“I Was Always the Good Girl”
The Twofold Silencing of Teachers as a Force Fostering a Low Sense of Professional Self-Efficacy

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What makes well-trained, devoted and experienced teachers have a subjective feeling of low competence, i.e. a low sense of self-efficacy?
Self Efficacy

People’s beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired effects by their actions.

(Bandura, 1997)
Teacher’s Self-Efficacy

• Many studies showed the relation between high self-efficacy and the quality of teaching.
• Higher pupils’ achievements
• Low rate of teacher burn-out
• A more humanistic approach of the teacher
• Love the teaching profession
• Use less punishing methods
• Are more committed to the school

Research Topic

• The effect of the nuclear family on professional self-efficacy

(As a part of a larger research on the sources of teachers’ self-efficacy)
Research Method

• Stage 1:
  357 teachers filled out questionnaires on self-efficacy with a Likert scale of 1-6 (Friedman & Kass, 2001)
  – Out of 2 groups of teachers, with low self efficacy and with high self efficacy:
    • 14 teachers with low self-efficacy, average score of 3.95
• Stage 2: in-depth open interviews, 1.5-3 hours long
Participants

- 14 women teachers with low self-efficacy
- Ages: 34-50
- Seniority: 1-26 years
- Elementary schools
- Diverse cultural backgrounds
The Request Presented to the Interviewees

• Please tell me frankly the story of your successes and failures as teacher?
Data Analysis

• Findings were analyzed using Grounded Theory Methodology
  (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

• Implementing the axial coding procedure
  (Strauss & Corbin, 1994)
Findings

• The nuclear family
1. Absence of a supportive father figure

“He was a closed person, very honest, super honest, and there was no relationship. No emotional attachment.”

“I remember that we went to summer camp in Tunis and we stayed for a whole month. Our parents came to visit every week. As a child I went happily, but after two days I started to cry and wanted to go home. After my father died, I had no problem staying in camp; I didn’t want to go home.”
2. Communication with the Mother

• “I didn't always feel that she understood me, because she had different opinions. I wasn't one who ran to tell her mother everything, because I knew she wouldn't understand me.”
3.a. The values: care for others

• “To be a human being. Mainly. The whole issue of helping, sharing”

• “I’m the only one of my sisters who continued studying and I don’t think it impressed them. It didn’t bother them...They had no aspirations for me that I would study.”
3.b. The Values: Be a ‘Goody-Goody’

• “I wasn’t a problem child. I was quiet, shy, very shy. I didn’t stand out.”

• “Look, it depends on the home and the upbringing, not on the country, but my upbringing was very ... puritanical, reserved, so moral, a good child....”
3.c. The Values: Need to be Perfect

• “...And I look at her and say: ‘Mom, we are so much alike, like, I’m such a perfectionist, and I invest so much and I can’t cope with the expectations from me. It’s too much for me.’”
3.d. The Values: Gender Roles

• A mother who works at menial jobs, sometimes below her ability
• In some families the older brother assumed the role of the man of the house:

“I was still a child and my oldest brother took command, you could say.”
Summary

• Don’t be Afraid of Fear: Development of a personal and professional sense of self efficacy

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