



**ALEXANDRU IOAN CUZA
UNIVERSITY of IAȘI**

Department of Doctoral Studies
Psychology and Education Sciences

**Motherhood at midlife:
relationships between self-perception of the parental role, self-efficacy,
and perceived psychological well-being of married and divorced midlife
mothers**

Scientific Coordinator: Assoc. Professor Ovidiu Gavrilovici, Ph.D.

Ph.D. student: Sara Oren

Table of content

1 Introduction.....	3
2 Research Design.....	3
2.1 Convergent Parallel Design.....	3
3 Study 1 - perceptions regarding parental role, psychological well-being, self-efficacy	
3.1 Research Method.....	6
3.2 Hypothesis testing	8
3.3 Discussion - Main Points.....	13
4 Study 2-3 Qualitative research	13
4.1 Data analysis process	13
5 Study 2 – Qualitative research on self-perception of parental role	14
5.1 Research procedure	14
5.2 Qualitative analysis	14
5.3 Discussion main points.....	16
6 Study 3 – Quantitative research on the impact of parental role on work related	17
Choices of mothers	
6.1 Research procedure	18
6.2 Qualitative analysis	18
6.3 Discussion - Main Points.....	20
6.5 The model.....	23
7 General Discussion.....	24
7.1 Research contribution.....	27
7.2 Universal contribution.....	30
7.3 Research limitations	31
7.4 Suggestions for further research.....	31
8 References.....	32

1. Introduction

In view of the prolonging life span, and changing family life cycle, midlife phase in parenthood is expanding. Due to the late giving birth, the delayed entering into matrimony and the increasing rates of divorce, midlife parenting of adolescents has become a common occurrence. The continuous middle phase of parenting is neither sufficiently understood nor satisfactorily studied, in comparison to the phases of entering parenthood or parenting young children. Previous research has explored parenthood from a particular part of the experience. This research fills this gap by focusing on the continuous midlife perception of parenthood. The study applies diversity lens between two groups across marital status, divorce and married midlife mothers. Additionally, it contributes to the existing literature addressing midlife parenthood by focusing on the mothers' point of view.

The period of midlife has been chosen. A period which enables introspection into former occupational history and solid base for future introspection of their future plans. A whole, life-long perception of the role of motherhood in their life, its importance as well as impact on their occupation is being revealed, shedding light on the conflict of integration of roles. This study aims to take forward the research on perception of parental role, as well as to light up the possible influence of the coronavirus pandemic on the mothers' perceptions of change in parental role, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being. In addition, the mothers' lifelong perspectives on work-related choices in view of their parental role conflict, are being explored. Lastly, three conceptual frameworks are being introduced: self-efficacy, self-perception of the parental role and psychological well-being.

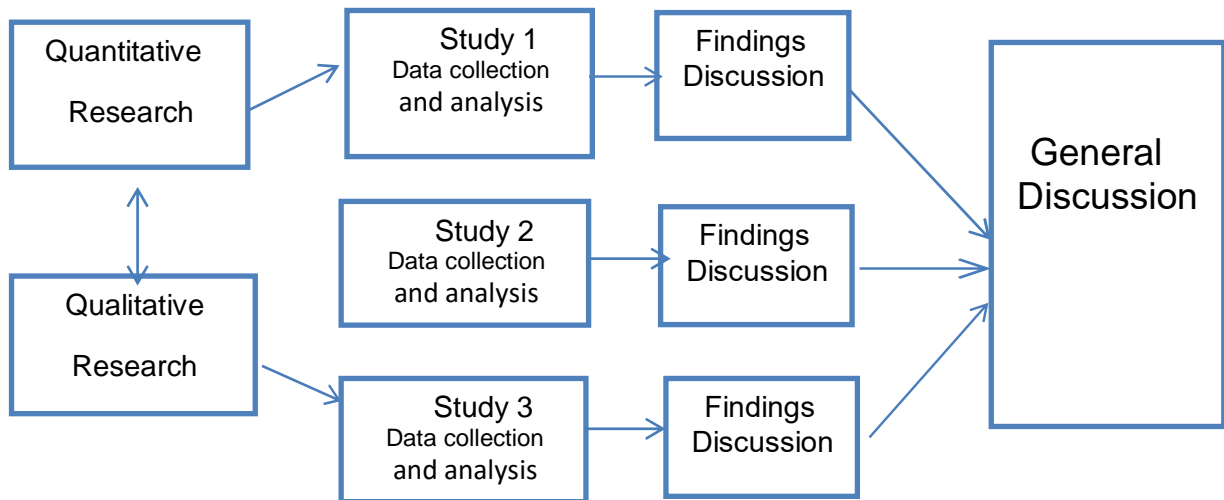
2. Research Design

2.1 Convergent parallel design

To receive a comprehensive view of midlife mothers' perception regarding their integration of roles, self-efficacy and feelings of well-being, the research was conducted based on the convergent parallel design (Creswell & Hirose, 2019). This design was based on quantitative and qualitative studies carried out concurrently to form a comprehensive picture of the research questions and goals. The use of parallel design is based on the perception that each method is elemental in collecting the research's data. Each method is

of equal importance to take a step forward in data collection, taking into consideration that each research method has its strength as well as weaknesses. The mixture of research methods enables significant point of encounter between the deductive reasoning raised by the quantitative research and the inductive reasoning raised by the qualitative research. Thus, enabling a wide two-sided perspective of the theory and data from each field (Coolican, 2017; Creswell, 2013). Coolican, (2017) emphasized the important role of the participant. Each participant has his or her own inner logic and the researcher role is not only to comprehend their world but also to transform it into multiple dimensions. The next figure will present the convergent parallel design

Figure 1 The convergent parallel design



3. Study 1

Study 1 examined the relationships between self-efficacy, self-perceptions of the parental role and psychological well-being among married and divorced midlife mothers. The study introduced additional evaluation of the change in the research variables following the coronavirus after 4.5 months of the pandemic (1-23.8.20). This period was selected since the national health bureau results showed that the number of new coronavirus cases remained stable (Dong, Do and Gardner, 2020); when the common belief was that the pandemic is under control. Additionally, the study aimed to evaluate whether the change will differ between self-efficacy, self-perception of parental role and psychological well-being following the pandemic. The research questions were:

1. What are the relationships between self-efficacy, self-perception of the parental role, and psychological well-being among midlife mothers?
2. What is the influence of perception of the self-perception of the parental role, and self-efficacy on the perception of psychological well-being of midlife mothers?
3. Are there differences between married, divorced midlife mothers with regard to the self-perception of the parental-role, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being?
4. What are the perceptions of self-efficacy, self-perception of the parental role, and psychological well-being following the coronavirus pandemic among midlife mothers?
5. Whether the impact of the coronavirus pandemic will differ between self-efficacy, self-perception of parental role and psychological well-being?

Following are the research hypotheses derived from the research questions.

Research hypotheses

- 1a. The self-perception of parental role will be greater among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers.
- 1b. The psychological well-being will be greater among the married midlife mothers than divorced midlife mothers.
- 1c. The self-efficacy will be greater among the divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers.
- 2a. High level of self-efficacy will be related with high level of self-perception of parental role among midlife mothers.
- 2b. High level of self-efficacy will be related with high levels of psychological well-being among midlife mothers.
- 2c. High levels of self-perception of parental role and self-efficacy will predict high levels of psychological well-being among midlife mothers.
- 3a. The coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the self-perception of parental role among the divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers.
- 3b. The coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the perception of psychological well-being among the divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers.

- 3c. The coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the perception of self-efficacy among the divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers.
- 3d. The impact of the coronavirus pandemic will differ between self-efficacy, self-perception of parental role and psychological well-being

3.1 Research method

The quantitative research method was used to examine the perceptions of midlife mothers on the variables that were hypothesized to correspond to various psychological aspects of midlife mothers in the context of their motherhood. The methods of sampling selected for this research were two: purposive sampling as well as snowball sampling. Both methods refer to non-probability types of samplings (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2013).

The research can be divided into 2 parts, the major part of the research where the validity was achieved by two procedures. prior to the administration of the questionnaires to the research group, a pre-test was conducted: in which 10 questionnaires were administered to the mothers and questions were tested as to their clarity. Secondly, the questionnaires were administered to expert validation by 5 family therapy professionals. Lastly the questionnaires were administered to the remaining research sample (1.7-31.8.19). Additional research was conducted 4.5 months after the beginning of the pandemic (1-23.8.20). This period was selected since the national health bureau results showed that the number of new coronavirus cases remained stable, and the common belief was that the pandemic is under control. The researcher did a pre-test and delivered again questionnaires 2-4 to 10 participants from the research sample. Following the pre-test and with the help of an expert a new shorter version of questionnaire was developed. The subscales with the highest Alpha Cronbach from former questionnaires were included in the new questionnaire- the coronavirus questionnaire. Finally, the questionnaire consisted 18 statements from the three previous questionnaires (MacPhee, Benson, & Bullock, 1986; Ryff, 1989; Schwarzer & Jerusalem,1995). The next section presents the instruments.

The researcher utilized a selection of high validity questionnaires supported by literature. In the present study, inter-item reliability of the questionnaires was presented using Cronbach's Alpha. The research instruments were:

Research instruments

1. Socio demographic background questionnaire developed for this research.
2. Self-Perception of the parental Role Scale (SPPR) (MacPhee, Benson, & Bullock,1986) Alpha Cronbach (0.74-0.85).
3. Psychological Well-being (PWB) (Ryff,1989) Alpha Cronbach (0.6-0.88).
4. Generalized self-efficacy Scale (GSE) (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995) Alpha Cronbach (0.85-0.88).
5. Coronavirus questionnaire based on questionnaires 2-4. (MacPhee, Benson, & Bullock, 1986; Ryff,1989; Schweitzer & Jerusalem, 1995). Alpha Cronbach (0.58-0.75).

Questionnaires 2-4 had a Hebrew version which had been found reliable and valid (Cohen, 2015), therefore it was utilized in this research.

Participants

The research sample, consisted of 77 Hebrew speaking mothers aged 40-60 of adolescents aged 12-18. The mothers were divided into 2 groups, according to their marital status, Group A-45 married mothers (age 40-60) of adolescents (age 12-18)-, and Group B-32 divorced mothers (age 40-60) of adolescents (age 12-18). All participants were selected in accordance with the conditions characterized by the researcher as dictated by the research goals. The study was conducted at a municipality with an average economic status.

3.2 Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis 1a postulated that the self-perception of parental role will be greater among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. To compare between the two groups of midlife mothers on self- perception of parental role multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) were conducted. The MANOVA revealed a significant difference between the two groups of midlife mothers on the subscale of competence ($F(1,75) = 3.52$, $p < 0.05$), resulting from a higher level of competence among divorced midlife mothers. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 1b postulated that the psychological well-being will be greater among the married midlife mothers than the divorced midlife mothers. To compare between the two groups of midlife mothers on psychological well-being, multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted. The MANOVA analysis revealed a significant difference between the two groups only on the subscale of positive relations with others ($F(1,75) = 9.22$, $p < 0.003$) resulting from a higher level of positive relations among married midlife mothers. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 1c postulated that the self-efficacy will be greater among the divorced midlife mothers than the married midlife mothers. To compare between the two groups of midlife mothers on self- efficacy, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted. The analysis yielded no significant difference between the groups ($F(1, 75) = 0.55$, n.s.), therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 2a postulated that high level of self-efficacy will be related with high level of self-perception of the parental role among midlife mothers. Pearson correlation was calculated between the variable 1 self-efficacy and the variable self-perception of the parental role.

Positive correlation was found between: self-efficacy and the total self-perception of the parental role ($r = 0.55$, $p < .01$), the subscale of competence ($r = 0.55$, $p < .01$), and the subscale of satisfaction ($r = 0.31$, $p < .01$). No correlation was found between self-efficacy and the subscale of integration. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 2b postulated that high level of self-efficacy will be related with high levels of psychological well-being among midlife mothers. Pearson correlation was conducted between self-efficacy and psychological well-being. Positive significant

correlations were found between self-efficacy and psychological well-being total ($r = 0.248$, $p < .01$), on the subscale of purpose in life ($r = 0.24$, $p < .01$), and on the subscale of personal growth ($r = 0.21$, $p < .03$), and on the subscale of self-acceptance ($r = 0.30$, $p < .01$). No significant correlation was found between self-efficacy and psychological well-being on the subscale of positive relationships. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 2c postulated that high levels of self-perception of parental role and self-efficacy will predict high levels of psychological well-being among midlife mothers. To examine the third hypothesis, Pearson correlation was conducted between the subscales of self-perception of parental role and the subscales of psychological well-being. Positive and significant relationships were found between the three subscales of the variable self-perception of the parental role and only one subscale of psychological well-being. The subscale of self-acceptance was correlated significantly with self-perception of parental role and wasn't correlated with either subscale of personal growth or the subscale of positive relationships. Therefore, the hypothesis was partially supported.

Note: Hypotheses 2b-2c A preliminary examination of the normality of the distribution was conducted for each one of the scales, using procedures for Skewness. All values fell within the range of normal distribution.

Hypothesis 3a postulated that the coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the perception of parental role among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. T-test for independent samples was conducted, which compared the self-perception of parental role following the coronavirus pandemic on the two groups. The results yielded no significant difference on the subscales and on the total score of self-perception of parental role. A difference approaching significance (0.08) was found on the subscale of satisfaction, therefore the hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 3b postulated that the coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the psychological well-being among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. T-test for independent samples was conducted, which compared between the groups on the subscales and on the total score of psychological well-being. T-test for independent samples was conducted, which compared between the groups on the subscales and on the total score of psychological well-being. A difference approaching

significance was found on the subscale of positive relationships ($p=0.08$). The hypothesis not supported since the results yielded no significant difference between the groups.

Hypothesis 3c postulated that the coronavirus pandemic will have a greater negative impact on the self-efficacy among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. To examine hypothesis t-test was conducted between the subscales of self-efficacy of divorced and married midlife mothers respectively The mean of self-efficacy of the divorced midlife mothers was lower than, the mean of self-efficacy of the married midlife mothers -0.19 by comparison with 0.16 respectively, and it was significant. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed.

Hypothesis 3d postulated that The impact of the coronavirus pandemic will differ between self-efficacy, self-perception of parental role and psychological well-being. To test the difference between the research variables, a one-way- analysis of variance with repeated measures was conducted, the analysis yielded a significant effect ($F(2,140) = 17.56, p < .001$). To identify the specific differences between the variables, a Bonferroni test was conducted. The results of the Bonferroni revealed that the influence of the coronavirus on psychological well-being is significantly stronger than the change in perception of self-efficacy, stronger than the change in perception of parental role ($p < .001$). the change in psychological well-being following the pandemic is negative, meaning the level of psychological well-being decreased in the context defined by the coronavirus pandemic.

3.3 Discussion - main points

The first hypothesis (1a) was the self-perception of parental role will be greater among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. The hypothesis was partially supported since significant difference between the two groups was revealed only on one subscale-competence. It can be presumed that divorced midlife mothers who are used to take sole responsibility for their daily challenges while dealing with their adolescents will feel more competent than the married mothers. Additionally, based on role theory, the process of internalization of roles requires the active negotiation of the role occupant with other participants in social situation (Stryker, 1980, cohen, 2015). Since divorced mothers are more used to handle by themselves either performing the roles or facing alone the conflict of performing the roles at the same time. Their competence can

be perceived as greater than married midlife mothers. The second hypothesis (3b) was that the psychological well-being will be greater among the married midlife mothers than the divorced midlife mothers. The hypothesis was partially supported on the subscale of psychological well-being-positive relations with others.

Social support system has been defined as the people that are directly associated with the individual, relatives included (Cochran, 1993). Research suggested that relatives especially grandparents can offer valuable social support for parents and increase their perception of well-being (Eggebeen & Hogan 1990; Ontai & Sano, 2008). In Israel relatives such as grandparents are considered as a valuable socially accepted source of support to parents (Hashiloni-Dolev & Triger, 2020). Therefore, the married mothers who are getting additional social support from both husband and family, their support system can be more effective than the support system of the divorced mothers and consequently their perception of positive relation is greater than the divorced midlife mothers.

The third hypothesis (1c) was that The self-efficacy will be greater among the divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers. The hypothesis was not supported. The hypothesis was not supported. Consequently, we can presume that the self-efficacy on both groups of mothers can be influenced by many factors other than their marital status (Pierce et al, 2010). For instance, married mothers can experience lower self-efficacy as side effect of their continuous balance between their dual roles as both parents and wives (Ramisch, Mcvicker & Sahin, 2009).

The fourth hypothesis (2a) was that high level of self-efficacy will be related with high level of self-perception of the parental role among midlife mothers. The hypothesis was partially supported since positive correlation was discovered between self-efficacy and two sub-scale of self-perception of parental role out of three- competence and satisfaction

The fifth hypothesis (2b) was that high level of self-efficacy will be related with high levels of psychological well-being among midlife mothers. The hypothesis was partially supported since positive correlation was found between self-efficacy and three sub-scales of psychological well-being. Research supports that the parent's relation with the child stays significant to their well-being throughout life (Knoester, 2003; Mandemakers & Dykstra, 2008). Additionally, findings suggest that self-efficacy is

compatible with the parents' belief in his parental-efficacy (Bandura, 2002) Therefore, it can be assumed that if a parent feels that he achieved a good relationship with his adolescent or in other words becomes a competent parent to his adolescent then his perception of self-efficacy will increase too.

Following the coronavirus pandemic, the difference between the groups on the variable- total self-perception of parental role was insignificant. Social support system has been defined as the people that are directly associated with the individual, relatives included (Cochran ,1993). Research suggested that relatives especially grandparents can offer valuable social support for single parents (Eggebeen & Hogan 1990; Ontai & Sano, 2008). Previous studies pointed out that when the support system decreased mother may lower their evaluation of their competence (Eggebeen & Hogan ,1990; Ontai & Sano, 2008). The insignificance of the difference between groups can be explained by the fact that the family institution in Israel maintains dominant role and centrality in comparison, to other industrialized countries (Cohen, 2015). Hence that during the pandemic, when the support systems were affected by the pandemic the family continued to play an important role in the life of either divorced and married mothers and therefore no significant difference was found between the groups.

Findings supported the hypothesis (3c) that the coronavirus pandemic will be followed by a higher perception of negative impact on the self- efficacy of the divorced midlife mothers, than on the self-efficacy of married midlife mothers. Research suggests that parental self-efficacy and social support are positively correlated. Consequently, decreased in social support will be related to decreased in parental competence (Ontai & Sano, 2008). Therefore, it can be presumed that divorced mothers are more affected by the coronavirus pandemic since their support system is being damaged by the pandemic. For instance, no support was possible during the pandemic from grandparents who were susceptible of medical risk. The divorced midlife mothers had to manage raising of children alone, whereas the married midlife mothers confronted the coronavirus challenge together with their husbands.

4. Studies 2-3 Qualitative research

Recent decades have introduced an increasing use of qualitative methods in research, based on a qualitative approach applying the philosophy of interpretive phenomenology. Morgan et al (2015) identified phenomenology as "the study of people's experiences of phenomenon, and the meaning people attribute to their experiences" (p.481). Employing this approach based on the principles of the grounded theory (Carmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990) allowed us to co-construct meaning with midlife mothers as they reveal their perceptions on their parental role and the impact of their perceptions on their work related choices.

4.1 Data analysis process

The data retrieved from the semi structured interviews was examined according to the grounded theory (Carmaz, 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The analysis followed three stages as suggested by Strauss and Corbin, (1990) The first stage included reading the interviews' transcripts several times for the purpose of familiarity with the text and observation of topics discussed by the mothers in relation to on study their motherhood, their relations with their adolescents, their perception of parental role and their observation of the impact of parental role on their work related choices. These topics were raised as an answer to specific questions, spontaneous reflections or as a result of recurring experiences introduced by the mothers. The second stage involved a thorough research, which was performed in order to locate the multiple patterns and recurring topics revealed by the mothers. Also, in the second stage axial analysis was conducted to recognize the organization and connections between the topics derived from the mothers' perceptions, as recognized from the semi structured interviews. At the third stage, a story line between the multi subthemes that emerged had been created, shedding light on the links between the subthemes and recognizing several themes (Carmaz, 2006). Experts (two) were recruited with the purpose of reviewing the data analysis. The comparison of the researcher's own interpretation with the analysis of other colleagues was of high importance, as it ascertains high degree of accuracy of the data analysis (Gilgun, 2005).

5. Study 2 – Qualitative research on self-perception of parental role

This study examines midlife mothers' perceptions, regarding their parental role, their sense of self-efficacy, and psychological well-being as well. The qualitative study examined two research questions that were analyzed in the previous quantitative study by the qualitative approach. Moreover, the study aimed to investigate possible association between parental role, self-efficacy, and psychological well-being to draw possible interrelation between them. The research questions were:

1. How do midlife mothers perceive their parental role and self-efficacy?
2. How do midlife mothers perceive the influence of parental role on their psychological well-being?

5.1 Research procedure

The sampling procedure striven to gather a range of mothers' personal narrative from Israeli mothers answering the research requirements. The participants were recruited from the research sample. The target sample on study compromised 20 midlife mothers in the age range of 40-60 with at least one adolescent between the ages 12-18. The indicator to terminate participants' recruitment was "saturation"-when the additional information was intertwined in previous themes. A semi-structured interview guide was employed to obtain the narratives from the mothers (Shkedi, 2005). The semi structured interviews were based on a previous Hebrew version applied on a former research with parents (Cohen, 2015). The interview was translated to Hebrew by Cohen (2016). The interview included 9 questions. 1 open question and 8 closed questions.

5.2 Qualitative analysis

Findings are presented as content analysis of midlife mothers' reviews, regarding their perception of parental role, sense of self-efficacy, and their sense of psychological well-being. The research exposed sixteen sub-themes, all of them emerging from six themes and one organizing theme: The importance of self-perception of parental role among the mothers. This major theme could be divided into six themes: integration of roles among self-perception of parental role. the essence of the parental role, competence in

fulfilling the self-perception of parental role, impact on psychological well-being, seeking professional help and general self-efficacy of mothers. These findings were consistent with evidence presented in the professional literature, revealing that self-perception of parental role has a crucial, impact on the psychological well-being, and general self-efficacy of midlife mothers. The themes and sub-themes will be presented in the next table.

Table 1- The qualitative analysis

Theme	Sub-themes	Frequency (%)
Integration of roles as part of self-perception of parental role	Difficulty and Success to integrate between different roles.	55% / 25%
	Difficulty in distribution of care between children.	30%
The essence of the parental role	The essence of the parental role	50%
	Caring for the adolescent	35%
	Setting boundaries for their adolescent	35%
Parental competence	Ongoing insecurity in fulfilling the parental role	40%
	Experience of high competence in fulfilling the parental role and mix Emotion in fulfilling the Parental role	25%
		20%
	Difficulty to establish cooperation with the adolescent	60%

Impact on Psychological well-being	Dealing with situations the wrong way	75%
	Negative penalty-worry and frustration	65% / 50%
	Personal penalty	65%
	Personal gain	35%
Seeking professional help	Receiving professional help to improve the relationship with the adolescent	50%
	Receiving professional help outcomes	50%
General self-efficacy of mothers	Self-efficacy addressing marital status	10%
	Self-efficacy addressing financial success	20%

5.3 Discussion main points

The study presents content analysis of midlife mothers' perceptions, regarding their parental role, sense of self-efficacy and their sense of psychological well-being. The content analysis revealed six main themes: Integration of roles as part of self-perception of parental role, the essence of the parental role, parental competence, impact on psychological well-being, seeking professional help and general self-efficacy of the mothers. In the next paragraph insights following the findings will be addressed. The discussion will intertwine between previous research and the qualitative analysis based on the stages of the grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2017).

Out of 20 respondents, 10 mothers were involved with the studies of their adolescents. To summarize the mothers' words, the issue of encouraging studies of the adolescent played an important part on their perception of parental role. The mothers were ready to go to any length to enable their adolescent's studies in any way they perceived as

appropriate. They were ready to oppose to the school decisions, to promote their children's welfare to their knowledge. The perception of mothers is that their adolescents' studies are their continuous obligation which doesn't change over time. The findings follow those of Omer, (2000; who pointed out, the difficulty to reconstruct new parental roles, when parental traditional authoritative roles fail to supply the desired result of stability. Consequently, the mothers will continue to fulfill their former role.

Out of 20 respondents, 7 mothers (35%) viewed caring as a dominant part in their perception of parental role. The expectation from mothers to be the caregiver of the family is traditional. Israeli mothers are still expected to be the family's source of support and care (Offer et al. 2011). In other words, the traditional image of midlife mothers as a caregiver still holds in Israel (Offer et al. 2011). The mothers' narratives in relation with caring as part of their parental roles, reveal an ongoing devotion towards their adolescents. A devotion which doesn't diminish over time.

Considerable number of mothers (40%) expressed ongoing feeling of incompetence in performing their parental role. Their feelings of insecurity were common occurrence with their younger children. Thus, the feeling of learning from experience was missing. The occupation of the mothers or years of education were irrelevant, since even experience youth workers working with adolescences shared these feelings of incompetence (Omer, 2000).

Out of 20 respondents, 13 mothers (65%) specified they face personal penalty. Findings suggested that The mothers' wish to live up to the expected perception of motherhood, triggered a personal penalty. A penalty which remained salient to the parent's well-being throughout life (Milkie, Bierman & Schieman, 2008). Additionally, motherhood is perceived by Israeli society as the core of the women's identity. Women are expected to secure the role of family's caregivers as an inseparable component of their motherhood (Offer et al. 2011).

6.0 Study 3 – Qualitative research on the impact of parental role on work-related choices of mothers

The study examined the perceptions of midlife mothers, shedding light on the impact of the parental role on women's work-related choices. The research questions were:

1. How do midlife mothers perceive the impact of their parental role on their work-related choices?
2. What are the lifelong attitudes of midlife mothers towards their work-related choices?

6.1 Research procedure

The sampling procedure striven to gather a range of mothers' personal narrative from Israeli mothers answering the research requirements. The participants were recruited from the research sample. The target sample on study compromised 50 midlife mothers in the age range of 40-60 with at least one adolescent between the ages 12-18. The indicator to terminate participants' recruitment was "saturation"-when the additional information was intertwined in previous themes. A semi-structured interview guide was employed to obtain the narratives from the mothers (Shkedi, 2005). The semi structured interview was developed for this research. The interview included 6 questions. 5 open questions and 1 closed question.

6.2 Qualitative analysis

Findings are presented as content analysis of midlife mothers' reviews, regarding their work. The research uncovered twelve sub-themes, derived from four major themes. The organizing theme: the crucial impact of motherhood on mothers' work, can be divided into four main themes. First, the crucial impact of motherhood on women's work-related choices; second, motherhood as a defining role; mothers' attitudes towards their work-related choices and lastly, sources of help. These findings are consistent with evidence presented in the professional literature, revealing that motherhood has a crucial, long-lasting impact on women's work-related choices. The next table presents the qualitative analysis. Additionally, the main themes and sub-themes discussed by midlife mothers will be presented by frequencies (%).

Table 2 The qualitative analysis

Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency (%)
The crucial impact of motherhood on women's work-related choices	Changes in the work-related choices prior to motherhood.	8%
	Alterations taking place after the birth of children.	46%
	Motherhood hinders promotion from lifelong perspective.	62%
	The long-lasting effects of motherhood.	70%
Motherhood as a defining role in relation to work	Children as a first priority.	48%
	Relations with partner are less significant than motherhood.	42%
	The impact of being the main caregiver on availability for work	44%
Mothers' attitudes towards their work-related choices Sources of help	Justification and regret of the chosen work-related choices	46%
	The need to create change in current position	20%
	Help from relatives	50%
	Help from spouse	16%
	Other help	10%

6.3 Discussion main points

The current study aims were to shed light on how midlife mothers perceive the impact of their parental role on their work. Out of 50 midlife mothers who participated in the interviews, 44 claimed that motherhood had a direct impact on their work-related choices. This finding lent support to the perception that motherhood is viewed by Israeli society as the core of the women's identity (Offer et al., 2011). The 6 mothers who denied that motherhood had a direct impact on their work-related choices were: a manager of a public company, a municipal construction supervisor, a municipal bookkeeper, school principal, a geriatric hospital worker and an owner of a private cleaning agency. All these mothers owned or were employed in mother friendly environs with flexible, convenient working hours. These findings supported the argument that control over working hours influenced mothers' work-family choices. Research has shown that conflict is considerably lower when mothers control their working hours (Heilbrunn & Davidovitch, 2011). Consequently, mothers were motivated to employ work-related strategy to reduce of working hours and seek mother friendly occupations to reduce their conflict. (ibid).

Out of 50 interviewees, 35 mothers claimed that motherhood had hindered their promotion at work. These results mirrored previous research showing motherhood hindering moves to jobs with higher occupational status, and promoting shifts to less demanding, lower status jobs with fewer advancement prospects (Abendroth et al., 2014).

In addition, this study emphasized the long-lasting price of motherhood. 35 of 50 commented on this phenomenon and the fact that even though their children had grown up, the majority were not interested in bridging the gap and resuming their careers. These findings are consistent with those of Gersick & Kran (2002) who found that midlife mothers favored life-balance and preferred to postpone work-related obligations.

Furthermore, 23 of 50 mothers mentioned changes they had initiated in their work-related choices after the birth of their first child. In comparison, only 4 mothers referred to the birth of a second child as the tipping point for possible change. This resembled Doren's findings (2018) who observed the birth of a first child was a turning point and women were likely to leave the workforce when they pregnant with their first child. These findings corresponded with those of Doren's (2018) findings that, "each subsequent child is associated with a smaller increase in the probability to exit" (p. 334).

Only 8 of 50 mothers referred to help from their spouses. One mother described her husband as her best friend. Unfortunately, he only came home at weekends so his potential help was rather limited. This finding supported research that married people experienced more work–family conflict than unmarried people (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985; Rosenau & Gilat, 2020). None of the mothers mentioned help removing the load of daily chores from their shoulders. They perceived themselves as responsible for household chores and did not allow their husbands to play a part in what they perceived as their responsibility. This finding is supported by the traditional image of mothers as caregivers still prevailing in Israel (Sa'ar ,2009). Mothers should attend to family members' demands and be the primary source of care and support (Cohen, 2016; Offer et al. 2011),

Help from relatives appeared to be very important to the mothers. Out of 50 interviewees 25 (50%) commented they used this source of help. This finding lent support to research in Israel that relatives such as grandparents, friends and neighbors were perceived as a safety net (Hashiloni-Dolev & Triger, 2020). The importance mothers attached to family support is supported by the research, showing that family support was always the strongest predictor variable of work-family conflict among mothers. In other words, mothers are motivated to seek family support to reduce the intensity of work–family conflict (Heilbrunn & Davidovitch, 2011).

The study examined the perceptions of 50 midlife mothers of the integration between their role as mothers and their role as workers. It shed a light on the crucial long-lasting impact of motherhood on mothers' careers. Nevertheless, it can be assumed that integration remains something to be desired. Moreover, the role of motherhood is so dominant with a long-lasting impact, which most mothers either denied or were unwilling to pursue different behaviors. These finding supported previous research conducted with different groups of Israeli mothers, which revealed that mothers with significantly lowest levels of integration conflict were entrepreneurs who had emigrated from the Soviet Union. This finding supported the perception that socialization in the Soviet Union was relatively egalitarian (Heilbrunn & Davidovitch, 2011; Remennick, 2005).

Although they recognized the long-lasting price of motherhood, mothers were unwilling to alter their perceptions of accepted standards for being a good mother. Mothers continued to strive for previous, traditional perceptions of motherhood, which urged

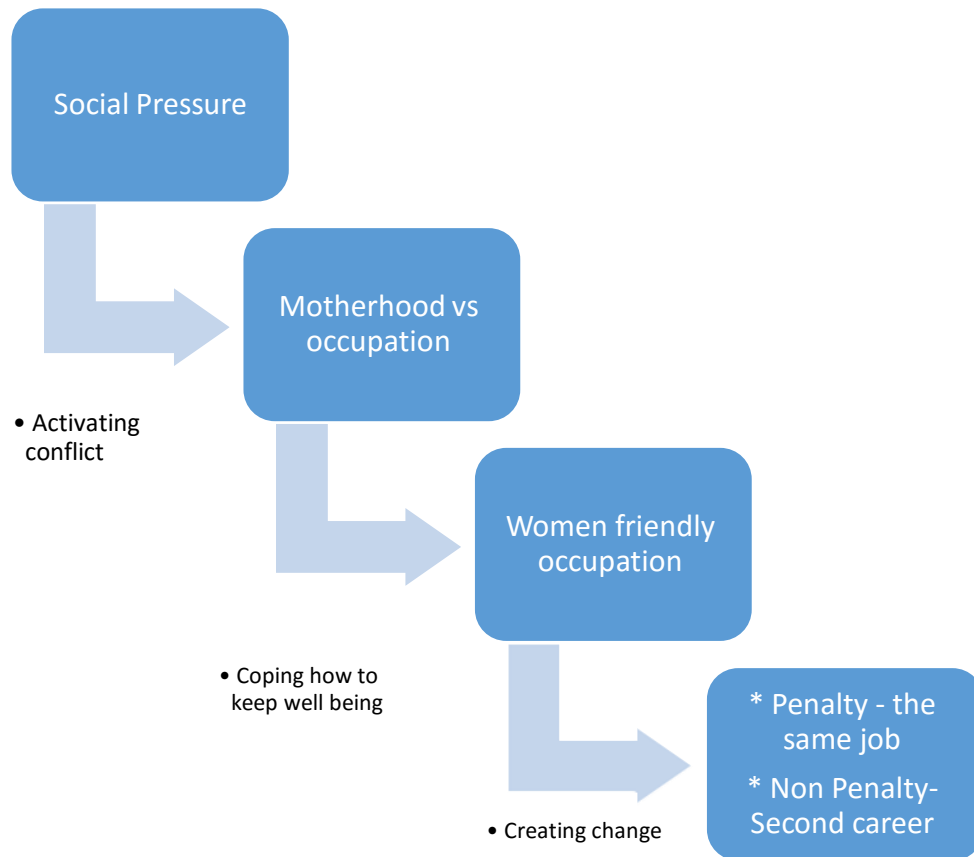
mothers "to stay at home with their children, thereby ostensibly maintaining consistency in women's nurturing and selfless behavior" (Hays, 1996, p.3) or adopt workforce behaviors with long-lasting impacts on their careers.

In Israel, society encouraged women to fulfill their potential by going to work. This encouragement was reinforced by government's strategy to minimize support given to mothers (Ahdut, 2010). This strategy succeeded and women do work, but the traditional role of motherhood still prevails (ibid). Consequently, Israeli families are challenged by two contradictory forces: modernization and being part of western culture versus traditional values (Lavee & Katz, 2008). This perception was supported Morgan et al.'s (2015) study showing that mothers who voiced strong traditional ideas about what constituted a good mother rearranged their work schedules to be more available to their offspring.

Consequently, until women will not change their perceptions and continue to put motherhood first, they will not change their work-related choices and thereby the role of motherhood will remain dominant. Therefore, it is not surprising that even though women's participation in the workforce has increased considerably this does not reflect the reality of part-time jobs and "mothers' positions".

The research findings revealed a significant difference in roles perceptions mothers and fathers. Mothers not only accepted social standards of motherhood as the dominant role, but they have had to accept that perceptions of parenthood are quite different between parents. There is a need to change social perceptions of parents' roles, especially that mothers are responsible for childcare. Only when such changes in perception occur, is there a possibility that mothers' perceptions of their role will follow.

Consequently, even though women's participation in the workforce has increased, motherhood remains a critical factor, which that plays a crucial part in their work-related choices that may trigger the motherhood penalty effect.



Study 3 - the model

Research findings revealed a model of behavior adopted by the majority of the respondents. Mothers were under social pressure to confront contradictory expectations: to become main family caregivers and be responsible of their families or be involved in a modern workforce market. The majority of mothers put motherhood first ahead of their occupation. Findings revealed that women coped and maintained their perception of psychological well-being by choosing work that allowed them a measure of control allowed by friendly working hours and traditional female occupations. This preference prevented mothers from undertaking more challenging jobs with opportunities for promotion. Consequently, they paid a penalty because their mobility options were limited and they found themselves in the same position with a low salary for long periods of time. It was also found that the majority of the mothers did not change their occupation when their children had grown up. Only a few mothers opted for a change.

7.0 General discussion

Previous research has explored motherhood at specific points of the experience. This research attempted to narrow a gap by introducing a long-term perspective of motherhood, from the perspective of mothers themselves. Midlife was chosen as a period enabling introspection into past occupational history and solid grounds for introspection about plans for the future. As a whole, the life-long perception of the role of motherhood, its importance as well as its impact on work-related choices as a case study shed light on the tension of integrating roles on mothers' psychological well-being. Moreover, this study not only introduced midlife mothers' life-long perceptions, but also new knowledge about their perceptions of self-efficacy, parental roles and psychological well-being. Furthermore, the research illuminated the mothers' perceptions of these variables following the COVID-19 pandemic. The researcher adopted a limited prism, focused on marital status. Two groups of midlife mothers were chosen: divorced and married.

To gain a comprehensive view of midlife mothers' perceptions of their parental role, self-efficacy and feelings of psychological well-being, this research was based on a convergent parallel design (Creswell & Clark, 2017). This design employed a mixed methods approach with qualitative and quantitative studies. Study1 presented statistical analysis of the data collated from 77 research participants taken on two points in time before the COVID-19 pandemic and after its first wave in Israel when the number of infected people remained stable and people assumed that the pandemic came to its end.

Findings suggested that marital status affected differences between the groups of mothers. significant difference was found between divorced and married midlife mothers. Divorced midlife mothers, reported a greater level of competence compared to married midlife mothers. Additionally, a significant difference was found in the subscale of positive relations with others, resulting from a higher level of positive relations among married midlife mothers compared to divorced midlife mothers. The never-ending parental roles perceived by both groups, are emphasized by the difficulty to integrate between them, taking their toll on the mothers' well-being. The mothers revealed a considerable gap between themselves and their partners. A gap regarding their perceptions of the obligation they attach to the role of motherhood. This Role which is identified with ongoing demand of care and supervision of their adolescents. The Gap is only intensified by the tremendous

importance they attached to the role of motherhood. Additionally, the findings enabled us to draw a model of the mothers' work force behaviors in Israel

Following the Covid-19 pandemic, perceptions of negative influences of the pandemic were stronger among divorced midlife mothers than married midlife mothers in psychological well-being variables. Divorced mothers confronted intense struggles and their support systems decreased during the pandemic (World economic forum, 2020; Burt, 2020). Support from elderly family members such as grandparents which is common in Israel, was forbidden under health ministry legislation owing to greater risks of complications and death among the elderly. The pandemic also led to increased financial concerns to which divorced women were more vulnerable because they had to depend upon their own resources, which were limited owing to the absence of valuable unpaid assistance with their children. Divorced midlife mothers were left alone and consequently had to confront family-work conflicts alone; And their sense of well-being was affected (Burt, 2020).

Overall, it was found that the COVID-19 pandemic changed midlife mothers' perceptions of self-efficacy, self-perceptions of parental roles and psychological well-being. Changes in perceptions of psychological well-being were significantly greater than changes in self-efficacy and parental roles and the most significant of the three variables.

In the second study, mothers described the essence of their parental role as encouraging their adolescent children's education, caring for and setting boundaries for their adolescent children. Additionally, 50% of mothers referred to difficulties and successes in integrating different roles. 30% mentioned difficulties distributing care between their children. Finally, 40% of the mothers described feelings of continuous insecurity fulfilling their parental roles and experiencing difficulties establishing cooperation with their adolescent children. Only a minority of mothers (25%) experienced high competence fulfilling their parental roles.

Motherhood was also perceived as having a considerable impact on mothers' well-being such as: negative penalties described by worry and frustration (65%). less than half (35%) stated there was any personal gain from motherhood. Perceptions of motherhood were intertwined with mothers' difficulties referring to their own sense of self-efficacy. Only 20% of participants mentioned self-efficacy with regard

to marital status. Even fewer mothers mentioned self-efficacy with regard to financial success (10%). In comparison, a majority of mothers referred to their parental roles and importance they attached to it (65%). Mothers revealed that being a competent parent was a feeling that could not be taken lightly, but rather a complex perception shared by half (50%) the participants.

Therefore, the next step was to consider the importance mothers ascribed to their role and to further explore the influence of motherhood on other environs in their lives such as women's work-related choices. Hence, the third study addressed mothers' perceptions of the impact of motherhood on their work-related choices. This study added another dimension to mothers' perception of their parental roles. Specifically, it shed light on motherhood's influence on work-related choices and whether integration between roles was possible.

Study participants' perceptions confirmed the crucial impact of motherhood on their work-related choices. Out of 50 midlife mothers interviewed, 44 stated that motherhood had a direct impact on their work-related choices. The minority who denied such impact, worked at women-friendly professions or occupations where it was easier and more acceptable to interweave motherhood and work. Out of 50 respondents, 35 mothers revealed that motherhood had hindered advancement at work.

Israeli society encourages mothers to join the workforce. Findings showed that in practice women worked, but traditional motherhood roles still prevailed. Additionally, 46% of mothers justified their decisions to prioritize their children's well-being. Since none of the 50 interviewees referred to government arrangements for children, or any other public assistance, we identified that a change is necessary in social perceptions of this model of motherhood. Most participants did not plan to return to their careers when their children had grown up. They either wanted a "good life" or to retain their previous priorities, where their children's needs preceded their own. Only a minority of women expressed a desire to return to their careers and aim for positions that had not been available to them beforehand because of motherhood. Even fewer claimed they were trying to place their nomination for a possible promotion at work.

Reviewing the data, motherhood was still perceived as women's primary role. Consequently, it had a crucial impact even on their work-related choices. Current social

expectations of mothers to integrate different roles of caregiver and employee do not work. The study drew attention to the fact that a high percentage of women in the workforce did not necessarily indicate successful integration into the workforce. There was no genuine integration, instead mothers at best juggled their roles and did not seek promotion or mobility. The results showed that integrating career and family roles came at a considerable cost that as findings suggested could not be overcome over the years. Findings revealed that even if midlife mothers expressed regrets about their work-related choices, only a few would pursue a desired change or long set aside dream.

7.1 Research contribution

Most of the previous research that explored mother's perceptions on their roles and its impact on their work-related choices, was based on the theme of motherhood as a single state. The study introduced a lifelong perspective of motherhood offering a wider view not based on specific points of the experience. Midlife was chosen as a period enabling analysis of previous perceptions and behaviors providing a solid base to comprehend future perceptions.

This study examined midlife mothers' perspectives of three variables: self-efficacy, self-perception of parental roles and psychological well-being and thereafter contributed to research on midlife. This study lights up the self-perceptions of these variables prior the COVID-19 pandemic and how these changed following its first wave when the number of cases remained steady in Israel and there was a belief the pandemic had ended.

The researcher applied a limited diversity prism focused on midlife mothers based on marital status. Two groups were chosen: divorced and married midlife mothers. Consequently, this study contributes to the understanding of divorced and married mothers' perceptions of chosen variables.

Research findings revealed a model of behavior adopted by the majority of the qualitative study participants. Mothers confronted contradictory expectations: to become main family caregivers and be responsible of their families or be involved in a modern workforce market. That is, traditional expectations resulting from traditional culture versus modern expectations as an OECD country and part of western society. The majority of mothers put motherhood first ahead of their occupation. Participants had to address conflicts between external pressures from social expectations to integrate work and

motherhood and maintain their caregiver role. Findings revealed that women coped by choosing work that allowed them a measure of control and at the same time retain their preference for motherhood over work such as family friendly working hours and traditional female occupations. This preference prevented mothers from undertaking more challenging jobs with opportunities for promotion. Consequently, they paid a penalty because their mobility options were limited and they found themselves in the same position with a low salary for long periods of time. It was also found that the majority of the mothers did not change their occupation when their children had grown up. Research showed that time points were of no importance whether it was before entering motherhood, while raising children or when making future plans when their adolescent children leave home at 18 to enlist to the Israeli army. Most participants preferred to remain in their current positions and enjoy the benefits of their newly acquired free time. Only a minority of participants would seek a second career or long neglected promotion opportunities.

Viewing the model, one reflects on what could be done to minimize the costs of motherhood and consequently increase mothers' well-being. First, it is recommended changing government policy. It is not enough to encourage mothers to join the workforce but necessary to reward women who choose professions or occupations other than those that are mother friendly. This should include offering children's day care solutions for mothers and enabling women to work from home while rewarding them for their accomplishments rather than promotion according to seniority in their current positions. Finally, to close the gap between modern western culture and traditional perceptions of motherhood prevailing in Israel. Social expectations of mothers should be adapted such as encouraging more flexibility among couples with regard to their familial obligations. Experience has shown that government legislation is not enough if not followed by addressing social expectations as learned from previous Israeli legislation encouraging husbands to take paternity leave. Until it became socially accepted, husbands did not use it. Social media can be engaged for such purposes. Social change could start in the public education system by introducing new educational programs in high schools to encourage girls to widen their preferences and choose more scientific subjects and not limit themselves to traditional subjects.

A new model of motherhood should be developed offering free choice to mothers. Mothers know they will be penalized if they prioritize motherhood over work. Mothers who put their careers before motherhood should be accepted by society and supported by their partners, who should be aware and accept their share of household duties and parental roles, putting an end to the existing traditional distribution of roles. The current situation, where out of 50 (44%) 22 midlife mothers expressed a gap between their partners and themselves with regard to the importance they assigned to parenthood should not be accepted in society including by mothers themselves and flexible arrangements between couples should be accepted as a social norm.

This introduction of a new model for mothers should be accompanied by employment legislation encouraging employers to allow fathers flexibility, for example to leave work early to pick up their children from school and offer mothers support to work longer hours. However, it should be noted that legislation alone is not enough, social perceptions of fathers' roles must change too. For example, current legislation addressing equal rights to maternity/paternity leave for both parents. Society, however, has only accepted that fathers take an unequal share in parenting roles and legislation remains on paper only. Based on this study's research journals, many mothers commented they received much more help from their former husbands after divorce compared to during their marriages. The difference can be related to the fact that it is socially more acceptable for divorced fathers' parental roles to be recognized by workplaces than for married fathers whose parental roles employers do not acknowledge.

Findings showed a need to adopt mental assistance programs for this population and lessen growing pressures on health and welfare services. Publicly funded short-term family therapy programs should be made available to mothers as well as fathers. Additionally, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services should be motivated to develop workshops to help parents operate well in environments loaded with tensions.

Therapists need to find a way to empower adolescent's midlife mothers. And built up their sense of competence to establish their parental roles with their adolescents. In addition, therapists should help the mothers to believe that change in their life long work-related choices, are possible. Midlife mother sought to feel that different ways of integration between their multiple roles are possible. That it is not too late to change their

priorities and place career in the first place. The therapist can work out with the mothers, that a priority change may be possible to live with and is acceptable.

7.2 Universal contribution

The study may have a universal contribution to the understanding of midlife motherhood, introducing differences in the inner worlds of divorced and married mothers, specifically their perceptions of well-being, self-efficacy and parental roles.

This study contributes to knowledge about changes in mothers' perceptions during a worldwide pandemic, pointing out the importance of support systems in times of stress and the impact of their absence.

Lastly, this study introduces a model of lifelong work related choices of mothers', in a country characterized by modern and traditional values. This model of lifelong work related choices detected in the current study might also have universal implications and could be applied to many other countries sharing this phenomenon.

Midlife mothers should be encouraged in any way possible, that it is never too late to make changes in their lives, especially in their work- related choices whether in Israel or around the world. The Ministry of Social Services and Social Affairs (or their equivalents) should organize mothers' workshops to improve and enhance the possibilities and qualifications necessary for successfully changing or upgrading work- related choices. A range of psychological interventions such as solution focused therapy, are in great demand not only for those mothers entering motherhood, but for midlife mothers as well.

7.3 Research Limitations

The main limitation of this quantitative exploratory approach was its non-representative and small number of participants.

One of the strengths of this study was its quantitative measurements, such as attitudinal scales, of self-perceptions of parental roles, psychological well-being and self-efficacy. Another strength was its careful exploration of research measures with 77 participants who met research characteristics while other participants were precluded. The research location was chosen with great care, a municipality with an average socio-economic status. It is hoped that this limited analysis will serve as a basis for future studies when research conditions improve, such as a study with a larger population of both mothers and fathers.

This research aimed to shed light on midlife mothers' perceptions. Therefore, for a broader perspective of mothers' perceptions, other age groups should be studied as well.

The COVID-19 questionnaire was administered after the first wave of the pandemic in Israel (between 1-23 August 2020). Thus, results may apply to COVID-19's short-term influence on mothers. Additional studies are required to analyze the long-term impacts of the pandemic.

The research literature reveals a tendency of participants to rate medium values (Birenbaum, 1993; Cohen, 1996). In this study this phenomenon was reduced by employing quantitative research tools with even number of Likert scale where the possibility of marking middle value is prevented.

The researcher was also aware of the danger of desirability where the participants can give answers which to their opinion will satisfy the researcher. To control this limitation. The research design two types of research tools qualitative as well as quantitative.

7.4 Suggestions for further research

In light of this study, there is a need for further research on the following subjects. The research population consisted of mothers from an average socio-economic municipality and it is recommended extending research to a range of socio-economic municipalities. The research applied a limited prism via marital status focusing on divorced and married mothers. It is recommended extending research to additional variables such as widowed and single mothers. Findings from these groups would enrich data about mothers' lifelong perceptions and consequently their work-related choices. Secondly the research population mostly consisted of working mothers and including unemployed mothers would provide an additional perspective.

8.0 References

- Abendroth, A., Dulk, L. (2011). Support for the work-life balance in Europe: the impact of state, workplace and family support on work-life balance satisfaction. *Work, Employment and Society*,
- Ahdut, N. (2011). The Program for Integrating Single-Parents at the Job Market: Do Mothers Who Got Job Allowances Improved Their Position at the Job Market? The Israeli Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor. Retrieved September 23, 2011 (<http://www.moital.gov.il>).
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social cognitive theory in cultural context. *Journal of Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 51, 269–29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1464-0597.00092>
- Burt, M. (2020). Most Vulnerable to be Hardest Hit by the COVID-19. Economic Downturn. Conference Board of Canada, 23 March. <https://www.conferenceboard.ca/insights/blogs/most-vulnerable-to-be-hardest-hit-by-the-covid-19-economic-downturn>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory*. London: Sage.
- Cochran, M. (1993). *Extending families: The social networks of parents and their children*. New York, NY: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge.
- Cohen, L. Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2013). *Research Methods in Education*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge. .
- Cohen, T. S. (2015). Parenthood in midlife: Perceived parental roles, intergenerational ambivalence and wellbeing among parents of adult children. *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences* 209, 137-149. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.2>
- Cohen, T.S. (2016). *Parenthood in Midlife: Perceived Parental Role, Intergenerational Ambivalence and Well-Being among Parents of Adult Children*. Cluj-Napoca: University of Babes-Bolyai.
- Coolican, H. (2017). *Research methods and statistics in psychology (6th Ed.)*. London; New York: Psychology Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th Ed.)*. Los Angeles, California: Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Clark, V. L. P. (2017). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Hirose, M. (2019). Mixed methods and survey research in family medicine and community health. *Family Medicine and Community Health*, 7(2).
- Doren, C. (2018). Is two too many? parity and mothers' labor force exit. *Journal of Marriage and family*, 81(2), 334-342. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jonf.12533>.
- Edgerton, D.J., & Hogan, D.P. (1990). Giving between generations in American families. *Human .. Nature*, 1 (3),211-232.
- Gersick, C. and Kran, K. (2002). High-achieving women at midlife: An exploratory study, *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 11(2), 104-127.
- Gilgun, J.F. (2005). The four cornerstones of evidence-based practice in social work. *Research on Social Work Practice*, 15 (1), 52-61.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). *Discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative Research*. London and New-York: Routledge.
- Greenhaus, J.H., & Beutell, N.J. (1985). Sources of conflict between work and family roles. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 76–88.
- Hashiloni-Dolev, Y. (2018). The Effect of Jewish-Israeli Family Ideology on Policy Regarding Reproductive Technologies. Boas, H., Hashiloni-Dolev, Y., Davidovitch, N., Filc, D., & Lavi, S. (Eds.), *In Bioethics in Israel: Socio-Legal, Political and Empirical Analysis*, 119–138. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hays, S. (1996). *The cultural contradictions of motherhood*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Heilbrunn S, Davidovitch L. Juggling Family and Business: Work–Family Conflict of Women Entrepreneurs in Israel. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*. 2011;20(1):127-141. doi:10.1177/097135571002000106
- Knoester, C. (2003). Transitions in young adulthood and the relationship between parent and offspring

- well-being. *Social Forces*, 81(4), 1431-1458.
- Lavee, Y., and Katz, R. (2008). The Family in Israel. *Marriage & Family Review*, 35, 193–217.
- MacPhee, D., Benson, J., & Bullock, D. (1986, April). Influences on Maternal Self-perceptions. Paper presented at the Biennial International Conference on Infant Studies, Los Angeles, Ca.
- Mandemakers, J.J., & Dykstra, P.A. (2008). Discrepancies in parent's and Adult child's reports of support and contact. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70(2), 495-506.
- Milkie, M.A., Bierman, A., & Schieman, S. (2008). How adult children influence older parents' mental health: Integrating stress-process and life-course perspectives. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 71(1), 86-105.
- Morgan, P.A., Merrell J.A. & Rentschler, D. (2015). Midlife mothers favor "being with" children over work and careers. *Work*, 50, 477-489. <http://doi.org/10.3233/wor141958>.
- Omer, C. (2000). *Restoring Parental Authority*. Tel-Aviv, Modan (Hebrew).
- Ontai, L., & Sano, Y. (2008). Low-income rural mother's perceptions of parent confidence: The role of family health problems and partner status. *Family Relations*, 57, 324-334.
- Offer, S., Sambol, S., & Benjamin. O. (2011). Learning to negotiate network relations: Social support among working mothers living in poverty. *Community, Work and Family*. 13(4), 467–82.
- Pierce, T., Boivin, M., Frenette, E., Forget-Dubois, N., Dionne, G., & Tremblay, R., E. (2010). Maternal self-efficacy and hostile-reactive parenting from infancy to toddlerhood. *Infant Behavior and Development* 33 (2) 149-158. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infbeh.2009.12.005>
- Ramisch, J. L., McVicker, M., & Sahin, Z. S. (2009). Helping low-conflict divorced parents establish appropriate boundaries using a variation of the miracle question: An integration of solution-focused therapy and structural family therapy. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10502550902970587>.
- Remennick, L. (2005). Immigration, gender and psychosocial adjustment: A study of 150 immigrant couples in Israel. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*, 53(11–12), 847–63.
- Rosenau, S., Gilat, I. (2020). Family-work relationship among women who work at the education system, *Journal of educational counseling*, 22, 231-265. [in Hebrew].
- Ryff, C.D., (1989). Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57(6), 1069-1081. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.57.6.1069>
- Sa'ar, A., (2009). Low-Income 'Single moms' in Israel: Redefining the gender contract. *The Sociological Quarterly* 50(3),450–73. [Taylor & Francis Online]
- Schwarzer, R., Jerusalem, M. (1995). Generalized self-Efficacy scale. In J. Weinman, S. Wright, & Johnston (Eds.), *Measures in Health Psychology: A User's Portfolio*. Causal and Control Beliefs, 35–37.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Stryker, S. (1980). *Symbolic Interactionism: A Social Structural Version*. San Francisco, CA: Benjamin Cum
- World Economic Forum (2020). Why We Need Women's Leadership in the COVID-19 Response? At [https:// www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/women-femaleleadership-gender-coronavirus-covid19-response/](https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/04/women-femaleleadership-gender-coronavirus-covid19-response/).