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Parental Involvement in School Pedagogy: Before and after COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

This paper brings together two rich bodies of knowledge that to this day have barely intersected in research: parental involvement in the school and processes of pedagogical change. Until now, parental involvement has been studied in many contexts, but references to parental involvement in a school's pedagogy are rare. Management of pedagogical change has also been studied extensively, but mainly by relating to the school as an organization that functions separately from the community context. This study is based on 22 in-depth, semi-structured interviews conducted in 2019–2020 with parents, principals, and senior education officials of two elementary schools in Israel that are undergoing pedagogical changes. Most of the interviews were made before the pandemic, and the rest were made during the 1st lockdown. Whereas the schools have similar demographic characteristics, they differ in pedagogy: One is an older school characterized by a conservative pedagogy; the second school is new and was founded with innovative pedagogy in the spirit of the 21st century. The findings reveal that the parents in both schools are interested in influencing the school's pedagogy, but that they do so in opposite directions: The parents at the conservative school are interested in promoting innovative learning, while the parents in the innovative school are interested in reintroducing conservative practices, such as frontal teaching and standardized evaluation. By comparing the interviews before and after COVID-19, the article offers important insights regarding parent–school relations, including the pedagogical aspects, following the coronavirus pandemic.

Keywords: Parent School Relationship; Elementary Schools (pedagogy); Educational Practices ;Educational Change;