ability to closely examine and interpret students' work, research the strengths and the needs of a certain student and explore the influence of the student's spheres of interest and difficulties on the instruction and the learning in general. I will give you a great example of how we draw new knowledge from the vast knowledge of the group participants. First, a participant teacher presents a student's work and shares it with the group. They distribute photocopies to all the discussion participants. The teacher does not provide all the information about the student, the assignment, or the context of their work. The student's work analysis ensues, prompted by the group leader's questions ("What do you see in the work?", etc.). The group members pose any question that comes to mind about the written work, the student, the assignment, the circumstances in which the work was written, etc.

Based on the viewing of the written work, the participants theorize about the problems or difficulties the student focused on while writing the assignment. They don't offer remarks on the quality of the writing and don't specify to which degree it suited their personal taste. We then analyze the context in which the work is written. Thus, the focus widens. After the group's sole focus on the work itself, it now examines, by way of conversation with the presenter, the conditions under which the paper was written – alongside broader issues of teaching and learning. The presenter provides all the data they deem relevant for the work context. These might include the assignment description, responses in the course of the discussion, answers to the questions raised in the previous section of the meeting, and the description of other assignments by the same student. Finally, the stage of reflection and insights arrives –the group leader asks the whole group (the presenting teacher included) to reflect on the ideas raised in the discussion of the student's work. In the framework of reflection, specific ideas can emerge concerning the subsequent stages in the student's work related to what the participants can do in their own classrooms or general thoughts on the teaching and learning process. Eventually, the whole group engages in reflection on the session itself. A discussion and group analysis generate a lot of information. This information is refined, formulated, and crystallized by the group. Each debate participant undergoes a powerful process of new knowledge condensation based on the existing knowledge of the group participants.

M.S. (modern sciences coordinator): I participate in a professional community called a 'pedagogical greenhouse' for science teachers. 'Pedagogical greenhouse' is a space for teacher training and learning in a dynamic, active, and creative form. The innovative component of the greenhouse is student attendance in our sessions: in the greenhouse, students, teachers and guides meet under the same roof. Together, they learn, practice, and experience pedagogy different from the familiar and known. Our sessions have two sections: the first, a class with students (where everyone is welcome to practice), and the

second, where only the teachers and the greenhouse guides remain for mutual reflection and pedagogical discussion of the lesson through examination of relevant issues, both from the field of the discipline (sciences and mathematics) and the pedagogical-educational aspect. The new knowledge that we extract from each session is immense. I leave the sessions with a great many insights and new information which I try to incorporate into teaching and learning processes in the classes I teach.

3.7.3. Empowering Sociocommunal Experience

The interviews with traditional and modern teachers for this study revealed the power of the sociocommunal experience encountered in sessions in PLCs. The teachers stated that a unique atmosphere and a respectful discourse developed among group members. The interviewed teachers viewed each of these professional meetings as remarkable social encounters shared by interested professionals who speak the same professional language, can learn from – and teach - each other, seek and give advice, and get charged with new energies; but, mainly, enjoy the authentic social interactions, as the teachers stated in their interviews:

Y.S. (traditional teacher): We've consolidated into a close-knit, unified group with a common language and shared learning experiences. A stranger won't understand it.

A.Z. (modern teacher): In the community that I was a participant of, friendships and reciprocal relationships developed. It became a friendship for life.

A.G. (traditional teacher): The group participant experience is empowering; you feel proud of being part of this group. You feel that you both contribute and benefit at the same time. All meetings become more significant for you and your friends, and no one misses a session or arrives late. The community sense is very strong, and the sense of affiliation is part of this beautiful experience that I am proud to be part of.

> **S.H. (modern teacher)**: Only those who participated in this beautiful process created in the group will understand what I am talking about. Group is power. Thus, we all emerged with a lot of strength from each session. We learned not only about the teaching profession but rather about ourselves as people in general and as teachers in particular. We shared our experiences with others and became active members who work consistently on improving their teaching skills.

To summarize this chapter, the in-depth interviews and the analysis of the policy documents yielded seven central themes that describe the encounter between the populations.

The first theme referred to the discussion of willingness to uphold teamwork as necessary, not accroding to regularities imposed by the school administration on all teacher groups, traditional and modern alike.

The second theme referred to many traditional teachers' views, expressed in the interviews, that relationships with other adults are not central to the teachers' psychological world and that teachers' teamwork can be sufficiently built on individualism.

The third theme touched on the issue of the gaps in the perception of teamwork meaning between traditional teachers, modern teachers, and school principals and the causes of these gaps.

The fourth theme referred to the issue of the gaps in the perception of teacher's status between traditional and modern teachers and the causes of these gaps.

The fifth theme pertained to the teachers' substantial need to tell stories in the teachers' room - about the principal, the parents, the work, their strengths and weaknesses, the challenges, and the successes. From their viewpoint, that is teamwork at its best in that it provides them with support and assistance.

The sixth theme is common for both modern and traditional teachers. It posits that the central characteristic quality of a *good colleague* is the ability to be supportive toward their colleagues. They praise and support them wholeheartedly and, in doing so, help them advance their professional reputation.

The additional central theme, the seventh, revealed a solution to conflict and teamwork management in heterogeneous teachers' rooms. Consistent with this theme, syncretic processes based on compromise and adaptation further manifest themselves within the framework of a professional learning community.

CHAPTER FOUR: DISCUSSION

4.1. The First theme: Existence of Teamwork in Teachers' Room

The theme focuses on the discussion of willingness to maintain teamwork based on necessity, not on regularities imposed on all teacher groups by the school administration. Traditional and modern teachers alike expressed this view on mandatory regularities.

Some of the participants referred to the issue of timeframes assigned to imposed regularities and expressed endless grievances against overlapping of said regularities with presence hours.

The theme is divided into two parts:

4.1.1. The Need Stemming from the Teaching Staff

Flexibility, prevention of mandatory regularities, trust in teachers and their judgment, and granting them autonomy by the school administration.

Both traditional and modern teachers referred to teamwork as something dictated by the school administration and imposed on them. Modern and traditional teachers perceive many staff meetings scheduled by the school administration as inefficient and held only to appease the school administration. This observation goes right through the traditional and modern teachers' words. In the teachers' opinion, the situation generates burnout, bitterness, despair, and passivity among traditional and modern teachers alike.

These findings are consistent with other studies that showed that teamwork is sometimes upheld through coercion, more so than by choice. Sometimes, instead of gradually developing, teamwork is imposed by the administration as a fixed, inflexible method (Fullan & Hargreaves, 1999). The inability to predict the consequences of

collaborative cultures can lead the administration to adopt teamwork forms that can be controlled, regulated, and moderated.

The professional literature acknowledges the phenomenon of principals imposing teamwork in an administrative form, thus creating inflexibility that violates the rational judgment principles that form the very core of professionalism in instruction. The professional literature offers multiple examples of imposed teamwork, developing under the banner of collaborative culture. Different kinds of trust relations among colleagues that both encourage and force teachers to collaborate on improving their practices generate imposed collegiality (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990). Compulsory forms of supervision, assistance tied to evaluation, and help provided by the hierarchy are another manifestation of imposed collegiality (Grimmett & Crehan, 1991). Another example of imposed teamwork is the demand for regular class teachers to meet with special education teachers - at times and with frequency assigned by the administration, even when they have nothing to discuss (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017). Moreover, other studies revealed teachers' indignation in the face of the school administration forcing them to perform various functions, such as participation in advancement courses irrelevant to teachers or daily use of a biometrical attendance clock activated by a fingerprint (Avgar et al., 2012). An excessive adherence to regulatory power mechanisms (presence hours, daily report submission, and imposed advancement courses) is pointless and harmful (Avgar et al., 2012).

Moreover, this study's findings support those of DuFour's study (1992) denouncing the very concept of contrived collegiality, claiming it gives reason to defend teachers' right to teach in any way they choose; that is, he justifies their demand for full autonomy in the classroom (DuFour, 1992). According to the professional literature, the autonomy given to teachers indicates the level of trust in them. Autonomy based on genuine trust

in teachers' abilities is essential autonomy that provides teachers with a margin for

error or, in other words, legitimacy for independent action, even at the cost of a

possible mistake or failure (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998; Bryk and Schneider,

2002).

According to Schwartz-Franco (2016), teacher autonomy is a statement of fact and

a requirement. Teaching is an autonomous profession. Expanding autonomy increases

motivation – in people in general and teachers in particular (Schwartz-Franco, 2017;

Fink, 2012). When teachers are engaged in decision-making process regarding their

work, they act out of a sense of belonging and identification with the chosen goals and

processes. Such a work structure turns teaching into *their own* and draws on their

internal resources different from those working solely for external reward or under

compulsion. In contrast, there is evidence that when teachers' freedom of action is

restricted and their autonomy denied, they lose interest in their work and even abandon

the profession (Gates, 2013; Strauss, 2013).

Schwartz-Franco (2017) expresses a double argument why teachers should be granted

freedom and autonomy in their work and why it is crucial to engage them in decision-

making processes. Based on characteristics of teaching, such as practical expertise, the

knowledge necessary in decision-making is practical, found in those involved in the

practical work of imparting knowledge, i.e., teachers. Secondly, the teachers

themselves sense the incongruence between the character of their work and the attempt

by various institutions to force directives on them and intervene in their work. The

teacher knows that even if they are willing to follow their superiors' instructions, they

will nonetheless have to give their interpretation of the instructions. Eventually, the

teacher will be the one to make decisions and take responsibility for them. Thus, when

the teacher is not involved in decision-making and forming said directives, internal

tension develops. This tension is inflicted on the teacher by the circumstances of his work. In the teacher's daily work, countless situations that involve choice and responsibility arise. When the structures attempt to limit this freedom and enforce their decisions, it leads to incongruence or perpetual conflict between their demands and the essential characteristics of the profession. In Schwab's opinion (1989), it is possible to alleviate the tension if the teachers participate in decision-making processes in the first place - the decisions that ultimately *they* will have to implement.

In these conditions, the teacher works with a sense of congruence: between the necessity to choose and the possibility to influence. Similarly, when there is sharing among teachers, they will encounter fewer contradictions between the content of the general directives and their concrete decisions made while teaching.

According to Schwartz-Franco (2017), the teacher's work can be seen as a troubling encounter between the human existence - characterized as necessarily free - and the social and professional world that does not accept the existentialist characteristic of the human life and demands to bend the person into the rigid, allegedly objective frameworks. Benaya posits (2015) that autonomy is not a neutral concept; it carries content and values. The call for the expansion of teacher autonomy in their work strives to adapt the school to the true character of the human existence in general and the teacher's work in particular.

Per Schwartz-Franco (2016), it is possible that because the potential for autonomy is inherent in, and characteristic of, the profession, the system uses control mechanisms to preserve the powers of the groups seeking to control the society through education. She asserts that this discrepancy between the essential autonomy of the profession and the hierarchical imposition of authority hurts teachers. The teacher is forced to comply with general edicts while they always deal with concrete situations requiring

independent decision-making. Henceforth, the sense of futility in work develops - a critical factor in teacher burnout. Burnout can be manifest in the abandonment of the profession or – worse yet – in teaching done with feelings of alienation and lack of involvement, minimal emotional and intellectual investment and the loss of "the twinkle in the eyes".

Denying teachers their autonomy has devastating consequences for the public image of the teaching profession as well. To the extent that worthy young people pass up the opportunity to enter the teaching profession because they presume it is not a profession that requires - and allows for - independent thinking (Schwartz-Franco, 2016).

The system that will grant greater formal autonomy to teachers will reduce the discrepancy existing today. The expansion of the teacher autonomy will draw high-quality, thinking people to the profession. As a result, the quality of teachers will improve, and the lack of trust in their ability which serves as a self-fulfilling prophecy, will end (Schwartz-Franco, 2017).

The theoretical part of the present study demonstrates that the professional literature distinguishes between organized collegiality - or planned collegiality – and contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1991).

Findings from multiple studies on collaborative cultures focus on the demand for a measure of guidance and involvement. However, that means supporting, guiding, and creating opportunities for collaborative work. Collaborative culture does not mandate support and collaboration among colleagues through fear and compulsion, as opposed to contrived collegiality in which collegiality and collaborations are imposed from above and generate rigidity that impairs judgment - the keystone of professionalism and professional capital. Such collegiality and collaborations are necessarily shallow and short-term (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

According to the professional literature, planned collegiality generates a system of formal bureaucratic directives emphasizing the attention given to collaborative planning, consulting, and other forms of collaboration. Principals initiate teacher teamwork, formally scheduled discussions, and fixed regularities to safeguard planned collegiality in school, facilitate a closer rapport between teachers, and nurture collaboration, learning, and improvement of skills and expertise.

Planned collegiality intends to assist in successful implementation of novel external approaches and techniques and create a more responsive and supportive culture in school (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017). It could be beneficial in creating more consistent relationships of collaboration and teamwork between teachers. That is a way to create connections with teachers on which principals can build effective teaching based on informal elements of recognition, trust, and support essential to community creation.

The professional literature does not view collaborative cultures as a spontaneously occurring process; planning is an essential condition for all collaborative cultures. Usually, some guided or even imposed organization is required for their initial establishment. Wise scheduling frees up suitable people so that they can plan together. Correct timing, opportunities to plan collaboratively and encouraging teachers to work together create sufficient conditions for developing collaborative cultures (Fullan, Hargreaves, 1999). Also, planned collegiality can raise awareness of group complacency, expand the basis for teacher collaboration and add focus to teamwork. The professional literature points out that organized collegiality can serve as a stepping stone to more profound forms of teamwork. Excessive planned collegiality are to be avoided. When planned teamwork is used to alleviate, not in an overbearing form, it can be a starting point and the first necessary step toward building collaborative cultures with focus and depth; yet, it cannot serve as an appropriate surrogate for

cultures themselves because they require time, patience and skill to develop and grow (Klette, 1997).

Consistent with the professional literature, the setting for teamwork is the basis for permanency and stability – without them, meaningful professional learning will not occur. A well-defined teamwork setting is a vital necessity. Such a setting provides constancy and confidence and conveys seriousness and commitment.

The setting should include structuring the frequency and duration of meetings, annual planning, and each meeting planning. Fixed and stable regularities form the platform that allows for significant learning.

Leaders are responsible for organizing and establishing fixed and steady regularities for teamwork, ensuring proper organization ans management of professional learning settings, and fostering the conditions required for involvement in the professional learning and development processes.

Structure creates a process: optimal learning processes can occur provided that structures that facilitate them are preserved: fixed times, appropriate frequency, comfortable physical conditions, etc. (Benaya, Jacobson & Zadik, 2013).

Furthermore, establishing structures and regularities for teamwork and allocating time and knowledge resources necessary for the staff development and set goals achievement. The staff cannot perform optimally if the schedule for meetings is not fixed in time and anchored in the system. (Hackman, 2002).

In their interviews, both traditional and modern teachers emphasize the detrimental impact on their presence hours by fixed regularities imposed by the school administration.

Compared to the professional research literature, the current study reveals congruence between the problems teachers tackle in their presence hours or the preparation time.

Broader research yields that many teachers believe that hours assigned for shared planning are not necessarily the best time for them to plan (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

According to the professional literature, teacher preparation time has complex ties to teachers' lives and work – the aspect that principals are not always able to recognize. Time intervals for planning and organization assigned to teachers during the day are relatively short. Often, teachers' preparation and organization time is lost on substituting, class delays due to the teacher's being late, problem-solving in student groups, and unplanned incidents during the day among the children that demand teachers' intervention. Eventually, merely a short time is left for planning proper, individually or in a group. Therefore, many teachers prefer to engage in teamwork at other times: during lunch break or after teaching hours. In other cases, preparation time is spent mainly completing countless small clerical tasks, making phone calls, or writing letters. However, other teachers consider preparation time a perfect opportunity to plan together with colleagues because they could not find different time for this activity. Thus, teachers' preparation time and its utilization are tied in complex and varying ways with the circumstances of their work and private lives.

To date, the professional literature has not come up with a conclusive managerial formula for preparation time; however, it recommends maintaining the essential principle of flexibility and consideration on principals' part when they delegate to teachers the decisions on how to use their pre-class preparation and organization time (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Avgar, Berkovich & Vigiser, 2012; Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2013; Schwarz Franco, 2016, 2017).

In Israel, the teacher's free time is called, as stated above, "presence hour", or "hour of window[4]" in the teacher's schedule. On the one hand, teachers are entitled to deal with their private matters at this time. On the other, they can choose to use this time for work. This time can be characterized as teaching-free time often used preparing lessons, grading tests, organizing an open lesson, etc.

The literature struggles to answer whether the time teachers spend in the teachers' room is considered a time of rest, i.e., *personal time,* or time intended for work and defined as *public time*. Although labor agreements safeguard the teacher's position (typically composed of frontal hours, individual tutoring hours – small group teaching, and presence hours), there is no doubt that the difference in perceptions stems from the dichotomy of the teachers ' room function as experienced by teachers.

The teacher's room serves as both a working space and a space for rest (Yariv & Gorev, 2018). On the one hand, it provides comfort. The function of a restful space is manifest in the intimate and cordial atmosphere, the structure of equal participation, and the clear preference for relationships. Concomitantly, work-related information is passed around orally or on the digital bulletin board. During recess, teachers meet their peers there and use this opportunity to discuss work-related matters, students' problems, and numerous other issues. Teachers get caught in the fabric of the blurred boundaries between personal and public time (Ben Peretz & Schonmann, 2013). The blurred boundaries between rest and work are apparent both in Goffman's article (1959) and Zerubavel's (1981).

Goffman (1959) used the metaphor of "stage" in his discussion of social interaction. He distinguished between "frontstage" interactions, i.e., belonging to the public and formal frameworks, and "backstage" interactions, i.e., those occurring in a

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[4] Window – i.e. a break of one or two teaching hours in the sequence of lessons in the teacher's workday

private, personal and informal setting. On the "frontstage", people present themselves according to how they want to be seen in public ("public attire"). We may say that lesson is a formal public event happening "frontstage", particularly from the students' viewpoint, whereas staying in the teachers' room is a "backstage" interaction. Goffman (1967) suggested the term "face", i.e., "public image" that serves as a positive social value that people wish to present to others in the course of interaction (Goffman, 1967). People use different conversational strategies to preserve their public image (Vardi-Rath et al., 2010). A motivation to reduce the threat to the public image is related to the phenomenon of politeness (Vardi-Rath, 2013). Politeness is a sociolinguistic phenomenon rooted in the individual's aspiration to preserve their and others' public image.

Goffman coined the concept of "appearance of working" as opposed to "appearance of idleness" (Goffman, 1959). He clarified that one of the explored conventions within social institutions is the "appearance of work". It is customary for many institutions to demand the production of specific output within a set timeframe and employees' preparedness to create the impression that they are not idle at any given moment. "Blurring of the boundaries" reinforces the perception that in the teachers' room both "work" and "idleness" take place concurrently, consistent with the phase the teachers are in at that moment in the teachers' room.

Zerubavel (1981) referred to the organization of time in social structures at the level of scheduling. He asserted that time allocation reflects the efficiency sanctified by western society and the social priorities. In his opinion, the time in social and educational structures is not distributed by itself but rather following the ethical perception that, among other things, determines social priorities and preserves or

changes the balance of power in the society. Zerubavel (1981) distinguishes between "public time" and "private time".

According to him, "private time" is designated to restrain social interactions and is deliberately intended to keep people apart. In contrast, "public time" is intentionally meant to advance interactions among people and connect them (Zerubavel, 1981). Also, Zerubavel asserted that we should not view privacy or publicity as absolute concepts because they are interdependent by their very definition. These two concepts illustrate the blurring of boundaries in the teachers' room, in its public and private areas, and in each teacher's private and public time. The teacher's room serves as a space for both work and relaxation, the latter function serving the need for catharsis, i.e., a positive process of emotional breakdown or, in colloquial language, "letting off steam" (Yariv & Gorev, 2018). We will discuss the cathartic need more broadly below.

The professional literature suggests principals set expectations regarding teamwork tasks through discourse and development with teachers and avoid insisting on controlling all trivial particulars of teachers' time.
The objective is to determine mutual expectations for the goals, directions, and collegial culture, and free up time for teachers to allow them to act to fulfill the goals. However, one must not predetermine for teachers how to use their allotted time most efficiently under the circumstances only they are fully familiar with. Ultimately, the collective exchange of ideas must be anchored in the teaching profession (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2011; Avgar et al., 2012; Schwartz-Franco, 2016; 2017).
Schwartz-Franco (2017) posits that teachers must be free in their work. Freedom is their essential trait, stemming from the character of the instruction work. She asserts

that assembly line workers performing a simple repetitive task with inanimate material can probably receive a detailed protocol with instructions dictating their work operations. Only if they decide to go on strike or rebel, will they behave otherwise. Teachers, even if they want to, cannot accept such directives because they work with the complex and unpredictable material – people (Schwartz-Franco, 2017). The exchange of opinions between teachers and a principal will generate open discourse that will allow for collaboration and mutual support. A sense of openness grows stronger when teachers hold leadership positions in the school and are actively involved in the school's decision-making. An open and sharing discourse requires constant dialogue between the teachers, the administration, and other administrative staff in the school (Avgar et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2011). Also, teachers must be placed in centers of decision-making and educational policy planning: committees that determine educational policies (Schwartz-Franco, 2016, 2017).

In their interviews for the present study, both traditional and modern teachers also emphasized the feeling of lack of trust, in the wake of mandatory regularities for teamwork, on the part of the school administration and inflexibility in implementing said regularities. These findings support other studies that consider teachers' lack of trust in administration to be a consequence of contrived collegiality or unconstrained planned collegiality. Despite the principals' need to organize and demand collegiality, it is critical not to justify or exempt from censure the abuse of collegiality constraints. It is hard to take seriously a professional collaboration based on an external agenda set and timed by principals and when teachers have no control over set goals. The professional literature asserts that it is pointless to assign teachers to shared meetings to compare students' papers or discuss disturbing data unless the grounds for

safe relationships were established from the outset, thus enabling teachers to get exposed in such meetings rather than withdraw into themselves.

There is no point in wasting resources to bring teachers to meet in a workshop if some of them have failed - or have been unwilling - to build relationships of trust and respect with the teaching staff. Initially, it is necessary to get to know the school staff and the colleagues and build a relationship with them. Without trust, respect, and time to build relationships, leaders initiating challenging or courageous conversations with teachers on expectations, strategies, or outcomes will quickly find out that what they deem challenging might be perceived as offensive by teachers (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017). Conceptual arguments and confrontations as to the most suitable way to organize the educational process in the school are possible only in an atmosphere of mutual trust between the staff members (Oplatka, 2015).

Trust in teachers also means providing support and appropriate conditions for teachers' work. Support forced upon teachers, especially when it is irrelevant to them, signifies, in fact, a lack of trust in them. To be considered trust-building, support must consider teachers' wishes and particular skills and adapt to them differentially (Avgar et al., 2012).

The use of the power of compulsion might lead to considerable objection and limited commitment. Legitimate power and the power of reward increase the probability of the subordinates' compliance with the manager's instructions, but not necessarily out of profound organizational commitment. In situations of this kind, teachers might perform their work "by the book", i.e., with the minimum required by their job description (Oplatka, 2015).

In their interviews for this study, the traditional and modern teachers described situations in which the school administration forced teacher teams to address a specific

issue in their staff meeting, although it did not match the teachers' needs and priorities. The teachers unanimously reported that, in many similar cases, they created a "subversive strike" in response to the school administration's demands and their judgment dismissal. These findings are consistent with other studies that reseached the damage to teachers' judgment.

Schwab (1983) characterizes education as a "practical art". It is an "art" because it is the sphere that cannot obey a fixed and predetermined system of rules; it requires constant creativity and innovation. It is "practical" because educational situations are real-life situation requiring decision-taking and practical action. The realization that teaching is a substantive profession implies that the natural contenders for the leadership role in education are teachers: they engage in this art in practice and possess the knowledge and the broadest experience. Hence, teachers should be given greater autonomy in their judgment related to their work (Schwab, 1983; Schwartz-Franco, 2017).

According to Schwartz-Franco (2016), teachers are masters of reasoning who have to make decisions on numerous issues at every given moment in their work (Schwartz-Franco, 2016). In their work, the teacher is required to face challenges and respond to multiple stimuli. A choice of response necessitates making a judgment. No external factor can predetermine the teacher's response or guide them in their judgment. The teacher acts as an artist because each case is new and requires creativity in judgment. There are no two identical cases in teaching. Acknowledging that judgment-making is the essential and central characteristic of teaching, i.e., understanding that teachers are first and foremost artists in judgment-making, gives rise to meaningful conclusions concerning the perception of the teacher's status. If teaching is an art of judgment-

making, i.e., eclectic and practical art, then its principal experts are the artists themselves – those who possess the practical experience, namely, teachers. Schwab (1989) reinforces and emphasizes the teachers' centrality and significance in making decisions on educational issues. This understanding must lead to empowering teachers and awarding them a more pivotal role in shaping the path of education.

According to the professional literature, teachers tend to "whine" a lot, vent their frustrations and talk freely about any issue that bothers them (Kainan,1996). Whining was observed in schools in different parts of the world, and the phenomenon is widespread, so it seems, among all teachers (Woods, 1979; Rist, 1978; Hargreaves, 1972): they enjoy complaining to each other, unburdening their hearts.

Kainan (1996) defines cathartic discourse as the way of talking where the speaker states a problem and amplifies it, often to the point of exaggeration. The professional literature described the phenomenon, the attempts to explicate it, for example, from the context of teachers' attitude toward students (Hargreaves, 1972) or toward the institution and, mainly, school administration (Woods, 1979). The subjects that teachers tend to whine about the most in the teachers' room are, therefore, the workload - way beyond what is accepted in other professions - challenging students, classes that are difficult to cope with, an organization that overloads them with unnecessary tasks, does not understand the problems the teachers encounter and interferes with their work. As a rule, teachers tend to present both the problem and the compromise or the sacrifice they had to make for their work (Kainan, 1996). This explanation displays the whining as a human phenomenon existing in other structures.

The current study highlights teachers' tendency to whine about imposed teamwork dictated by the school administration that does not suit their needs. The study's

contribution is its elucidation regarding the extent of the eventual damage to teaching staff and school administration. This study shifts the attention to the consequences of mandatory and contrived teamwork in teachers' rooms.

While colleagues cheer up a frustrated teacher and support them when they do not control their emotions and snaps, the cathartic process fulfills the social function of support and alleviation in experiences of negative emotions. If the peers do not support the teacher at the time of outburst, the cathartic process is empeded. When the teacher enters the teachers' room, they may ignite a collective cathartic process that typically develops in the following way: the teacher presents a problem and talks about what is bothering them. In most cases, the issue is familiar to the rest of the teachers; they identify with it and respond on the spot. The need to address the problem urgently brings the whole teacher group to focus and linger on it. They discuss it at length, straightaway. Thus, a collective cathartic process is shaped by all the participants and with active or passive participation of novice teachers, senior, modern and traditional teachers alike.

According to Emmerick and Peeters (2009), exposure to the other's feelings and conscious attentiveness toward them affect the individual. A transition from the team level to the individual can occur via an open and intentional process of sharing, similar to the collective cathartic process. Emmerick and Peeters (2009) suggested an "emotional contagion model" that refers to exposure and nonconscious attentiveness to the other's feelings.

We can view mandatory regularities that principals create for teachers as an example of the aspect that empowers catharsis and forms the "emotional contagion model" - from the individual teacher's level to the collective team level. An

opportunity to share frustrations and bitterness with colleagues in real-time generates a

process that can induce the escalation of strong negative feelings. A collective cathartic

process allows all participants to become unified through teachers' complaints about

enforced teamwork and "infect" everyone with emotional fervor. The discourse and the

fueling of teachers' anger at imposed regularities for teamwork execution demonstrates

the exacerbated outcome of the collective catharsis that includes taking a stand and

expressing solidarity leading gradually to an act against the school administration. The

collective catharsis has the potential of a "declaration of rebellion" and of ruining the

atmosphere. As both traditional and modern teachers articulated in their interviews in

this study, eventually, it can lead to a subversive strike, that is, to teachers deciding not

to work at all, not to conduct teamwork as demanded by the school administration, and

not to utilize the hour for the intended work.

The present study illustrates the inherently disruptive potential of the collective

catharsis to serve as a destructive force in a school culture creation. In the wake of

teamwork imposed via mandatory regularities, the teachers' room events grow into

anger that is difficult to rein in.

The social function of catharsis in the teachers' room is perceived in the

professional literature as vital to improving the teaching. Via a collective cathartic

process, teachers attribute meaning to their work. By venting the pressure and

discovering they have allies, teachers share the successes and the despair they

experience in their work (Kainan, 2006; Peretz & Schonmann, 2013; Yariv & Gorev,

2018).

By contrast, this study demonstrates that the social function of the cathartic

process induced by mandatory regularities in teamwork can lead to havoc and ruin in

the teachers' room. Moreover, the collective cathartic process occurring in the teachers' room lasts only a short time. Due to the character of the teachers' room and the short time teachers spend there - in between the bell signals for class - the context developing in it will always be the "between-the-domains" context: between the teachers' domain, that of the teachers' room and the public domain, the classroom shared by them and their students (Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2013).

Contrary to the professional literature (Kainan, 1996; Peretz &Schonmann, 2013; Yariv & Gorev, 2018) that referred to these complaints as having no apparent goal other than "letting off steam", this study shows that the cathartic process caused by mandatory regularities in teamwork lasts for a longer period and lingers in the teachers' room, preoccupying teachers, from the current regularity and onward to the future one. The complaints about forced meetings hang over the teachers in the long term. Some complaints are voiced and forgotten. The complaints regarding forced regularities on teamwork are harsh, and the timeframe in which teachers are engrossed in them is, as stated, more extended than usual. Complaints, therefore, do not fade away until they trigger the teachers' "subversive strike" against the school management.

Satisfaction of teachers' needs as a tool for autonomous motivation and optimal performance

The teachers' interviews in this study yielded their distinct requirements for their needs to be satisfied in their school work. Autonomy and freedom of judgment, trust in teachers, flexibility in determining regularities, and choosing contents constitute the substance of teachers' needs in their school work. The self-determination theory deals with the questions of the human motivation to act (Ryan & Deci, 2016, 2017); it rests on the premise that a need-satisfying environment generates, in different contexts,

autonomous motivation and its optimization (Chen et al., 2015; Ryan et al., 2016). Per this theory, people are driven to act through self-determination to varying extent, on the continuum between motivation, lacking all self-determination (amotivation), and *intrinsic motivation* – when a person acts out of satisfaction from the act itself, characterized by high self-determination. On this continuum, additional motivations are the product of internalization – from *extrinsic* motivation to *intrinsic*. People who operate out of *introjected* motivation do so because of the internal pressure and a desire to avoid negative emotions, such as rejection, guilt or shame, or the desire to preserve their self-esteem. Those acting out of *identified* motivation operate based on the feeling of identification with the value of the act and understanding its significance for the individual's personal goals (Ryan & Deci, 2016, 2017).

People driven by *autonomous* motivation will act out of identified and intrinsic motivation, that is, out of interest, pleasure, or understanding of the value of the act. The act is done out of autonomous motivation, accompanied by positive emotions with a high capacity for perseverance and better results (Ryan & Deci, 2016). In contrast, acting out of controlled motivation is accompanied, mostly, by negative emotions and difficulty coping with obstacles and complications (Ryan & Deci, 2016).

According to the self-determination theory, the human environment and the social learning climate that encourage the development of autonomous motivation are significant.

The environment can create the right conditions for the development of autonomous motivation, should it satisfy, among other things, the need for autonomy – the need to feel that there is a freedom to choose and navigate the actions in compliance with intrinsic values and goals (Roth et al., 2007; Harpaz, 2011).

The studies that examined the influence of need-satisfying environments in different cultures, including collective and individualistic western cultures, demonstrated that the needs described in the self-determination theory are human needs, innate and universal (Vansteenkiste et al., 2005). Ensuring the satisfaction of needs enables internalization and affects motivation, irrespective of the culture in which the individual was raised or the system of values they were taught (Kaplan & Madjar, 2015).

That being the case, support for need-satisfaction was found to be linked to autonomous motivation in different and diverse contexts. It emerged that people found in need-satisfying environments - whether it is an educational environment, between the school principal and the school teachers, doctor-patient, or social worker-citizen relations - will act out of more autonomous motivation and enjoy optimal experiences and greater success (Baard et al., 2004; Katz et al., 2015).

In recent years, many more studies have explored the level of satisfaction of teachers' needs in school (Lam et al., 2010; Janke et al., 2015).

The data provided by these studies concur with the data that emerged from the studies on the effect of different, other than schoolwork, environments on employees' motivation, emotions, and efficiency (Baard et al., 2004; Deci et al., 2001; Gagné & Deci, 2005).

As in other workplaces, it appears that in teachers, the degree to which their needs are satisfied is linked to motivation. The more satisfied the teachers feel, the more autonomous their motivation to teach, and they experience less burnout (Eyal & Roth,2011; Fernet et al., 2012).

The teachers' autonomous motivation was found to be linked to their students' positive output (Deci, 2016). This connection between the teacher's motivation and their

students' positive work products is evident based on the measure of support in their behavior for their psychological needs. However, even though the self-determination theory views need satisfaction as a critical condition for creating autonomous motivation in many diverse contexts, and although it points out the satisfaction of needs in a workplace specifically, it is only recently that teachers' needs in the school have begun to receive attention (Kaplan & Madjar, 2017). The focus on teachers not only as *needs satisfiers* but also as those whose own needs demand consideration stems from the response to calls in research to explore the teacher in-depth and put them in the center of scientific inquiry (Kaplan, 2014).

Prior studies that relied on the self-determination theory showed that people whose needs are met act out of intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2016). This motivation is linked to the preference for behaviors supportive of the other's needs (Aelterman et al., 2014; Reeve et al., 2014; Roth et al., 2007), and these behaviors elevate the motivation of the supported other (Pelletier et al., 2002; Roth et al., 2007; Aelterman et al., 2014). As Katz and Cohen (2018) established in their study, the teacher who feels that the workplace satisfies their needs is the teacher with internal resources who teaches out of autonomous motivation and believes they should support their students to facilitate their motivation to study. The teacher's motivation leads them to favor supportive behavior toward students. This behavior results in a lower dropout rate in the students in their class.

Their study's findings strengthen the importance of creating a positive educational environment and climate in the school, not only for the students but for their teachers. Katz and Cohen's study (2018) reinforces the assertion that supporters need to be supported (Katz et al., 2011).

Supporting teachers who are expected to be key supporters of their student's needs will lead to the improvement of teachers' teaching practice and the creation of resources that will enable them to support their students; it will eventually work for the students' good (Katz & Cohen, 2018).

Thus, we must attend to teachers' autonomy and wellbeing no less than students' and allow the existence of intervention programs in teachers' rooms that emphasize support for teachers' need for autonomy, a sense of connection, affiliation, and capability. To make teachers feel that their needs are met and teach with a sense of freedom and significance of their work is the goal.

 It is evident from Kaplan and Madjar's study (2017) that the teacher population is significant, and their needs in the workplace must be satisfied for their own sake, not only to advance students. Support for teachers will generate a sense of autonomy, connection, belonging, and capability.

This study's interviews with Bedouin and Jewish teachers alike demonstrated that in the Bedouin community, characterized by collective and hierarchical values, the support for the basic needs is also linked to motivation and its optimization. The criticism on the issue (Lyengar & Lepper, 1999) claimed that these needs - especially the need for autonomy - are relevant for those who grew up in an individualistic western society, and satisfaction of these needs would not necessarily result in autonomous motivation in those who grew up in a hierarchical society that emphasizes the values of sharing and the collective. Studies conducted in recent years in different contexts and cultures show that environments providing for psychological needs contribute to the development of autonomous motivation and optimization. (Katz & Cohen, 2018, Kaplan et al., 2014; Kaplan & Madjar, 2015; 2017; Katz & Assor, 2007; Ryan et al., 2016).

The past decade saw numerous programs developed to turn educational environments into need-supportive environments (Aelternman et al., 2014; Cheon et al., 2016; Su & Reeve, 2011).

The emphasis is on deepening the understanding of the unique characteristics of support for teachers' needs in the Bedouin sector because these cultural differences merit consideration.

4.1.2. The Need Stemming from the School Administration

Creation Opportunities for teachers to collaborate in school, more stable collaborative teachers' relations (fixed regularities), group complacency and acquiescence prevention, broadening the teacher base for collaboration and added focus on working together. In their interviews, school principals justified planned (guided) teamwork as conducive to opportunities for different teachers to work together in school and more stable teachers' collaborations. The perception that justifies planned (guided) teamwork as a preventive measure against group acquiescence and complacency emerged from the interviews with the principals. The study's findings on the principals' policy on planned teamwork creation reflect the difficulty in developing collaborative school cultures in the short term. These findings support other studies showing that collaborative cultures do not develop quickly and are not particularly attractive to principals looking for fast solutions. The emerging collaborative culture is not always consistent with the principal's preferences or with the current priorities of the Ministry of Education. Collaborative cultures do not necessarily develop in pre-established directions. Therefore, often, principals prefer collegiality forms they feel they can regulate: meetings with clear agendas and well-defined workgroups.

The professional literature demonstrates that principals stay away from the culture of collaboration because what evolves in these cultures does not always suit their preferred objectives or the current priorities of the teachers' room.

This could explain why most collaborative cultures are limited in form and why their practice infrastructures, syllabus, and teaching programs are not explored in-depth within the framework of the school community.

According to Fullan and Hargreaves (1999), broader forms of collaboration require formal delegation of responsibility for syllabus development to schools and teachers to give them significant issues for collaboration.

The study's findings regarding principals' policy of creating heterogeneous and broad teamwork groups are consistent with the identification of *balkanized* groups in research. The professional literature defines *balkanization* as a culture consisting of separate and often rival groups competing for the top positions in the school.

In *balkanized* cultures, teachers feel loyal to a specific group of colleagues and identify with those who work relatively closely, share most of their time, and hang together frequently in the teachers' room or shared workspace. The existence of secondary isolated groups in school reflects and often reinforces significantly differing learning concepts, teaching strategies, discipline, and syllabus.

Balkanization leads to impaired communication, indifference, or the development of secondary groups going each their own separate way. Balkanization gives rise to conflicts over space (classroom distribution, storage spaces, access to online resources), time (precedency of a class assignment), and resources (budget, number of students in class, etc.) (Ball, 1987). Striving to achieve shared responsibility for student learning of all grade levels is one of the ways principals bypass the danger of balkanization, as is flexibility in teacher placement in different grade levels over the

years intended to broaden the network of their connections and to strengthen their understanding of other teachers' instruction methods. According to Fink (2000), balkanized cultures characterize traditional and modern teachers alike. Innovative teachers who consider themselves as more advanced or better than their peers might even distance themselves from them in ways that will impede the development of the whole school. In Fink's opinion, this is one of the classic factors in the decline and demise of innovative schools and programs over time – lack of ability to rein in teachers' envy of each other (Fink, 2000).

The analysis of the principals' interviews shows that principals perceive their position holistically, with all the complexity of the notion of teamwork management: the activity and the people involved in it (overall educational staff) fall under their responsibility, whether the activity takes place in their office and their presence or without them.

These findings appear to be consistent with other studies' findings involving school principals, which demonstrated that the principal is the absolute authority in the school and holds a wide range of responsibilities (Reeves & Burt, 2006). One of the principals' central areas of responsibility is competent everyday conflict-management concerning daily work routine, decision-making, absences, employee turnover, etc. (Barda, 2015). Trust between the principal and the employee has a positive effect on job-satisfaction levels. When trust prevails, the pressure at work decreases, and the measure of job satisfaction rises (Guinot et al., 2014).

Findings from other studies that examined the functions of the school principal and the intermediate school management indicated that school administration fulfills a primary role in the leadership and establishment of teamwork in school (Robinson et al., 2008; Timperley, 2008).

The concept of school leadership includes not only a principal but all leadership strata and their functions: grade level coordinators, subject coordinators, and other professionals in official positions, leaders not holding official positions whose leadership stems from the power of their influence, experience, and expertise. Given that the concept of a PLC signifies a school culture of professional learning and specialization aimed at constant improvement, all leaders partake in developing such a culture - first and foremost, team leaders or team coordinators themselves.

In this regard, the principal holds two key functions: (a) creating a collegial and inclusive work environment that learns and grows from community practice, and (b) supervising the teaching staff and organizing professional development processes for them (Avney Rosha, 2002).

Moreover, locating and identifying people suitable to lead teams in school is a *casting* function unique to the principal's job (Hackman, 2002).

The central assertion of the syncretic model is that the encounter between principals' groups and both traditional and modern teachers gives rise to clashes - a trademark of a significant social and cultural conflict. However, gradually, the mutual influences develop because cultural contact is a reciprocal process in which all groups maintaining interactional ties are given to change, with the help of intermediaries; principals can also adapt to teachers' needs.

Ultimately, the deficiencies and the advantages of organized collegiality at its best or contrived collegiality at its worst do not depend on whether necessary structures, or practices, were introduced abruptly or in an organized manner. The differences between a plain organization and artificial coercion, or contrived collegiality, are rooted in the question of whether the school culture already contains trust, respect, and

understanding to the extent that would allow for new structures and arrangements to advance it.

It is advisable that mediators from the school intermediary leadership, who understand the contradicting values of the two cultures, take an active part in the syncretic process – traditional and modern teachers, on the one hand, and principals, on the other – and prepare the ground for a compromise between them.

The concept of intermediary leadership or middle management means a group of people holding managerial positions in an organization and responsible for people or resources and procedures but not involved in the organization's senior management. In school terms, this group is expected to be composed of most coordinators, including grade level coordinators, subject coordinators, and, often, program or project coordinators. It is also likely to include other school employees: counselors, learning assistants, and a vice-principal (Barak-Medina et al., 2011).

One function of the intermediary leadership is to mediate between school administration and teachers and elevate teachers' improvement initiatives. These initiatives will have a higher chance of success because they will develop in conditions of dialogue and shared language based on a broader understanding of school-related matters, needs, and problems and have a high-quality stage for evaluating and refining ideas (Barak-Medina et al., 2011).

The intermediary leadership representatives will support compromise and the path of negotiation, raise suggestions for reconciliation and, consciously or subconsciously, fulfill a crucial role of agents of change. They must create a discourse between the two systems and advance a process of compromise between them.

These mediators will serve as a bridge as they belong to both cultures and understand the principals' different social worlds, on the one hand, and teachers', on the other. The

intermediary leadership, knowledgeable of the system of contradicting values of both groups, collaborates with the two groups, and in cases of acute conflict between the principal and the teachers, will initiate compromise agreements to ensure organized, not contrived, teamwork.

The central question is not whether principals or teachers must be the driving force behind the professional collaboration. The two options contain both risks and benefits: when principals lead the change, the interactions might be forced and, worse yet, interfere with the original purpose. That said, if collaboration is left solely to teachers', it might be ineffective. Eventually, someone will need to lead the collaboration process, and it is vital for both groups not to ignore or trample each other.

It does not matter whether the pressure comes from principals or teachers. Collegial pressure is not preferable to pressure applied by principals if the wrong type of pressure is involved or misapplied. The same applies to positive pressure of organized collegiality, which is not forced – the quality of the plan or the program is more important than the identity of its advocates.

Teachers who choose to use their preparation time, including presence hours, at their discretion and according to their needs assert their right to demand the recognition policy, one of the guiding principles of multiculturalism. The premise of the recognition policy, presented by Taylor (1994), is that recognition and identity are intertwined. Recognition means asserting respect and appreciation regarding the other's cultural values in an intercultural encounter and the readiness to study the components of value in the other.

The theoretical contribution of the syncretism model is in placing the research focus not only on the ideological process between teachers and principals concerning

organized collegiality or contrived collegiality but also on its outcome. The outcome, as stated, is the fruit of compromise and adaptation between the principal and the staff. According to the syncretic model, syncretism mainly occurs in a weaker group: subordinate, lower rank (syncretism-from-below). Merging cultures is considered a way of group's resistance to various forms of domination, an indication of cultural existence, and a way of political expression and national identity (Juergensmeyer & Clark, 2012).

According to the syncretic model, the dominant group's cultural values – the principals' group – might also change (syncretism-from-above), resulting in a compromise, a variety of *organized* teamwork types, and prevention of coerced and contrived teamwork. These will be assimilated through negotiations based on reconciliation and adaptation.

Established and profound trust relationships between the educational professionals are a vital element of a properly functioning system because, in modern society, individuals cannot create or maintain certain services independently; they have to trust others to provide them (Frowe, 2005). Trusting the professionalism of these factors is the core component of the existence of functional relationships. According to Dowine (1990), the relationship between the professional and the nonprofessional factors is never equal (in terms of access to the knowledge base); the gap creates vulnerability and opens up room for abuse. However, trust does not require a symmetrical system of relationships. Often, in the organization's life, asymmetrical relationships emerge from centralized formal power or knowledge and expertise retained by one party. Nonetheless, the expectation is for the stronger party's actions to be guided by competent judgment and genuine consideration for the weak party's interests (Cherney, 1997).

Education and instruction management are professions (Shedd & Bacharach, 1991; Sergiovanni, 2000), and as such, they bear asymmetry between those who hold the professional knowledge and those who serve. Professional knowledge includes two elements (Oakeshott, 1989): information, such as facts, obtainable from books, etc., and capacity for judgment and discretion; the latter two cannot be learned directly but rather accumulated gradually, concomitantly with the process of acquiring information. The less the professional sphere deals with technical abilities and the more with mental work (such as analysis, synthesis, creative inference), the higher the signifivance of the ability for judgment and discretion (Frowe, 2005). Mostly, these qualities are individual, opinion-based; they vary from person to person and affected by attitudes, principles, and expectations (Frowe, 2005). Hence, education and teaching management are professions in which the discretion of the professionals is a decisive factor.

School principals should remember that the teacher population is vital and meaningful, and, therefore, their needs in the workplace should be satisfied. Supporting teachers will result in their sense of autonomy, connection and affiliation, and capability (Kaplan & Madjar, 2017).

Focus on the teacher not only as needs satisfiers but also as those whose needs must be attended to, as in other workplaces, is most meaningful because teachers' degree of need-satisfaction is linked to their motivation. The more satisfied the teachers feel, the more autonomous their motivation to teach, and they experience less burnout (Eyal & Roth, 2011; Fernet et al., 2012).

4.2. The Second Theme: Teamwork Models in Teachers' Rooms

The theme is divided into three secondary themes: individualistic culture, absence of teamwork, and collegial teamwork.

4.2.1. Culture of Individualism

This theme refers to the fact raised by traditional teachers in their in-depth interviews that relationships with other adults are not central to teachers' psychological world. In traditional teachers' view, teamwork can rely on individualism. Teachers can work best without their colleagues' active assistance because teacher-teacher interaction does not fulfill a critical role in teachers' professional lives.

The interviews show that these traditional teachers consciously choose professional isolation. They enjoy working alone; in their case, physical isolation is a choice. Traditional teachers state that their relationship with students is the goal and that the remaining interactions are less significant. They direct their primary efforts toward the learning group. In these teachers' view, one can attain true success also in professional isolation.

They claim that a professional teacher with knowledge of the work should not fear professional isolation. The professional literature refers to isolation in a workplace as a choice employees make. Indeed, some employees enjoy working alone. That being the case, physical isolation can be a choice: "choosing loneliness". The literature refers to isolation by choice and the enjoyment teachers draw from it (Micciche, 2000).

This appearance of isolation seems to have a positive connotation that reveals the beneficial influence of isolation on an employee's performance and the enjoyment employee derives from isolation in her daily functioning in a workplace.

Cohen (2003) refers to it as *aloneness* - meaning *fullness*, intense spiritual life, listening and attentiveness, opening up to the world; and, concomitantly, an encounter

of the individual with himself as a condition for opening up a dialogue with himself, and as a path to self-discovery. Cohen states that the person can be socially isolated and still enjoy intense and creative spiritual life.

Such loneliness is described in Anwar Sadat's, the former president of Egypt, autobiography that he wrote while in prison. Sadat (1997) portrayed that period as the happiest in his life and claimed that isolation, imposed on him, granted him a good opportunity for introspection and for the development of personal philosophy, which guided him throughout his life afterward (Sadat, 1997).

Philosophers distinguish between "loneliness" and "aloneness". They assert that loneliness is a sense of emptiness, closedness, and distress, whereas aloneness is fullness, intense spiritual life, listening, attentiveness, and opening up to the world. Rubinstein and Shaver (1982) viewed seclusion as positive solitude and noted its soothing effect on people. Seclusion is tied to disconnection from external influences, such as technological overstimulation, and getting closer to the ability to observe the soul's dreams, imagine, explore, experience, create and realize the inner world for creative purposes. Through positive observation, the individual can connect with their thinking and learn, as Moustakas (1972) described it, how to manage their life in a way that will facilitate growth and will lead to meaningful learning based on "the inner voice" (Moustakas, 1972).

The Indian philosopher Krishnamurti (1972) posits that the hearts and souls of those living alone are free from the pain of loneliness, and they are true persons. Aristotle (ca. 340 B.C.E./1985) claimed that people can find happiness within themselves if they dedicate themselves to self-study, and the wiser they grow, the more capable they will be; thus, they will find themselves self-sufficient, with no need for others. Notwithstanding, in their work, people do need other people.

Schopenhauer venerates solitude in his claim that true serenity of the heart and true

peace of mind can be found only in solitude - the core of being where a person can

realize his freedom. The person will be capable of enjoying solitude only if they

recognize their ability to discover themself in it (Cohen, 2003).

Furthermore, seclusion is a significant way toward creativity because it allows

observation necessary for unique discoveries. Seclusion can lead to inquisitive

exploration of the unknown. Esther Buchholtz (1998) recapitulated it clearly when she

said that "alone-time is fuel for life" (Buchholtz, 1998). Flashes of insight and

imagination often appear when the person is alone; they might summon inspiration and

lead to a passion for creation, enhancement of self-awareness, growth, and intellectual

and spiritual prosperity. Erica Landau (1990) claimed that every person can be creative

– for instance, when they look at known objects from a new perspective or find new

connections between familiar things – and that every person is more inclined to be so

when alone (Landau, 1990).

Rabin et al. (2017) found that solitude can be either a positive or negative

experience. One aspect that will determine the way solitude is experienced is choice.

Solitude out of choice does not mean that the negative sense of loneliness overwhelms

and paralyzes the person – it lies in the power of the ability to dwell in one's own

company – to be rewarding and strengthening, advance creativity, spirituality, and

introspection. Solitude by choice (similar to seclusion for meditation or as part of a

creative process) might allow the person who seeks solitude to develop themself make

decisions with clarity and discover their identity and selfhood. However, if the solitude

is imposed externally, intentionally, and forcefully (as in cases of war prisoners or

convicts), it might have traumatic implications. Enforced solitude (as emerges from

prisoners' testimonials, for instance) is an experience of emptiness, heightened anxiety,

and a distorted sense of time and space, that could lead to long-term devastating consequences, from post-traumatic syndrome to psychosis.

The reader will come across the feeling of loneliness of Leah Goldberg, the Israeli poetess, in each turn across the expanses of her writings: in her work, prose, poetry, letters, and diaries. There are lengthy and painful descriptions of the feeling of her enforced solitude, e.g., in her poem: "For a while now no one is waiting there for me" (Goldberg & Back, 2017).

The positive outcome of solitude-by-choice is linked to the freedom the person receives in choosing to spend time alone, contrary to enforced solitude in which human freedom is denied. Also, in enforced isolation, sensory stimuli are withheld, and, above all, the satisfaction of physiological needs and social connections is denied.

Another aspect that affects the experience of solitude is its duration. In the short term, the individual might choose loneliness for undisturbed rest as part of the attempt to enrich and strengthen themselves. Indeed, short-term seclusions were found to give the individual more mental freedom that serves as a playground of creativity and, in some studies, as a condition for spiritual experience. Solitude for a limited time is perceived as tolerable, as a rule. However, continual solitude when the individual has no control over its timeframe is extremely difficult to bear (Rabin et al., 2017).

A review of the professional literature on professional isolation among the population of teachers, principals, and preschool teachers, reveals that literature attributes solely negative consequences to professional isolation, such as detriment to professional performance (Rosenholtz, 1984; Dussault & Thibodeau, 1996), professional burnout (Gavish & Friedman, 2003; Tham, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1996), lack of reciprocity (Smith & Scott, 1990; Garber, 1991; Bakkenes et al., 1999), and lack of sense of affiliation (Ganz-Aloni, 2003; Firstater, 2012). The current study offers a new

perspective on the significance of professional isolation in that it presents the consequences of the feeling as a dualistic issue, wherein both negative and positive aspects coexist. We can find the explanation for the phenomenon in the traditional teacher's role as an educational leader capable of leveraging their isolation toward positive and enjoyable directions leading to personal and organizational efficiency, such as leveraging loneliness to organizational intimacy that fosters interpersonal relationships with students and their parents. Also, leading projects and educational initiatives in an organization to strengthen the traditional teacher's sense of belonging is beneficial to their partnership with the students' parents – both for the children's sake and the classroom.

The present study shows that traditional teachers endure professional isolation in work out of conscious choice. These traditional teachers view professional isolation in a positive light. They have amassed experience in instruction, grown professionally and experientially; their collegiality level is high; they have succeeded in reducing the sense of solitude in their work and started to perceive it positively (rewarding autonomy). This finding contradicts the literature on professional isolation among teachers that ascribes only negative consequences to professional isolation.

The results of this study appear to support the study into professional isolation among kindergarten teachers and preschool educators. According to Eisenberg's study (2010), preschool educators and teachers consciously choose professional isolation for independence in the classroom achievable only by them being teachers in an educational institution. These kindergarten teachers stated the positive aspect of their isolation in the workplace is that it allows them to act independently, based solely on their personal and professional credo, unlike the school system and the teachers' room that generate daily encounters with other teachers and work according to a fixed

curriculum. Experienced kindergarten principals describe their freedom to make independent decisions and initiate unique projects. They link their personality and professional aspects, their common trait being the willingness and the ability to lead and make independent decisions.

Also, kindergarten principals stated that their solitude in the kindergarten allows each of them to accentuate their uniqueness when in practice, each one chooses to emphasize specific subjects and study others in depth; thus, they choose their teaching methods according to their judgment. According to Eisenberg, kindergarten principals report that being alone allows them to preserve their uniqueness and personal work style (Eisenberg, 2010). Moreover, the study asserts that a kindergarten bears its teacher's signature; that is, a kindergarten reflects the teacher's personality and professional methods. Working in kindergarten allows teachers to work uniquely, keeping with their general worldview. More specifically, it enables the teacher to implement their distinct work methods, such as organizing a unique daily routine that suits best the kindergarten, in their view. Under this, kindergarten teachers are perceived as educators with unique worldviews who own the courage to generate change in kindergartens (Eisenberg, 2010).

If so, loneliness by choice highlights a different aspect of professional isolation: the solitude as a personal and professional conscious choice by a traditional teacher, aware of its benefits, such as rewarding autonomy, emphasis on uniqueness and independence, and elevation of self-worth.

The present study's results shift the focus to the sense of conscious choice of professional isolation among traditional teachers. The study reveals a meaningful insight linked to the consequences of professional solitude. The implications of solitude may be both negative and positive. On the one hand, they could be detrimental

to the traditional teacher's professional functioning. On the other, professional isolation might have valuable consequences for a traditional teacher and afford them freedom of action and intimacy that they would enjoy.

4.2.2. Absence of Teamwork

The interviews conducted in the present study reveal that traditional teachers are very lonely in their work. The interviews depict the traditional teachers' perpetual solitude in their classrooms with the children present - a significant part of their loneliness. They emphasized the feeling of loneliness resulting from a lack of support, backing, and trust from the school administration.

Moreover, the interviews show traditional teachers' lack of support and trust toward their peers. Indecision and multiple reservations characterize traditional teachers in their relationship with colleagues and school administration.

According to the study's interviews, traditional teachers prefer to work alone because in that case, no information regarding their weaknesses or failures is conveyed to the administration via their colleagues.

They also state that the administration does not offer support when they face difficulties and does not back them. Furthermore, when parents complain, the administration blames teachers and criticizes their work. Hence, they prefer to work alone, apart from their peers, because collaborating with them can be a double-edged sword. They prefer being in their classroom, steer clear of critique, negative assessment, gossip, disloyalty, and lack of support from their peers and the school administration.

The professional literature yielded a similar finding. Teachers' isolation at the school allows them a certain degree of protection in performing assessments based on their judgment about the children they know well. On the other hand, the isolation also

disconnects the teachers from explicit feedback crucial in evaluating their work and improving their efficiency (Hickcox et al., 1988).

Teachers who maintain open and transparent communication with their peers collaborate with different staff members, report on a positive climate in the school, exhibit a strong sense of capability and job satisfaction, and decrease their risk of burnout at work (Kass, 2012). In contrast, harsh criticism of the teacher's work methods and the pressure they find themself in might undermine the teacher's professionalism and self-confidence, lead to their isolation (Grinbank et al., 2018), and be the source of increased burnout (Stoeber & Rennert, 2008).

In addition, the teacher's worktime is filled with hours of teaching in the classroom, where they are found alone. Principals and teachers grumble at having no time available for teamwork or peer observation. At times, teachers are prone to conflictual feelings related to the tensions between the commitment to the organization and the commitment that the profession requires of them. This assertion is supported by Somech and Zahavi's study's findings (2007) indicating that junior high school teachers feel more committed to the profession's requirements than the organization. According to the researchers, the fact implies processes of segregation occurring in the school that impede effective teamwork. Vidislavsky et al. (2011) assert that many teachers do not possess skills necessary for teamwork such as participation in decision-making, giving and receiving feedback, openness in information and concept sharing, and appropriate communication skills. According to Gov (2014), the inequality in the focal points of influence arises from some teachers' exclusion from the institutional circle of influence. These teachers will find their utmost professional satisfaction in communications with their students. Also, teachers deal with duty-overload and experience tension between commitments. Some teachers are members of several

teams with different goals, missions, and activity scopes. These generate an excess of duties and tension between requirements (Gov, 2014).

Furthermore, teachers carry a great deal of stress, professional and administrative (Gavish & Friedman, 2010). Numerous external pressures by those in charge of policies, reforms in the education system implemented in the school organization, guidance, and supervision, cause the teacher's function to expand; thus, the teacher is forced to fulfill additional tasks, such as documentation, registration, filling forms, participation in advancement-courses and numerous meetings (Grinbank et al., 2018). These tasks cause overload, hurt teachers' autonomy and creativity, and might lead to their burnout (Oplatka, 2013; Van Droogenbroeck et al., 2014).

Also, there are many demands on the teacher in the school: to exhibit knowledge and expertise in pedagogical skills, class management, student achievement improvement and behavior, comply with organizational norms, and partake in teamwork with other teachers (Arviv-Elyashiv & Zimmerman, 2015). Studies also highlighted teachers' immense task-load during the workday and afterward (Theobald, 1990) and the requirement to teach numerous classes (Johnson et al., 2005).

Lortie (1975) posits that teachers hesitate to collaborate and share their ideas and successes for fear of being seen as trying to impress.

Teachers hesitate to share a new idea with others, afraid a collegue may steal or take credit fo it. Young or older teachers hesitate to ask for help lest they should be seen as inept or incompetent. When teachers stick to the same approach year after year - even though it does not work - such inclinations significantly hinder their development and improvement because they limit access to practices and ideas that can offer better ways to perform. These tendencies institutionalize conservatism and individualistic work (Lortie, 1975).

It emerges from the professional literature that often, teachers think that whoever offers them help judges them and that collaboration, in essence, is aimed at supervision and control. Teachers' first experiences in the presence of other teachers in their classrooms usually occur at the beginning of their career when they are still learning the pedagogical practice. Also, these experiences take place in other conjunctions in the framework of school days or open classes. In these experiences, the assistance to the teacher is tainted with judgment and, at times, masks it. The common factor emerging from teachers' reflection on evaluation processes is the unpleasant encounters with the assessment that has the appearance of a humiliating attitude by those supposedly helping, e.g., teacher guide, subject coordinator, principal, and inspector (Brookhart & Moss, 2015). Therefore, it is not surprising that teachers often associate help with judgment and collaboration - with control; so, isolation and individualism become defensive weaponry, a guarantee of protection against scrutiny and intervention (Smith, 2006).

According to Fullan (2017), the more high-risk teachers' assessments, in terms of salary and retribution, the less the chances that teachers will share with others strategies that give them a relative advantage or a measure of protection, and the lower probability that they will ask for help that will expose them as weak or as failing. The interviews in this study show that traditional teachers prefer to work alone due to indecisiveness and fears in their interactions with their colleagues and the school administration.

Also, Lortie's study (1975) revealed that individualism among teachers is often the result of teachers' doubts and indecision. In teaching, a lack of confidence is rooted in the fears of negative assessment or circumstances in which teachers do not receive feedback. A lack of confidence is one of the reasons for teachers' need for self-

preservation. Personal interests are an additional reason, less common but more infuriating. In such cases, individualism puts up more defiant protection against a justified examination that may reveal that some teachers fail miserably in their efforts or efficacy (Fullan, 2017).

Lortie (2002) stated that school organization per se sets boundaries that prevent peer teachers from sharing knowledge. According to Lortie, we must consider ways to limit the isolation because it causes the loss of valuable knowledge accrued by the teachers. Despite the attempts over the years to instill the feeling of a professional community in the schools, isolation is still prevalent in most of them.

Professional isolation is considered one of the primary dropout factors in the American education system referred to by Lortie. Many states in the US developed various programs to prevent school dropouts and high turnover. These programs focused on extricating teachers from the isolation in general and novice teachers in particular, using different methods, e.g., telephone mentoring, mentoring by a senior teacher and creating a novice teachers' community, and peer training (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Heider, 2005).

One of the studies on the subject (Hord & Cowan, 1999) showed that reflective collaboration is significant in limiting the teacher's isolation and advancing their personal and professional development and that collaborative work reduces the risk of isolation.

The school staff is the resource that works to decrease the teacher's isolation by improving collegiality and collaboration, encouraging personal development, and promoting learning opportunities for them as a teacher (Spark, 2002; Drago-Severson & Pinto, 2006). An additional study found that establishing a learning teacher community and peer teaching alleviates the feeling of isolation and enhances teaching

skills (Iorio, 1992). Similarly, other studies demonstrated that reciprocal relationships between teachers and their colleagues, the level of collaboration or alienation, and the teachers' feelings about their ability to trust their peer teachers in an hour of need are all linked to burnout (Gavish & Friedman, 2000; Pomaki et al., 2010). Social support through support groups (Gavish & Friedman, 2000) and the teacher's good relations with colleagues and parents are linked to the teacher's satisfaction level with the workplace (Fraser et al., 1998). Moreover, teachers who withdraw into themselves are hesitant about offering or receiving help. Under such circumstances, it is difficult for a teacher to trust their expertise and be perceived by others as a person who has something to offer. It becomes evident when teachers accept positions of subject or field coordinators in the school (Fullan, 1999).

In Magen-Nagar and Steinberger's study (2016), teachers described conflicts between peers in which the suggested resolution involved the principal's intervention, e.g., the teacher should involve the principal in their professional conflict with another teacher in the team. Should they involve the principal in their professional disagreements with the parallel class teacher or one of the homeroom teachers? These are interpersonal conflicts in the sociocultural sphere, and the solution is conscious.

According to Magen-Nagar and Steinberger's study (2016), most interpersonal conflicts fall within the sociocultural domain and behavioral solution. The researchers posit that these interpersonal relations between figures operating in the school - teachers, colleagues, the principal - pose a concern for teachers (Magen-Nagar & Steinberger, 2016). The teachers' statements portray the conflicts as conducive to a productive discussion in the context of learning and organizational quality improvement, tension, anger, and even alienation. Back (2013) states that collaboration

and dialogue can deepen the understanding of conflicts. Developing ties with a peer teacher fosters self-confidence, facilitates active engagement, and contributes to professional identity consolidation (Chong et al., 2011; Olsen, 2008). Thus, it is essential to view teachers' conflicts in an educated and competent manner, maintain regular classroom and school discussion meetings adapted to the target audience, raise the issue of conflicts and understand them while establishing the behavioral norms in the classroom and school. The process can lead to the formation of professional identity with consistent introspection that will also win social recognition (Magen-Nagar & Steinberger, 2016). Furthermore, organizational factors (such as aggressive organizational culture) may contribute to the employee's loneliness due to an atmosphere of distrust, suspicion, and fear detrimental to relations between work colleagues and lead to seclusion and disassociation (Rabin et al., 2017).

The organizational climate has a substantial impact as well. Wright's study (2005) that involved 514 employees from various organizations revealed several organizational factors that affected the employees' loneliness: fear within an organization, lack of communal spirit, and status differences between employees. These factors had an overall negative impact, contributed to employees' seclusion, and reduced their job satisfaction levels. At times, the senior management suppresses the expression of alternative views by imposing sanctions on the honest expression of criticism for fear of losing control, competition, and damage to the manager's authority (Rabin et al., 2017).

Organization, service, and factory workers are often afraid to voice criticism and suggest creative ideas because the act might be interpreted as critique toward the manager and organization. In such cases, employees convince themselves that "the boss is always right" and prefer not to raise alternative ideas. Such situations entail

their sense of loneliness at work. Such workplaces and organizations lose the fruit of the creative thinking of the people intimately familiar with the workings of these organizations, and that does not work for the system's benefit. Frequently, the policy-makers themselves are constrained by their assumptions, afraid of criticism and facing their employees' viewpoints. Both sides may get drawn into these restrictive and stunting patterns; therefore, the policy-makers must adopt a strategy that allows for creativity and openness and breaks the circles of solitude and status, even though it involves certain risks. Creative and innovative processes require time and space and are not immediately rewarding. Organizational, social, and monetary incentives for new initiatives are a long-term investment that, in due time, may bear fruit for the organization and bring satisfaction to the employee, and thus also influence the sense of loneliness in the organization or lack thereof. Such encouragement is likely to be part of the work process (similar to staff meetings) or fall within the framework of fostering the leisure culture of the group and its individuals as a motivator to "replenish powers and recharge batteries", that is, a transition from loneliness at work to the state of ties and communication benefiting both the individual and the organization (Rabin et al., 2017).

According to Shimoni (2009), an individualistic society – such as European society – nurtures the ethos of a "lone rider" who sets their own goal and strives to reach it using their abilities to accomplish a personal achievement. Even in a group, Europeans seek their satisfaction. In other cultures, e.g., the Japanese, the Chinese, or, to some extent, the South American culture, the individual sees themself only as part of the collective and pushes aside individual desires and aspirations. Thus, in a team composed of representatives of an individualistic culture, we will encounter quite a few revelations of idleness because the participants will struggle to perceive the team

achievements as their own, the latter being the focus of their interest. In contrast, the collectivists will wholeheartedly launch into work in full solidarity with the group. Representatives of both societies have to collaborate in the same team where these differences will stand out and cause a lot of discord (Shimoni, 2009).

The sources of loneliness described by the traditional teachers include the human factors in the work environment. In general, it emerges that traditional teachers refer to the human component as the primary cause of their loneliness. They frequently refer to their colleagues and the school administration as probable factors in making them feel professionally isolated. Previous studies supported this finding and pointed out these sources as important human sources that could affect teachers' work in schools both positively and negatively.

4.2.3. Collegial Teamwork

In their interviews, modern teachers expressed a significant need for collegial teamwork. They believe that collegial teamwork consolidates the group members, creates a shared language, and assists teachers in developing instruction, learning, and evaluation processes. Some teachers mentioned institutionalizing work distribution in a group and strong affiliation with the group to the level of *esprit de corps*. Traditional teachers voiced their preference for collegial work for personal support, expansion of knowledge, and facilitation of work distribution, both in the disciplinary and the didactic fields.

These approaches are supported in the research literature on teachers who view collegial collaboration as a vital path to professional reflection, pedagogical, and intellectual growth (Kazemi & Franke, 2004; Greenleaf & Katz, 2004).

The professional literature shows that in a school with a collaborative culture, teachers engage in collaboration a lot. Most teachers, - even the most experienced, - understand

that teaching is inherently arduous and believe that they never cease learning how to teach. They recognize that they often require assistance and that helping or receiving help does not prove incompetence or incompatibility. This process is part of the shared aspiration for constant improvement. It emerges from the literature that a show of support among peers and communication with them regarding their work give teachers confidence in what they are trying to achieve and the path they have chosen for that purpose (Rosenholtz, 1989).

Blanchard (2008) maintains that teams perform their tasks better and evolve faster than traditional structures. In contrast to the individual, a competent team makes better decisions, solves more complex problems, enhances creativity, and develops skills. The research into school teamwork revealed several advantages. Teamwork effectively promotes collegiality (Malone et al., 2001), and the exchange of ideas and information (Harris & Klein, 2002). Team members believe that they benefit from the insights acquired through exposure to other fields of knowledge and others' experiences (Millward & Jeffriet, 2000). Employees reported that teamwork improved communication (Harris & Klein, 2002), planning efforts, and students' achievements (Hunt et al., 2003), facilitated parent involvement (Scott-Stein & Thorkilsden, 1999), and improved problem resolution and decision-making (Senior & Swailes, 2004). Moreover, team members believe that teamwork can effectuate an array of personal gains, such as an enhanced sense of fellowship (Malone et al., 2001), belonging (Fenton et al., 1979), broadening of knowledge (Brown, 1995), and giving personal support (Hunt et al., 2003).

Collaboration in successful schools is associated with the norms and opportunities for constant improvement and career-long learning. The assumption is that the improvement in teaching is more of a collective enterprise than an individual and that

analysis, evaluation, and experience shared with colleagues are the conditions that facilitate teachers' improvement (Rosenholtz, 1989). A collaborative reality increases the chances for teachers to trust each other, appreciate and validate shared expertise, ask for advice and provide assistance in and outside of school. Also, the chances increase of them evolving into better teachers. Therefore, in schools where collegial work takes place, it is easier to learn how to teach and learn to teach better than in other schools (Rosenholtz, 1989).

In a learning community, learning occurs through interaction between group members as opposed to the traditional learning characterized as passing the bulk of knowledge from experts to learners through lecture and discussion (Sharon et al., 2019).

Differences between learners in knowledge areas, background, and position in the hierarchy do not pose a problem because, in the experience of learning, all learners are equal (Keini, 2002). Such interactions foster collaboration, exploration, trust, openness, supportiveness, and enhanced motivation for learning (Castle et al., 2006).

Collaboration between teachers is crucial in tackling the uncertainty factor. Coping with it alone may undermine the teacher's self-confidence. The primary gains that collaboration awards are its ability to reduce teachers' sense of powerlessness and enhance their abilities (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Collaborative teachers reported their conviction that they are capable of a meaningful contribution to the children's lives and that they have a personal and public obligation to do so. They held a higher positive opinion of their profession and the appertaining responsibilities. They defined their work in broader terms emphasizing personal development along with academic achievements, working with colleagues and students. Teachers' characteristics became the school's organizational characteristics, such as work among teachers, team teaching, shared decision-making, sharing diverse

resources, and joint planning conducted at the beginning and the end of each school day. Teachers customarily talk about everything and raise problems to achieve a joint focus. All this facilitates the creation of a shared sense of language, performance, and faith in their competence (Rosenholtz, 1989).

The research shows that teachers in schools with collaborative cultures ask their colleagues for ideas more frequently in professional conferences and workshops. When they encounter an obstacle, they are not shy to ask for and receive advice and assistance from other teachers and the principal because they are confident in themselves and their ability to improve and much more committed to it. In contrast, teachers in schools characterized by poor teamwork do not refer to their responsibility to learn and know more. They do not realize that they can become more competent by jointly searching for new ideas with colleagues (Rosenholtz, 1989).

 In collaborative schools, continuous, high profile, and experiential self-renewal is accepted as the intrinsic fact of daily life. In such schools, teachers can become better based solely on their affiliation with a specific school team (Little, 1990).

Flores (2004) found that teachers want to learn together but believe that the school time limitations and work conditions do not allow for it. Peer teachers' shared learning in professional communities helps improve students' achievements in the educational framework (Gajda & Koliba, 2007; Kurland & Shahaf-Barzilai, 2013).

Elucidation of shared problems in the learning community compels the individual teacher to compare their premise with their colleagues' (Merriam, 2004). They have to expound on their positions and cope with others' ideas and assertions (Schwarz et al., 2000). The significance of peer learning lies, therefore, in strengthening complex cognitive aspects of the learner's perception: they develop in an environment that recognizes the individual's ability to hear and receive other opinions (Merriam, 2004),

and strengthen emotional aspects of their perception because the learner shares their experiences with peers (Flores, 2004).

Robinson (2015) defines collegiality as a range of behaviors demonstrating care and concern for other people. Collegiality also includes work in collaborative forms. Bergman and Stein Cohen (2018) observed a stronger sense of collegiality among women compared to men. Moore (2014) found an interrelation between the participants' gender and employment status (having tenure or not) and their level of collegiality. Lester (2007) pointed out that women feel the need to conform to stereotypical female traits within the organization, namely, collaboration and collegiality. Wood (2012) stated that elementary-school male teachers received more negative responses about their collegiality levels. Also, Huang and Fraser's study (2009) conducted among science teachers found distinct statistical differences in most aspects of the school climate, with female science teachers experiencing a higher sense of collegiality than male teachers.

Traditional teachers explained in their in-depth interviews for this study that their preference for individual work is caused by the diffusion of responsibility in a group ("hitchhikers") and a "takeover" by one or two staff members of the entire process occurring in the group.

The professional literature relates to these phenomena as teamwork. In some groups, dynamics work like "magic", and each group member brings in themself and their strengths. In other groups, members do not get along and include "hitchhikers" who do not contribute their part to the group effort.

A study that examined the tendencies in collaboration among employees in workplaces found that someone's strength as an excellent team player might be a disadvantage for them and their organization (Shellenbarger, 2018). The desire to help others often

stems from the desire to feel in control of what transpires in the work environment and

be seen in colleagues' eyes as an expert on specific subjects. This desire causes such

employees to divert resources to unnecessary tasks that reinforce the positive feeling

drawn from helping colleagues and the resultant organizational positioning.

One of the solutions to this problem is the introduction of individual facets into

teamwork when the learners describe their experiences and insights from the activity.

In addition, writing a *group protocol* should be encouraged, in which the learners

define for themselves rules of behavior, each member's responsibilities, and the

members' mutual expectations (Huang, 2018).

To rein in this excessive activity while preserving employees' roles as team players an

excellent team player is asked to examine the situation – on a peer's request for help or

while in collaboration in a specific process – and ensure that they intervene - only if

they are the right person for that and do not engage in the process automatically

(Shellenbarger, 2018).

The question arises how a syncretic process can develop when some teachers willingly

prefer to work alone, some are content with individualistic work, while others are

content with collegial work?

In the interviews, a distinctive agreement is evident among traditional and modern

teachers alike that teamwork assists teachers in developing teaching, learning, and

evaluation processes, expansion of knowledge, and cultivation of work distribution in

both disciplinary and didactic fields. The current study shifts the spotlight to these

mutual agreements that the interviews with traditional and modern teachers yielded.

These agreements form the basis for creating a shared syncretic process between

traditional and modern teachers. In this process, adaptation and compromise between

team members are plausible.

Teamwork form, most appropriate for this agreement in traditional and modern teachers' opinion, is a PLC.

Working in a team is customary in PLCs where teachers teach, plan or analyze their teaching practice together, and it is the most powerful form of collaboration (Little, 1990) that we strive to achieve using the syncretic model.

What about the teachers who consciously choose to work alone? What about teachers who prefer individualistic work to teamwork? How can we integrate them into the syncretic process in the teachers' room?

The professional literature on teachers' "circle of life" dwells on the issue extensively. Huberman, the researcher of teachers' life cycle, claimed that at certain stages of their professional lives, teachers tend toward individualism, and at others toward collaboration: a teacher can behave both ways, depending on their professional developmental stage (Huberman, 1989).

Rosenholtz posits that the difference between the two forms of social relationships lies in the school: working conditions in most schools compel isolation; teachers do not see or hear each other, and there is little communication between them. As a result, the essential characteristic of their work is individualism. However, in other schools, the teaching is done through collaboration (Rosenholtz, 1985; 1989). Either form can exist in a school, but separately, not concurrently.

Hargreaves, in a special issue article, focused on both forms. While he views the teachers' room as a site of encounters where the existing collaboration influences the teacher's work, he does not ignore working in conditions of isolation that produce individualism. In his opinion, a teacher can be individualistic in the classroom and collaborative in the teachers' room. These two forms of social relationships can co-

exist in a regular school, and there is no need to discuss a specific situation, a developmental stage, special schools, etc. (Hargreaves, 1984; 1988).

Lortie (1975) stated that the school organization and structure place each teacher in an isolated classroom, with no contact between teachers in *isolated cells*, in a sense. Due to this structure, individualism becomes an essential characteristic of teachers' work. At the same time, when teachers can meet together in an appropriate place and time, they instantly turn into a social group where they collaborate and compete at the same time. The individualism that teachers exhibit in the teachers' room is a type of *situational individualism* generated by the external conditions imposed upon teachers in the school. However, also in teachers' rooms, there is room to exhibit individualistic characteristics - mainly in areas of personal choice, different tastes, and different personalities (Kainan, 1996).

The syncretic model that includes compromise and adaptation while preserving each staff member's traits is feasible; it can foster success in heterogeneous teachers' rooms, according to the present study's finding of a broad agreement among traditional and modern teachers alike regarding the benefits of collegial teamwork. This agreement, as stated, is the basis for the success of the syncretic process in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

4.3. The Third Theme: Perception of Teamwork by School Teachers and Principals

The third theme refers to the gaps in perception regarding teamwork among traditional and modern teachers and school principals, and the reasons for these gaps.

It was found that different interpretations affect the gaps in the determination of the cause for the phenomenon of traditional teachers' resistance to opening their classroom doors to open lessons (and to videotaping) constructed at a team level to advance

instruction, learning, and evaluation processes, as indicated in the study. The revelation of this base of primary worldview gaps forms the basis for understanding the conflictual relationship revealed in this study that included the traditional teachers' feelings of hostility and embitterment, and the modern teachers' feelings of guilt, condescension, and paternalism; these feelings impede syncretism processes and the desired adaptation and compromise between the groups. Another typical example emerged - that of grading tests of students unfamiliar to the teacher. The theme is divided into four subthemes:

4.3.1. External Factor Intervention in Student Test Evaluation

The recent years saw a concept implemented by teachers' guidance counselors and inspectors that calls for change in test evaluation so that each teacher grades the tests of their colleague's students. This work form ensures, so it is argued, a reliable, fair, and equitable testing procedure: each teacher grades the tests of the students they do not know or teach; therefore, their evaluation is unbiased by their familiarity with the students. Teachers' guidance counselors claim that with this method, evaluation turns "purer" and more objective, not tinged by the acquaintance and bond between the teacher (the evaluator) and their student (the evaluated).

Upon the evaluation completion, the teacher may share evaluation experiences with the students' teacher: the strengths and shortcomings that the evaluation revealed - at the class, group, and individual levels.

Also, some traditional teachers interviewed for this study pointed out that no discussion between the teacher ensues after test evaluation. That means, in their view, that the process is unnecessary. Also, these teachers indicated that external evaluation often evoked mistrust in the evaluator by the student's homeroom teacher.

The perception that views test evaluation by the teacher unfamiliar with the students as alienated, pointless, even intrusive, damaging, and indicative of mistrust on the school administration's part emerges from the traditional homeroom teachers' words.

In contrast, the perception of students' test evaluation by a different teacher as a problem-free process emerges from the interviews with modern homeroom teachers. These teachers relate to the method as a "purer" and more objective evaluation tool, and the test indicator as a working tool providing the evaluator with objectivity in grading.

The professional literature defines the school administration's request for test evaluation to be performed by a different teacher as an example of *contrived collegiality* – a phenomenon of school principals imposing teamwork administratively. Thus, inflexibility is created, undermining the principles of rational judgment that constitute the very essence of professionalism in teaching. The research offers multiple examples of contrived collegiality developing in the name of collaborative *culture*. The excessive focus on regulatory mechanisms of power, such as imposing advancement courses on teaching staff, is not only pointless but also damaging (Avgar et al., 2012). Moreover, the decision to exert power upon the other or trust them is highly consequential (Bachmann, 2002).

Different types of collegial trust relations that encourage and even force teachers to work together on improving their practice give rise to contrived collegiality (Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990).

Furthermore, the central school figure with the ability to influence the sociolearning climate in the classroom, the student's motivation to learn, and, consequently, their dropout decline is the homeroom teacher (Reeve et al., 2014).

The level of the homeroom teacher's support for their students' psychological needs, autonomy, sense of capability, and belonging makes them a significant figure in students' lives (Ryan & Deci, 2016). Therefore, this significant figure who teaches, imparts, practices, strengthens, empowers, supports, and monitors their achievements must be the only one to perform the evaluation processes and grade their students' tests themself – the students they know closely and better than any other person. The importance of test grading by the teacher herself is crucial for their students and their success.

Also, previous studies showed that comparative tests acquired transformative significance in educational institutions and among school principals and teaching staff (Koretz & Barton, 2004) and changed the overall school endeavor because they led to teaching centered on *teaching-to-the-test*, the reduction of the study material and the abandonment of advanced learning skill development (Koretz, 2002). When the organizational structure is too restrictive, it might create restrictive conformity. Conformity and compliance, while critical to effective organizational performance, could hurt the functioning of employees who respond to them by "seeking refuge" in seclusion and avoidance of open communication (Jansen & Chandler, 1994). Traditional teachers' insistence on grading their students' tests expresses the teacher's lack of trust in the school administration and the damage to their autonomy as teachers. The research literature cites the issues similar to our findings: teachers feeling a lack of trust and damage to autonomy in their work.

Previous studies demonstrated that one of the characteristics of a teacher's work, the condition for the existence of trust relations in the school, and the outcome of these relations is the autonomous space and the freedom to take professional-pedagogical decisions, not through force and constraint. An autonomous dimension is an integral

part of teachers' work in an environment of trust. However, true autonomy stemming from genuine trust in the teacher's abilities does not always lead to desired results and holds the possibility of error. Genuine autonomy must contain a margin for error within which the teacher is allowed to experiment and fail. In the absence thereof, the sense of autonomy is substantially impaired. When students' test evaluation performed by their teachers reveals a discrepancy, it is detrimental to the autonomy given to the teachers as an indication of the level of trust in them. For teachers, it is not the case of autonomy inherent in the fact that most of their work occurs behind the closed doors of the classroom. Instead, they aspire for autonomy stemming from genuine trust in their abilities. That is essential autonomy, allowing the teacher a margin for error: a legitimacy to act independently, even at the cost of a potential mistake or failure (Avgar et al., 2012).

Traditional teachers' responses in this study support other studies' findings regarding the contribution of trust to the willingness to take risks and, consequently, the improvement of the change and learning processes in the school (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998; Bryk & Schneider, 2002).

Traditional teachers stated that, in their view, the fact they do not grade and assess their students' tests signifies the school principals' low level of trust in teachers. However, despite the centrality of the school assessment and evaluation processes, all respondents agreed that in practice, the school principal holds the primary position in defining the boundaries of the teacher's autonomous space. The trust the principal puts in their teachers is manifest, in their words, first and foremost in the level of autonomy he grants them in the school and in their ability to serve as a buffer between the external demands (Ministry of Education) and the teachers. Thus, the principal sets the boundaries within which the teachers enjoy essential autonomy.

Traditional teachers claimed in their interviews that test grading is only one evaluation tool of many other alternative methods (reflective diary, presentation, quizzes). They grade and assess all students' products themselves; this fact attests to trust in them. This form of evaluation fosters the teacher's visibility in work. Once the teacher is not allowed to grade their students' tests, the trust is undermined. The school administration's decision on minimizing mistakes does not set a valid margin for error and, therefore, restricts teachers' essential autonomy. No wonder teachers define it as detrimental to the mutual trust relations between a principal and teachers. In contrast, when evaluation is oriented toward teacher support and performed openly and overtly, it is considered effective and trust-building. Such an evaluation style, where the principal provides feedback stating points of strength and points requiring improvement, is designed to attempt to see the teacher themself. Such evaluation fosters visibility, encourages trust, and attests to (Avgar et al., 2012). The professional literature points out that when support is forced upon the teachers - especially if it is irrelevant to them - it signifies mistrust toward them. To be considered trust-building, support needs to heed teachers' wishes. Then it will be based on the teacher's visibility (Avgar et al., 2012). Trust between the superior and the employee positively affects job-satisfaction level; also, a negative correlation between trust and tension at work was found. Thus, when trust is prevalent, work tension decreases, and job satisfaction levels rise (Guinot et al., 2014).

The academic literature emphasizes that open discourse is necessary for collaboration and mutual support. Open and shared discourse mandates constant dialogue between the teachers, the administration, and other administrative staff in the school (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 1998; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Tschannen-Moran, 2011)

Trust is not a spontaneous concept created from nothing in an organization; behavioral and organizational practices are necessary to generate it (Altinkurt & Yilmaz, 2012). The trust in teachers is sustained by four core practices: essential autonomy, visibility-facilitating evaluation, visibility-based support, and constant dialogue. Essential autonomy relies on learning to trust the teachers' capability to fulfill their work adequately, and believing that they act in good faith.

Visibility-facilitating evaluation strengthens the connection between the teacher's goodwill and the continuous professional activity (reliability). Support, based on visibility, enhances the teacher's competency, while openness and candor comprise the core of the constant dialogue.

Each practice is a pillar that can stand alone; however, in reality, they lean on and nurture each other. As stated above, trust, with all its components, is a unique resource that grows stronger when in use and deteriorates - when it is not (Gambetta, 1998; Putnam, 1993; Cherney, 1997).

The foundation model of trust in teachers demonstrates that each practice can strengthen the other. The dialogue with the teacher is the basis for their visibility. The teacher's visibility, both in the evaluation of their work and the support resources provided to them, reinforces the dialogue and, concurrently, establishes the teacher's autonomy - essential autonomy anchors the teacher's visibility in the practices of evaluation and support. Nevertheless, this model can be reversed, and an environment of mistrust will require a stronger regulatory system that, in turn, would aggravate the mistrust (Cherney, 1997).

4.3.2. The Open Lesson Hosting and Evaluation

In the interviews for the present study, traditional and modern teachers unanimously defined an open lesson-performance assessment as a hard and threatening

experience. They experienced such assessments in the presence of teachers' room colleagues (and, at times, the general school inspector) as offensive. As a consequence of said experience, teachers reported a lack of willingness to host open lessons in front of colleagues, guides, and the school administration. However, they described open-lesson planning as a meaningful and empowering learning experience in the team where collaborative learning between all the participants occurred in a professional-pedagogical discourse - reassuring and significant for them.

The sense of the open- lesson assessment being judgmental, offensive, and lacking in empathy revealed in the interviews for this study was identified repeatedly in the professional literature on teacher evaluation.

According to Nasser-Abu Alhija (2010), many teachers experienced evaluation as hard and offensive from the onset of their teaching career. Most teachers' early experiences in the classroom while still learning their trade were offensive and, worse yet, occurred in the presence of principals, guides, pedagogical counselors, inspectors, and mentors. Novice teachers reported that the assistance was attenuated by judgment and, at times, appeared as help in disguise. An accepted evaluation process generates irritability and anxiety among teachers, thus making it harder for them to admit their mistakes and learn from them (Nasser-Abu Alhija, 2010).

The researchers agree about the chief effects of anxiety on the individual's development and performance level (Bendas & Friedman, 1993; Karmon-Kolet, 2005). Anxiety comprises four components: stress, worrying, irrelevant thoughts, and physical responses. Evaluation-induced anxiety constitutes a bias that might distort the evaluation results (Nasser Abu-Alhija, 2010; Birenbaum, 1997).

Additional arguments against feedback on teaching refer to their tendency to be imprecise, shallow, and often accompanied by a bad atmosphere and lacking empathy or support (Frase, 1992).

Most teacher evaluations are based on single lesson observations, isolated from context (Noakes, 2009). Many teachers view observations as a stressful experience, and they fear the "I have got you" feeling of the moments when the principal, who rarely observes a routine classroom process, makes a sweeping judgment about their teaching abilities (Guterman, 2014).

Moreover, the common denominator emerging from numerous studies is the unpleasant encounters with evaluation viewed as displays of the humiliating approach by those supposedly assisting, and the helping hand can strike without mercy. Thus, it is not surprising that teachers often associate the evaluation with judgment and the collaboration - with control and supervision (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

Therefore, many teaching staff members perceive the open lesson as an occurrence in which, on the one hand, teachers receive help and, on the other, are hurt. Even when the intentions are good, the teacher preparing for their open lesson experiences the assistance as patronizing, as help "packaged in power". The help of this type deters the teacher who needs it from asking for it again. Therefore, the more high-risk the teacher evaluations in terms of pay and retribution, the lower the chances of teachers sharing with others the strategies that give them a relative advantage or protection and volunteering to host open lessons. Objecting to or avoiding open-lesson hosting is a defense against prying and intervention in the teacher's work (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

Furthermore, although the observations provide ample opportunities for fostering pedagogical discourse (Guterman, 2010) that can help teachers' improvement, most

evaluation processes do not emphasize this aspect. Teachers consider observations a tool in the checklist, data collection to fill out the evaluation tool with no chance for a meaningful discourse or professional growth (Almy, 2011). Anast-May et al. (2011) support this finding in their assertion that teachers rarely experience regular and lengthy observations and are involved in the structured and systematic feedback facilitating a reflective process on their teaching performance.

According to Lortie (1975), teachers' resistance to open lesson hosting does not stem from arrogance and self-confidence; it is caused by fear and hesitancy. A lack of confidence stems from the fear of negative evaluation. As stated above, the teaching staff's lack of confidence is one of the reasons for teachers' need for self-preservation (Lortie, 1975).

Also, the research examines the occurrence of the teacher's negative experience with the school principal and the group's attitude toward it.

In such a case, colleagues can be supportive, understanding, and respectful regarding the individual's commitments. However, the research literature enables us to observe the problem in reverse, as Van Emmerik and Peeters (2009) did: staff members' negative experiences might impact the individual. The transition from the team to the individual level can occur through an open and conscious collaboration process.

For instance, employees who complain about their work overload can transfer these feelings to their colleagues. Van Emmerik and Peeters (2009) based their research on the "emotional contagion model" that speaks of exposure to the other's feelings and unconsciously giving attention to these.

According to Gov (2014), such a mechanism exists in teaching staff due to organizational behavioral norms and job expectations, e.g., bringing work home and

prioritizing work over family. Stress and tension crossover stemming from work exists

between employers and employees and between employees and their peers.

Crossovers are visible in different team members and found in teacher groups -

particularly among the teachers who were sensitive toward the others' feelings or when

they spoke about work-related problems (Gov, 2014).

The emotional contagion model is, indeed, manifested in this study - in the aspect

of teacher evaluation. The entire staff shares fear and anxiety about open-lesson

hosting and each teacher's separate painful experience is conveyed to the teacher whom

the principal asks to conduct an open lesson at the given moment.

Teacher evaluation has several key goals, including providing teachers with

information on how to improve their teaching behaviors and assessing precisely

teaching performances for promotion or tenure (Sartain et al., 2011; Culbertson, 2012).

The less-discussed goals in teacher evaluation are to create control mechanisms and

establish a distinct school hierarchy (Guterman, 2014).

Moreover, there is a broad consensus in the professional literature that lesson

observations and pedagogical discourse must be sensitive to each teacher, their unique

teaching style, intellectual reserve, and emotional and professional resources. The

ultimate goal of lesson observations and pedagogical discourse is to inspire teachers to

preserve and develop their empathic and creative teaching abilities while giving place

to humor, wisdom, and self-understanding, helping them become better teachers and

connect with themselves and their students. (Guterman, 2014).

Also, great significance is attributed to generating a sense of trust and creating a

fruitful dialogue between teachers undergoing evaluation, focusing on constructive and

empowering communication out of the feeling of responsibility for the evaluation

process and its results. Teacher evaluation based on respect, trust, impartiality,

reflective dialogue, and collaboration constitutes a foundational component in constructing a professional community that would lead to improved teaching quality in the school and the advancement of the education system (Levian & Zamir 2013).

According to Guterman (2014), principals can utilize open-lesson observation for growth, not as a judgment tool or a promotion device. The teaching observation and the subsequent discourse target the teacher's empowerment and personal development and do not fixate on evaluation. Using the data collected through the observation technique and pedagogical discourse lessens the fears concerning lesson observations, enhances teachers' reflective abilities, and creates change in teaching patterns. The benefits of this tool lie mainly in the teaching and learning improvement, not the teacher's personality. The discourse occurs between teachers and principals who view the educational process as the core of the school work and designate their time to improve the school teaching and learning. It is free of judgment or critique and characterized by mutual respect. The tension between the formative and the summative types of observation inherent in each evaluation process - certainly in the lesson observation process - can be alleviated chiefly through the entire process of lesson observation and reflective pedagogical discourse - short, focused, and fair. Teachers' positive experience resulting from an introspective encounter with the observer that provides them with an opportunity to identify alone the problems in teaching while choosing alternatives and creating an experience of learning and advancement out of the encounter is the key to lessening the tension inherent in instruction observation (Guterman, 2014).

4.3.3. Collective Open-Lesson Planning

In their interviews for the present study, both traditional and modern teachers defined lesson planning in a team as an informative and empowering experience, with each

participant in the group contributing and benefiting in the process, raising their questions and doubts and, at the same time, imparting their experiences and skills. Planning turns into a group effort where all teachers participate and get exposed to teaching methods, materials, insights, and pedagogical principles. These findings are consistent with other research findings on shared team-based pedagogical planning. According to the professional literature, school culture as a PLC is built on collaboration between teachers and administrators. This way, teachers work together to analyze and improve learning and teaching in their classrooms. Teachers reveal their instruction techniques and are ready to cope with different opinions and try methods and approaches different from their own. They engage in discussions and share what traditionally was considered personal: goals, strategies, materials, questions, concerns, and outcomes (DuFour, 2004; DuFour et al., 2006), observe their peers' lessons, provide feedback and discuss shared professional issues (Bolam et al., 2005).

The collaborative culture encourages teachers accustomed to working autonomously and single-handedly to change their approach and work as partners in a team (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006).

Full transparency and sharing with colleagues require a high level of trust between the teachers and between the teachers and the principal (Williams et al., 2008). Trust is a crucial factor in the school's function as a professional community. Moreover, teachers learn best when the learning is based on instruction methods within the context of their learning environment, is continuous, allows for collaboration with colleagues in and outside of school, allows for reflection, and develops cognitive knowledge and skills required for the instruction improvement (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006).

Reflective examination constitutes part of the PLC's inquiry into itself and its achievements (Louis et al., 1996; Louis & Marks, 1998), and part of its professional

development. In this framework, teachers engage in a constant reflective dialogue that critically examines their practice against the goals they set for themselves against their formulated vision. Interactions between teachers of different knowledge and experiences provide opportunities for learning and reflection (Greene, 2007) that generate viable, practical knowledge. Lesson observations, their analysis, and applicable conclusions about the teaching are examples of practice types and learning through action.

In collaboration, teachers share responsibility and search together for creative solutions to problems. The integration of learning generates cohesion between the learning group members, and, consequently, the learning becomes more appealing and collaborative (Sharon et al., 2019).

The power of the group process lies in the diversity among the group members that allows for a wide range of perspectives, the pursuit of shared goals, and the creation of a shared vision (Vidergor & Sisk, 2013).

The group context as a learning community offers a substantial advantage: active and engaging learning for both the individual and the group. Similar to the dialogic instruction-learning process, active and engaging learning shapes the learners' personality through structuring traits, such as responsibility for learning, skepticism, vigilance, systematic inquiry, and critical thinking. In the group, learners are exposed to perspectives, thoughts, and feelings other than their own, hear and recognize others. All these are the expressions of the constructivist processes in teaching and learning in the social context.

Teachers share their knowledge with colleagues and expand it with their colleagues' assistance.

This way, the fusion of knowledge, meaning, and interpretation occurs in the process of defining goals and mutual intentionality (Sharon et al., 2019).

Parsons and Taylor (2011) pointed out that learners' involvement in learning enhances its emotional quality because learners attribute positive meaning to the possibility of initiating activities and implementing programs. Moreover, engagement in learning leads to identification with the values of their educational institution and participation in its activities (Parsons & Taylor, 2011). To create relevance of learning for learners (to increase their engagement in learning), we must nurture their sense of capability, provide constructive feedback (both formal and informal), cultivate experiences of success among them, and structure the class as a caring learners' group that meets the learners' needs and recognizes the difference between them (Vidislavski, 2014).

Affiliation with the group enables the employee to connect with others and satisfy the need for relationships with other people. The group influences how the person understands their environment and forms views regarding themself and the world around them (Thibaut & Kelley, 2017). The group affects the person's work performance. Within the group, complex relationships develop that include collaboration and competitive relations (Dor-Haim, 2018). The group can be defined as a populace who engage in reciprocal activities and, in some way, mutually influence each other (Thibaut & Kelley, 2017).

Thus, this study's findings appear to be comparable with other studies that showed that teachers experience open-lesson evaluation as judgmental and offensive while the team experience of the lesson planning teamwork is perceived as instructive and empowering by them.

However, the current study's distinction is that it draws attention to the purpose and the goals of open lessons. The goal is to create a platform for team-based learning and

further pedagogical exploration in the team. Open-lesson planning by teaching staff is a tool for fostering great teamwork. Yet, once the teacher experiences excessive judgment and hurt feelings during the lesson evaluation, the motivation and willingness to continue to develop and foster teamwork are undermined.

The open lesson conducted in the presence of counselors, staffroom colleagues, and mentors is not a lesson for teacher evaluation; it is the lesson that serves in its entirety the purpose of team learning, extraction, and formulation of pedagogical principles, raising insights from the practice and experience in the educational and pedagogical field. Open-lesson planning and hosting foster teamwork and collaboration processes among teachers. Evaluation for promotion, tenure, or dismissal must be separated from open-lesson hosting. Open lessons are not part of the evaluation aimed at data collection that will help make administrative or any other decisions. Instead, their goal is to improve teaching at the team level. Reflective discussion at the team level following the lesson is a significant part of the teachers' learning process. Given this, the evaluation aimed at data collection for administrative decisions should be excluded from this reflective discussion. This separation will prevent damage to teamwork in the teachers' room and encourage teachers to continue planning lessons together as part of continuous teamwork management.

4.3.4. Open-Lesson Videotaping and Analysis

The interviewed traditional teachers stated their unequivocal refusal to host a videotaped open lesson held to analyze and extract pedagogical principles at the team level. The tension associated with the use of lesson videotapes for teaching assessment and professional development was distinct in the interviews. Traditional teachers objected categorically to open-lesson videotaping. In their opinion, the camera affected

processes occurring in the classroom and, at times, even interfered with the learning process.

Open-lesson videotaping infringes on their privacy in the community. In their interviews, traditional teachers also expressed their resentment of modern teachers' consent to collaborate on the matter and defined the consent as a "disgrace". In their interviews, teachers of the Moslem-Bedouin sector stated that lesson filming is against their culture and that their principals agree with them on the matter. Hence, it seldom occurs in their schools.

In research, videotaped lessons in teacher training and professional development are not new, and it has developed significantly since the 1960s (Sherin, 2004). Many original methods of this medium are in use today - often adapted to the developments in theory and research and the insights on teacher learning. Many of these insights are based on theory and research into teaching and learning for all types of learners, with specific adjustments to adult learning (Quinn et al., 2011).

In recent years, vast experience has accumulated regarding videotaping in teacher learning. Borko et al. (2011), for example, described different models of teacher learning: models that integrate lesson videotaping as a way to present the work of teaching.

A survey of the research literature that explored lesson videotaping in teacher training supports the findings of this study. The academic literature refers to teachers' objections to their lessons videotaped. Also, it discusses in detail the limitations of lesson videotaping and even its inherent dangers.

Bringing the camera into the classroom may impact the processes taking place in it and, at times, even interfere with the course of learning (Zhang et al., 2011). However, the professional literature inspires "stormy" debates and, at times, disagreements

among educational researchers regarding the shortcomings and advantages of a

videotaped lesson in teacher learning and professional development.

Studies have revealed a broad agreement on the context of the teaching work being

vital in teacher learning. Videotaped lessons are an effective tool in presenting teaching

work and, thus, can provide learning opportunities for teachers. Using videotaped

lessons for teacher professional development holds tremendous potential (Borko, 2004;

Ball & Cohen, 1999).

According to the professional literature, lesson videotaping significantly evolved in

recent years following the efforts invested in understanding the work of teaching,

teachers' knowledge, classroom dynamics in various disciplines, etc. Due to

developments in technology filming, storage, and accessibility have become relatively

easy; that seems to allow for a new era in lesson filming for teacher professional

development. The professional literature points out the possibility of effective

utilization of lesson videotaping as an opportunity for teaching improvement and

teacher professional learning (Talanker, 2013).

One of the unique features of the video that makes it effective in working with

teachers is that it provides documentation of the activity in the classroom that allows

teachers to use it dynamically (repeated viewing of recordings, focusing on something

new with each new viewing, pausing, rewinding, etc.). An additional feature is an

option of collecting video clips and reorganizing them in a different format (for

instance, not in chronological order, or by dividing them into segments) or linking

them to other media (e.g., text, graphics, or another video). Combining these features

allows for designing different analysis methods for teaching and learning and reflecting

on them with teachers. In discussions surrounding videotaped lessons, the video

provides the discourse with a concrete point of reference not colored by the experience

of an individual teacher who brings their personal experience or projection into the observation or projects themself into the situation (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2000). These discussions aid the teacher in refining their professional vision, that is, the ability to discern essential characteristics of the classroom interactions and understand and interpret them (Sherin & van Es, 2009). The significance of this ability is emphasized in various programs that focus on different characteristics of teaching, such as students' thinking and learning (Borko et al., 2011)

Also, videotaped lessons are used to aid the teaching of specific disciplines. One such example is the *Learning and Teaching Geometry* (LTG) project designed to assist junior high school math teachers in the US in teaching geometry (Borko et al., 2011). Lesson videotaping can be used in learning about learning, learning about teaching, and both, in learning about interactions within the classroom, about the classroom *covert* culture, and expanding the repertoire of examples available to the teacher. Lesson videotapes can turn the work of teaching into public and create an object for shared review by a learning team (Zhang et al., 2011).

The example of educated and efficient use of videotaping is evident in the "flipped-classroom" program built on a method different from the customary in most schools. Per this method, basic knowledge is imparted outside the classroom, usually through video films or short quiz questionnaires (Bergmann & Sams, 2012; Khan, 2011; Baker, 2012).

Thus, the lesson time is devoted to further exploring the material studied and integrating and implementing students' knowledge through a broad range of learning strategies. The flipped learning model serves as a bridge to a learning environment that centers on the learner and, thus, allows for profound and significant learning (Bergmann and Sams, 2012; Michael, 2006).

The professional literature relates to video as an excellent tool to identify problematic points. Occasionally, the teacher makes mistakes that they lose sight of until the videotaped lesson is viewed again. Videotaping may expose various activities occurring during class unnoticed by the teacher in real-time (Talanker, 2013). Nowadays, in the era of accessibility and widespread expansion of video technology, there are still teachers who have never seen themselves teach. They may be unaware of the problems easily revealed in video recordings, such as selectively asking specific groups of students for answers, ignoring some students, or even *screening* them out for various reasons.

Lesson videotaping is a tool that serves the process of reflection performed by the teacher. Theoretically, it is possible to distinguish between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. The ability to reflect on the processes occurring in the classroom requires great skill. Videotaping allows the teacher to base their reflection on the source more reliable than their memory alone. Nevertheless, reflection is not always effective. Occasionally, teachers see what they *want* to see, while in reality, they are incapable of criticism regarding the object of reflection (Brophy, 2004). Moreover, lesson videotaping can turn the teaching evaluation more objective and precise and generate opportunities for professional development. Undoubtedly, an evaluation based on solid evidence is more accurate than an evaluation without evidentiary support. The human and the technological components should be interwoven synergetically (Talanker, 2013).

However, Talanker (2013) points out that in evaluation, video can never serve as a substitute for a principal or subject coordinator. Yet, the principal cannot be present in the classroom for longer than a limited period. The massive use of videotaping can

guarantee validation of an evaluation tool, and, thus, minimize the subjectivity of the

principals' evaluation (Talanker, 2013).

In the present study interviews, the modern teachers' objection to lesson videotaping

stemmed from different reasons: these teachers conveyed the ethical dilemmas of

lesson recording and their effect on the staff in the teachers' room. In the interviews,

these teachers expressed the fear - not of the evaluation but the unfair public judgment

following lesson videotaping. In the interviews, these teachers acknowledged that they

did not watch the end-product and that it was made public without their consent; they

received a low evaluation for the videotaped lesson not because of the quality but

rather because of the focus of filming. Furthermore, the video was distributed among

communities not included in the teacher's consent, and, thus, their privacy was

violated.

The professional literature on teacher's lesson videotaping for learning purposes

and its shortcomings shows that our findings are similar to other research findings. The

professional literature addresses two separate ethical questions: (a) The videotaped

individual's privacy – both the teacher and students have a right to privacy, and lesson

videotaping might infringe upon it. The other experience mentioned in the professional

literature is gained through less successful lesson videos. In a smaller teacher

community, teachers are easily identifiable. Some of the teachers who had volunteered

to have their lesson filmed described feeling disgraced. (b) Teacher evaluation – each

evaluation can be interpreted as a pretension to know better than the teacher themself,

whether they teach well or less so. The profession of teaching is total – teachers bring

all of themselves into it, yet they are assessed based solely on specific issues.

Psychologically, each time the teacher feels that they are evaluated as a human being.

The consequences of such an evaluation can reach far beyond the professional realm.

Lesson videotaping and evaluation, especially risk-prone summative evaluation, may be detrimental to the teacher's self-confidence and authority - two components essential for good teaching (Talanker, 2013).

Hence, the key term for the ethical issue of the two aspects is trust in teachers. Each injury to the trust in teachers is an ethical violation; it is counterproductive as well, both in the short and long term (Van Swol, 2003).

So, how can we mobilize the heterogeneous staffroom with all its participants to partake in lesson videotaping for learning and professional development? How can we do it without compulsion and obligation but rather through their mobilization for this mission? How do we empower teachers, encourage them to lead this process in the school, minimize excessive objections through empowerment and collaboration, and even create team mobilization?

Ajzen and Fishbein's continuity theory asserts that the individual's perceptions, attitudes, and behavior are interrelated. In the organizational context, it is safe to say that the employee's positive perceptions of the organization that they work for lead to positive attitudes and optimal, efficient performance, whereas negative perceptions lead to negative attitudes and performance that may damage the organization (Ajzen, 2012; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2005).

The concept of empowerment means allowing employees to develop attitudes that have the power to influence organizational processes. Menon (2001) presented three approaches to empowerment: granting power and authority in decision-making (a structural approach), encouraging experiences of power and strength (a motivational approach), and the manager providing the employee with a possibility to participate in the process of change in the organization (a leadership approach). Menon (2001) adds the integrative psychological approach by which the principal sets goals for their

employees, and they assess and internalize their value so that a primary component is created in the psychological experience of empowerment toward initiative, autonomy, and empathy. The factors prone to affect the employee's sense of empowerment are collaborative organizational climate, understanding the senior management's goals and vision, openness and teamwork, good communication with the superiors, and clear job description (Collinson et al., 2009).

Empowerment processes might foster in the employees a sense of autonomy, initiative, freedom in decision-making, and influence over strategic and practicable outcomes in work which could have a direct impact on the efficiency and innovativeness in the organization, optimal work performance, and the diminished desire to leave the organization (Sprietzer, 1995).

The stronger the sense of psychological empowerment in both dimensions – influence and freedom in decision-making and personal significance and capability, the higher the occurrence of citizenship behavior. The dimension of influence and freedom in decision-making emerged as a more dominant mediator than the dimension of the psychological empowerment of meaning and self-efficacy (Zemach & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016).

Also, the empowered employee feels satisfaction in their work and, consequently, improves their organizational citizenship behavior (Dalal, 2005). Furthermore, teachers experiencing a sense of freedom and influence in decision-making (a dominant component in their empowerment) exhibit citizenship behavior more frequently (Bogler & Somech, 2004; Dani, 2007).

Moreover, ethical leaders are supposed to treat their employees with respect, not as a means to their gains. Respect for the person's value is reflected in the employees'

strong sense of significance in their work (a metric in measuring psychological

empowerment) (Bandura, 2001).

By heeding teachers' need for empowerment, authentic principals will allow for

teachers' growth and confidence in their work skills and, in doing so, will give them

autonomy and seek opportunities to train and support them in making difficult moral

decisions at work. School principals cannot cope with all the responsibilities on their

own; thus, their ability to empower others is crucial and serves as a practical

expression of their leadership (Meyerson & Kline, 2008, Zhu et al., 2004).

According to Rosse and Hulin's adaptive strategy (1985), the more severe the

employee's perceived violation of the psychological contract – the employee's belief

and the administration's mutual commitment, the more extreme their withdrawal

behavior. At first, the employee will resort to being late, then absenteeism – even to a

tendency to leave until they feel the congruence between the perceived level of injury

to them due to psychological contract violation and the chosen withdrawal behavior

(Zemach & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016).

Teachers whose psychological needs are satisfied by teaching out of intrinsic

autonomous motivation, i.e., they act out of enjoyment and understand the value of

teaching and the sense of mission, behave more supportively toward their students'

psychological needs (Cheon et al., 2014; Katz & Shahar, 2015). Studies that examined

the consequences of this type of support for the students demonstrated its positive

emotional and academic influence on students' motivation, engagement, and

optimization, and the socio-learning climate in the classroom (Ryan & Deci, 2016).

Barsheshet and Nutov (2018) found that, in a teacher's view, empowerment in an

organization is a process in which the school administration delegates authority to

teachers, advances them in their positions, provides opportunities for self-expression, and gives them autonomy in the line of duty. Apart from these aspects, the school principal's supervision over work performance can be perceived as empowerment in an organization (Barsheshet & Nutov, 2018). Pearson and Moomaw (2005) called for giving teachers pedagogical autonomy manifested in the teacher's perception and feeling regarding the level of control they exercise in their work and work environment (Pearson & Moomaw, 2005).

This approach views teachers as professionals who undergo internal and external empowerment processes in their long work careers. Avidov-Ungar and Friedman's study (2011) depicted teachers' feelings in the process of empowerment. Teachers experienced a transition from a passive state -expressed in preserving the status quo and taking no initiative toward change - to the active state, manifested in task-oriented capability, growth, and restructuring of existing and new processes and programs.

A key to empowerment is to give teachers an essential role in decision-making as an opportunity to elevate the level of control in their work environment. Work autonomy means seeing the teachers themselves as having the authority to make decisions regarding different aspects of their work, such as scheduling, syllabus, choice of textbooks, and determination of lesson outlines. Thus, teachers receive control over the essential features of the learning environment (Barsheshet & Nutov, 2018).

Apart from the administrative management, principals should serve as pedagogical and educational leaders to all the school comers, including teachers working in it (Nutov & Hazzan, 2014). Some principals see themselves responsible for each aspect of work occurring between the school walls and beyond (Nutov & Somech, 2016). The research emphasizes the principal's contribution to teacher empowerment which

constitutes one of the components of improving school performance and creating a teacher-supportive work environment (Kermit & McDowelle, 2000).

Making teachers' capacities more profound and improving their performance in their existing capacities may arise from principals' consideration of creating challenging and motivating positions for their employees, in which they will have autonomy and authority, and access to information (Roberson–Smith & Markwick, 2009).

Expanding the capacity via delegation of authority contributes to the enrichment of teachers' work, enhances their motivation to work and enjoy their work, facilitates the creation of mutually supportive relationships in the teacher's group, and awards them greater appreciation. In addition to authority delegation, different researchers pointed out that actions such as discussion, argument, freedom of choice, brainstorming, and granting autonomy are indispensable for teachers in their empowerment (Somech, 2005; Sweetland & Hoy, 2000). The principal wishing to empower teachers gives them job autonomy while taking risks and reducing threats (Sweetland & Hoy, 2000).

According to Sahadi (2019), managers good at taking risks are also adept at being cautious and calculated. Managers will be good at risk-taking if they know how to proceed with flexibility under pressure between taking risks and taking precautions, excel, and be skilled on both ends of this tension (Sahadi, 2019).

Furthermore, Zemach and Shapira-Lishchinsky's study (2016) found that the more authentic the perceived school principal's leadership, the stronger the teachers' sense of psychological empowerment in both empowerment dimensions: influence and freedom in decision-making and personal significance and capability. Also, it was found that the connection between the perception of the principal's authentic leadership and the sense of psychological empowerment in the dimension of influence and freedom in

decision-making is distinctly strong, statistically, as compared to the connection between the perception of the principals' authentic leadership and the sense of psychological empowerment in the dimension of personal significance and capability. We can elucidate these findings through the dominant dimensions of teacher empowerment in decision-making processes that form authentic leadership: encouraging teachers to speak their minds and express attitudes consistent with their fundamental values. Moreover, it was found that the stronger the sense of the psychological empowerment in both its dimensions – influence and freedom in decision-making and personal significance and capability, the higher the frequency of citizenship behavior. Similarly, the research corroborated that the dimension of influence and freedom in decision-making is a more dominant mediator than the dimension of psychological empowerment and personal significance and capability (Tzemach & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2016).

The professional literature indicates that teachers should be equally aware of the criteria for evaluation, the evaluation process, and the scheduling of evaluation and videotaping in their classroom. When we speak of evaluation or filming for professional development, they will be futile, unless the teacher believes in the process. Ensuring teachers' privacy is crucial for maintaining their trust. It means that every video product of the teacher's lesson must reach solely the people they trust, be it the teacher themself, their counselor, or a teacher community.

Nonetheless, the professional literature argues that the evaluation policy evaluation per se does not constitute a violation of ethics. In the end, the teachers themselves evaluate their students; we must keep in mind that, in contrast to students, teachers are adults who should be capable of coping with a professional evaluation. Moreover, teachers

provide professional service to citizens, and the country must ensure high-quality service.

Ethically, before filming, the filming entity is responsible for showing the filmed material to the teacher and obtaining their consent to distribute the film among the entities the teacher approved of as documentation recipients.

The lack of accuracy in the evaluation tools - especially nonvalidated tools - may lead to the teachers' inaccurate evaluation. A principal's direct observation supposedly balances the evaluation tool, and the teacher must be a partner in the evaluation process. Given that, videotaping accompanied by strict specifications of the evaluation criteria serves the teacher who feels that they hold evidence that their practice is worthy of a higher score.

The present study's findings shift the focus to compromise and adaptation as syncretic values regarding traditional and modern teachers who do not always wish to participate in lesson videotaping but recognize this method as a meaningful learning tool. Teachers' learning does not have to take place solely around their teaching. Video recordings of other teachers' lessons can present ample learning opportunities for teachers. Indeed, the academic literature supports this finding. The literature describes various frameworks for teachers to learn from lesson videotapes, and they do not necessarily revolve around the teachers' lessons (Sherin, 2004; Zhang et al., 2011).

Usually, the learning processes within such frameworks are based not only on lesson videotapes but also on additional materials related to teaching and learning – records of practice – such as samples of students' work, lesson planning, study materials, etc. These materials allow teachers to learn about their own and other teachers' practices and students' learning without being physically present in the classrooms. They can, for

instance, examine teaching strategies and discuss ways to improve them (Borko et al., 2008; Kazemi & Frnake, 2004; Little et al., 2003).

This study shifts the focus to three types of recorded lesson observation as a path to compromise and adaptation – the essential values in the syncretic model:(a) watching one's lessons with the purpose of independent work according to an indicator or with the assistance of a guidance counselor; (b) group viewing of the general school staff or subject peer teachers' videotaped lessons that allows for feedback and deeper understanding of thinking patterns behind the pedagogical practices, and (c) viewing lessons taught by unfamiliar teachers to enrich the repertoire of the teaching techniques, examine teachers' decisions reflected in the lesson, and consider and justify possible alternatives.

Furthermore, there are different models of professional development that rely on video. The professional literature distinguishes between several model components:

  a. the recorded object component: viewing recordings of oneself, colleagues, or unfamiliar teachers;
  b. the group component: independent learning, one-on-one with a guide, with professional, school, city, or regional colleagues;
  c. the teaching guide component: interior school (principal, subject coordinator), system-interior (inspector), external (academicians, institute for development).

The professional literature extensively discusses the relative shortcomings and advantages of different models of using the video medium (Sherin, 2004; Zhang et al., 2011).

According to the syncretic model, the achievement of compromise between heterogeneous groups is contingent on trust, with a principal leading and facilitating it.

Trust will encourage open, complete, and accurate communication and enhance collaboration among the school teaching staff members. It will also improve collective decision-making processes in the discourse shared by the teachers and the principal. Teachers' trust in peers will strengthen their feeling that teaching is a profession and teachers are professionals. The level of trust and autonomy awarded to the teachers by the principal will limit forced and contrived teamwork, such as test grading by outside teachers; restrict imposed lesson videotaping and open-lesson assessment of a rigid, contrived format, and integrate compromise and adaptation processes in teamwork types in the school in collaboration with the entire teaching staff. By empowering teachers, principals can mobilize them into various and diverse missions that evoke aversion and objection, such as lesson videotaping. Such empowerment will turn the teachers' room into a highly motivated, active team truly capable of tackling the tasks that they would previously oppose or decline. It will fix the team's focus on growth and structuring of tasks regarding which there has been no prior consensus.

4.4. The Fourth Theme: Teachers' and Principals' Perception of Themselves and Other Teachers

Teachers' rooms have a broad range of employees – from those leaning toward conservative and traditional work forms to innovative, tech-savvy teachers who integrate information and communications technologies both in their personal life and school work (Levy & Baratz, 2016; Rotem & Avni, 2008; 2009).

The theme bears upon the question of the shared life in the teachers' room and each group's function and place within the internal system of relationships at the school; it indicates the probability that modern teamwork evokes ambivalent feelings among the senior teachers.

This theme is divided into four subthemes: (a) modern teachers' perception of themselves and others in teamwork; (b) traditional teachers' perception of themselves and others in teamwork; (c) ethnic identity – "us and them", and (d) principals' perception of both teacher groups in teamwork.

4.4.1. The Modern Teachers' Perception of Themselves and Others in Teamwork

In their interviews, the modern teachers described themselves as active initiators and generators of change, willing to change the school conception and image, cause parents to believe in the school and love it, and change the culture and the local discourse so that it contains fewer claims of deprivation, bitterness, and "obsolete" perceptions. They conveyed their belief that their arrival, backed up by ideology, faith in the power of the place, and a genuine will to make a change, would help them realize the potential of creating meaningful teamwork.

Modern teachers view their teamwork maintained out of choice as an opportunity for a change in perceptions and image. Faced with the negative image, modern teachers see themselves as those whose choice to lead the teachers' room and whose initiatives might change the image and the reality.

They identify with modernity and advanced quality pedagogy, innovation, and the future of a 21st-century enterprise. In modern teachers' perception, traditional teachers' forms of teamwork are the product of self-consciousness, feelings of incapability, inferiority, despair, burnout, and passivity. Modern teachers perceive traditional teachers as burnt out and fatigued and engaged in old, traditional pedagogy that ought to change without delay, notwithstanding their vehement resistance.

The modern teacher's perception of themselves and the traditional teachers revealed in this study is consistent with multiple research findings on traditional and modern teachers (Davidson & Goldberg, 2009; Harasim, 2011; Levin, 2012).

The professional literature depicts modern teachers as leading innovational pedagogy through innovative instruction tools, including instruction models, differential responses, new instruction methods, and novel alternative evaluation tools. They are described as teachers who changed concepts, attitudes, and personal conduct following the introduction of innovative technologies into the school. Characteristically, such teachers initiate and implement innovative teaching and learning processes through wide use of the web-based environment and particularly the utilization of the educational potential inherent in the second-generation internet tools (Web 2.0) (Wadmany, 2017). The professional literature distinguishes between the traditional teacher who perceives their role as mainly passing the knowledge and tends to minimize the use of technological tools and the modern, tech-savvy teacher who views their role as a moderator and leader of active learning processes combined with computer and communications technologies (Rotem & Avni, 2008; Levy & Schrire, 2015). Traditional teaching is considered dull and routine in contrast to modern teaching methods described as accomplished through a technology-supported, shared-adventure approach (Wadmany, 2017).

Furthermore, while the traditional teacher supposedly has a good command of three knowledge bases – pedagogical content, educational system, and teaching and learning management, the modern teacher is expected to be adept, apart from the three areas mentioned above, in the technological body of knowledge integrated into the traditional knowledge bases (Mishra et al., 2009). The modern teacher acquires new skills unused in traditional teaching that include technical skills required to operate technological tools available in the school and digital literacy skills: knowledge of the characteristics of the information-rich environment in general and the internet in

particular (data search, organization, and retrieval, internet-based research) (Wadmany, 2017).

Additional skills are essential in the management and organization of learning using technological tools, learning assessment in the digital environment, and facilitating discussion and distance learning (Kameshel-Bell, 2001; Halevi et al., 2008).

Integrating technology into the classroom enables teachers to diversify their classroom instruction and learning, manage to learn in online environments, and maintain a constant connection with the education staff, the students, and the parents (Rotem & Avni, 2008; Nachmias & Mioduser, 2001).

The difficulty in integrating information technologies relates to the teacher's attitude toward change. The diffident traditional teacher is on the one end of the continuum; further on the continuum is the inquisitive teacher, and on the other end of the continuum is the leading modern teacher who believes in change, can lead the process of implementation in the school and helping the teachers in need of assistance (Kochavi, 2010).

In this study, the modern teachers conveyed their enthusiasm about digital pedagogy and its vitality when integrated into the teaching and learning processes. They understand the significance of professional development and that they should learn, develop, specialize, constantly update their knowledge, and adopt diverse pedagogical approaches with technological innovations.

The interviewed modern teachers indicated that their role has evolved, and they must create a structure that supports students in independent learning and initiative-taking. They should learn together with their students and assist them in building learning processes through appropriate pedagogical approaches. Nowadays, they realize that

they need to *break* the classroom *boundaries* to make the frameworks of time and place more flexible and enable both themselves and the students to create relevant learning continuums of the studied subjects.

These findings are in line with the professional literature (Levy-Feldman et al., 2011; 2012) that characterizes the digital teacher as possessing technological skills in instruction, developing professionally, independent, curious, flexible, open to change, a guiding, student-focused teacher who allows for independent learning while encouraging collaborative learning as well.

The necessity to learn constantly and stay up-to-date does not deter modern teachers; however, they exhibit the need for supportive frameworks that would guide them along the path. Also, they understand they should perform learning in teamwork and collaboration with other teachers in the school (Wadmany, 2017).

Usually, most of the research literature that explores tradition and modernity discerns dichotomously between them - as two concepts that cancel each other out, two alternative social orders that cannot coexist.

Furthermore, the research literature shows that traditionalism is perceived as static and as resistant to change and innovation (Weber, 1964); it is routine and temporary (Shoham, 2011. 2013; Weber, 1965), and socially and culturally outdated (Shoham, 2011).

Hence, tradition, according to Weber's definition (1964), is based on public action carried out solely by the force of habit; it grants legitimacy to social norms and cultural practices based solely on their continuity with the past. Tradition, according to Weber, is a fixed habit. Therefore, these community members ignore technological innovations and view tradition as a permanent restraint, delaying change.

In contrast, people living in modern societies, per Weber (1964), advocate a rational worldview manifests in self-discipline under cultural values, such as ambition, success, time-awareness, and efficiency-oriented large organizations.

Modernity, according to Weber, is, therefore, based on rational social action; its social norms and cultural practices draw their strength from their logical compatibility with the present, based on rational thinking regarding the determination of means and goals. Hence, modernity means a gradual replacement of the traditional worldview by rational thinking that contributes to social change.

The presented theory of modernization has two vital components: the conceptual conflict between tradition and modernity and the inescapable victory of modernity over tradition. The theoretical sociology of modernity sees tradition as a mundane and temporary phenomenon – the opposite of modernity. It posits that the erosion and the disintegration of tradition and traditional society (detraditionalization) form the necessary process or outcome of the advancement of modernization, if not its principal goal (Eisenstadt, 1983; Sharaby, 2016).

According to Weber and his followers, the modernization processes are processes of transition from a traditional to modern society, while the tradition is defined by way of elimination: unreflective, irrational, nonautonomous, nonindividualistic, etc. (Weber, 1964; Shoham, 2011, 2013).

Therefore, often, modernity is viewed as post-traditional, not only in the temporal sense but in terms of values as well. The image of modernity emerging from this radical theory is a nontraditional filter that none of the organizational forms, leaders, or ceremonies can pass through. These are cultural forms signaling the end of the age of tradition and the beginning of another era (Gamliel, 2010).

Similar to sociology, anthropology also views cultural differences between western and non-Western societies as a temporary state of affairs because it believes that traditional society must change (Fabian, 1983).

Folklore researchers and cultural anthropologists assume that western society stands at the top edge of the human progress ladder, and the bottom edge is where natives are, the primitives. The primitive, according to the western worldview, is characterized by the combination of primordial, pre-modern life patterns of simplicity and unsophistication (Barkan, 2001).

Researchers see tradition as a form of social and cultural backwardness, distinctly *other* from modern western (Shoham, 2011). Critics disagreed with these viewpoints and claimed that the incidence of the classical dichotomy between tradition and modernity does not rest on a solid scientific argumentation; it is a corollary of europocentricity, the obsession to create a distinction between "*us"* and "*them"*.

4.4.2. Traditional Teachers' Perception of Themselves and Others in Teamwork

 The modern teachers trace the traditional teachers' primary problem to their negative, internal and external self-image, while the traditional teachers name concrete problems linked to burnout barriers, workload, and mental fatigue that turn teamwork into a conflict trap the modern teachers want to escape. In the traditional teachers' view, these resistance barriers align with other blocks in the areas of burnout and workload.

The traditional teachers associate the modern teachers' teamwork methods with the latter's separatism, obstinacy, the need for competition, their compulsive and obsessive eagerness to be advanced, and the feeling of misrepresentation with aggressive marketing of educational initiatives and alienated enthusiasm for teamwork.

This study's findings support other studies showing that modernity can be compulsive, obsessive, self-motivated, and self-amplifying (Bauman, 2011).

The tradition per se is rarely defined as a worthless notion. Nevertheless, it is perceived as anti-modern (Yadgar, 2010; Shoham, 2011). According to Sharaby (2016), against the backdrop of the failure of the classical modern worldview to explain the new global reality, more realistic theorists emerged in the recent decade who refute the myths about modernity and its relationship with tradition (Arieli, 2005; 2012).

Zygmunt Bauman (2001; 2011) used the term *liquid modernity* to describe the current form of the modern condition. He asserts that what turns modernity liquid, thus justifying the choice of the description, is the compulsive modernization and its obsession, driving and amplifying itself. That is why none of the ways of social life emerging one after another preserve its form over time, analogous to liquid (Bauman, 2011).

The idea of liquid modernity is based on the metaphoric contrast between the solid and the liquid. Solids have a specific dimension preserved for a long time. By contrast, the liquid changes its form at any moment; therefore, time serves as a factor molding its features. This game with space and time reflects, according to Bauman, the distinction between the early modernity, which he termed *solid modernity*, and the late modernity, which he *termed liquid modernity.* Solid modernity begins when spatial and temporal forms as independent categories gradually separate. Whereas in liquid modernity, time continues to be the primary factor while the significance of space grows smaller (Bauman, 2000; Shanhav, 2007).

Bourdieu (2010) and Bauman (2011) agree that the present-day culture does not deal with normative order but with setting temptations and attractions, and this activity is never-ending. The role the culture plays is not to preserve the status quo - it demands change at all times. Bauman offers sound analysis and critique of the liquid modernity

concerning fashion, in which he sees a cultural phenomenon emerging as an unending process of change, its driving force and influence expanding concomitantly.

Fashion is one of the chief flywheels of progress, signifying the same change that dismisses and underrates everything it leaves behind and replaces with something new. The chase after the latest fashion driven by the impulse to be different leads to the extinction of existing distinguishing marks and, thus, loss of individualism - the opposite result of the intended. The fashion draws its power from the human aversion to being different and aspiration for conformity and further widens the difference, inequality, and discriminations it promises to blur (Bauman, 2011).

According to Bauman (2000), popular ideas of our time are to "start anew" and "be reborn". Hence, there is no end to efforts of "self-making", and only little room left for solidarity with other people.

Moreover, according to Bloomberg (1983), modernity is a period of an infinite process in which new forms of consciousness replace the old.

Ophir (2000) defines modernity in more precise terms: a distinct *periodic* perspective of self-understanding that seeks change everywhere and always defines itself as different from what has been before. This perspective reveals constant interest in the cutting lines distinguishing modernity from its precursors and, on the other hand, also attempts to trace its roots, early harbingers, and beginnings to previous periods. Namely, the emphasis is not only on the historical consciousness separating between periods and eras because this phenomenon per se does not characterize only the modern era. The emphasis is on an awareness of change and renewal as the core element of identity determination and self-understanding reflected even in the meaning of the word *modernity*: a never-ending search for the advanced, different, new, and an attempt to grasp the present itself as the moment of transition from the old to the new.

However, the irony of this attempt becomes evident at the moment when the present turns into the past, and there is a need to redefine *the new*. The never-ending act of marking the cutting lines undermines the dichotomous structure separating the old from the new - due to the never-ending movement of time and its tendency to draw and redraw the cutting lines in different ways, locations, and times. The new instantly becomes old; thus, the modernity is not only a fracture in the line of the traditional continuum, as accepted sociological perception asserts, but also a continuum of fracture lines, and in its framework, the dichotomy is created and fragmented over and over (Ophir, 2000).

Thus, this study emphasizes the contemplations of most thinkers surveyed in this section; the obvious central conclusion is that the tradition is not pre-modern and does not contradict it. Instead, it is an integral part of modernity to this day. Gadamer (1989) and others stressed that the tradition is a defining narrative, ever-present in the background; it constructs our communal and personal identity. Tradition is a kind of presence or influence of the past upon the present; given that, it is itself subject to the continuous process of interpretation and renewal.

4.4.3. Ethnic Edentity: Us and Them

In this theme, also ethnic identity emerged: "Us and Them". The theme focused on the difference between the two populations, the place of ethnic identity and status, and their consolidation before and during the encounter. Supposedly, ethnicity does not mark the differences in the encounter between young and senior populations as there are innovative teachers among senior teachers.

Yet, ethnic identity is not necessarily related to the origin, but rather the identities and roles that different players adopt. Ethnicity, as in many cases, is the product of

conflicts and interests and constitutes a medium through which groups advance mutual interests (Kachtan, 2013).

In the interviews for this study, modern teachers spoke of traditionalism as a normative ideal that marks others as the inferior and traditional population as supposed to change. At the same time, the labeling reinforces the opposing ethnic identity.

As noted, "modern" and "traditional" do not relate solely to the teachers' status, but also mages, identities, the entirety of worldviews, a way of life, the language, and culture of the hegemony as opposed to the marginal. This description highlights the gap between teacher types. The gap is accompanied by feelings of frustration by the traditional teachers labeled as a population in need of help, weak and requiring image improvement, and modern teachers' assistance and guidance.

Despite the diverse ethnic composition of the innovative teachers, the traditional teachers see them all as "zealous" and use the term "zealousness" to describe modern teachers who have adopted the discourse of the dominant group. Modern teachers avoid interactions and distinguish themselves from traditional teachers. Moreover, they create privileges for themselves inaccessible to the minority groups; the issue further aggravates the segregation (Lees, 2016; Mumm, 2008). The traditional interviewees see in innovative teachers a strong group, "bored hegemony-wise" and awarded rights along with the support from the administration that views innovative teachers as those creating opportunities for traditional teachers.

In the interviews, traditional teachers describe their status in the teachers' room community as teachers without a voice, seeing without being seen compared to the modern teachers' status in the teachers' room. They attempted to convey their heavy feeling accompanied by a belief that the administration favors modern over traditional teachers. Also, traditional teachers seek, in different ways, to gain the rights of their

gradually diminishing status - while the modern teacher's status grows - and break the walls of silence in the teachers' room regarding the discrimination between the two groups. In the interviews, the traditional teachers expressed the feeling of definite class discrimination (*classism*).

Furthermore, they articulated the need to give their energy, talents, and abilities to the collective – the broader school community, and depicted the gaps between this perception of theirs and that of the modern teachers.

This study's findings support other studies demonstrating that in traditional society, the collective and contribution to the collective are above all; therefore, the community sanctifies social interactions based on the values of the contribution to the community, communal cohesion, and meaningful collaboration (Durkheim, 1947). Traditional society does not destroy the ideology of total faith in the collective and avoids expanding the individual's responsibility at the expense of the collective responsibility (Lamdan, 2004). Traditional people identify strongly with the collective out of the belief that the dream of creating a new generation will come true by expanding each individual's responsibility to the society and broadening the functions of the collective education system (Lamdan, 2004).

Durkheim (1947) viewed traditional society as simpler than modern society. In his opinion, traditional society is based on "mechanical solidarity", i.e., on social bonds based on shared and unifying moral values. He saw the decline of mechanical solidarity as a distinguishing mark of modern culture. However, while Tonnies (1957) asserted that modernity means the loss of social solidarity, Durkheim (1947) claimed that modern society nurtures a new type of social integration – "organic solidarity". Such solidarity, according to Durkheim, relies on work distribution between the people and on mutual interdependence stemming from various areas of their expertise.

When interviewed, traditional teachers indicated that while digital tools are welcome and significant in the teaching and learning processes, they should nevertheless supplement traditional teaching, not replace it. In their opinion, they are not the so-called "technophobes"; rather, for pedagogical reasons, they are inclined toward selective adoption of digital technologies.

Along with this, modern teachers perceive traditional teachers as "worn out", "technophobes", "stuttering" with digital tools in instruction and learning, and as "resistance creators".

The present study is consistent with other research findings showing that traditional teachers tend to be afraid or anxious about technology or are personally predisposed to stalling in adopting innovations (Selwyn, 2003). Also, traditional teachers' response reflects ideological protest against technology and their preference for the traditional ways of life (Turkle, 1984).

"Feeble, exhausted, and scared" were common labels that technology promoters ascribed to reluctant teachers seen as hindering computerization initiatives; the label described *technophobia* – their irrational fear of technology. The opponents of technology were labeled as impaired people who should embrace change (Selwyn, 2003).

Also, the professional literature shows that the starting point of leading research approaches regarding innovation spreading and digital gaps is that adaption of any new technology represents the universal willingness, and whoever does not adopt it suffers from mental or environmental blocks that must be overcome (Selwyn, 2003).

Broader literature offers documentation of patterns of resistance to technological innovations. The resistance to innovation can be classified into two intertwined axes: the first refers to the individual base of the resistance, the other – to its strength. On the

personal aspect, we can find four explanations for resistance to technology in the research literature: personal-mental, structural, ideological, and selective-rational. According to the diffusion approach researchers (Selwyn, 2003), the personal-mental explanation links avoidance to technophobia – fear of technology or personal tendency to stall in adopting innovations. The researchers of the digital divide approach (such as Rogers, as cited in Selwyn, 2003) assume that structural blocks prevent access to new technologies; hence, they recommend that policymakers warrant access to technology to every person interested in it (Wyatt et al., 2003). These two explanations share the epistemic perspective, according to which the use of technologies is inherently good and nonuse is not normal (Selwyn, 2003).

The third explanation asserts that the resistance expresses ideological protest against the anti-sensual characteristics (Turkle, 1984) of technology and prefers traditional ways of life. The three interpretations suggest that the opponents are within the realm of the marginal population, and their arguments are mostly irrational. By contrast, the fourth explanation links the resistance to rational people who feel that adopting technological innovations in specific areas will not make their life better; however, it is presumed irreversible and, as a consequence, pointless to oppose (Levin, 2018). Contrary to the previous three, this approach seeks to view the adoption of technological innovation as a human activity and, accordingly, explore the adoption through the *bottom-up* approach (Chatman, 1996). According to this explanation, the opponents may also distinguish between selective adoption of the innovation determined by the context of adoption, e.g., at home or school (Ribak & Rosenthal, 2015; Selwyn, 2003), and how people perceive that space. That being the case, people cannot be classified as the adopters of innovation and the rejecters; they should be seen as negotiators with technologies (Levin, 2018).

This study directs the attention to the professional literature that, in recent years, addressed the widespread contemporary theoretical approach - *the coexistence theory* that explains the perseverance of tradition in the face of modernization. Shils objected to the conceptual contradiction between tradition and modernity. He is considered the researcher who paved the way for the coexistence theory and disagreed with the simplified definition of tradition, i.e., everything passed on or bequeathed from the past to the present (Shils, 1958; 1981). Shils emphasized that tradition evolves in the process of intergenerational transition; the changes themselves become part of the tradition. In this manner, its original forms continue to exist in combination with other - changed - forms. He assumed, however, that modernization entails the decline in the extent of substantive traditions and the rise of rational traditions. Therefore, his position is perceived as a revised modernization theory (Shoham, 2011).

The anthropologists Robert Redfield and Milton Singer (1969) presented tradition from a modern perspective and ascribed a distinctive modern trait to it: linear advancement through intellectual elites and technologies. They identified tradition with the reflective historical consciousness and showed that many traditions act out of a consciousness of progress, i.e., development and growth, not out of awareness of stagnation and fixation.

According to Redfield and Singer (1969), only a society with no time awareness, i.e., a primitive society (had such a society existed), could be tradition-free.

Other researchers stressed that tradition may indeed support change because it relates to the continuity, individual and collective identity, and security – concepts that, in their view, create the ability to bring change and renew – therefore, its continuity must be secured (Bernstein, 1972; Eisenstadt, 1971; Levine, 1968; Rudolph & Rudolph, 1967).

According to Gusfield (1973), like any society, traditional society is characterized by insecurity in socialization, meaning that the possibility of change always exists. Tradition and modernity are not in conflict and do not present an obstacle to each other; on the contrary, often, the tradition strengthens due to modern means or in response to modernity. Traditional structures can provide skills; traditional values can grant legitimacy to the change employable in achieving new goals: the new does not take the place of the old but rather broadens the range of the existing alternatives. According to Sharaby (2016), tradition is open to interpretation and change processes in evolving historical contexts. Tradition does not force itself on people; it is assimilated into the given time and place and reinterpreted by them. What people call *tradition* is frequently none other than the reconfiguration of tradition that reflects the new complex contexts of their encounter with the tradition (Gadamer, 1989). Thus, tradition does not resist a change in political, social, or religious life. The tradition being the basis for preservation, it is within its power to serve as the basis for change and renewal: tradition is not the opposite of modernity, although it might oppose modernity when the latter is conceived as destructive regarding significant traditions in a specific society (Graham, 1993; Yadgar, 2013).

Yadgar pointed out that both traditional and modern communities thrive on traditions and award them a status of authority. The main difference relates to their self-image: modern societies nurture their image as nontraditional, while traditional societies view tradition as the essential component of their identity. They emphasize the historical authority of customs, norms, and institutions significant in any cumulative tradition and the need to preserve them (Graham, 1993).

 Sagie (2013) outlined the concept of tradition as a framework with traits frequently shaped in a dialogic process, and its various features differ from those the

traditionalism ascribes to it: first and foremost, it is given to change, including radical changes originating in a change in socioeconomic or cultural ethical life conditions, or a productive dialogue with the other. At a specific timepoint, differences within the same cultural tradition are possible, stemming from various inner contexts. Given these contexts, one or another group of the community members shapes its traditional world. Reflective criticism of tradition often exists in the tradition itself. According to Gadamer (1989), the past - that is to say, tradition - structures our concepts and shapes various optional possibilities available to us. We are always within tradition because it is part of us, always (Gadamer, 1989).

In Sagie's opinion (2002), being reflective creatures, we cannot go back to tradition; yet, we cannot live and establish our identity outside of it because an individual's life is characterized by the organization of the human experience within the framework of tradition (Sagie, 2003). Cultural identity is a matter of construction, and it goes through a constant transformation. It is far from being fixed forever in some substantial past, and it is subject to the continuous play of history, culture, and power (Sagie, 2002). Shoham (2012, 2014) articulated the significant role of the concept of tradition in the processes of modernization. He suggested that the discourse on tradition be taken seriously, namely, how we speak about tradition as the source for legitimizing social action, cultural practices, and social norms. He believes that established traditions were an attempt to create a continuum of the present with the past. In comparison, other existing traditions attempt to create a continuum of the present with the future. Using both types of practice for the same concept – tradition - revealed that this concept does not merely bind the past with the present; it links the past, present, and future (Shoham, 2014).

Shoham (2009; 2014) thinks that the emergence of the concept of tradition as an identity marker and legitimator of social, cultural, and political order is characteristic of modern cultures or those found in modernization processes. The concept of invented tradition is one of the most important variations of the process of strengthening that the concept of *tradition* undergoes in the modern era. As it became a central marker of identity, tradition, as the concept, went through expansion of the time dimension contained within it. While the concept of pre-modern tradition relates chiefly to the past and present as two central dimensions that the tradition binds together, in the modern era, tradition relates to the future. Thus, in the wake of it becoming a central identity marker, it became a mechanism of social and political legitimization.

That being the case, the tradition's function is to bind the past, the present, and the future in the modern world where the concept of change occupies the central stage. What tradition and modernity have in common is being used for the construction of identity on the temporal axis. Both offer a type of narrative that unifies past, present, and future within one timeframe without distinguishing between the three-time dimensions; i.e., out of the clear distinction between the past, the present, and the future via the historical consciousness (Shoham, 2012, 2014).

4.4.4. Principals' Perception of Traditional and Modern Teachers in Teamwork

For school principals, the central problem of senior teachers is their negative image and low self-esteem. On the one hand, they hide their potential and prevent teamwork from happening; on the other, they harm the chance of teamwork participants to make changes in their lives. However, a change in the image that school principals work to advance may elevate the teachers' room. The teachers' room gets accomplished by absorbing a robust entrepreneurial population that will make the necessary change that the traditional teachers allegedly cannot effect. Also, the

principals' interviews revealed the perception of the modern teacher as an agent of change and a role model for the traditional-senior teachers and the significance they attribute to their teachers' room.

The principals' interviews for this study revealed that they avoid dealing with conflicts between traditional and modern teachers, claiming that conflicts resolve by themselves eventually. They intervene only when conflicts overstep the boundaries, thus, leaving the principals no choice but to interfere in the dispute to stabilize and calm the teachers' room. Some principals explained that in conflictual crises in the teachers' room, the willingness to ask for help is realized because of the fear to share the teachers' precarious status in the teachers' room with others.

This study supports other research findings indicating that the conflict between the longing for harmony and serenity and the refrainment from sharing one's problems with others because of the fear of potential conflicts is a known phenomenon in the professional literature (Dor-Chaim, 2018).

According to the professional literature, the principal's refrainment heightens tensions within the teacher group (Dor-Chaim, 2018).

Thus, paradoxically, the desire to avoid confrontations exacerbates conflicts in the teachers' room. The teaching staff will begin to feel they belong and are accepted only after they share their feelings of rejection or acceptance as legitimate.

The fear of rejection at the school causes teachers to avoid sharing their hardships and distress because they risk rejection by exposing their true feelings (Dor Chaim, 2018).

According to the syncretic model, the agents of change significant to the process between the two groups are the leading group that includes the representatives of both traditional and modern teachers, school intermediary leadership, counselor, and even psychologist (Symington & Symington, 2000).

These agents of change can raise the groups' distress and represent the different and diverse voices of the teaching staff. A joint effort is necessary to understand the traditional and modern teachers' feelings and "hold" their distress for them. To foster the development of conditions for the teachers to expose their feelings, the school team, as a group, needs to take a chance and face rejection, anger, aggressiveness, and exposure to the team's limitations. A discourse on distress and rejection will not lead to the disintegration of the school or induce conflicts within the teaching staff. From that day forward, the school will be perceived as a place where one can talk about their problems and troubles; in the process, the realization will form that the members of the teacher group do not collapse or get ruined by participating in the discourse. Instead of resolving the problem, the effort should be directed at finding the source of its endurance and changing the assumptions that perpetuate it.

The intervention must not seek to create harmony; teachers should not be pressed to *connect*, nor should the cause for tension be sought out. The solution is to create a new interpretation of the concepts of collaboration and self-disclosure. Problem sharing is presented as a courageous and legitimate, nonthreatening and constructive act. This interpretative change makes avoidance and silence relevant to the teachers' sense of security at the school (Dor Chaim, 2018).

In this study, the principals acknowledged their preference for modern teachers over traditional. The traditional teachers spoke of feeling discriminated against and less favored by the school principal. According to the professional literature, paradoxically, denigrating staff members and restricting their abilities lead to the diminution of the group power (Smith & Berg, 1987). Thus, instead of reinforcing and empowering the authority, a mutual process of weakening and lessening is created. Such a paradox might develop in two different directions. The group participant might avoid

empowering the other's authority because of the fear that approving others' authority

detracts from their own. On the other hand, the teacher may choose to avoid asserting

themselves as a figure of authority out of fear of weakening the authority of others.

Therefore, one of the group's essential developmental tasks is to successfully create a

situation where the group members empower themselves and their fellow members.

Given that, empowering the group is for the good of the self, while self-empowerment

is for the good of the entire group.

That being the case, the attempt to create unity in values and behavior will hurt the

formation of those norms. An attempt to avoid confrontations will only reinforce their

existence, and trying to institute authority will lead to a gradual loss of power. In the

three cases, the advantage lies in the ability to live with the internal contradiction and

accept the very behavior about which the group has reservations.

According to Watzlawick et al. (2006), an impasse in human communication often

stems from an internal contradiction within the person (Sluzki & Veron, 1971).

Attempting to solve the problem perpetuates it. These researchers showed that

providing an unsuitable solution to a specific problem may perpetuate the problem

(Watzlawick et al., 2006). Hence, numerous issues emerge following failed attempts to

solve the existing problem because the problem and the solution amplify each other

and create a new, more complex problem.

This study's distinction is that it highlights the phenomenon of principals' indifference

and passivity regarding conflicts developing in staffrooms between traditional and

modern teachers. This study emphasizes that conflicts should not be avoided or

prevented; instead, they should entail examination in an attempt to profoundly

understand the conflict and recognize it as part of the shared life in the teachers' room.

The psychoanalytical literature does not view the conflict in teachers' rooms as

negative but rather as a motivational force for change, creativity, and development.

Also, psychodynamic organizational approaches consider the phenomenon of discord

in an organization as a force that can bring forth productivity, innovation, and

creativity in work (Rioch, 1970).

Therefore, according to the syncretic model, we should encourage a conceptual change

of the negative contemplation of the conflict for the perspective that sees value in it. In

this spirit, one of the goals of the syncretic model in the school is to help the principal

stop recoiling from the conflict and start considering how to explore its significance,

acknowledge and live with it. That way, anger, frustration, and lack of satisfaction

prevalent among teachers may become opportunities for growth, change, and

innovation, not only a threat and a peril (Dor Chaim, 2018).

Furthermore, the school's multicultural dimension holds the potential for the outbreak

of conflicts among the educational staff members. Hence, in the multicultural domain,

the principal should pass on pedagogical knowledge and be skilled in managing

conflicts through "culturally-sensitive intervention" (Haelion et al., 2018).

A heterogeneous school principal must be alert and sensitive both to the audible and

the silenced voices in the room. They must allow for clear-cut meanings and situations

of ambiguity (Haelion et al., 2018).

Strayhorn (2010) extensively discussed "cross-cultural misunderstandings" unique to

heterogeneous schools. Thus, for example, a conflict might arise due to sensitivity to

one cultural value and forsaking of another. Misunderstandings can also stem from the

difference in the meaning different groups ascribe to the situation that develops in the

teachers' room (e.g., a group finds it critical to talk about racial discrimination, while

another group can feel that the discussion places them in an inferior position). Another

situation Strayhorn describes is the state of "cultural disequilibrium" - the state in

which a participant experiences cultural shock in the wake of another participant's behavior or interpretation. Strayhorn asserts that giving meaning and interpretations constitutes a fertile ground for struggles, negotiations, resistance, and overgeneralizations (Strayhorn, 2010).

Often, the staffroom becomes an arena of the struggle for definitions, meanings, and interpretations; at times, the interpretations and the meanings given to an event have more bearing than the event itself (Haelion, 2018).

In their interviews for this study, traditional teachers described their status in the staffroom community as teachers without a voice, seeing without being seen, compared to the status of modern teachers in the teachers' room. Strayhorn states that the issues of communication or silence are critical because they embody gaps in power. Teachers experience speaking and speechlessness as manifestations of obligations and rights. Hence, sensitivity is crucial in situations of "overtalk" or silencing (Strayhorn, 2010). In his view, the leadership should be very sensitive, when examining who is empowered or weakened by discussions on gender, ethnicity, or race. Similarly, silencing specific contents embodies indirect reference to what is allowed and prohibited in the teachers' room. Moreover, it creates an opening for misunderstandings and misguided interpretations. Another situation typical of multicultural teachers' rooms is a deterioration into opposing arguments on "differences of essentialism". Per Strayhorn, discussions and conversations on controversial issues in heterogeneous teachers' rooms may quickly deteriorate into opposing arguments related to fixed and substantive differences between groups ("*This is how they are, these senior/novice/traditional/modern teachers"*). These are obstructive arguments that preclude finding starting points between members. Such conversations tend to be fruitless and impolite and impede developing a rapport

between the staff. Needless to say, "difficult conversations" in heterogeneous teachers' rooms, as described by Strayhorn, necessarily generate reflective experiences among teachers. Thus, to be a professional in a work environment of different cultures often means being a master acrobat, walking a tightrope, and learning how to avoid falling and crashing in the process (Ben David, 2009).

According to Asher (2007), heterogeneous teachers' rooms need to serve as an arena in which one can talk about everything because this is a place where stereotypes and prejudices are widespread. The teachers need to be allowed to replace the silence areas with active and challenging discourse. Strayhorn believes that the dialogue between teacher identities must be active and continuous (Strayhorn, 2010).

According to the syncretic model, viewing differences between teachers as a contradiction to the moral and normative unity of the group is a misperception, damaging to the group.

Diversity is perceived as threatening to the school's identity and thus heightens the sense of anxiety in the group. Paradoxically, the very desire to promote group unity hurts the broader teacher group's identity. The solution to the conflict is to encourage the teaching staff to examine their own and others' uniqueness without fear of losing the group identity. Ultimately, strengthening individuals' moral distinctiveness reinforces the ethical collaboration within the group. The teacher's substantial need to express their uniqueness is characteristic of the teaching staff's collective identity. Given that, the teacher group's heterogeneity can be perceived as a unifying factor that enables them to see their difference as valuable and beneficial to the group identity. This way, mutual taunting will cease, and judgmental criticism will decrease. Persistent attempts to resolve the confusion regarding the group identity perpetuate it. Therefore, halting the attempts to find a solution to the group identity crisis allows for

the change and helps the group to find a way for the collective and the personal

identities to coexist. This way, the group transitions from the state of a rift between the

collective and personal identities to the state of being able to embrace both identities at

the same time (Dor Chaim, 2018).

Moreover, the distinctiveness of this study lies in the fact that it draws attention to the

phenomenon of principals' indifferent and insensitive response to their subordinates'

pain resulting from disagreements and conflicts within the teaching staff.

Ford (1969) found that, in addition to the satisfaction of the basic physiological needs,

the workplace also needs to meet the social needs through positive peer interaction. A

principal who does not act to establish social relations between peers and remains

unsympathetic to disagreements and conflicts developing in the teachers' room,

impedes conflict development by intervening and creating feuds within the staff which

will generate negative feelings toward themself (Bernstein, 2006).

Frost (2004) who investigated such negative emotions in an organization, further

clarified the significance of negative emotions in an organization, their origins, and

outcomes. He distinguished between negative emotions per se and negative emotions

that turn "toxic". Frost (2004) asserted that negative emotion is not toxic. However, the

emotion grows toxic when it is not processed; it evokes detrimental emotional

outcomes in the employee and the organization. When these events occur, toxic

emotions arise - the hurt and the anger. The employees remain angry and frustrated;

they learn to "play it safe" and keep their heads down. The emotional outcome is

bitterness, mistrust, and fear. Subordinates do not feel security and hope; they sense the

decline in their self-image.

When toxic emotions develop, people disengage from their work and its demands

and focus on the pain and its origins; consequently, the employees will not invest

emotional and intellectual energies in the work matters. Moreover, these employees will lose loyalty and commitment to the organization and struggle to rebuild their confidence and trust. Hence, such emotional toxicity causes negative results, such as poor organizational efficiency and poor employee performance.

As stated above, when the organizational environment is negative numerous negative emotions emerge that may turn toxic and bear negative consequences for the subordinate and the organization. Along with the harmful implications that negative emotions hold for them, subordinates can use these feelings to cope with a hostile environment (Perrone & Vickers, 2004). It can be manifested in the concealment of specific emotions to put up a "tough front" in the organization, in aggressive behaviors aimed at scaring managers, or in a display of false emotions (such as feigning joy to annoy managers or pretending to be unconcerned).

Ben Ze'ev (1998) discovered the reason for the incidence of negative emotions: the time duration and the extent of mental engagement related to negative emotions far exceed the attention devoted to positive events. People allot five times as much time to the events that arouse powerful negative emotions than strong positive emotions. Therefore, people tend to remember their negative experiences more than positive ones (Ben Ze'ev, 1998); as a result, they can recount numerous negative emotions.

The reason for the tendency of negative events and emotions to get *burnt* into the respondents' minds - and the reason for considerable attention devoted to them, evident in the current study, can lie in the essential survival value inherent in retaining memories of such events and feelings. The survival value is the perceived ability to carry on functioning in the workplace. These events give rise to negative emotions and affect the teacher's elementary skill of professional functioning at the school. When the principal harms the teacher's sense of ability to function professionally or when there is

damage to the team support or administrative sources, the teacher feels threatened and insecure regarding their place in the school and ability to continue to function within that framework. In all probability, the feeling of impermanence creates tension and, therefore, is preserved and remembered long afterward (Bernstein, 2006).

Dasborough (2006) discovered that when principals did not display behaviors their subordinates expected of them or displayed such behaviors inappropriately, the teachers experienced negative emotions in response. The explanation for this can be linked to the hierarchical organizational school structure, wherein many teachers are subordinate to a single principal, while there is often no significant intermediary leadership level in the school.

This situation can result in the teachers' expectation of the principal to be their pillar of professional and moral support as a source of authority. When the principal does not function per their expectations to support them professionally, emotionally, and nurture a personal connection with them, this safeguard is damaged, and thus multiple negative emotions develop (Bernstein, 2006).

It appears that the dynamics created in the school - especially in the school where the principal struggles to fulfill what is expected of them in terms of constructive approach toward the teacher's professional role, emotional assistance, and building a relationship between them and the teacher -a vacuum is created in the school regarding the satisfaction of these needs which, in specific cases, the school teaching staff can fill in. In conclusion, other negative events and emotions in the teacher's experience occur, and the reasons for them can be mental overinvolvement in these emotions possibly related to the chance of survival in the school, a lack of consideration or tackling the issues on the part of the principal.

4.5. The Fifth Theme: Telling Stories

In-depth tnterviews revealed many teachers' intense need to tell stories in the teachers' room about the principal, the parents, the work, strengths and weaknesses, challenges and successes. They spoke of an emotional and mental space where they want to feel safe telling their ″secret″ stories without fear. Stories in the staffroom summon conversation, listening, consulting, discussion or confrontation. Teachers define some of the stories as "sacred stories" they can tell other teachers. Retelling a story enables teachers to step aside from their personal stories and observe their work from outside. As a result, their professional knowledge and experience expand significantly. The narrating teacher performs reflection on their actions and reactions within the story. It constitutes a meaningful learning process, both for the teacher and the listeners. Also, by telling the story in the teachers' room, the teacher themself undergoes an introspective process, from venting emotions and anger to reconciling with the situation perceived as unalterable and mutual reassurance.

That serves as an opportunity to view the teachers' room as a syncretic stage for traditional and modern teachers to present themselves and their personal stories to colleagues. At that stage, one can consult, share, and receive a recommendation, support, assistance, or answers to the questions arising from the day-to-day practice. At that stage, traditional and modern teachers alike provide mutual support. In a shared syncretic encounter, teachers offer a kind of group therapy to the teacher by recounting the story. This way, teachers help each other cope with the situation familiar to them all, and the process grows into an act of mutual support among different and diverse teachers.

The research literature shows that storytelling distinguishes humankind from other living creatures (Shur, 2019); it is the way people organize knowledge and convey both

overt and covert messages and meanings (Bruner, 1987). The narrative research

engages in an analysis of storied texts as a tool for exposing these meanings and

messages. The goal is to understand the other, present their voice and delve into the

depths of human phenomena. The power of the story lies in that it allows giving

meaning to the events a person experiences and presents the other with a clear vision as

a possible model to follow. Therefore, the story serves a person for various goals: a

tool to understand themselves and be understood by others, and a pedagogical tool. These

qualities of the story conduce to better coping with questions of identity in general

(Fischer-Rosenthal, 1995) and with questions of professional identity in particular

(Conle, 1997). Also, they allow for a better understanding of the other, thus promoting

interpersonal communication in a multicultural society. In an evolving multicultural

reality of the post-modern era, these qualities serve the individual's substantial needs.

The research on identity construction deals with the fact that constructing identity in

the post-modern period is a lifelong ongoing process, and the tool that makes it

possible is the narrative. The person tells and retells themself their life story and each

time ascribes a new meaning to it (Fischer-Rosenthal, 1995).

Furthermore, the narrative evokes memories, conveys feelings, and contains the events

that transpired, their significance for the narrator, and their feelings regarding the

events (Riessman, 2008). The narrative depicts impact via a language that captures

sensory memories, images, metaphors, analogies, etc. (Tuval-Mashiach, 2014). The

professional literature defines the narrative as a verbal product, oral or written,

generated in an interview, consultation, study, or a spontaneous conversation between

people. In each of these settings, the narrative can include a short and specific story, an

expanded meaningful story from the narrator's life, or a whole life-span story (Chase,

2005). A narrative shapes the relationship between people and serves as a point of

encounter between the individual and society and culture (Tuval-Mashiach & Spector-Mersel, 2010).

Kupferberg (2016) distinguishes between a "big story" that enables the narrator to distance themself from their experience and reflectively observe it and a "small story" generated by people in natural communication (through conversation) at a workplace or home, in which people perform various discourse acts, such as description, explanation, instruction-giving, apology, etc. A communicative act they fulfill is constructing experience through a *small story*. Contrary to the interview in which the interviewer and the interviewee mutually agree to meet and verbalize the interviewee's life story - or a *big story*, *the little story* is verbalized without special preparations and relates to a one-time past occurrence, mostly.

In addition to personal stories of the past, people produce generic stories and future stories, verbalizing their experiences in big and small stories. A generic story construes an abridged narrative template that sums up the experience through generalizations about the activities people perform over and over (Kupferberg, 2016).

Different definitions concur on what teachers' stories have in common. They describe a hero/heroes and figures; through which a plot structure develops - with a twist or a peak – holding an inherent message significant for the narrator that inspires the listener's/reader's interest (Tuval-Mashiach & Spector-Mersel, 2010).

Also, stories contain common theme occurrences signifying what happens in the teachers' room. These themes have pedagogical, social, cultural, and institutional aspects that characterize occurrences in the world of teaching – behind the classroom doors, in corridors, in the teachers' room, and during recess. The themes bear on diverse teaching methods, existing differences in learning, cultural climate, and educational discourse of the staffroom, an exploration of the boundaries of teacher's

professional authority, reciprocal relations between teacher's private and professional worlds, etc. (Schatz-Oppenheimer & Silberstrom, 2012).

Furthermore, stories have always served as a tool for creative, conceptual, and aesthetic expression. Through stories, the individual can describe reality and attribute meaning to it. Stories are a window into the world of the human consciousness. Apart from the plot, occurrences, and events, they allow exposing their significance regarding the individual's inner world. The narrator presents a story - in this case, their professional story, interprets, ascribes meaning to it, reveals their identity, and enables themself to create reflective insights that restructure reality (Mishler, 2004).

The story is a way to express a silenced, excluded, and inaccessible world. It allows learning about marginalized, hidden from view worlds that represent a personal story holding additional ways to understand the reality. Besides the narrator's world, the story also presents the sociocultural contexts of the environment they find themself in. Typically, the story is seen not only as a factual occurrence but also as an occurrence accompanied by thoughts, questions, desires, and ideas (Riessman, 2008).

Thus, the narrative is the most appropriate form to convey the educators' knowledge about their work (Elbaz Luwisch, 2001). It is a story the individual tells of their life exploits, perceptions, beliefs, and identity (Elbaz Luwisch, 2001; McAdams, 1993). The story (more so than academic writing) exposes the meaning that writers ascribe to reality. The narrator's choice of the event recounted, the way they choose to organize the description, interpretations of the phenomena, the narrator's dialogue with the external environment and themself, and their point of view, often less controlled and more revealing of expectations, positions, and ideologies that the narrator maintains without being explicit – all these teach us a lot about both the described phenomenon and the narrator. At times, a story is more convincing than reporting in writing laden

with research data. The story reaches a broader common ground of readership

(Zuzovsky, 2017).

The narratives are so widespread in our culture that, arguably, they create the

reality of the people's lives. The *truth* in the narratives is not the objective historical or

scientific truth.

Each person experiences the world in their way; therefore, we can call it "narrative

truth" (Freeman, 2007). Past experiences do not sit in a kind of memory library waiting

for someone to open and read them. The past is repeatedly recreated through the story.

No story about past events, within a specific context, is similar to the same story, but in

a different context. The link between life and the narrative is usually manifest in one of

the two ways: on the one hand, life seems like something describable in narratives; on

the other, the narratives are perceived as ideals in light of which we attempt to sketch

the life. Thus, we could say that life experiences and the narrative are interconnected:

life has meaning because it is lived per a narrative scenario, and the narrative scenario

is constructed based on life experiences (Shkedi, 2016)].

4.5.1. What Do Stories in Teachers' Rooms Tell?

In their interviews for this study, traditional and modern teachers tell stories of

what happens in their school in the teacher, parent, and student communities of

teaching, learning, and evaluation processes, and their personal life outside of school.

The discussion centers on school matters: curriculum, learning and teaching materials,

tests, instruction models, exchange of materials, coordination with the same grade

professional and parallel teachers, discussion of students' and their families'

difficulties, etc. The interviewees acknowledged that they talk about everything in the

teachers' room: whatever bothers or hurts them, makes them laugh or angry. In most

cases, these are "stories" of what occurs at the school: arguments between teachers, the

administration and the teachers, difficulties that arise from facing challenging students, or dealing with some parents. At times, the stories are also about gossip about a teacher or any other school employee.

This study supports other research findings showing that work stories relate to the educational and pedagogical work in the school (Ben Peretz & Schonmann, 2013; Egan, 1988; Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017; Jackson, 1987; Langellier, 1989; Orr, 1987; Schwartzman, 1984).

This area of stories about schoolwork focuses on schools as a workplace where employees tell each other about their work experience.

As the encounter between teachers at school occurs in the teachers' room, many work-related stories are told there. Teachers who enter the teachers' room during recess tell each other stories of the day's events. Usually, the stories describe what has happened to teachers in their work in class, regarding particular students, groups of students, or whole classes. Other stories recount encounters with the educational establishment, from the school level to the teacher's relationship with the Ministry of Education. One more category of stories focuses on relationships between the teachers themselves in the workplace, and events related to collegial workplace relationships (Kainan, 1992; 1995; 1996; 1998; Megan & Steinberger, 2016).

Megan and Steinberger's study (2016) showed that most interpersonal conflicts in teachers' rooms stem from sociocultural situations, such as interpersonal collegial relations. Conflict plays a central role in teachers' lives and is manifest in teachers' stories (Megan & Steinberger, 2016).

The broader professional literature demonstrates that teachers' stories in staffrooms do not deal only with various and diverse school-related issues but also dwell on different personal matters. One such example is Kainan's study (2002) on the stories that female

teachers told of their husbands: female teachers' stories from staffrooms involved family, relationships, and home matters (Kainan, 2002).

Avidov-Ungar and Fink (2016) organized the teachers' stories according to the character of the motivations found in three circles moving from the inside outward. The innermost circle of stories, "the circle of self", brings forth stories that contain reasons related to the teachers' and their families' biographies, the meaningful defining events linked to disillusionment and enlightenment in the teacher's life, and personal challenges. The second circle of stories is "the circle of the other" which presents stories that hold reasons related to a meaningful agent of change, for instance, the school principal, parent, or lecturer. The last, most external circle of stories is called "the institutional circle"; it brings forth stories that exhibit the motivations that chiefly focus on change or reform in the education system toward the foundation or development of organizational culture (Avidov-Ungar & Fink, 2016).

This and more: from the study by Ben Peretz and Schonmann (2013), we learned that "the exit" stage (a period before returning home, i.e., workday conclusion period) is "private time"; therefore, teachers choose to delay their *exit time* to engage in lengthier conversations with colleagues. The *exit time* is generally devoted to gossip and storytelling when teachers feel they belong to the group without any obligation to it. They are free to leave whenever it is comfortable or critical for them to do so. Also, the teachers in a hurry to get home (being mothers to young children) "confess that they would like to stay in the teachers' lounge" because of the pleasant atmosphere, "sharing stories and information", "and, in general, enjoying the period of transition between the workplace and home" (Ben-Peretz & Schonmann, 2013, p. 59). The interviews in the current study show that storytelling time occurs throughout the day, including recess and *presence hours*' time intervals, and, mainly, during the *exit time* at the end of the

day, similar to Ben-Peretz and Schonmann's study's findings (2013). It also emerges from San Juan's study (2017) that university managers are aware of the need for informal meetings to improve management and negotiation processes. However, they struggle to find time for informal meetings at the end of the workday. Also, female managers find it difficult to attend such meetings due to their family commitments and domestic work (San Juan, 2017)

4.5.2. Reasons to Tell Stories

The teachers who participated in the study They view the teachers' room as a place where they can receive and offer advice on teaching, learning, and evaluation processes, including syllabus and discipline and reflect on social and moral educational goals. Teachers have the desire and need to share their stories with colleagues and broaden their knowledge of the other's tactics, learn from their lessons, and the way they navigate through their workday. It is apparent from the interviews that the teachers' room is the appropriate place to share these stories with colleagues. What is the significance of the stories told in the teachers' room? Why do teachers tell these stories in the teachers' room specifically? Can this form of teamwork, despite these gaps, generate a syncretic process between traditional and modern teachers?

Upon examining the interviews in this study, it is safe to say that these stories serve several parallel purposes: to vent emotions, reconcile with a situation perceived as unalterable, and for mutual support. They are socially significant. As with any story, these stories serve as a cathartic process, both for the narrator and the listener. The teacher narrates all the steps of the tale in detail and relives the feeling of anger. However, this time, their anger is accompanied by laughter, and the teacher thus vents the feelings weighing on them. This process influences not only the narrator but also the listeners – the entire teachers' room. A familiar and recurring structure and

messages provide a kind of group therapy. This way, teachers assist each other in coping with a commonly known situation. Thus, the process contains a function of mutual support.

From the interviews, we have gathered that teachers consider the teachers' room a place to confer, share, get a recommendation, receive support, assistance, or answers to questions arising from the daily practice.

Moreover, the interviews revealed that through the narrated stories, teachers understand their deeds, generate meaningful reflection on their reactions and the actions they took, and understand their mistakes.

Similar to the findings of our study, Talbert and McLaughlin (1994) asserted that shared teacher cultures provide assistance and support through shared experience to solve ongoing educational work problems (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

In line with the present study's findings, additional studies, such as Jalongo's (1992) and Wood's (1992), refer to the storytelling as a tool that provides teachers with the ability to reflective thinking on their work and thus improve their professional performance. The researchers perceive the act of storytelling as a natural process of further consideration that facilitates examination and understanding. The life stories' advantage is inherent in that they create a state of reflection in the narrator, reconstruct the past for them, and raise their awareness of events and experiences they almost forgot or did not see their significance for the present (Gesser & Zelkovich, 2014).

Also, McLaren (1986) describes a teachers' room in which conversations serve as mutual support against the problematic outside. In our study, the teachers' room is revealed as a social encounter, enabling teachers to unburden themselves of their concerns and, thus, return to their daily lives strengthened and feeling better and lighter. Humor allows for the safe venting of mental stress and avoiding serious

discussion of the problem or managing it comprehensively. Therefore, while it intends to deal with the situation to a certain extent; it is not through an attempt to change it but by accepting and reconciling with it.

Hence, we have observed that these stories do not aim to change an existing situation; no such demand emerges from the stories. On the contrary, the overall message is that this is how things are, and we should accept it. The acceptance occurs cathartically. Teachers grumble about the problem, nevertheless, do not attempt to change the situation and merely accept it, while grumblings assist them in coming to terms with the situation.

Hargreaves (1984) spoke of a similar phenomenon among school teachers in England. He described how they used comically exaggerated talk to jointly define the boundaries of the acceptable in the school's worldview. Humor allowed them to defend their worldview and altogether avoid bringing the matter forward for discussion. Also, in our study, in the staffroom, the teachers set boundaries to the principal's demands: the latter are described as something they treat with ridicule, or grumble about one moment and at the next - return to business as usual. The teachers did not refer to the administration's demands as unbearable but rather as typical, and even if bothersome, annoying, and stress-inflicting, they still fall within the range of entertaining anomalies. Laughing at the problem puts it into perspective and demonstrates that it is not too big.

That is why laughter helps teachers, narrators, and listeners alike in the staffroom, even though it does not contribute in any substantial way to the in-depth treatment of the matter and does not help in coping with their real problems arising from a specific occurrence or situation.

Through the story, the individual's diverse voices are heard and maintain an inner reflective dialogue until an intricate tapestry is created. The events the individual chooses to recount, the way they choose to organize these events, the contexts and the meanings they ascribe to them, the way the story is told with the multitude of voices - all these enable the narrator to understand themself and the researcher - to study the significance and their interpretations of the internal and external reality they cope with (Bruner, 1987; 1990; Mishler, 2004; Riessman & Speedy, 2007).

The processes of comparison and examination of affiliationד that the individual maintains are contextual. A debate or dialogue occurs within the external environment in which the individual functions. However, at the same time, internal, intra-personal negotiation is also held. Conflict, competition, contrast, and disparities form a decision-making platform. We can learn about them through the story when gaps, tensions, transitions, and conflicts are revealed (Kunnen, 2006).

The interviews indicated that teachers bring the stories of their pedagogical work to the staffroom, "secret stories" they can share with other teachers. Recounting their stories enables teachers to separate themselves from the scenario and observe their work from the side. As a result, their story becomes a familiar but not solely the teacher's scenario, "the story" shared by all. The researchers Clandinin and Connelly (1995) obtained similar findings in their study. They stated that "teachers need others to engage in conversations where stories can be told, reflected, heard in different ways, retold, and relived in new ways" (p. 13).

Once the story goes out into the world, it is considered capable of standing on its own. The teachers told their stories authentically as they experienced them. The stories contained many significant topics that merit examination and further exploration, such as interpersonal relations, conflicts, dilemmas, successes, difficulties, gender-related

problems, professional development, and ethical, social, ideological, or multicultural aspects that hinge on the work environments and the narrators' lives (Avidov-Ungar & Fink, 2016).

In general, the stories of development reflect, on the one hand, the *internal* career – something of a "snapshot" of the teacher's professional life, and *external*, on the other. It occurs in the social and professional reality in which the teacher is moving ahead toward the creation of power and organizational influence (Borko, 2004).

4.5.3. Narrative-Silencing Teachers' Room without Storytelling

 The professional literature refers to the implications of the teachers' room with narrative silencing where no one tells stories, as a rule. The teachers' room consists of many entities or players, and each presents a unique and different narrative. Creating organizational change includes changes in the concept and conduct of the organization's employees and management. The people's ability to speak and listen differently inspires change in the discourse within the organization and creates the desired organizational change (Dor-Chaim, 2017).

For an individual, a coherent story is at the center of positive change creation. Research indicates that even when people undergo especially tough and negative experiences, they can cope with them more healthily through developing a coherent description of their experiences (Dallos, 2006).

Dor Chaim (2017) studied a school where almost no dialogue existed between various types of teachers' narratives, with each teacher weaving their story in solitude that often involved feelings of anger, embitterment, and guilt. In that school, a crisis developed between the senior and novice teachers. The teachers failed to create a clear and continuous dialogue that described their feelings, emotions, and thoughts regarding

arduous events in the school. Their fragmented narrative contained characteristic overrunning emotions such as fear, confusion, anger, and guilt.

The researcher discovered that the strengths and opportunities inherent in the teachers' room were almost completely silenced. Spector-Mersel (2014) asserted that silencing the narrative presented by the narrator touches on the unspoken facts because they are perceived as contradictory to the endpoint of the story. Thus, the school required narrative intervention that included both assistance with creating a clear and constant narrative and identification of exceptional events, contradicting the *problem-saturated* story and allowing for an alternative narrative. A dialogic discourse allowed for the externalization of the distress felt in the school. In that case, the externalization meant not viewing the individual as a problem - or a problem as an integral and vital part of the individual - but rather presenting a problem as an external state separate from the person (Dallos, 2006; Cohen, 2018).

Also, Cohen (2018) posits that the narrative approach does not view the problem as an integral part of the person but as a matter external to him; it relates to the problematic behavior as an object separate from the person, not stemming from their personality and not inherent in their traits. The problem is a problem, not the person themself (Cohen, 2018). Before the narrative intervention, teachers would characteristically feel guilty regarding the school difficulties and see the distressing story as inseparable from their personal. The senior and novice teachers viewed the confusion and distress that characterized the school as part of the interpersonal conflict and their own inability to adapt to the changes that occurred in the organization. The narrative intervention enabled the teachers to realize that the distress is not theirs alone and not tied to their traits; rather, it stems from the structure of the organization and the occurrences in it. The externalization allowed the teachers to discuss the distress openly and honestly

and thus allowed them to replace the narrative of distress with coping (Dor Chaim, 2017).

Hence, the problem in the teachers' room is the absence of sufficient opportunities for a sharing discourse among the teachers and an encounter with the people's diverse narratives in the organization.

According to Dor Chaim (2017), it is advisable to consider the school as built on the confluence of various narratives the teachers tell in the staffroom. The narrative contains the stories that different figures in the teachers' room possess - about the system and the fellow teachers examining the past, the present, and the future. The narrative approach to organizations fosters the creation of renewed insights into various events in the school system and thus opens up new opportunities to act and achieve results (Dor Chaim, 2017).

Weick (2012) asserted that creating organizational change from the perspective of discourse encourages people to take responsibility for their speaking and listening. An awareness of structuring the reality through narratives in the organization makes the teachers and the administration into those who create reality, not only report it. This insight compels all school-comers to take upon themselves higher responsibility regarding the school's organizational culture and conduct. Every voice in the organization serves as a source of authority perceived as influential and formative of the school system's conduct. The responsibility for the discourse in the school is linked to teachers' readiness to take responsibility for the outcomes emerging from their speaking and listening within the school (Dor Chaim, 2017).

4.5.4. Storytelling as Process of Professional Development

The teachers' interviews indicate that the teachers' room is where both the teacher telling their story and the listeners can develop professionally. Every staff member undergoes a significant learning process - a professional development process owing to teachers' stories. The literature expands substantially on the storytelling as a professional development process:

The encounter between the teachers and the life-story narrator structures the study contents, and the experience the teacher has acquired in life serves as a foundation for knowledge structuring, not only in the personal sense but also professionally. The narrating teacher leads a pedagogical process that enables them to infuse their personal story and experience with personal and professional meaning, extract professional concepts and ideas from it, and form broader generalizations and contexts (Dvir, 2007). Moreover, the storytelling encourages reflective thinking and compares the narrating teacher's personal story with supplementary stories - their own, their peers, and theoretical "stories". The centrality of personal and professional stories in the process of learning and instruction requires the development of the "curriculum of lives" (Aoki, 1993) or "lived curriculum" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1998).

Ben-Peretz and Schonmann's (2013) description of the teachers' room bears similarity to the interviews' findings in the current study. In the teachers' view, a staffroom is where teachers can find mental space and time for professional knowledge development, in the sense of the intellectual and moral landscape, and thus feel safe to tell their "secret" stories unredacted. At the same time, "sacred stories" of the external policies and school norms become part of the relevant discourse and facilitate conferring, discussions, and even confrontations. Thus, the boundaries between the

personal, professional, practical, and close knowledge and the professional non-personal knowledge get blurred as the latter finds its way into the teachers' room. The teachers' room is the home base for "interactive professionalism", as Fullan and Hargreaves (1996) put it, where teachers have opportunities to exercise judgment on teaching and curriculum and relate to educational climate and social initiatives. According to the social learning theory, "profession knowledge development" refers to learning based on the social context and occurs through observing others and collaborating with them (Schunk, 1991). Employees gain understanding and insights into their work and institution in the framework of their job duties and interactions with others (Louis, 1990).

Smylie (1995) pointed out that one of the principal conditions that may promote learning in the workplace is each individual's opportunity to collaborate with others permanently and learn from them. Teachers' rooms provide such opportunities for regular daily encounters between teachers. Fullan (1995) reinforced this claim: "Continuous learning must be organically part and parcel of the culture of the school" (p. 258).

The language of the stories refrains from using the concepts such as goals, results, and skills; it offers an alternative narrating language. Its example is evident in the model developed by Diekelmann and Diekelmann (2009). In this model, the proposed language contains concepts such as *presencing* and *actively participating, gathering, structuring, enrichment, listening, and attentiveness, caring and sensitivity, interpreting, critical examination, disassembly, and reassembly,* and verbs such as *suspend, enable, ponder the known, reconstruct and increase future opportunities*. The model allows for more concepts such as experience, description, analysis, interpretation, reflexivity, and learning ″growing from the practice". The narrating

language emphasizes emotions, positions, and values involved in structuring personal

knowledge (Zembylas, 2005; Yuan & Lee, 2016).

Storytelling also challenges the teaching-learning process and highlights the

constructivism of the curriculum and the knowledge structuring. A model developed

by Goodson and Gill (2011) offers a spiral organization of curriculum built in a

learning-teaching process in the spirit of the narrative pedagogy (Goodman & Gill,

2011). Per this model, the process includes the following five stages: (a) the narrator's

act of telling a story; (b) collaboration on the story and peer learners' participation; (c)

generalization, theorization, and examination of personal place in the broader context;

(d) integration of the existing knowledge with the new, and (e) reiteration of the story,

given the new knowledge.

That being the case, narrative pedagogy offers an instruction-learning process based on

life stories and focuses on a personal story. The assumption is that such a process

might help the teacher extract personal professional insights and meanings from it,

conceptualize and generalize them, and anchor them on theories. The process is guided

toward structuring individual professional knowledge and re-examining the teacher's

personal and professional vision - at times, even via a confrontation with colleagues

and other teachers' visions. The process might facilitate the teacher's reflective and

critical thinking on their perceptions and the professionalism they bring into the

discipline they teach; it might also assist them in restructuring personal and

professional identity (Goodson & Gill, 2011).

4.5.5. Telling Stories as the Process of Growth of Teachers' Professional Identity

Behavioral circumstances specific to the teachers' room expedite the process of creating community professional knowledge. Teachers act as both learners and teachers in the staffroom. By sharing their stories and experience with others, they inspire and support each other in building and shaping professional knowledge. Teachers' stories are one way of creating and sharing knowledge: they become part of the community school knowledge and serve as the basis for its ethos creation. Corrie (1996) postulated that "schools cannot afford to ignore the knowledge of talented individuals, even if it challenges established orthodoxy. Maintaining the school knowledge and excluding all other knowledge may carry a high price" (p. 246). Narrative pedagogy does not render traditional or other modern pedagogies redundant; it attempts to expand the practical pedagogical repertoire of those in learning through practice. Structuring personal knowledge does not diminish the value of theoretical knowledge based on empirical research. On the contrary, it might make for a more profound structuring of the theoretical knowledge and enhance the learning processes - specifically, structuring a professional identity (Dvir, 2017).

The professional literature links storytelling in the teacher's room to teachers' professional identity development. The opportunity given to teachers - to tell about their professional work - nurtures their professional identity and teaches about the techniques of its structuring. In the professional story, teachers' educational beliefs are reflected - regarding the curricula, their different ideological perceptions, educational approaches concerning children and peers, and skills and various practices teachers use in their professional lives. (Tzabar Ben Yehoshua & Dargish, 2001; Beijaard et al., 2004).

The story is akin to the "teacher's landscape". On the one hand, it allows the narrator to structure their identity, while, on the other, the researcher can expose this identity and examine the personal biographical, sociocultural, and professional practical components in the teacher's story (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999). The teacher's professional story allows us to learn about their professional identity components and how they construct it. The stories teachers tell are amplified with descriptions of conflicts, tensions, and confrontations occurring in the arena of the structuring. The process of examining the personal, cultural and professional identity is carried out by a comparison with *the other*, between *places* and *times*. In this process, personal, cultural, social, and professional affiliation is examined. The encounter between types of affiliation entails tension and eventual defining decision on the integrative, dynamic, and multifaceted professional identity (Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2008). The path of structuring a professional identity through stories may turn the school into a better place for teachers and the school system alike (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007).

4.5.6. Storytelling as an Opportunity for Syncretic Process in the Staffroom

A syncretic process integrates old and new, modern and traditional through compromise and adaptation by all participants. Heterogeneous staffroom's community knowledge, created in the school, may reflect the common denominator for the current traditional knowledge and thus silence the voices of the modern teachers. However, the syncretic research aspires to view teachers' rooms as a place for dynamic work of blended diverse voices, both traditional and modern teachers' voices where the balance between the school's community knowledge creation and preservation of individual expression is maintained. The combination of diverse voices is evident in the teacher A.A.'s words, as follows:

Teachers' room is a significant place - mainly because it allows teachers to argue, express contradicting opinions, raise problems, and search for different and diverse solutions.

In this theme, we posit that the staffroom stage is the optimal place to build such a syncretic community; naturally, it provides the teacher with social encounters and opportunities for professional, social, and personal development. The teachers' room can be viewed as a stage where teachers present themselves to their colleagues (Kainan, 1994). From Goffman's perspective (1959), we can see the actors and actresses on stage. The show must involve traditional and modern teachers alike. The spectacle occurs within the boundaries of the teachers' room. It is not the only stage the teachers act upon because the classroom also serves as a stage. In the classroom, the teacher dons a teacher mask, while in the teachers' room - a colleague mask (Kainan, 1994). On the staffroom *stage,* different and diverse stories emerge, one after another, told by traditional and modern teachers. Each story is unique, while other stories add to the understanding of the story itself; the overall phenomenon is seen as a harmonious synergetic occurrence. The story belonging to a specific circle does not deprive it of the features existing in other circles; its distinct color contributes to recounting it from a specific viewpoint, just like in a gallery, i.e., explaining the complexity of the phenomenon of development, human diversity, multiple skills, abilities, aspirations, and learning styles, and an abundance of unique personality traits (Avidov-Ungar & Fink, 2016).

Through the syncretic process that reflects compromise and adaptation, social interactions, experience sharing, and the shared memory of all the events in the school, teachers develop knowledge, experience, and practice concerning their work in

heterogeneous teachers' rooms. They share and consult, vent their feelings, and create reflections and reinforcements as part of a significant social connection.

Hence, this study offers an additional and novel viewpoint about the teachers' room as a place for collegiality development between teachers: one of the collegial norms, *storytelling*, takes place on the teachers' room stage and constitutes part of the school ethos. Learning these norms will allow student teachers to contemplate the meaning of *storytelling* on a syncretic stage based on interpersonal relations of compromise and adaptation among new and experienced colleagues, traditional and modern alike.

Awareness of the collegial norms of storytelling and the ability to interpret them can be of utmost use for teachers - novice and student teachers in particular because they are still unfamiliar with the diverse interactions between the staff members at the school. Students and novice teachers may misinterpret specific processes, such as storytelling accepted within the walls of teachers' rooms, potentially leading to confusion, confrontation, and conflicts. According to Poyas (2016), pre-service teachers should work and augment their ability to tell stories. Also, they should teach their students to tell stories.

Acknowledging this aspect of teaching might help students in teacher training courses, and novice teachers avoid feeling like *outsiders* in the staffroom. It is essential for teachers to be considered participants of the storytellers' heterogeneous *stage,* listen to others' stories, and, in due time, tell their personal stories when they wish to share them with their peers.

The stories enable all the teachers in the staffroom to learn about processes of change, turning points, conflicts, dilemmas, and the dynamics accompanying the instruction.

The stories present not only factual occurrences but also thoughts, wishes, desires, and ideas (Schatz-Oppenheimer, et al., 2016)

Different and diverse teachers perceive storytelling norms as a basis for any syncretic open, professional, and productive community. Therefore, we must aspire to achieve a deeper understanding of the significance of the *storytelling* concept.

Via storytelling, meaningful sociability processes between different teachers in the staffroom are created. The narrating teacher and the listening audience learn to know each other's world so that strangeness and alienation subside and grow into more significant acquaintances. Many topics are perceived as more profound and meaningful through stories that vividly describe the narrators' positions, actions, and interpretations. At the core of this approach is the premise that through the story the individual ascribes meaning to the events in their life as they subjectively perceive them, and thus the image of the narrator's world is presented to the public (Shapira & Arar, 2015). Every story has several perspectives, angles of analysis, or emphases; choosing between them imposes the framework through which the narrator shares and tells the story. The framing gives meaning to the story: it highlights stereotypes, tragedies, stigmas, and familiar patterns and determines the plot of the story. To understand the communicative framing means to identify the angle of inquiry from which the public views the event reported through the lens of organizational pressures, ideologies, personal positions, etc. (Feuerstein, 2016).

The success of the syncretic process in the teachers' room may be reflected in the teachers' storytelling in the teachers' room. The stories indeed reflect reality and, concomitantly, structure it. Thus, the stories are a way for people to understand themselves. Via stories, individuals succeed in understanding themselves and interpreting new experiences and ideas. Moreover, the stories guide them toward

decision-making (Gesser & Zelkovich, 2014). Similarly, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) stated the importance of teachers' stories in understanding their experiences, choices, and perceptions of work.

Judith Warren Little (1990) defined a collaboration continuum, from weak to stronger forms: four variants of collegial relations between teachers. Storytelling falls within the first three, relatively weak, forms of collegiality with (a) scanning (cursory glance - exchanging ideas, anecdotes, and gossip), (b) aid and assistance (mostly, upon request), and (c) sharing (materials and teaching strategies). In other words, according to Little (1990), telling stories is a relatively weak form of collegiality. The novelty of the current study is its perception of storytelling as a strong collegiality form meaningful for the teacher community and conducive to the advancement of a structured and stable syncretic process in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

Our primary assertion in this theme is that the place of the narrative pedagogy in the heterogeneous teachers' room should be expanded and implemented as part of the syncretic model in the complex human work environment and the conflictual environment with multiple interpretations

4.6. The Sixth Theme: "The Good Peer" (Good Colleague)

The *good peer*'s vast and significant contribution - to the teachers' room in general and teachers in particular – clearly emerged from the interviews with modern and traditional teachers.

The good peer is a good colleague. They have a significant beneficial influence on teachers' professional lives. The term good colleague contradicts the mythos of the "lone teacher", as it reflects building different and diverse interactions between themself and traditional, modern, experienced, and novice teachers alike.

It is evident from the interviews that every teacher ascribes a different meaning to the concept of the good peer. For instance, a teacher of significant status in the teachers' room, experienced and well-liked by peers, can be a good colleague to a teacher who is interested in changing their social status in the teachers' room, getting to know the popular teachers closer, building ties and interactions, cultivating social networks and, indeed, creating connections beyond the school work. A subject teacher, proficient and known as an expert in their field, who regularly participates in advancement courses and serves as a subject coordinator at school, can serve as a good colleague to a teacher who wants to develop professionally, lead quality pedagogy, improve, specialize, and undergo a meaningful learning process.

The finding appears to be in line with the professional literature.

Satisfaction with the colleagues' support in an organization means there is compatibility between the employee's needs and the response they receive from their *good peer*. The level of compatibility between the type of support and the employee's specific need is linked to the range of support forms accessible to the employee. These can include assistance in easing the employee's load of work cases, guidance, and counseling, sharing relevant knowledge or creating a good atmosphere in the organization through birthday celebrations and other social activities (Bellet al., 2003).

The literature surveys peer support forms (Catherall, 1995; Horowitz, 1998; Pearlman & Saakvitne, 1995; Stamm, 2002; Yassen, 1995). Among other aspects, it states that satisfaction with peer support is linked to the source of the support being the expected one (Haslam et al., 2006).

Ben Peretz and Schonmann's study (2013) shows that every teacher has a different definition of a good colleague. The researchers referred to a teacher who chose

teaching because of the convenient work conditions of this profession for mothers. The said teacher will see a good colleague in a peer teacher willing to substitute for her when she needs to stay home with her sick child (Ben Peretz & Schonmann, 2013). That bears similarity to the event possibly perceived as critical by one educator and negligible - by another (Shapira –Lishchinsky, 2013).

4.6.1. Supportiveness as Collegial Tool in Teachers' Rooms

The interviews conducted in this study with both modern and traditional teachers bring out the good peer's key common characteristic – the ability to be supportive of peers. In the teacher's view, the good peer is not envious of their colleagues' successes; on the contrary, they praise and support them wholeheartedly, thus helping them elevate their professional reputation in the teachers' room.

The interviews indicate that teachers value colleagues' supportiveness more than their help with lesson plans, syllabus, or solving a professional problem. Supportiveness is a social activity that positively impacts professional work and thus enables it. A lack thereof would be detrimental to any teacher's work. It is one of the elements in creating social cohesion in the teachers' room.

Similar to the interviews conducted in the current study, the professional literature demonstrates that supportiveness and social consolidation of teachers' rooms are of great value in teachers' lives. Katriel and Nesher (1986) examined this aspect in Israeli schools (Katriel & Nesher, 1986; Katriel, 1991). Their studies reveal that one of the teachers' main goals is cohesion in the classes they teach. The researchers indicate that teachers also keep in mind the goal of achieving good and consolidated relationships in the teachers' room. This goal outlines the good-peer norm. Supportiveness and social cohesion in a professional community are concepts that flourished in the Israeli culture; they may also be significant for other teaching cultures as they bear on

essential issues of professional solidarity. Teachers belong to a professional community that cares for its members; they want to preserve their professional and social image as a collective and individuals. It is essential for teachers to be affiliated with a consolidated and supportive community and feel they are part of it. The interviews conducted for the present study yielded the following good colleague's praising and supportive words and expressions: "*Respect for taking the lead on this!*", "*You broke into an educational poem that reverberated through all the classrooms in the school!*", "*Carry on with your success from strength to strength!*" "*Well done!*", "*You are a champ*!", etc. Comparably, the professional literature presents similar complementary expressions.

Vardi-Rath (2016) studied the use of compliments and mutually supportive expressions within the framework of mentor teachers' teamwork. She found the word '*amazing*' most commonly used in conversations between mentor teachers: "'I*t was amazing!*", "*a good and amazing activity*", "*simply amazing*". Moreover, she discovered encouragements and compliments expressed in metaphors and imagery: "*That was gripping!*", '*They acted like true professionals and like experts*'; '*You've earned your bread big time*' (p. 291). In the said study, the solidarity style was most evident in the staff meeting discourse, with a broad and rich range of expression forms, as the examples above-mentioned indicate. According to Blum-Kulka (1997), this finding is common in nonformal social encounters, mostly, and less frequent in work-related meetings (Blum-Kulka, 1997).

Nahli'eli (2015) pointed out that a lack of supportiveness is manifest in different forms, from dwelling on "the glass half empty" to blaming the colleague - when someone dares praise the other. Nahli'eli examined the essence of a person's difficulty to be supportive of the other's success. He claimed that the reason is simple - the

moment I acknowledge the other's success, I will have to look at myself in the mirror and ask myself: *How come they succeeded whereas I did not? How did they make progress while I still am lagging?* And since it is threatening, one finds good 'reasons' that explicate the other's success – flattery, an organizational structure that encourages aggressiveness, personal connections, etc. If we keep minimizing the other's success and fixate on the empty half glass, we will not learn. That constitutes a real danger to our ability to improve and adjust to the pace of world advancement (Nahli'eli, 2015). Studies show that supportiveness, cohesion, and emphatic concern are the core elements of a positive school climate and one of the crucial components of students' success (Thapa et al., 2013). Research in different disciplinary areas indicates that the sense of security, emphatic concern, supportiveness, and collaboration among all school staff contribute to their improvement and that there is a positive correlation between a positive school climate and academic achievement (McCarley et al., 2016). The literature posits that staff cohesion in the teachers' room significantly contributes to the school and the entire school staff.

4.6.2. Consolidation of Teaching staff as Collegial Tool

Interviews in this study clarified that sometimes consolidation has far-reaching consequences, as is evident in the following example from one of the interviews: N., a young novice teacher in elementary school, reached the ninth month of her pregnancy and was due to give birth any day. She was hospitalized for a week due to concerns about the fetus's health. The entire teaching staff mobilized to support and reassure her and her family in a difficult time. The teachers divided the Book of Psalms between them and asked each staff member to read a segment of the prayer for easy and successful delivery. They organized all the help in the teachers' room meetings. There were daily meetings where the teachers exchanged information and shared their

feelings. The teachers turned to N.'s parents and her husband and stayed in touch with them daily, offering any help needed. The more time passed, the higher the number of teachers willing to help grew. *"It strengthened and unified us. It is a pity we know how to team up only when one of us is in trouble"*. (S.I., traditional teacher). These words reflect the prevalent perception among teachers. Teachers expressed their willingness to learn from this unique situation: *"Teamwork depends on us – the teaching staff. We must foster it more and more.*" (S.A., modern teacher).

A similar finding arose from Cunningham and Gresso's study (1993). They emphasized that "collegiality is the basis for group spirit and the bonds that holds a group together, allowing it to achieve extraordinary success. Once team spirit develops, the power of the team will work in almost any situation" (Cunningham & Gresso, 1993, p.111). Nowadays, there are creative ways to preserve and maintain, promote and foster group cohesion: challenge games, learning, empowerment sessions in the form of workshops, outdoor training (ODT) activities that reinforce the communication within the teacher community; simulation games with 'real-life' assignments; and experiential learning via routine situation experience through games in simulation centers. Simulation centers train teachers and educators in effective conflict management and the development of interpersonal communication skills; foster group cohesion via building relationships based on trust, listening, and empathy; coping with resistance; mediation skills; crisis management, and giving feedback.

Yariv and Gorev (2018) discovered that when the teachers' room is perceived as a place that facilitates the development of positive social contacts, it becomes, in the teachers' view, an influential factor in the overall school life. Meaningful social relations between the staff members are likely to serve as a precondition to a professional community establishment that will lead in the future to a feeling of

competence and success in school life. Indeed, in the schools with low student achievement scores, the teachers reported a sense of unstable community and fewer opportunities to spend time together in the teachers' room in contrast to the teachers' reports from successful schools. Hence, it is critical to consolidate a policy that would guarantee the following conditions: open and effective communication (such as weekly Grade-Level staff meetings), warm relations (activities forging team spirit), and intensive collaboration (teachers working in teaching-related groups and on school event production).

In teachers' rooms with a strict hierarchy, teachers are more dependent on external factors to facilitate collaboration compared with the schools where matters run via initiative and team autonomy (Ahlstrand, 1991).

Staffroom cohesion will not occur in schools where a closed, competitive, alienated, and bureaucratic climate prevails (Rafferty, 2003). Such a climate is manifest in a stifling and overly stressful atmosphere; teachers limit as much as possible reporting or sharing with their colleagues, conferring with them, or praising them.

4.6.3. Expression of Gratitude as Collegial Tool

Literature also expands on gratitude as an aspect of supportiveness. To express gratitude is one of the most powerful ways to fill our and our colleagues' souls. The easiest way is merely to tell someone that we are grateful. Nevertheless, studies show that expressing gratitude in writing has more impact (Grant & Gino, 2010). An employee might think that their routine work is uninspired and their professional life is unsuccessful; yet, a letter of gratitude received from a peer can help them realize the extent of their work's impact, and how successful they are. Such a letter can create positivity in three ways: to inspire or remind them to write down their feelings of appreciation and the reasons for them, raise the receiver's awareness of being valued

and respected and reinforce the point of contact for the need of the future flow of positive emotion in the relationship (Grant & Gino, 2010).

As the American philosopher William James put it over 100 years ago: "The deepest principle in human nature is the craving to be appreciated". Instead of ignoring peers at work, it is advisable to reject the reasons for ignoring them. Often, chances of success at work ensue from acknowledging our own and our colleagues' best and expressing gratitude. If we appreciate the good, the good grows and expands (Ben Shahar & Ridgeway, 2017).

An additional challenge emerging from the literature is that our relationships become less authentic because virtual meetings or texting via *WhatsApp* and other applications are gradually replacing them. The support and consolidation process is damaged our days, mainly in *WhatsApp* groups. To create this exceptional and powerful energy field, we need genuine connections. Thousand virtual friends cannot replace a single intimate friend. *Facebook relationships* cannot substitute face-to-face interactions. The amount of time we spend interacting with other people on the other side of the screen explains the growing levels of loneliness that, among other things, are linked to depression and heart disease. The more our internet interactions increase in contrast to our authentic interactions, the lonelier we grow. Regardless of how tempting these online interactions often are, we have to disconnect - to connect. Considering the clear evidence of genuine relationships' vital contribution to the individual's health and the organizational success, they must be a higher priority in a workplace (Ben Shahar & Ridgway, 2017).

A ground-breaking study by Hawthorn illustrates the importance of coworker social familiarity. A rich culture characterized by knowing and appreciating colleagues is critical in an organization and relationships between colleagues, i.e., an authentical and

positive appreciation for others and others' work – outspoken and sincere appreciation of their contribution, whenever possible. Support and praise not only make a person feel valued but can also drive them toward future success. Moreover, the relationship between the good peer and the person on the receiving side grows stronger and becomes more durable (Ben Shahar & Ridgway, 2017).

Thus, people in the world of employment love to be appreciated. People love being recognized for their worthy work – in effect, for implementing their values.

4.6.4. The Good Peer's Contribution

The good colleague's contribution - to the teachers' room in general and teachers in particular - emerged from the interviews with the modern and traditional teachers. The interviews revealed that teachers appreciate and cherish good peer support. Support, by their definition, is significant in stressful situations and encouraging in tough times. It creates social identity and strengthens the teacher's sense of belonging in a moment of crisis. The good peer serves as a person to lean on, someone a teacher can turn to at a difficult time, like a "beacon of light" in the darkness - that is their contribution.

This finding arose from many other studies as well. The studies by Meyer (2003) revealed that teacher support groups reduced fear and stress and encouraged teachers to be less egocentric. Also, these support groups helped teachers focus on the teaching tasks based on a more moderate and balanced approach toward their students. It is evident that support groups in which members share a common characteristic have stronger social identity and self-acceptance and feel less socially isolated.

Peer support among teachers is evident in *face-to-face* encounters between teachers of all strata and various positions and experiences in places such as schools, teacher-training colleges, advancement courses, conferences, etc. Weissberg and Geston's

study (1982) discovered that teacher peer support groups successfully motivate teachers to draw on their peers' knowledge and encouragement. Moreover, peer teachers' support helped decrease teachers' sense of alienation and alleviated coping with school structures and interactions with school senior staff members (Zins et al., 1988).

Caplan-Moscovich's study (1982) shows that peer support is vital for a teacher's professional development. Other studies demonstrate that peer support aids in developing independence, self-awareness, confidence, and reflective thinking on values, attitudes, and emotions. It enhances self-direction and encourages acceptance of responsibility, helps develop professional relations among coworkers, and strengthens their support in stressful situations. Moreover, peer support prevents burnout, facilitates the creation of a comfortable environment for learning, giving, and receiving feedback in a constructive and less conflictual manner; learning from models; deliberations on policies and professional ethics; sharing knowledge, and learning about professional innovations in the profession of instruction and guidance, and dealing with professional isolation in an institution (Benshoff & Paisley, 1996). Arnon (1996) discovered similar findings in a study on school counselors' guidance. He posits that small groups hold a central factor in peer support. It allows one to communicate and share one's doubts with peers, a sense of being stuck, helplessness, anxiety, and anger in a nonthreatening and nonjudgmental atmosphere of support that promotes and fosters productive and constructive thinking. The contributors and the beneficiaries alike benefit from it, and the feeling of belonging is created that allows for identification with shared professional characteristics. Such an atmosphere promotes personal growth, professional development, and burnout decrease.

In peer support, each participant contributes their interpretation, offers and receives help, guides, and gains guidance. Forces influencing the individual are amplified; the empowerment enables them to work more rigorously on their professional identity; it elevates their self-esteem. In the moratorium provided by the group, the individual has an opportunity to experience social relations with other people as experimental practice toward life outside the group. The participant can express anger, practice assertiveness, and learn to operate differently.

An analysis, together with colleagues, of teaching events and ways of coping with different interpretations does not only cultivate complex multifaceted pedagogic understanding. It also prompts teachers to draw encouragement from the fact that their peers experience similar difficulties and realize that their more experienced and proficient colleagues do not always know, there is more than one solution to a problem and that different people who see, sense, or experience the same thing, often, form differing impressions (Ben Galim, 1999).

Also, the professional literature relates broadly to peer support as a tool for personal and collective empowerment: Ina Fuchs (1995) conducted a study about medical interns. In the initial stages, when a new professional faces problematic issues, they tend to ascribe them to their incompetence and blame themself or, by projection, others.

Multiple studies demonstrated that a teacher, tackling a difficult situation through their closedness, pretends that "Everything is fine", sees themself as a victim of the situation, and does not accept responsibility for it. After the first staff meeting, where the intern witnesses the experienced and advanced colleagues' frustration in the face of similar problems and sees that the problems are not uniquely theirs, they tend to report

a boost in their professional self-confidence, and from that point on feel free to voice their doubts (Fuchs, 1995).

Peer support meetings provide graduates with a platform to freely raise problematic issues without fear of critique or mistreatment. A more experienced graduate who has successfully gone through the adaptation stages serves as a model of successful coping for a novice teacher.

Trust is a necessary condition for interpersonal communication. Because a counseling situation is perceived as threatening, more emphasis should be on anxiety reduction through trust-building as trust reduces anxiety (Orion, 1997).

Peer discourse stimulates reflective processes. The processes are emphasized and amplified through peer support. Kupferberg and Olshtain (1998) defined an experienced teacher as an expert, a professional who raises questions about their area of expertise and continuously learns (Kupferberg and Olshtain, 1998). A verbalization of a story in a discussion creates awareness of the previously concealed issues and facilitates the construction of professional knowledge. A continuous peer discourse on their teaching experiences makes peers re-examine their function as teachers in an introspective and retrospective view. Also, group conversations challenge the knowledge drawn from a single source; experienced teachers learn from their own and their colleagues' experiences. When one guides others, it is both inspiring and enriching. During work hours, a person does not always find time to sort out problems and analyze events and experiences. Through raising and analyzing them jointly with a group of peers, professionals acquire a deeper understanding. Peer discussion among both more experienced and younger teachers promotes the identification of professional development stages.

Teachers' work performance varies during different periods in their life. Peers become more receptive, expand their repertoire, develop a complex processual, developmental, and perspective vision, grow more tolerant toward staff's different styles and diversity, and understand the need to adjust a teaching style to the teacher's personality and the educational situation (Frankel, 1998).

Apart from the cognitive gains, peer support is beneficial for the emotional factors that drive the processes of change and learning: the peer's accessibility, an empathic and supportive atmosphere created through identification with experienced difficulties; validation, and expression of feelings of uncertainty and ambiguousness - especially in the absence of an authoritative professional; seeing failure as normative and as part of the learning process; reinforcing the sense of belonging to the group of equals that strengthens the professional self and serves as a defense mechanism against alienation, commonly experienced by an employee entering a new organizational system.

It is relevant mainly for "development towns"[5], distant from the academic support centers - especially in the post-modernist era - notably characterized by individualism and dismantling of structures (Ben Galim, 1999).

Also, the professional literature expands on it and refers to peer support as beneficial in dealing with burnout.

According to McKinney-Thompson, teacher burnout, among other things, might impact the teacher's health, teaching ability, and ability to persevere in work. Therefore, it is crucial to seek factors that will help alleviate the phenomenon (McKinney-Thompson, 2015).

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[5]In the first years of Israel's establishment, development towns served as a solution to mass immigration, a way to decentralize the population and strengthen previously unpopulated areas. Known as *peripheral*, characteristically associated with low socioeconomic status, these settlements were declared areas of national priority. The state strives to strengthen social resilience in the periphery and foster economic, social, and cultural growth. To date, about 31% of the total population of Israel lives in regions, defined as *the social periphery*.

Different studies attest to the fact that collegiality reduces teacher turnover - one of the phenomena caused by burnout - and raises teachers' confidence in their capability, enhances productivity, helps them find meaning, solve problems and cope capably with situations of uncertainty (Ham, 2011; McClure, 2008; Robinson, 2015). Also, it is argued that collegiality improves teachers' satisfaction with their work. In another study (Koruklu et al., 2012), the researchers found a significant difference between teacher burnout levels per traits with collegiality characteristics, such as relations with colleagues and the principal.

Other studies showed that social support, collaboration, and positive social interactions mitigate burnout (Firstater, 2012; Lavian-Hillel, 2012; Malach-Pines, 2011). Also, it emerges from the studies that the sense of collegiality increases the teachers' level of satisfaction with their work and diminishes teacher turnover caused by burnout (Ham, 2011; Robinson, 2015).

In their study, Bergman and Stein-Cohen (2018) found a link between the feeling of collegiality and a lower level of teacher burnout. Namely, a teacher with a greater sense of collegiality is less burnt out and vice versa. Similarly, Firstater (2012) found a link between burnout and reciprocal relations between peer teachers and the level of collaboration or alienation.

Blazer (2010) and Malach-Pines (2011) discovered that it is possible to cope with burnout by maintaining substantial social support networks. Katz (2012) stated that teachers who experience a lower level of stress work effectively with their colleagues.

Bergman and Stein-Cohen's study (2018) found that the sense of collegiality is stronger among women. Moor's study (2014) revealed an interaction between the respondents' gender and employment status (with tenure or without) and their level of collegiality.

Lester (2007) asserted that women feel the need to conform to stereotypical feminine traits within the organization, namely, cooperativeness and collegiality. Wood (2012) showed that elementary school male teachers received more negative responses about their collegiality level. Also, Huang and Fraser (2009), in a study carried out among science teachers, found distinct statistical differences in most of the aspects of the school atmosphere, wherein female science teachers experienced a stronger sense of collegiality than male teachers.

The teacher's interpersonal ties with the staff members affect forming the teacher's sense of professional efficacy (Grinbank et al., 2018). Teachers working in collaboration with various colleagues and reporting a positive school atmosphere show a higher rate of self-efficacy sense and satisfaction with their work performance and diminish their risk of burnout (Kass, 2012).

Decker and his colleagues discovered a significant link between low levels of burnout and characteristics, such as guidance, support, and protection - mainly among teachers and aid professionals (Decker et al., 2002). On the one hand, peer-reliant work can become a source of additional stress, while on the other, teamwork can serve as a source of support that allays stress (Nelson-Gardell & Harris, 2003). Studies into the relationship between burnout and peer support reveal that peer support helps contain and alleviate burnout situations (Burke & Greenglass, 1995; Capner & Caltabiano, 1993). However, the absence of peer support or positive feedback is especially consequential: it impedes the employee's coping with the feeling of stress at work (Etsion & Westman, 1994; Gray-Stanley & Muramatsu, 2011).

Pines and Aronson (1981) articulated that people cope better with burnout-related stress in a workplace when they have social support systems in place. In the institutions

where staff members provided personal backing to their colleagues in an hour of immense mental stress, the employees experienced less alienation toward their patients. Thus, a lower burnout rate was observed among people who shared their feelings and problems with colleagues. In the wake of these findings, Pines and Aronson developed a technique for coping with burnout stress that includes workshops where the working team members meet, and share their feelings, stress issues, and problems. Also, Freudenberger (1975) suggested support groups and sharing feelings as a means of burnout management.

Cobb (1976), and Pines and Aronson (1988) viewed social support as a tool to reduce burnout. They all defined the term "social support" in a different aspect. Cobb describes social support as information that leads an individual to believe he is well-liked and is a member of a system of mutual commitment. In comparison, Pines focused on organization. He believes that social support in an organization falls into two types: formal and informal. He breaks down the concept into cognitive, emotional, and behavioral support and views these types of support as means to curb burnout. Also, Etzion (1984) examined the role of social support in burnout reduction. She claims that to manage burnout, we must, first of all, alleviate the teaching work through group support.

If so, peer support is an acceptable means, according to the professional literature; it emerged as a solution to problems in instruction already a few decades ago.

Today the definition accepted by most researchers is that peer support is an interpersonal transactional system perceived by the receiver or intended by the giver as alleviation of coping with stressful situations in daily life (Salanova et al., 2006; Van Staa et al., 2000).

It emerges that, in organizations, employees participating in regular staff meetings for support exhibit higher coping capability in situations of stress and burnout (Van Staa et al., 2000). Peer support also reduces loneliness and despondency among teams caring for critically ill patients such as oncology wards - the feelings linked to exposure to the patients' suffering (Montgomery, 1999).

Studies among staff working with children with learning disabilities and low intelligence - work structures characterized by high exposure to stress and burnout - revealed that peer support influences the sense of wellbeing and the employees' abilities within these structures. Also, peer support, including social networks in the workplace, was found as linked to a significant decrease in burnout levels, both among the direct care staff and the managers (Alexander & Hegarty, 2000).

The organization's character and the characteristics of the organization's line of work are also related to peer support. It was discovered, for example, that firefighters lack a sense of peer support because working in shifts does not create opportunities to generate such support (Cadell et al., 2003).

In contrast, in teachers' rooms, teamwork and continuous meetings facilitate and encourage mutual connections and prove a fruitful ground for high peer support. It is significant because peer support and ties within the group of equals are substantial for success in teaching based on teamwork these days (Barak et al., 2001).

Working in an environment where encounters with staff members occur daily creates opportunities for peer support development, a channel through which the employee can process their experiences and work-related dilemmas, receive feedback and recognition of their feelings, and examine their reflections, successes, and failures in a broader perspective (Chenot, et al., 2009; Tobiana, 2000).

Furthermore, teachers need to feel supported in a meaningful way when they take risks and lead innovative initiatives. Just like their students, teachers need to feel supported if they should take risks, implement new initiatives and integrate the use of innovative instruction technologies and new technological tools (Tucker, 2016).

Thus, the professional literature views peer support as a coping resource that proved significant and moderated burnout levels (Dvir & Ben-David, 2012). This resource is a multidimensional variable, underscoring the individual's interpersonal resources and the extent to which the individual's needs for affection, appreciation, affiliation, and confidence are satisfied by significant peers (Cahana-Friedman, 2000; Ergh, 2005; Ergh et al., 2002; Takeda et al., 2005).

Peer support is an acquired, dynamic resource subject to influence and modeling. Thus, we must aspire for teams to rely on the resource and enhance their ability to meet their students' needs adequately. Moreover, peer support is a resource that the staff can nurture. The administration's backing and investment in the development thereof can aid in building a safety net to protect the employee (Dvir & Ben David, 2012).

Similarly, the literature on work relations in organizations refers to the crucial importance of our connections with coworkers. Even casual connections – one-minute-encounters between colleagues, such as a brief chat, provided they are positive and supportive, can enhance work performance (Sparks, 2004). The interactions that form the basis of the organization's social fabric, predominant values, and established organizational norms are vital. The social fabric, for its part, either empowers or reduces the employees' ability to collaborate, create new products, share information, and adapt. These small daily interactions are closely linked to the overall organizational performance (Sparks, 2004).

In addition, studies show that social connections present a powerful indicator of the individual's health. Emphatic behaviors and supportiveness increase the level of the oxytocin – known as the "love hormone" – and decrease the "fight or flight" hormone cortisol (DeVries, 2003).

Developing ties with a peer teacher fosters self-confidence, allows for active engagement, and contributes to the process of teachers' professional identity consolidation (Chong, et al., 2011; Olsen, 2008).

4.6.5. Shaping the "Good-Colleague" Image According to Syncretic Model

In different schools and cultures, the *good-peer* norms may develop in divergent directions and have a different impact on the teacher community in the school and definitely on the syncretic processes in the teacher community. The staffroom culture can be viewed as closely linked to the overall professional climate at the school; therefore, we should aspire to understand in-depth the overt, observed, and hidden messages concealed or open to various interpretations and make teachers acknowledge the importance of encouraging the formation of the *good-peer* image.

Thus, the teachers' room is perceived as a place for collegiality development among teachers: collegiality norms and good-peer characteristics are part of the school ethos. Learning them will provide students and in-training teachers with opportunities to reflect on the meaning of the good-teacher concept. The awareness of the existing collegial norms and the ability to interpret them may be highly beneficial for teachers, first and foremost, novice and in-training teachers unfamiliar with the diverse interactions in the staffroom between the teaching staff members. In-training and novice teachers might form a wrong impression regarding specific processes accepted

within the walls of the teachers' room and find themselves in situations of confusion and confrontations.

The teachers' room as a place for social cohesion between the teachers is one of the most important and instrumental aspects of building a professional community. The recognition of this aspect of teaching as early as in the pre-service teachers' training stage is likely to help novice teachers and students in teacher-training programs not feel like "outsiders". It stands to reason that teachers need to be considered good peers to their fellow teachers no less than good teachers in the classroom. When they learn how to work and learn together in a heterogeneous teachers' room, they will be ready to partake in the syncretic model and nurture diverse interactions with all the staff members in the teachers' room, even with those different from them.

Good-peer norms are viewed as a basis for an open, professional, and productive syncretic community. Therefore, the aspiration is to deepen the understanding of the good-peer concept meaning in the teacher community in the framework of a continuous development process. Along with the collegiality norms - the accepted norms of behavior in the teachers' room, it also seems appropriate to examine norms related to the good-peer behavior that positively affects teachers' professional life.

As every teacher ascribes a different meaning to the good-peer concept, the situations are probable in which a traditional teacher will be a good peer to a modern teacher and vice versa.

Hence, the celebration of supportiveness toward peers by peers in the format of a heterogeneous teachers' room that includes both traditional and modern teachers is a celebration of collegiality, first and foremost. Support and praise fulfill various functions in heterogeneous teachers' rooms, the primary function being: a release from the restrictions of affiliative behavior imposed by the very fact of social affiliation and

preservation of team and community solidarity. If a traditional teacher expresses praise and support to a modern teacher and vice versa, it undoubtedly involves dismantling subgroup structures and weakening group affiliation in the teachers' room. A good colleague marks the affiliation and its boundaries. In this case, a show of support is an inherently liminal event wherein a free familiar bond is established between people separated in their daily lives by the partitions of hierarchy (Bakhtin, 1978). Thus, the good peer's supportiveness is an opportune moment to blur social boundaries – affiliation and culture - with the other in a heterogeneous teachers' room, and the good peer concurrently opens and closes the borders with the other.

That is a dual identity rooted in ethnic uniqueness, on the one hand, and in a group affiliation, on the other. The tension between the identities and an attempt to bridge them is apparent in the teachers' room. If a modern teacher is a good peer to a traditional teacher (or vice versa), the politics of recognition occurs that constitutes one of the central guiding principles of the multicultural concept. The premise of the recognition politics, per Taylor (1994), is that recognition and identity are intertwined. Recognition means an attitude of respect and appreciation regarding the other's cultural values in an intercultural encounter and a willingness to learn about the elements of value in the other. If indeed, a modern teacher is a good peer to a traditional teacher, the workspace itself is changing, and the syncretism from above takes place in it; namely, the majority group's cultural values are likely to change under the influence of the minority group. The definition of optimal teamwork is not set by the dominant group but rather through encounters with traditional teachers, while praise and support are examples of successful bridging of traditional teachers with modern. These processes strengthen the syncretic model through which the two traditions nurture and influence each other.

Along with the mobility of supportiveness, modern teachers learn to support and praise traditional teachers; thus, in the teachers' room, a steady process of recognizing the good in traditional teachers develops. It is, in essence, syncretism-from-below (Sharaby, 2016), the learning and merging of traditional and modern elements involved in the processing, interpretation, and adaptation of the traditional symbols and customs to the new culture, and the adoption of new content.

Good colleagues or good peers are the leading agents of continuity and change in heterogeneous teachers' room dynamics. They create opportunities for compromise and adaptation and form a unifying link in the teachers' room that serves as bridging traditional and modern teacher integration, recognition, respect, and appreciation of the other's cultural values at the time of the intercultural encounter; and the willingness to learn about the other's valuable aspects.

4.7. The Seventh Theme: PLC

We see based on the traditional and modern teachers' interviews for this study that professional communities have a positive impact on teamwork improvement. Traditional and modern teachers alike explicitly indicated that their participation in a PLC generated connections, interactions, partnerships, compromise, and mutual adaptation through a constructive discourse.

In teachers' experience, these meetings turn out to be empowering, fascinating and significant. In the interviews, they conveyed that the meetings were held in an intimate, optimistic, and happy atmosphere with energies of creativity, collaborative thinking, shared willingness to drive positive change, and orientation toward goal achievement. Furthermore, they stated that learning in a PLC exceeds that of teacher advancement courses, lectures, or workshops and that it grows out of teacher interactions in their discourse communities.

The interviewees in this study referred to their learning community groups, including learning communities within the school. A team that serves as a PLC in the school can be the whole teachers' room or specific discipline teaching staff, homeroom teachers' staff, interdisciplinary staff, and any other school team operating to achieve defined goals. PLCs can have different and diverse foci: teaching and learning, curriculum, social issues, student involvement in the community, etc. (Benaya et al., 2013). The theme is divided into four subthemes:

4.7.1. Sharing Practical Knowledge from the Field with Colleagues and Creating New Knowledge Developing in PLCs

In their interviews, traditional and modern teachers who participated in a PLC spoke of significant knowledge sharing. Also, they described how knowledge-sharing in a PLC gave rise to new knowledge developing in a discourse community that relies on shared teamwork between traditional and modern teachers.

This experience was described in the teachers' interviews as positive, characterized by high levels of trust, collaboration, and communal spirit. They spoke of creating a space of knowledge-sharing and shared-knowledge construction with a sense of benefiting from and contributing to each meeting.

This study's findings are in line with other studies that demonstrated how the participants in a PLC collaboratively examine their knowledge and discuss it for professional development and improvement of their expertise and their students' achievements (Goldstein et al., 2004). Moreover, community members have a shared vision; they support each other and work as a group and in collaborative teams to fulfill their defined vision and achieve their shared goals (DuFour et al., 2006).

According to the professional literature, there are several PLC models: continuous learning, subject-oriented, shared interest, and online communities. One of the

conclusions drawn from the survey of the research literature on the subject is the absence of a single unifying universal definition of the concept (Bolam et al., 2005; DuFour et al., 2006; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Instead, multiple definitions represent different conceptions and approaches to the subject.

Despite the differences in definitions, all definitions share a reference to a school teacher learning community focused on peer learning. Community members share educational vision, values, and norms, and work in teams as a collective enterprise (King & Newmann, 2001). They constantly examine their work through reflection and comprehensive learning that facilitate growth and development (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000; Stoll & Louis, 2007). Teachers maintain a constant reflective dialogue that critically examines their practice against the goals they set for themselves. They collect and analyze data and scrutinize evidence regarding the connections between their practice and their students' products of learning; reach conclusions in keeping with the findings, and implement changes to improve their teaching and the students' learning in their classrooms (Birenboim, 2009).

A PLC is founded on constructivist learning theories that view the learner as an interpreter engaged in constructing knowledge about the world, capable of judgment and reflection on their ideas, and assessing and revising them if needed (Birenboim, 2009).

According to this school of thought, learning is not a passive process; it occurs within the work process via knowledge construction and the learner's responsibility for the knowledge. The learning involves information evaluation by the learner until they can present it from their personal, explicated, and substantiated point of view (Berry & Sahlberg, 1996). Information is a conveyance of facts, concepts, ideas, or processes and is an achievement - particularly in competitive environments (Van Aalst, 2009).

Knowledge is a network of connections between fragments of information (Salomon, 2000). To construct it, the learner needs to engage in building connections between various knowledge fragments and prior knowledge. While constructivism views the learning process as individually-based, social constructivism sees structuring knowledge as a product of social interaction that includes sharing, comparison, and discussion between the learners (Brown et al., 1990). Several principles for shaping an effective learning community include determining shared goals (Bielaczyc & Collins, 1999). Per this principle, a community must build and frame its goals together through negotiation and sensitivity to each member's needs, interests, and abilities (Novik et al., 2014).

In such a culture, there is a tendency to focus on collaborative learning. Through recognition of situated and decentralized learning between the participants, norms of mutual help and knowledge-sharing develop. Critical reflection grows into a thinking habit (Tishman et al., 1996) and is manifested in discussions, task performance, and feedback (Birenboim, 2009).

A PLC serves as a means for the development of teachers'

general ability to explore, improve and change (Fullan & Hargreaves, 2017).

4.7.2. Empowering Sociocommunal Experience

The traditional and modern teachers' interviews for this study revealed the power of the sociocommunal experience of PLC meetings.

The teachers noted an exceptional atmosphere created between the team members and respectful discourse developed among group members. The interviewed teachers viewed each professional meeting as a remarkable social encounter shared by interested professionals who speak the same professional language and can learn from

– and teach - each other, seek and give advice, and get charged with new energies; but, mainly, enjoy authentic social interactions with each other.

This study's findings appear to be in line with other research findings that demonstrated how in a PLC, friendships and reciprocal relations emerge in a learning group (Lave & Wenger, 1998). Similarly, Novik et al. (2015) indicated that in the technology-enhanced teacher learning community that they researched, the overall communal feeling was high; in particular, the feelings of trust and community spirit stood out as indicative of openness and group cohesion. Per the situated learning theory, knowledge is the product of action, situation (sociophysical context), and culture (Brown et al., 1989).

According to this approach and contrary to the perception of learning as a personal acquisition of *material* (Reinmann, 2008), learning can be viewed as participation, a process of affiliation with a specific community (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This affiliation requires the learners to adopt the language and the community norms and, eventually, participate in creating knowledge, significant and vital for them and the community. This approach attributes importance to the everyday practice of the culture as an authentic activity as part of the learning process (Novik et al., 2014).

Social learning theories ascribe critical importance to collaborative learning which includes creating opportunities to exchange ideas and opinions, mutual consideration and assessment of information, and asking questions. Interactions between the learner and the social environment have a crucial effect on the construction of knowledge (Bandura, 1977; Mintz & Nachmias, 1998). Any individual's behavior, including the learner's, is explained through reciprocity between personal cognition and environmental influence.

Fulfillment of potential for development is contingent on broad social reciprocal relations within the learning group. The learning process, according to this theory, also includes reinforcement through mutual observations between the learning group members, and from it stems the motivation to learn, or lack thereof.

Vygotsky (1962) investigated the effect of social and cultural interactions on mental development and cognitive functioning in general and learning processes in particular. He believed that diverse interactions within the sociocultural context are the individual's basic need and constitute the primary stimulating factor – allowing for and prompting cognitive and intellectual development. Vygotsky posited that all higher mental functions develop within social relations. Only through the influence of the person's interaction with an external environmental factor that maintains a dialogue with him amorphous and spontaneous concepts turn into distinct conceptual thinking. Lave and Wenger (1998) maintained that learning requires social interaction, the key component being the learners who become part of a learning community with characteristics that bind them together.

The professional literature suggests that a PLC is founded on a collaboration between teachers, administrative personnel, and a principal. In this process, teachers work together to analyze and improve the learning and teaching in their classrooms (Bryk et al., 1999; Du Four, 2004; Louis & Marks, 1998).

Teachers demonstrate their teaching methods, are ready to deal with different opinions and try teaching methods and approaches different from their own. They engage in discussions and share what traditionally has been personal: objectives, strategies, materials, questions, concerns, and outcomes (DuFour, 2004; DuFour et al., 2006), observe their colleagues' lessons, give feedback and discuss shared professional problems (Bolam et al., 2005). The collaborative culture encourages teachers used to

work autonomously to change their approach and operate as peers in a team

(McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006).

Thus, teachers benefit from peer instruction in a heterogeneous learning community

via dialogue with others and social interaction with their colleagues. Teachers who

became active members in a learning community learned about the teaching profession

and themselves as people in general and teachers in particular. In such a multicultural

setting, teachers share their experiences with others, become active members of the

community and, at the same time, perform reflection and thus enhance their teaching

skills (Levi & Chen, 2018).

Furthermore, over time, teachers in a PLC develop shared responsibility for the

community members' professional development and professional knowledge

development. In teacher learning communities, participants define shared norms and

values of behavior and develop an awareness of behavior and communication patterns

in the community in an atmosphere of trust and respect between community members.

Also, PLC members are characterized by eagerness, perseverance, and *yearning* to

belong, act and develop within the community (Schertz, 2018).

However, the modern and traditional teachers in the present study recounted the

empowering experience drawn from their participation in a PLC but not the challenges

existing in such a group. The professional literature extensively discusses the

challenges of a PLC community characterized by teacher heterogeneity. It refers to the

fact that when professional advancement is the source of competition between

community members, a collaboration between them requires effort and planning to

bring forth open interaction and true collaboration (Sergiovanni, 1994). Moreover, in

their daily work, teachers tend to be isolated from each other, and much effort is

required to impart the possibility of working together effectively to them (Grossman et

al., 2000; McKenzie, 2001; McLaughlin & Talbert, 2006). Furthermore, as in any organization, conflict is inherent in a PLC (De Lima, 2001). Aspiration for collaboration gives rise to various types of conflict. A strong community, willing to endure conflicts as part of its social dynamics can cope with differences of opinion, view them as a positive process in which different ideas, beliefs, and teaching techniques challenge the community, and require all its participants to critically examine different perspectives and alternative solutions to problems (Achinstein, 2002).

In contrast, a community that allows collaboration as an aspiration for consensus might suppress the individual voice, the minority voice, or the voice of resistance. According to De Lima, a community that prefers to limit the scope of conflict tends to preserve the status quo, suppress genuine learning, and cause groupthink stagnation. Moreover, the community might isolate factors that comprise a source of conflict and limit their active participation (Achinstein, 2002).

Thus, even when one of the community members holds a different - or opposing the consensus - opinion, they will avoid voicing it for fear of being ostracized (Lev-On, 2014). The social and technical mechanisms of supervision and threshold preservation in PLCs can sometimes serve to enforce inequality and marginalize the minority's opinions (Lev-On, 2014).

Furthermore, principals' prominence in a group might deter teachers from asking questions for fear of getting hurt in the future. Also, teachers are likely to avoid expressing and voicing their opinions, fearing their fellow members' reactions. For this reason, balancing out the distinctions on status, professionalism, and seniority in communities is significant. The more decentralized and flexible (less hierarchical, bureaucratic, and centralized) the structure of a knowledge community, the higher the

level of knowledge-sharing between its members (Sharratt & Usoro, 2003). Thus, equalizing differences in status, professionalism and seniority might facilitate the expression of opinion and knowledge sharing by the community members, raise equality in participation and even lead to the enhanced ability to influence community members. "Leveling" of status, professionalism, and seniority within the community might impact the conduct of the professional learning community (Lev-On, 2014).

The literature elucidates that participation in a community can be a form of escape and liberation from the high work-related pressure. Thus, teachers choose to enter the nonjudgmental platform on which they can openly articulate the problems they cope with, mistakes, and unforeseen outcomes (Shoop, 2009). It is apparent from Lev-On's study (2014) that knowledge communities are perceived as a judgmental platform, not necessarily a "safe haven". The interviewees in Lev-On's study (2014) described an array of fears in this context, e.g., that the principals' critique will collide with the response in the knowledge community or beyond it, that others will join the discussion and drive it toward critique, that discussions will not be in line with the principal's agenda and will be perceived as organizing against the principal, etc. All these fears might have a significant "chilling effect" on teachers interested in sharing content that, although "explosive", has the potential of being beneficial for their peers and the organization in general.

Also, in schools with *balkanized* staffs, in these frameworks, teachers create discipline-based subcultures; thus, a sense of belonging is shared more by colleagues teaching the same discipline than by the general school community. The subculture depends on the professional and physical proximity within the school walls when a specific subject teachers' and classrooms are adjacent. Teachers of the same discipline create their social norms that affect the types of discourse developing in such a group (Grossman

and Stodolsky, 1995; Grossman et a., 2000). Discipline-based subcultures or stratification between different disciplines and subjects may suppress the general interdisciplinary professional learning community (Ailwood & Follers, 2002; Louis & Kruse, 1996).

As stated, the professional literature yielded several challenges and problems of a heterogeneous PLC which did not emerge in the interviews with the teachers in the present study.

4.7.3. PLC as Opportunity to Create Syncretic Process between Teachers

This study offers a unique examination of the syncretic process possibly occurring in a PLC with traditional and modern teachers as its participants. The study's findings on this issue show that within the framework of the discourse generated in a PLC between different teachers, points of agreement, compromises, and mutual influences are formed within the context of various types of teamwork. As a result, professional communities facilitate and improve teamwork between traditional and modern teachers.

That poses the question of what opportunities in a multicultural and highly heterogeneous PLC will facilitate a syncretic process?

In a multicultural PLC, a multidirectional program not implemented according to predetermined rules is given to change. It is steered toward developing learners' transformative ability to change and effect change. In a multicultural group, the reflective process is maintained in joint work. The idea is to create situational, contextual thinking that contains concrete specifics, on the one hand and fosters generalizing, formal, and abstract thinking, on the other (Levi & Chen, 2018). Choosing the subject is critical for the quality of interaction; therefore, it is advisable to select controversial topics conducive to exposure to different worldviews, opinions,

and multicultural aspects. Levi and Chen (2018) researched multicultural learning communities and recommended not to fear raising controversial issues that highlight personal and social differences.

In an interaction between colleagues, they are exposed to different views; thus, new ideas crystalize, related to different cultures of the learning community's members. A multicultural PLC exposes teachers to the skills of shared learning and enhances their motivation to recognize each other (Levi & Chen, 2018).

Under an open and inclusive teaching system, alongside the direct dialogue occurring in a multicultural PLC, networks of personal and social relations develop that serve as the foundation for peer community learning. Such a community discovers unknown matters in the uncharted territory through observation of self, the community, and the relations between the members.

In terms of a multicultural professional community's output, it is evident that teachers exposed to the global cultural reality can understand that their mainstream culture is but one of many and has no absolute advantage over another culture (Levi & Chen, 2018).

Such a community encourages its members to develop multicultural awareness and sensitivity they could apply in everyday practice. Through interaction and exposure, multicultural community participants will be able to exercise sensitivity to multicultural differences that characterize a society. Exposure to the reality in which social pluralism exists fosters a tolerant attitude toward the other and allows access to the multicultural reality (Levi, 2014).

Hence, a PLC serves as a platform for creating a syncretic process between the traditional teachers, modern teachers, and school administration. On this platform, various teachers can adapt to each group's differences and, from this difference,

develop an inclusive, flexible, open, and conciliatory culture of syncretism. However, in a PLC, additional scenarios can transpire between traditional and modern teachers. Due to a gap between groups in a heterogeneous teachers' room, the dominance of pedagogical uncertainty may develop, and a change in the modern pedagogical structure will destabilize the social and traditional structures of the traditional teachers' group. Alternatively, this group may be unwilling to identify with the modern teachers and will continue to adhere to the traditional characteristics of their teamwork. There is also the third possibility: the heterogeneous teachers' room developing from opposition and resistance into the state of coping and compromise developing toward syncretism, leading to a blend of traditional and modern teamwork patterns when the two behavioral forms and the organization operate alongside each other.

Another question posed in the framework of a professional learning community is whether, through conflicts between the traditional and modern teachers, both groups have changed and adapted to each other. That is, whether they have come closer to the perception of the other and adopted new teamwork models suited to the school norms, or whether they have shown no concession and adaptation and, instead, forced upon each other the implementation of the teamwork method they favor and find most convenient.

In a PLC, a distinctive combination of traditional and modern teamwork patterns is possible with both forms of behavior and organization operating in parallel. Traditional teachers will acknowledge that for the 21st-century instruction and learning methods, traditional teamwork forms do not suffice. Therefore, they must adapt to the social reality and embrace new teamwork models. That way, the traditional teachers' community can serve as a transitional community that, while still upholding traditional teamwork forms, is at the same time influenced by modern teamwork forms.

From an individual or balkanized form of work traditional teachers transition to more innovative work models such as PLC participation or open lessons followed by an analysis based on lesson videotapes. During the transition of the traditional teachers' community from traditional teamwork forms, such as individualism or balkanism, to more innovative forms of teamwork, a syncretic process is generated - a blend of tradition with modernity. As a result of change among traditional teachers, the tradition did not persist in its original format; it blended with new values. Thus, the syncretism in heterogeneous teachers' rooms has not eroded the old pattern; it integrated it into the new structure. The conflict between traditional and modern teachers was resolved by way of compromise.

So, the difference and strangeness - and at times marginality, alienation, and suppression - reinforce the importance of building processes of collaboration and inclusion that enable people to exercise influence in their own lives and on the environment (Agmon-Snir & Shemer, 2016).

4.7.4. Agents of Change Significant in Syncretic Process in PLC

Mediators from both sides actively partake in the syncretic process in a PLC; they have grasped the two groups' conflicting values and prepared the ground for a compromise between them. In this process, the intermediary leadership plays a crucial role. It will monitor the discourse, create personal connections with the teachers and assist the members in reaching points of agreement. Even when the intermediary leadership representatives serve as bearers of external authority whose values and imagery are alien to teachers, they can turn into agents of change because they will represent the model the teachers need to learn and provide the teachers with a role model for compromise and adaptation.

The three types of mediators - representatives of the traditional teachers, the modern teachers, the intermediary leadership, and the school principal - are committed to fulfilling, consciously or unconsciously, a significant role of agents of change. They must create a discourse between the two groups and generate the process of compromise between them. These mediators are suited for the effort of bridging because they belong to both cultures and understand the different social worlds of the traditional and the modern teachers.

The three factors, familiar with the opposing systems of values, often collaborate and, at a time of acute conflict between teachers, initiate compromise agreements to ensure the success of the teamwork in a heterogeneous teachers' room.

Let us elaborate on significant highlights appertaining to each of the agents of change:

a. *Significance of Community Manager's Involvement in the Syncretic Process*

Professional community managers enable a community's existence and perform vital functions in creating and preserving the platform and contents framework based on which the community develops (Butler et al., 2007).

Beyond technical aspects of discourse management, the managerial challenge in a community is manifest in tailoring the discussed issues to suit community members and finding the correct balance in knowledge distribution in the community. As community members might perceive information overload as ineffective, the manager's job is to find the right and meaningful measurement (Meier, 2000).

Community managers have the role of fostering a normative climate in which the teacher community's innovative actions are encouraged and supported. The principal and the staff should share leadership and decision-making functions (Sergiovanni, 1994). Moreover, other researchers support the approach that views the principal as a guiding force and a mentor (Bryk et al., 1999).

That being the case, the literature demonstrates that, as a rule, the community manager and the functions they perform have a significant impact on the discourse in the community, the achievement of the community's goals, and its success in content-related and social aspects. The literature refers to community managers' typical roles, such as recruitment of members and their supervision, formulation of rules and behavioral norms and their enforcement, conflict resolution, and, in addition, management of the community's financial and material infrastructure (Kim, 2000; Press, 2000).

Various studies emphasized the importance of community managers, particularly in the initial stages of community development - a concept consolidation stage, establishment, and the growth stage. In the early stage of the community, managers are required to engage actively in the community's conduct: member recruitment, creating different spaces for discussion and strengthening the community members' sense of community, security, and privacy (Iriberri & Leroy, 2009). However, the manager's role is also significant in all aspects of content management – supervision of the community's agenda, discourse assistance and encouragement, moderation and prevention of "flare-ups" during discussions, and tailoring of discussion topics to suit community members, prevention of information overflow, and regulating discussions held in the community to ensure their relevance to the issues on the community's agenda (Kim, 2000).

Studies reveal that in community members' perception, the manager's role is crucial for the community's success; their work contributes to the community's prosperity and its development from a knowledge-sharing forum (knowledge-exchange platform) into a knowledge community – a space wherein the knowledge is built through shared learning (Gray, 2004).

Thus, the existing research asserts that the manager's role is crucial for the community; however, few studies illustrated empirically how these roles are manifested in the community's dynamics (Lev-On & Steinfeld, 2015).

In their study, Lev-On and Steinfeld (2015) demonstrated that the managers' dominance in the community's conduct is evident in all aspects related to content development, discussion initiation, and discourse encouragement in the community. Lev-On and Steinfeld's study interviews (2015) show that the members unanimously recognize the manager's central role in the community's conduct; they are a pillar of discussions. In the interviewees' view, community managers' role is to make sure that an organic and authentic discussion develops, strengthen the discussion in a dynamic and renewable way, and draw the community members into participation. At times, the members pointed out that the managers encourage the members in private - "behind the scenes" - to raise issues for discussion. Also, the community managers interviewed in Lev-On and Steinfeld's study (2015) spoke of immense activity, not only on the visible tier but also *behind the scenes*.

In these random and informal encounters, the interpersonal dimension is no less dominant than the professional. These meetings are held in an informal atmosphere, and their purpose often becomes apparent in retrospect. Often, they occur spontaneously and straightforwardly and contain significant moments of insight and connection. Moreover, these meetings constitute an opportunity to reveal - to the community members and other agents of change - additional facets of the employee's personality and image and the organization's facets (Agmon-Snir & Shemer, 2016). Processes of change usually inspire emotions, particularly when they touch upon people's lives in a meaningful way. Hence, managers must exercise profound and genuine sensitivity for the emergent feelings in general and when they stem from the

cultural encounter in particular, both for the community people's feelings and those who work in the community and outside of it (Agmon-Snir & Shemer 2016). Furthermore, cultural communities – especially minority communities – occasionally experience identity crises based on their difference from the environment and their otherness and even an absence of affiliation experienced by their friends. An identity crisis is manifest in subjective feelings of unrelatedness, inequality, and a pessimistic view of the future. Community managers can study the existing community mechanisms for nurturing and preservation of its identity and the elevation of its pride and explore whether their help is needed. The recognition of the community powers generates pride, strengthens affiliation, and fosters the ability to connect with community members (Agmon-Snir & Shemer, 2016).

b. Significance of School Leadership Development in Leading Syncretic Processes

One of the goals of a PLC is to develop strong school leadership intended to ensure that the future leadership is adequately trained for its role and becomes an influential school leadership (Dickenson & Montgomery, 2015; Oplatka, 2012;). The challenge is to bring the school leadership to the awareness of social changes occurring in the environment and prepare it to cope with pressures arising in the field, e.g., communication and community (McDougall et al., 2007). PLCs have additional goals, namely: educational leadership empowerment, nurturing the ability to impact school processes, staffs training and guidance, and leading change in the educational institution and community.

Furthermore, PLC's goal is to improve the school leadership's performance, in particular educational leadership development, school culture development with the focus on learning, effective development of the school teaching and education staff, the building of change-oriented work plans, introduction of inclusive approaches in

decision making, promotion of collaboration and teamwork (Kraft & Papay, 2014). PLC provides the school leadership with the basis for professional development and peer learning. The creation of learning communities where the school teaching staff maintains a constant reflective dialogue with their peers within the school walls significantly benefits the process (Hall, 2014).

Altarac and Miro-Yaffe (2016) asserted that learning in the school occurs in compliance with a principle positing that change can be implemented and established only when the school meets three conditions: (a) the principal holds a central role in leading the change; (b) an established leading team with well-defined functions supports the principal in leading the change, and (c) the entire school staff participates in decision-making regarding the process of change. To ensure a successful change, the principal's backing - or even direct involvement in the process - is insufficient; the leadership team is essential. It works together with the principal, understands the change, and implements it in the school. One of the main contributions of the school PLC is the change from specific "fire extinguishing" tactics to the systemic concept that succeeds in strengthening loose ties that characterize the school organization and turning them into closer-knit bonds (Spillane et al., 2011).

Moreover, the professional community's contribution lies in consolidating a distinctive professional development model for school leadership adapted to the local culture and needs and substantively different in concept from the framework of advancement courses for principals only and advancement courses for teaching staff. In the process of shared learning, leading teams share responsibility and leadership with the principal, impact the school work and support the principal who, in their turn, delegates authority, takes risks, puts trust in the leading team, and allows them to share leadership with them. Thus, collaboration empowers the entire staff and enables all

PLC participants to lead the change in the school (Altarac & Miro Yaffe, 2016). The PLC advances the school as a learning organization whose members consistently improve their abilities and jointly cultivate new and shared thinking patterns (Oplatka, 2015; Sengaet al., 2012).

Harmony and collaboration in maintaining instructive and conducive pedagogical discourse are evident in the traditional teachers' deviation from traditional teamwork norms. In this community, lesson analysis, sharing of materials and knowledge, and new shared-knowledge construction illustrate that traditional teachers recognize new values of the broader society and adapt to the new pedagogical environment. Thus, despite the advantages of a PLC as a platform for conflict management and the syncretic process of compromise and adaptation, this study presents a distinct outlook on the possible challenges faced by a heterogeneous PLC. Along with the erosion of the traditional teachers' social and traditional structure or prevention of any willingness to identify with modern teachers regarding the characteristics of the traditional teachers' teamwork, another scenario is conceivable – a syncretic process in all its glory.

The current study's findings shift the focus to the prospect of the heterogeneous classroom developing from the state of opposition and conflict to the state of coping and compromise in the direction of syncretism followed by the creation of combined traditional and modern teamwork patterns where the two forms of behavior and the organization co-exist. This unique occurrence is possible if the agents of change are active and take it upon themselves to lead a syncretic process. Thus, the present study highlights the significance of the agents of change in leading processes of compromise and adaptation.

The difference emerging from the present study is that while the professional literature yields four aspects that affect the development of teacher learning communities: technical, intellectual, socioemotional, and sociopolitical (Bascia & Hargreaves, 2000), the sociopolitical aspect in heterogeneous groups is the most significant because it pertains to the balance of the operating powers and the school discourse.

The present study turns the attention to additional sociopolitical aspects, which are: the mobilization of the intermediary leadership, the school administration, and agents of change on the part of traditional and modern teachers, capable of a significant impact on the success of the syncretic process in a PLC.

To conclude, notwithstanding the past, personal and collective experiences of rejection and negative stereotypes toward traditional teachers and despite their awareness of possibly developing emphasis on negative visibility, by participating in a PLC, these teachers choose to highlight their identity symbols. They expose themselves to the risk of their opinions, sayings, and perceptions facing rejection, possibly resulting in their more profound sense of estrangement in the community. They choose to highlight their central identity symbols: contribution to and responsibility for the collective, modesty, and humility as core values in their work.

Aharon (2010) posits that in many cases, immigrants, for instance, use their ethnicity that in other circumstances would construe a distinctive and excluding category as an "entry ticket" into the Israeli collective. In the case described in the present study. drawing attention to ethnic symbols serves as "a segregation strategy aimed at affiliation" (Aharon, 2010). However, for traditional teachers, ethnicity emphasis was their way of presenting themselves as people with a relevant social message for society in general and negotiating their place in the social space of the teachers' room in particular.

We assert that through a PLC, we can bring genuine change in the social reality. Our study demonstrates that alongside the processes of ostracism and discrimination - the existence of which we obviously cannot deny - processes occur in heterogeneous teachers' rooms through which traditional teachers from minority groups engage in negotiation of their place in the teachers' room and attempt – and at times succeed – to change their experience from that of ostracism to inclusion. Making traditional teachers into partners in knowledge was the step that, in our view, contributed to teachers feeling sufficiently safe to initiate, organize, take risks and use the public space of the teacher's room to proudly celebrate their ethnicity and reclaim their place in the social discourse on their visibility (Arieli et al., 2018).

Moreover, traditional teachers use their participation in a PLC to affirm their ethnic identity; it is a space where they can share experiences concerning ethnicity with other members of the same community (Krumer-Nevo, 2014). We can interpret their choice to raise issues for discussion with the group and demonstrate their ethnicity symbols as their way to gain control of the group in the face of the external forces which, at least in their opinion, underestimate it.

The traditional teachers' primary significance in a PLC is intra-communal; the traditional teachers use the group as a medium for affirming their ethnic identity (Krumer-Nevo, 2014). Their participation is not intended for the traditional teachers' eyes, i.e., their colleagues, but rather for the eyes of the others. Indeed, for traditional teachers, their participation in a PLC served as a practice indicating the transition from ostracism to inclusion. The traditional teachers' belief in the prospect of such a transition was inherent in the practice.

However, this transition must be done in a supportive and intimate atmosphere with the structure of equal participation, a clear preference for relationships, and a blurring of

boundaries. If such transition is possible for traditional teachers, they will be able to

arrive at meetings with modern teachers with a big smile and be filled with a sense of

pride (Vardi-Rahat, 2016).

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present study sheds light on teamwork forms in heterogeneous teachers' rooms, including enforced/contrived teamwork and organized/planned teamwork, and the implications of the choice of teamwork type for the teachers' room.

5.1. Research Questions

a. How do traditional teachers, modern teachers, and principals characterize teamwork in heterogeneous teachers' rooms (organized, planned, enforced, contrived)?

b. Which teamwork types do traditional teachers prefer, and which modern teachers? Which teamwork types do both groups agree on (from weak to strong forms: collegial, solitary, individual, professional learning community)?

c. What is the contribution of the syncretic model as a conflict management tool in heterogeneous teachers' rooms concerning a teamwork form that all the teachers and the principal accept?

d. What is the principal's role in the heterogeneous teachers' room in facilitating an agreement on teamwork types.

e. How can the current state of the heterogeneous teachers' room be influenced through a syncretic process?

5.2. Results

1. The present study highlights the implications of mandatory and contrived teamwork in teachers' rooms imposed by the school administration. The study illustrates that collective catharsis has an inherent disruptive potential to be a disruptive force in the school culture creation. This cathartic process regarding mandatory regularities on teamwork lasts longer and lingers in the teachers' room, preoccupying teachers for lengthier periods than usual. Such a cathartic process may lead to teachers' withdrawal

behaviors of the subversive strike type in response to the school administration's demand for enforced/contrived teamwork.

2. This study raised awareness of the distinct necessity to satisfy teachers' needs in their school work; trust, autonomy, trust in their judgment, flexibility in determining regularities, and choosing contents are teachers' core needs. The study showed that the principals justified planned (guided) teamwork as a means of creating opportunities for different teachers to work together in the school, thus forming more stable collaborative relations among teachers, and as a measure to prevent group acquiescence and complacency while encouraging teachers to "step outside their comfort zone".

3. The present study's findings direct attention to the conscious choice of professional solitude among traditional teachers. The consequences of professional isolation might be both negative and positive. On the one hand, they could be detrimental to the traditional teacher's professional functioning. On the other, professional solitude might be beneficial for the traditional teacher and afford them freedom of action and intimacy that they would enjoy. Moreover, the study revealed that traditional teachers are very lonely in their work due to their indecision and numerous reservations in relationships with colleagues and school administration.

The study showed an apparent agreement among both traditional and modern teachers as to the fact that collegial teamwork aids teachers in developing processes of teaching, learning, assessment, knowledge expansion, and facilitation of work distribution in the disciplinary and the didactic fields. Our study shifts the focus to this consensus on the benefits of collegial teamwork.

4. The study's findings put forward the enforced forms of teacher teamwork:

    a. test grading by outside teachers, not teachers who teach the students;

b. open-lesson hosting aimed at teaching improvement and professional development at the staff level experienced as judgmental and hurtful toward teachers and damaging to their motivation and willingness to continue to cultivate teamwork;

c. lesson videotaping as a tool for staff's learning and professional development. The study draws attention to the empowering team experience of open-lesson planning in teamwork beneficial and instructive for teachers.

The study demonstrated that compromise and adaptation are the core values of the syncretic model adequately suited for heterogeneous teachers' rooms. The achievement of compromise between heterogeneous groups is contingent on mutual trust, with the principal leading and facilitating it. The level of trust and autonomy, given by principals, will limit forced and contrived teamwork. The study shows that empowerment turns the teachers' room into a highly-motivated active team capable of tackling previously contentious tasks.

5. Tradition and modernity are not dichotomously distinctive. The study highlights scholars' ideas that yield a central conclusion: tradition is not pre-modern and is not contrary to it; it has been an integral part of modernity. The coexistence theory explains the perseverance of tradition in the face of modernization. Tradition is a defining narrative, ever-present in the background; it is given to the continuous process of interpretation and renewal.

6. This study's distinction lies in highlighting the phenomenon of principals' indifference and passivity regarding conflicts developing in teachers' rooms and insensitive responses to their subordinates' pain resulting from disagreements and conflicts within teaching staff. The present study points out that we should not avoid or evade the conflict; in fact, we should examine it, make an effort to understand it more profoundly and recognize it as part of life and routine in the teacher's room. Based on this study,

we can assess the consequences of the principal's discrimination against and preference for specific teachers.

The study showed that denigrating staff members and restricting their abilities lead to the diminution of the teachers' room power. Moreover, instead of reinforcing and empowering the authority, a mutual process of weakening and lessening the authority is generated.

7. This study offered an additional and novel viewpoint about the teachers' room as a place for collegiality development between teachers: a collegiality norm called *storytelling* takes place on the staffroom *stage* and constitutes part of the school ethos. Through *storytelling*, teachers share their experiences, confer, and develop knowledge, experience, and practice of their work. They vent their feelings and create mutual reflections and reinforcements as part of a significant social connection. The success of the staffroom syncretic process is evident in teachers' storytelling. The novelty of the current study is in its perception of storytelling as a strong collegiality form meaningful for the teacher community and conducive to the advancement of a structured and stable syncretic process in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

8. The study demonstrated that the collegiality norm called the good colleague is an opportune moment to blur social boundaries – affiliation and culture - with the other in a heterogeneous teachers' room.

9. The study showed that professional communities facilitate teamwork improvement. In these communities, knowledge-sharing by all participating teachers occurs, and new knowledge emerges and further develops in discourse communities, owing to shared teamwork by traditional and modern teachers.

This study revealed the power of the sociocommunal experience the traditional and modern teachers underwent in PLC meetings. The study's findings showed that in the

discourse generated in a PLC between different teachers, points of agreement, compromises, and mutual influences are formed.

10. The current study sheds light on the contribution of the syncretic model to conflict management in traditional and modern teachers' heterogeneous staffrooms:

   a. In the encounter between groups of principals, traditional teachers, and modern teachers, clashes emerge - a trademark of a significant social and cultural conflict. However, mutual influences develop gradually because cultural contact is a reciprocal process wherein all groups maintaining interactional ties are given to change with the help of mediators. Principals can also adapt to teachers' needs and vice versa. Per the syncretic model, the cultural values of the dominant group – the principals' group - might also change (syncretism-from-above), the outcome being compromise and adaptation to a variety of *organized* teamwork types and prevention of coerced and contrived teamwork. These will become assimilated via negotiations based on compromise and adaptation.

   b. The study indicated that in the syncretic process, it is best that agents of change include representatives of both traditional and modern teachers' groups, the school intermediary leadership who understand the contradicting values of the two cultures – the traditional and modern teachers, on the one hand, and principals, on the other - and prepare the ground for compromise between them. The school counselor or psychologist is required to participate in the process. Intermediary leadership representatives will advocate compromise and the path of negotiation, raise suggestions for agreements and, consciously or subconsciously, fulfill a crucial role of agents of change. The discourse on disparities and rejection between the groups will not lead to the disintegration of the teachers' room because from that day on it will be perceived as a place where one can talk about

their problems and troubles; in the process, the realization will form that the members of the teacher group do not break down because of this discourse.

c. The theoretical contribution of the syncretic model is in focusing not only on the ideological process between teachers and principals regarding organized collegiality or contrived collegiality but also on its outcome. The outcome, as stated, is the fruit of compromise and adaptation between the principal and their staff.

d. The syncretic model inspires conceptual change that will replace the negative view of the conflict with the perspective that sees its value. One of the goals of the syncretic model is to help the principal stop recoiling from the conflict, consider its meaning, acknowledge the conflict and live with it. Anger, frustration, and lack of satisfaction prevalent among teachers may serve as opportunities for growth, change, and innovation, not only as a threat and peril.

e. According to the syncretic model, seeing the difference between teachers as contradictory to the moral and normative group unity is a misperception damaging to the group. The desire to promote group unity hurts the broader identity of the teacher group.

f. The study demonstrated that the staffroom stage is the optimal place to build a syncretic community while granting teachers a social encounter and opportunities for professional, social, and personal development. The syncretic research aspires to view the teachers' room as a place for dynamic activity of diverse voices - both traditional and modern teachers' - blended.

g. The study showed that the *storytelling* and *good-colleague* norms are perceived as the basis for any open syncretic, professional and productive community. Thus, we should seek to deepen our understanding of these collegiality norms in teacher

communities in a continuous growth process. The current study revealed that in these norms, the *syncretism-from-above* is likely to occur in the teachers' room, i.e., the majority group's cultural values may change under the influence of the minority groups. The definition of optimal teamwork is no longer set by the dominant group but rather through encounters with traditional teachers. The storytelling, praise, and support are examples of successful bridging of the gap between traditional and modern teachers. The process strengthens the syncretic model whereby the two traditions nurture and influence each other. Along with the mobility of supportiveness and storytelling, modern teachers learn how to gain insights from the traditional teachers' stories, and support and praise them until a steady process develops in the teachers' room of recognizing the good in the traditional teachers. It is, in essence, *syncretism-from-below*: selecting and merging traditional and modern components involved in the processing and interpretation of the traditional symbols and customs into the new culture and the adoption of new content. A *good colleague* is a leading agent of continuity and change in heterogeneous teachers' room dynamics. They create opportunities for compromise and adaptation, form a link unifying the teachers' room, and serve as a bridge to integration between traditional and modern teachers.

h. This study offers a unique reflection on a possible syncretic process in a PLC with traditional and modern teacher participants. This study's findings show that in the discourse generated in a PLC between different teachers, points of agreement, compromises, and mutual influences are formed within the context of teamwork types. The study demonstrates that a PLC serves as a platform for generating a syncretic process between the traditional teachers, the modern teachers, and the school administration. On this platform, different teachers can adapt to each

group's differences and, based on this difference, develop an inclusive, flexible, open, and conciliatory syncretic culture. In a PLC, a distinctive combination of traditional and modern teamwork patterns is possible with both forms of behavior and organization operating in parallel. In individual or balkanized work forms, traditional teachers transition and adapt to more innovative work models, such as PLC participation. In the transition of the traditional teachers' community from the traditional forms such as individualism or *balkanism*, to more innovative forms of teamwork, syncretism is generated as a version of tradition and modernity. As a result of the process of change in traditional teachers, the tradition was not preserved in its original format but blended with new values. The syncretism did not erode the old pattern but integrated it into the new structure. The traditional and modern teachers' conflict was solved through compromise. The traditional teachers in a PLC can choose to highlight their identity symbols. Our study demonstrates that alongside the processes of exclusion and discrimination, other processes occur in heterogeneous teachers' rooms whereby traditional teachers from minority groups engage in negotiation on their place in the teachers' room, succeed in changing their status and reposition themselves in the social discourse on their visibility in the staffroom.

 In a distinctive combination of traditional and modern teamwork of the PLC, both forms of behavior and organization coexist. Traditional teachers will acknowledge that for the 21st-century teaching and learning methods, traditional teamwork forms are not adequate. Therefore, they must adapt to the social reality and embrace new teamwork models. Thus, the traditional teachers' community can serve as a transitional community still maintaining traditional teamwork is influenced by modern teamwork forms.

i. This study is effectively a monograph on the teachers' room demonstrating that, through the conflict, a distinct model has developed in teachers' rooms deviating from its original format and developing per the syncretic model. The theoretical framework of syncretism is explored and presented for the first time in the current study as an additional sociological model for analyzing processes of collaboration and teamwork and the encounter between a traditional teachers' community and modern society. Per this model, as opposed to the existing sociological and anthropological studies, the traditional teachers' community does not necessarily forgo its cultural identity, but neither can it preserve its original tradition in its entirety. In the wake of the cultural encounter, mutual influences develop between innovative and traditional teachers while the two normative structures evolve with mediators' help

5.3. Conclusions

In light of the present study's findings and a subsequent reflective discussion, we can draw several significant conclusions contributing to research at both theoretical and practical levels.

a. Based on our research, we can conclude that the use of organized or contrived collegiality involves the question of whether the school culture contains trust, respect, and understanding to the extent that would allow new structures and arrangements to advance it.

b. Based on the study, we can determine that both teachers and principals must be the driving force behind the professional collaboration. With the principal leading the change, the interactions might be contrived and even sabotage the original goal. Conversely, the collaboration left solely to teachers may prove ineffective. Thus, both groups must not ignore or trample each other.

c. The study concludes that the role of the narrative pedagogy should be expanded in heterogeneous teachers' rooms and implemented as part of the syncretic model in a complex human work environment and a conflictual environment with multiple interpretations.

d. We can infer from the study that the good colleague's supportiveness is a liminal response wherein a free familiar bond is established between traditional and modern teachers separated in their daily lives by social and cultural *partitions*. The good colleague concurrently opens and closes the borders with the other, thus creating acknowledgment of respect and recognition regarding the other's cultural values in the intercultural encounter and the readiness to study the components of value in the other.

e. The study concludes that the community manager's role in a heterogeneous community is critical for the community's success, and their work is essential not only on the visible tier but also "behind the scenes". Also, empowering the educational leadership (intermediary leadership) in heterogeneous groups, fostering its performance and ability to impact the school processes, and advancing collaborations and teamwork are part of the PLC's goals.

f. The conclusion emerging from this study is that evaluation processes for teachers' promotion, tenure, or dismissal must be separated from open lesson hosting.

g. The conclusion drawn from this study is that it is vital to encourage the teaching staff to view their own and the other's uniqueness without fear of losing the group identity. Boosting the individuals' distinctiveness nurtures the group's ethical collaboration.

5.4. Recommendations

The current study offers several empirical and practical recommendations aimed at both contributing to the existing knowledge of the academic literature on enforced/contrived teamwork forms and assisting the decision-makers, principals, inspectors, and education system employees in all aspects of traditional and modern teachers' coping with teamwork gaps in the heterogeneous teachers' room.

a. The awareness of the contribution of the storytelling collegiality norm and the ability to interpret it can be most beneficial to teachers, in particular, novice teachers still unfamiliar with the substance of interpersonal relationships between the school staff members; students and novice teachers may misinterpret processes such as storytelling accepted within the walls of teachers' rooms leading to confusion, confrontation, and conflict.

It is critical to augment pre-service teachers' ability to tell stories on the staffroom stage and utilize this collegiality norm as a tool. Teacher training program students and novice teachers can avoid feeling like "outsiders" in the teachers' room if they learn this aspect of teaching already in training.

One of the messages that the present study aspires to convey is that all teachers should engage in the heterogeneous storytelling on the teaching room "stage", listen to others' stories, and, in due time, tell their personal stories when they wish to share them with their peers.

b. The awareness of the contribution of the good-colleague collegiality norm can be highly beneficial for both new and experienced teachers, and for student teachers who might misinterpret conventional processes within the walls of teachers' rooms. The recognition of the teachers' room as a place of social consolidation can benefit teachers in training and novice teachers and demonstrate to them that to be

considered a good teacher in the classroom is as significant as being seen as a good colleague.

c. Furthermore, this study's findings can also be used in guidance and counseling of both new and experienced principals in their work with the teaching staff, conflict management in heterogeneous staffrooms, and building operational teamwork.

d. Based on the study's findings, the academic institutions for teacher and principal training need to add enforced and contrived work forms to their agenda, along with planned and organized work forms and the implications of choosing any thereof. They should consider training staff to identify the components of teacher needs for the team while adopting the syncretic model that predicts success in conflict resolution between traditional and modern teachers. Educating to recognize the teacher's teamwork needs will raise awareness of the challenges heterogeneous staffrooms present and prepare the staff by teaching them valuable tools and effective strategies for coping with this challenge.

e. The present study opened a window into the traditional and modern teachers' world in terms of their shared and agreed-upon teamwork in the teachers' room; it merits expansion through further research.

5.5. The Study's Limitations

a. The teacher and principal samples included elementary school staff only, hence the limited ability to generalize about schools of other stages of education. The populations of participant teachers and principals were small and did not include teachers and principals from high schools, specialized schools, schools for gifted, special education schools, etc. Also, the study involved five principals affiliated with the Bedouin sector, ten principals of the secular Jewish sector, and five principals from state religious schools. The limitation, therefore, applies to the

study's findings that relate to the secular Jewish sector principals and reflect the situation in the Jewish sector schools in disproportion to the Bedouin-Moslem and the Jewish state religious sectors. The study comprised schools in the south of Israel (the Southern district), and its limitation is that schools from other areas of the country were not sampled. With multiple efforts to arrive at the most heterogeneous sample possible, the findings represent the traditional and modern teachers' perceptions of each other, their perspectives on teamwork, and the interviewed principals' perceptions. It is possible that a more significant difference exists among the teacher population in general and that the sample comprised teachers who have the enforced teamwork burnt as a tough experience in their minds, with far-reaching implications for their lives and identities.

b. Another limitation of this study lies in the analysis stage which did not integrate document and educational protocol analysis. The documents could include policy documents dealing with teacher communities and teamwork planning for teacher communities, including planned regularities for teamwork in various teacher groups. Also, protocols for teacher groups and teachers-principal work meetings were not used. Despite the researcher's numerous attempts to obtain documents and protocols, it proved unfeasible.

c. Another limitation concerning the school principals applies to data collection based on nonanonymous self-reports. As a result, there might be a bias in participant responses for various reasons, e.g., social appeasement.

d. The method of data collection presents an additional limitation. In this study, we examined not the teachers' behavior in practice but their declared preference for teamwork types that support their needs. Given the possible discrepancy between the teachers' statements, positions, beliefs, and their behavior in practice, it would

be useful to further explore the research questions through additional tools, e.g., observation or data collection from other school sources that could provide evidence of teamwork, e.g., the school psychologist, counselor, or vice-principal. Also, the attempt to explore whether the teachers' perceptions of their behavior and teamwork type preferences are linked merits further research.

e. Finally, the researcher's affiliation with the group of the Southern district principals contributed to the openness on the participants' part and served as an invitation to break the code of silence encompassing heterogeneous teachers' rooms. However, it is conceivable that the researcher's affiliation with the said group affected the interactions with the study participants, and fragments of the participants' narratives were silenced, such as minimal reference to the resilience and strength factors that helped them cope in a heterogeneous interaction. For that same reason, most principals did not rush to provide the researcher with documents and protocols of teamwork planning for teacher communities, including teamwork regularities for different teacher groups.

Notwithstanding all these limitations, the study successfully painted a clear picture of teamwork in heterogeneous teachers' rooms. These findings can lead to additional forms of action by educators and policymakers tasked with the optimized school teamwork and the effort to reduce conflicts between traditional and modern teachers, and between these two groups and the school administration.

The study can open the gate to additional research on finding alternative tools for conflict management in heterogeneous teachers' rooms.

5.6. Further Research

As this exploratory study offers a conceptualization of teamwork in heterogeneous teachers' rooms among traditional and modern teachers, there is room for further research in the following directions:

a. Despite the recent evidence that reliable findings are obtainable through small sample analysis (Sideridis et al., 2014), it is advisable to examine the question with a larger sample in the future to reinforce the ability to generalize the findings. It is recommended to conduct additional studies that will cover a larger population size and include research groups from central and northern Israel.

The study's population size of 60 school teachers and 20 principals was appropriate for the study's goals and recognized in qualitative research. However, it will be interesting to examine teamwork types in heterogeneous teachers' rooms across various other schools. Moreover, all the participant teachers and principals represented elementary schools. A similar study among teachers and principals of junior and senior high schools or kindergartens can yield a new perspective on shared agreements between teachers and allow for a broader knowledge base on teamwork styles in heterogeneous staffrooms.

The study was based solely on one qualitative research method tool: the open semi-structured interview.

It will be fascinating and challenging to conduct a broader study in the future that would explore some of the present study's issues and study the population of an entire country using the quantitative methodology.

In future studies, it is advisable to combine qualitative and quantitative research tools to achieve higher objectivity in assessing the contribution and the place of planned and unforced teamwork in teachers' rooms. Similarly, future studies should

integrate educational documents and protocols. These documents can include policy documents on teacher communities, teamwork planning for teacher communities, and planning teamwork regularities for various teacher groups. Also, the protocols of teacher groups' work meetings and teachers - school principals' meetings should be included.

b. The schools that participated in the study represent the three different sectors existing in the state education system in the Negev (the Jewish schools, subdivided into state secular and state religious schools; and Moslem-Bedouin schools). Also, it will be interesting to conduct a study on teamwork styles in heterogeneous teachers' rooms in specialized schools with unique ideologies, schools for gifted children, and special education schools.

c. There is room for identification and closer examination of additional enforced and contrived teamwork, and planned teamwork forms. It is essential to conduct further research that can shed light on substantive differences between the different sectors because the current study yielded no significant differences between the sectors - state secular and state religious Jewish schools, and Moslem-Bedouin schools - concerning enforced forms of teamwork, except for lesson videotaping. Lesson videotaping has not been assimilated in the Bedouin-Moslem schools thus far due to the cultural difficulty of filming a female teacher with/without their headdress and posting it in a conservative community.

d. Further studies can clarify and yield additional operational recommendations for the principal on how to lead a heterogeneous teachers' room in an educated manner suitable for all the groups.

Future studies can continue to explore the principal's role in heterogeneous staffrooms to assist them in coping with challenges arising from the field in the

heterogeneous teachers' room. Based on the bulk of knowledge accumulated in this study and future studies, it will become possible to build a collection of best practices and recommendations for principals to support them in facing the challenges.

e. It is desirable to evaluate, in further research, the syncretic model's achievements. It is substantial to investigate schools that will choose to adopt it in their heterogeneous staffrooms. Also, there is a need for a study that will complete the findings that the present study produced.

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APPENDIX 1: *Teacher Interview Evaluation Sheet*

Subject: Syncretism as conflict management tool in heterogeneous teachers' rooms

Part A: Teamwork as perception

1. What is teamwork, in your view?

2. What, in your opinion, are the basic components and the necessary components in teamwork (what shoud take place, in your estimation?)?

3. What, in your opinion, are the strengths and what are the vulnerabilities/weaknesses in teamwork?

4. How is communication done between team members in the group you belong to?

5. How are team members assigned?

6. How is team leader selected?

7. How did you formulate clear goals that guide your work?

8. How is the measure of group team efficiency determined in the group you belong to?

9. How is the teamwork evaluated? At individual level or as interdependence?

Part B: Cultures/Collaboration forms (individualism, collegiality, scanning and storytelling, help and assistance, balkanization, "convenient collaboration", "planned collegiality").

18. Which group do you belong to in teamwork? What does the group have in common? What is the bond between you and the team members?

19. What role do you usually fulfill in teamwork (indicate the characterization that most describes you by choosing the appropriate letter)?

a. dominant

b. leading

c. conciliatory

d. liaising

e. formulating ideas and proposing ways to act

f. attentive

g. ready for action

h. diligent

i. willing to try new ways or new tools

j. individualistic.

20. What is the reason for this description of you?

21. Please, indicate, which of the following issues you attend to in teamwork:

a. discussion on syllabus;

b. sharing learning and instructions materials, including lesson plans or specific teaching practices;

c. discussing logistical issues, e.g., physical classroom management or field trip planning;

d. analysis, asking questions/collaborative thinking;

e. support;

f. review;

g. developing study materials, teaching models, open lessons, writing tests;

h. customized programs for students;

i. development of online materials;

j. planning of Peak Days and ceremonies, social and ethical activities;

k. examination of various events – case study;

l. systematic and rich evaluation (variety of evaluation methods) of students'

   work and of teamwork;

m. discussion on pedagogical decisions, based on students' works or

   evaluation data;

n. discussion on issues of student behavior and discipline.

Part C: Principal's role in leading teamwork

33. How often do your team members meet for teamwork? Do you designate fixed and regular time for teams' meetings? Are the meetings set in advance or held spontaneously?

34. In your opinion, is the time allocated for teacher teams' meetings sufficient?

35. Is the time allocated for teamwork maintained throughout the year?

36. Who determines these regularities? In what timeframe (learning, teachers' presence hours, reinforcement hours)?

37. Do you feel that teamwork regularity is imposed upon the group?

38. In your opinion, how does team leader ensure that the team is composed of people suitable and essential for the implementation of team tasks?

39. What is your opinion on the school principal's participation in teamwork of different groups?

40. In your opinion, does the principal provide the teams with the knowledge base, time and support required for effective work?

Part D: Work processes in heterogenous teachers' rooms as challenge for creating syncretic collaborations

41. How would you define yourself?

    very experienced teacher (15 years and above)/experienced teacher (6-15)/novice teacher (1-5)

42. Teacher of: traditional teaching methods/modern teaching methods

43. In your opinion, what are the advantages of heterogenous team structure? What are the disadvantages?

44. Ino your opinion, how do differences between team members affect the team performance?

45. What are the conditions for success of teamwork in heterogenous structure?

46. Remarks:

APPENDIX 2: *Principal's Interview Evaluation Sheet*

Subject: Syncretism as conflict management tool in heterogeneous teachers' rooms

Part A: Teamwork as perception

1. What is teamwork, in your view?

2. In your opinion, what are the basic components and the necessary components of teamwork (what, in your estimation, should take place?)

3. What, in your opinion, are the strengths in teamwork and what are the weaknesses?

4. How is communication done in your school between you and the teachers?

5. How is teamwork determined in the staffroom?

6. How is team leader for each group in the staffroom determined?

7. How did you formulate clear goals that guide your work?

8. How is team efficiency in the school groups measured?

9. How is teamwork evaluated? At the individual level or as interdependence?

Part B: Cultures/collaboration forms (individualism, collegiality, scanning and storytelling, help and assistance, balkanization, "convenient collaboration", "planned collegiality").

18. Which cultures/collaboration forms exist at your school?

19. What role do you usually fulfill in teamwork with your teachers (indicate the characterization that most describes you by choosing the appropriate letter)?

a. dominant

b. leading

c. conciliatory

d. liaising

e. formulating ideas and proposing ways to act

f. attentive

g. ready for action

h. diligent

i. willing to try new ways or new tools

j. individualistic.

20. What is the reason for this description of you?

21. Please, indicate, which of the following issues you deal with in teamwork:

    a. discussion on syllabus;

    b. sharing learning and instructions materials, including lesson plans or specific teaching practices;

    c. discussing logistical issues, e.g., physical classroom management or field trip planning;

    d. inquiry, asking questions/collaborative thinking;

    e. support;

    f. review;

    g. developing study materials, teaching models, open lessons, writing tests;

    h. customized programs for students;

    i. development of online materials;

    j. planning of Peak Days and ceremonies, social and ethical activities;

    k. examination of various events – case study;

    l. systematic and rich evaluation (variety of evaluation methods) of students' work and of teamwork;

    m. discussion on pedagogical decisions, based on students' works or on their evaluation data;

    n. discussion on issues of student behavior and discipline.

Part C: Principal's role in leading teamwork

33. How often (regularities) do teachers meet for teamwork? Do you, as the principal, designate fixed and regular time for teams' meetings? Are the meetings set in advance or held spontaneously?

34. In your opinion, is sufficient time allocated for teacher teams' meetings?

35. Is the time allocated for teamwork maintained throughout the year?

36. Who determines these regularities? In what timeframe (learning, teachers' presence hours, reinforcement hours)?

37. Do you feel that teamwork regularity is imposed upon the group?

38. In your opinion, how does team leader ensure that the team is composed of people who are suitable and essential for the implementation of team tasks?

39. What is your opinion on the school principal's participation in teamwork of different groups?

40. In your opinion, does the principal provide the teams with the knowledge base, time and support required for effective work?

Part D: Work processes in heterogenous teachers' rooms as challenge for creating syncretic collaborations

41. How would you define yourself?

    very experienced (15 years and above)/ experienced (6-15)/ novice (1-5)

42. In your opinion, who is a teacher of traditional teaching methods? A teacher of modern   teaching methods?

43. In your opinion, what are the advantages of heterogeneous team structure? What are the disadvantages?

44. In your opinion, how do differences between team members affect the team performance?

45. What are the conditions for success of teamwork in heterogeneous structure?

46. What is the school principal's role in management of teacher conflicts in the staffroom?

47. How do you respond when to conflicts in the staffroom?

48. Remarks:

_____