

# Bar-Ilan University

The blurring of the time allotted to work and family  
among teachers in primary education in Israel:  
Causes and implications.

Ma'ayan Mauda

This work is submitted as part of the requirements for obtaining a  
master's degree at Bar Ilan University's School of Education

Ramat Gan, Israel

2019

## **Abstract**

This study examines the issue of blurring the boundaries of time between the time devoted to the teacher's work and the time devoted to caring for her family and her family from the teacher's point of view. The study seeks to understand the phenomenon of work permeability to the family of Israeli teachers in all its aspects and their significance. Its characteristics and implications for teacher functioning in both- frameworks and tactics are examined to balance the needs of the family and work.

The study was conducted using a qualitative method using 36 semi-structured in-depth interviews, and the analysis of the findings was performed in longitudinal and lateral analysis. The 36 Jewish sector teachers in official recognized elementary schools were selected from across the State of Israel.

### Findings:

1. The phenomenon of blurring the boundaries of time between the time allocated by work and family teachers is broad and evident in the commitment of teachers to perform work assignments, while in their homes and at the expense of contacting their families. These tasks include examining tests and assignments, preparing lessons and responding to parents who contact them in a variety of media. In some cases, it is compulsory to give up family activities because of their work commitments and the need to get organized.

2. The key factor in blurring the time limits is the multitude of tasks that need to be done simultaneously and immediately. This situation does not allow teachers to complete school assignments during their formal work hours, forcing them to take work home frequently. Dealing with these chores in the home comes at the expense of the time devoted to their family. Another factor calling its predecessor, is the school year

periods. Teachers reported an unusual multitude of tasks ahead of parents' days and diplomas, twice a year, forcing them to take their work home. In addition, the nature of the teaching profession is seen by the teachers as a profession that always has a multitude of assignments and there is not enough time to perform at school. This applies to all types of teaching and education roles, whether as a professional teacher, educator or coordinator. Another factor is the conditions of employing teachers. Teachers report that their working conditions make it difficult to perform all their tasks at school. For example, staying hours are not efficiently spent on personal work of their assignments, such as checking jobs and exams due to school assignments that take place during these hours, including meetings and handling of disciplinary problems and lack of basic work equipment such as computers, lack of quiet work environment. As a result, teachers are forced to do some of the chores in their homes. Another factor is the policy and requirements of the Ministry of Education, which burdens teachers with many tasks beyond current teaching as requirements for conducting mappings, examinations and various projects, which contribute to an increase in teacher assignments and require her to take her work to her home. To regulate the requirements of the Ministry of Education and allow them a little more time to work among the school walls, but not always. Another but less important factor is the relationship with parents, which is supported by the use of advanced communication technology and the need for permanent availability of teachers.

3. Implications for the quality of life and functioning of teachers are expressed at the individual level and the general harm to their family. This expressed by giving up or avoiding family activities, taking their school work into their home physically and mentally in thoughts, and rarely using withdrawal behaviors as poor quality of work and poor performance. In addition, injury to the physical and mental health of teachers

was observed due to this, although this finding is required for further research to determine the cause and effect relationship.

4. In order to reduce the scope of the phenomenon, teachers point to three key factors that can help (in descending order): the Ministry of Education, the principal and themselves. Teachers take on some of the responsibility for blurring the boundaries of time between work and family in their current working conditions, noting that streamlining their work may help little, but not solve the problem. Effective management of their time does not matter, although the number of tasks assigned to them will slightly reduce the power of blurring the boundaries of their time in their current working conditions. Teachers note that a key factor in addressing the issue at issue is the Ministry of Education, whose many demands lead to unreasonable workloads and which have a first duty to reduce, depending on teachers' ability to perform while in their workplace.