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THE LABELING OF STUDENTS IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN ISRAEL ACCORDING TO THEIR ECONOMIC AFFILIATION

ABSTRACT. Franco Sali Manor, *The Labeling of Students in Educational Institutions in Israel According to their Economic Affiliation* [Etykietowanie uczniów w instytucjach edukacyjnych w Izraelu poprzez ich status ekonomiczny]. *Studia Edukacyjne* nr 40, 2016, Poznań 2016, pp. 327-352. Adam Mickiewicz University Press. ISSN 1233-6688. DOI: 10.14746/se.2016.40.18

This paper shows that it is possible to note a number of points in the development of the educational system in Israel from the establishment of the State: the framework of uniform education from the end of 1948 until the conclusions of the Fromkin Committee in 1950 and the integration from 1968. The changes of policy reflect the historical changes that occurred in the social economic discourse and that shaped the development of the state of Israel. The system began its path as controlled by the center and as supporting social equality. After failed attempts to correct the difference that reigned between groups of students, reforms in the system, such as the implementation of the integration program, led to the presentation of a new policy, such as affirmative action. Following another failure, reforms were presented, and an attempt was made to return to the idea of equality through the presentation of analysis and evaluation related to the quality outputs of the system. Israel faces many challenges to improve its educational system, and it has the duty to persevere with the reforms it has initiated in the subject of education. Education is one of the most important investments that the State can make to improve its future.

Key words: Israel, economic affiliation, educational institutions, labeling of students

Equality is a supreme value in our society. The right to equality has been recognized in international documents and in the Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel, where it says that the State of Israel “will ensure complete equality of social and political rights for all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex.”¹

¹ Declaration of Independence of the State of Israel, 1948.

The equality of opportunities is a main value in modern and postmodern societies. According to this value, the social status of the individual, his part in the resources and social rewards, such as money, power, and prestige, is determined on the basis of his personal achievements and not according to his lineage and origin. The demand for the equality of educational opportunities is based on the argument that for norms of fairness to reign in the rules of competition for the social resources, it is necessary to ensure equal conditions of competition and equal social chances.

The school is a system in which the student acquires educational resources through his ability and efforts, and it will determine his chances in his social economic future. Inequality in the educational opportunities constitutes a source for the continuation of the social inequality and the perpetuation of social gaps.

The researchers Sabirsky,² Aviram,³ Lemm,⁴ and Lavi⁵ maintain that the educational system is not equal and is differentiated according to religious, national, and ethnic lines. In the first years of the establishment of the State of Israel, the Compulsory Education Law (1949)⁶ was legislated. All the Jewish educational sectors (according to political and religious background) were recognized, and the Arab educational system was also recognized and funded.

Compulsory Education Law, 1949

The Compulsory Education Law of 1949 was a revolutionary law. Until the establishment of the State of Israel, families were not obligated to send their children to school and the State did not compel them to do so. The transition to the Compulsory Education Law occurred in parallel in most developed countries around the world. It was revolutionary since the country took upon itself the responsibility and also obligated all families to send

² S. Sabirsky, *Seeds of Inequality*, Tel Aviv 1995.

³ R. Aviram, *Education and Equality in the Postmodern Era*, Trends: Quarterly to Behavioral Sciences, 1998.

⁴ Tz. Lemm, *Ideology, Pedagogy, and Policy in Education in the State of Israel*, [in:] *Initiative for Social Justice*, Ed. M. Elkana, Yad Yaari 2000.

⁵ Tz. Lavi, *Is Education Possible in the Era of Postmodernism?* Tel Aviv 2000.

⁶ The Compulsory Education Law, 1949, determines that every child in Israel must be in the educational framework. This law is in effect from the age of three, in the kindergarten, and until the end of the twelfth grade. The law assigns the responsibility to the child's parents to register the child to the educational institution and to make certain that the child regularly attends the studies until he completes them.

the children to the school. It was in force for what was then considered elementary education (ages five to fourteen, from kindergarten to eighth grade). This law made education in Israel universal. However, did it end the educational inequality? This law in essence conveyed the question of the inequality from the elementary stage (elementary education) to the secondary stage (secondary school). If the system does not take upon itself the responsibility for the high school studies, then there is preference for every person who can fund high school studies, as opposed to a person who cannot afford them.

In this period, there were many students who had not learned. Therefore, the State determined that it is possible to complete the elementary studies for youths aged fourteen to seventeen who had not studied at an earlier age. Education would be provided for free by the State and the local government. The primary arrangement was that the State funds the teachers' salaries and the construction of the schools and the local government finances the school's administrative personnel and maintenance personnel. In addition, the local government could charge an education fee that would cover studies beyond what the Ministry of Education funded.

The other side is the side of the parents' obligation. The law determined explicitly that the parents must register the children to the school, and if they did not do so, then they would be fined and could even be imprisoned (ten lira). It was implemented very partially, and until today the State conducts a legal process against parents who do not send the children to the school. Regarding the choice of the school, the State of Israel recognized the parents' right to choose a school. In recent years, the topic has become a subject of discussion, when the State changed its position and argued that the parents do not have this right. However, this first law does recognize the parents' right to choose a school from the sectors that operated in the period of the British Mandate. This law completely ignores the question of Arab education. This section was required since the State did not unite the sectors. The financing of the sectors shifted to the responsibility of the State, but the sectors still operated separately.

The local governments are responsible for the registration of the students and for the enforcement of the law. The State cannot engage in this since it does not manage the registration for the schools. The local government has the responsibility to establish learning institutions for children who are 'difficult to educate' or have defects.

The first law, which determined that education in Israel is compulsory and free, also determined that it was possible to receive an exemption. The

definition in legal terms, as seen here, is very vague. The State decided with this law that people need to send their children to one of the sectors. There are four sectors: workers, general, Mizrachi⁷, and Ultra-Orthodox. Parents from the Ultra-Orthodox sector are more extreme, and some in the Ultra-Orthodox sector say that they do not want the State to decide what sector to go to and they want independence. Therefore, they want an exemption from the law and the government approves this. It approves this for coalition reasons, since to preserve the government coalition the government needs the support or at least the lack of opposition of the Ultra-Orthodox parties. Here is where the concept of exempt institutions comes in. The exemption is not for the institution; it is in essence for the parents, an exemption from sending the child to another institution. The exemption institutions are those that collect the students who have received an exemption from going to other schools. There is no State supervision of these institutions. These exempt institutions are called this because the learners are students who have received an exemption from the Compulsory Education Law that provides a free compulsory education.

In the year 1953 the State Education Law was enacted. This law defined state education as education provided by the State according to curricula, without connection to an ethnic party organization or any other organization outside of the government and under the supervision of the Minister or somebody authorized by him. The aim of this law was to eliminate the political influences and to establish state principles.

State Education Law, 1953

The second important law in this period, a law that to some extent is even more significant, is the State Education Law. For the first time, one orderly educational system in the State was created. The state religious system also accepted the State's authority, but it also sought autonomy. The religious part will determine the study contents and the appointment of the teachers and principals. Additional things that were determined are that the official curricula will constitute 75% of the study hours in the school and the parents have the possibility to determine additional contents that will be learned.

⁷ Mizrachi, which means East in Hebrew, refers to Jews who are descended from the Jewish communities of the countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

The Goals of the State Education Law of 1953. It is possible to see the integration of two ideologies, one universal, which was pushed to the last part of the passage and one with a very clear ideology that is derived from the Jewish, Zionist, and even socialist perception (Mapai⁸). If the bourgeoisie had phrased the law in this period, then it would not necessarily have introduced sections such as training in agricultural and pioneering work. It is possible to see in the law that makes the educational system into a State system the very political mark of the party that reigned in those years. What there isn't in this section is democracy, reference to the Arab population. There is no reference also to the internal differences in the Jewish population. In this period of time, Jews from all around the world came to Israel, but there was no reference to the differences among them. In ideology religion was not allowed to enter.

Goals of the State Education Law, Amendment from the Year 2000

1. To educate the person to be a loving person, loving his people and his country, a loyal citizen to the State of Israel, who respects his parents and his family, his heritage, his cultural identity, and his language.

2. To inculcate the principles in the declaration of the establishment of the State of Israel and the values of the State of Israel as a Jewish and democratic State and to develop an attitude of respect for human rights, for the basic liberties, for democratic values, for the upholding of the law, and for other people's culture and outlooks, and for education for peace and tolerance in the relations among people and between nations.

3. To teach the history of the Land of Israel and the State of Israel.

4. To teach the *Torah*⁹ of Israel, the history of the Jewish people, the heritage of Israel, and Jewish tradition, to instill the awareness of the memory of the Holocaust and the acts of courage, and to educate to respect them.

5. To develop the personality of every boy and girl, their works, and their different abilities, to fulfill their ability completely as people who live a life of quality and meaning.

6. To establish the knowledge of every boy and girl in the different areas of knowledge and science, in human works of the different types and of the

⁸ Mapai is the Hebrew acronym for Workers' Party of the Land of Israel. It was a left-wing political party in Israel and dominated Israeli politics until it merged into the modern Labor Party of Israel in 1968.

⁹ *Torah* is the central reference of religious Judaic tradition and has a range of meanings. It can specifically mean the first five books of the Jewish Bible but usually includes the rabbinic commentaries. The term *Torah* means instruction and represents a way of life. It can even mean the totality of Jewish teaching, culture, and practice.

different generations, and in the fundamental skills they require in their lives as adults in a free society and to encourage physical education and leisure time culture.

7. To strengthen the power of judgment and criticism, to cultivate intellectual curiosity, independent thought, and initiative, and to develop awareness and alertness of the changes and innovations,

8. To grant equality of opportunities to every boy and girl, to allow them to develop according to their path and to create an atmosphere that awakens differences and supports them.

9. To cultivate involvement in the Israeli social life, willingness to accept roles and fill them out of dedication and responsibility, desire for mutual assistance, contribution to the community, volunteering and striving for social justice in the State of Israel.

10. To develop an attitude of respect and responsibility to the natural environment and connection to the country, its vistas, and its flora and fauna,.

11. To know the language, the culture, the history, the heritage, and the unique tradition of the Arab population and the other groups of population in the State of Israel and to recognize the equal rights of all the citizens of Israel.

There was a transition from a centralized and collectivist discourse to an individual discourse that takes into account the differences and the person himself while preserving the thought of loyalty to the State of Israel. It is possible to see here an interesting combination between old and new sections. The topic of pioneering and the working of the land was rather erased during these years. For instance, in section 5, there is reference to girls and not only to boys; this is a very individualistic perception of the person. Between the year 1953 and the year 2000 the inequality increased but in the legislation it decreased. In actuality, the data indicates that the economic and educational inequality increased. In section 11, it is possible to see a significant movement from a more ethnocentric direction to a universal direction. However, here too there is a significant gap between the declared goals and what we see in actuality in the system.

Until the 1980s the educational system was bureaucratic and centralized. The central education policy was guided by the ideas of equality in all that pertains to the division of resources (uniform curriculum, identical number of students in the classroom, identical teaching methods) and quality (equal level of achievements, equal percentage of recipients of the high school matriculation certificate).

This creates a situation in which the State controlled the entire pedagogical system, in organizational and financial topics, and in addition employed teachers who became state workers (although this did not include the teachers of the high schools).

The first reforms began in the system. They occurred after the Israeli leadership understood that the policy is not effective. The Fromkin Committee was established in the year 1950, at the directive of the Prime Minister David Ben Gurion, to examine the implementation of the 'uniform education' in the Israeli educational system and the examination of its influences in terms of coercion and implementation of the 'melting pot' on students from different countries of origin. The 'melting pot' model is expressed in contents that characterized the educational system in Israel. This system attempted to inculcate in all the students the values of modern Western culture - achievement-orientation, rational planning for the long-term, and so on. These traits may promote the individual towards occupational success and social integration. Following the Fromkin Committee, the efforts increased to establish state education on two systems - secular and religious.

Many research studies have found that there is a significant relation between the student's achievements and the student's socioeconomic background. These conclusions indicated that equality in the division of resources does not ensure equality in the achievements.

Following these discoveries, the Israeli educational system began to implement a policy of affirmative action. In the 1960s it was possible to see a transition from collective equality to over-compensation for schools, according to the percentages of the students defined as deprived, primarily students from Mizrachi or Arab backgrounds.

In the year 1968 the *Knesset* (Israeli Parliament) decided with a majority vote to accept the offer of the parliamentary committee for the examination of the structure of elementary and secondary school education in Israel, with all its sections. Thus, the suggestions of the committee headed by Dr. Elimelech Shimon Rimlet became the decision of the *Knesset*, according to which a reform in the structure of education was implemented.

At the end of the 1960s, the middle school was presented as the key to social integration through the bringing of children from different neighborhoods into the same school. The policy of integration encountered a separation in the school system, for instance, between study groups and thus perpetuated the inequality among the students.

The Period 1953-1968

After the establishment of the State of Israel, Jewish society underwent far-reaching demographic changes. There were rapid processes of expansion but alongside the expansion there began a great split in the system. On the one hand, there was a population that changed rapidly, increased in size, and became more heterogeneous as a result of mass immigration, while on the other hand, the Jewish population before the establishment of the State was homogenous and composed mostly of Zionist Ashkenazi¹⁰ Jews. In it there were groups of immigrants from Yemen. After the establishment of the State of Israel, there was a flow of Jewish immigrants, primarily Holocaust survivors from Europe, and in the continuation, from the middle of the 1950s there was a large wave of immigration of Jews from the Islamic countries.

After the State of Israel was established, there were large waves of immigration from Europe and Iraq, Syria, and Yemen. Later, throughout the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, there was a very large wave of immigration from the countries of North Africa. One of the important points was that in essence the absorbing Jewish population was smaller than the population of immigrants, a situation that is rare on an international scale. The absorbing population held the economic and political resources and dictated the prevailing ideology, in the field of education as well.

Consequently, there was a very massive increase, by a multiplication factor of three, in the number of schools and by almost five times the number of classes and students. The system faced basic problems that did not divide equally among all the sectors in the population. The main problems that the Jewish educational system faced were as follows:

To provide education services for a rapidly growing population. The tremendous increase in a relatively short period in a country that was very poor resulted in an austerity regime for part of the time. This meant for the new schools conditions of poverty and lack. The system was found all the time in the attempt to find a place for the students.

- To establish schools in new communities and in transition camps.
- To train teachers. In the training of the teachers the problem was far greater - a lack of teachers. It was very difficult to train teachers rapidly. Most of the teachers were new. In the older and more established communities, there were more experienced teachers, while in the new schools, which had been opened recently, there were new teachers.

¹⁰ Ashkenazi refers to Jews whose origins are the countries of Europe.

- To learn Hebrew.

- To address the phenomenon of dropping out. One of the main problems was the problem of dropping out. Many students dropped out from school. One of the main reasons was the need to help earn the family's livelihood, to ensure the family's survival. In addition, the Compulsory Education Law, which provided free and mandatory education, was in effect until the age of fourteen. Many families did not have sufficient funds to pay for studies for their children after the age of fourteen.

- Cultural Differences. The way in which the State handled the cultural differences was not for the population to accept the differences but through the 'melting pot': to make all have the character of the Jewish community. The prevalent ideology did not promote equality although it would seem that it called for equality.

The rapid increase and heterogenization of the population were not unique Israeli phenomena. These phenomena have also characterized other educational systems in the 20th century. Therefore, it is not surprising that some of the solutions for the problems were imported from other places.

The Solution - Separation

The problem in Israel was a problem of cross-pressures. On the one hand, there was a population that is rapidly increasing and becoming more heterogeneous. The problem was that in parallel to the State's desire to include, there was the desire of strong populations to maintain their advantages and a high scholastic level. A widespread phenomenon that was more extreme in Israel was how to resolve the desire to include and yet allow the strong to maintain their advantages. The solution was a separation in the system. On the one hand, the system attempted to include as many students as possible and to reduce the dropping out in the Jewish sector, while on the other hand the State wanted to maintain the students' high scholastic level. When referring to separation, it is possible to see a number of dimensions.

Types of Separation. *There is spatial separation* (as a part of the broader social policy). This is a spatial and demographic policy of the dispersion of population, a declared policy of the government, in the framework of which development towns and communities of immigrants were established. The immigrants from the Islamic countries, the Mizrahi Jews, were directed to these communities. They had less negotiation power with the government. Iraqi Jews were not settled in the periphery for two reasons: first, they immigrated very early, before this policy was implemented, and second they had a profession that was required in this period and did not have problems finding work.

This was one of the main mechanisms and had long-term impact. Consequently, there was the establishment of separate neighborhoods and separate schools, since the educational system is a local system. If separate residential camps or communities were established, then the children learned in separate schools.

Extension of Vocational Education. The distinction between theoretical education and vocational education is very significant in the educational system in Israel and around the world. The separation in the schools into the different study programs, which is called tracking, creates in the school different levels of socialization and education. This has great impact on the children's professional and academic future. The programs today are a certain development of these study tracks. The third mechanism in the educational aspects began to develop in the 1960s but steadily accelerated after the reform - the mechanism of grouping, in which students study the same topic but at different levels.

Students in the Theoretical and Vocational Tracks in Secondary Education, 1948-1980

The first thing that should be noted is that the educational system that had existed until the establishment of the State of Israel was primarily a theoretical system, in secondary education. The educational system that had existed with the establishment of the State was theoretical, but during the 1950s and 1960s and until the end of the 1970s there was a significant increase in vocational education. Nearly 60% of the students in Israel study in vocational education, the highest percentage or among the highest percentages in the world.

Over the years, it is possible to see that the main study subject in vocational education is metalworking. One-third of the students studied this field (welding/blacksmithing, machining, metal framing).

The field of electronics, which is the industry of the future, increased relatively little in these years. Another field that increased is the field of clerking, and here there is a very clear gender division. The men went to manual work, while the women went to office work. In addition, the women studied in the seminars for teachers and in the schools for nurses the health-care professions. The first explanation is the perception of the roles of women and men. The second explanation for the gender differentiation is related to the scholastic achievements: girls study better than do boys and

the vocational education is perceived as a solution for students with scholastic difficulties.

An international comparison of the percentage of the learners in vocational education shows there is a trend of decline in vocational education in the origin countries of the immigrants (Western Europe, North Africa). It is possible to see a similar increase to the increase in Israel only in one region – Eastern Europe. The explanation for this situation is communism, a very strong ideological perception of ‘work as a value’. In Israel, the socialist party believed in the same principles. Another reason is the desire to limit theoretical education since in this way people avoid thinking critically and will not rebel against the communist government. It is possible to say that in Israel vocational education developed very rapidly, very considerably, and in counterpoint to the global trend.

What are the implications of the referral of students to theoretical education or to vocational education? One of the main implications is the ability to continue to academic studies. A higher percentage of theoretical education graduates continue to an undergraduate degree, in comparison to vocational education graduates. There are also implications on the salary: theoretical education graduates for the most part earn more in the future than do vocational education graduates.

The system retains the students longer and enables more students to complete the high school stage. However, at the same time it provides the students with different learning, with different educational outcomes. Education was free until the age of fourteen, and the parents needed to pay beyond this age. The State implemented a graduated level of tuition, and there were mechanisms that were intended to allow students to enter high school education without paying at all. The cost of a high school education was not very high.

There was a very rapid growth in the educational system in Israel as well as a dramatic change in the proportions between the theoretical system and the vocational system. In three decades the system became a system that was more than one-half vocational. The rapid development in Israel of vocational education was not a part of the global trend. Rather the reverse was true: in many parts of the world there was a decline in the vocational education in this period. In addition, we also saw that in vocational education the blue collar professions, working class professions, were taught. The graduates of the vocational schools frequently remained without a livelihood since the engagement in these professions steadily declined.

The rise in vocational education was primarily in Jewish education and not in Arab education, despite its suitability for this population (which was

characterized by learning problems, a low level of education, and the need for skilled workforce). This occurred for different reasons. One reason was an economic reason: vocational education is far more expensive than theoretical education and the State preferred to invest this money in theoretical education. The separation easily enabled the State to develop vocational education only in Jewish education.

In addition, there was the coping with the dropping out, which existed in the two populations, and the State wanted to reduce this phenomenon. The government wanted to lessen phenomenon primarily in the Arab population, through the development of vocational education.

To summarize in the meantime, we saw that one of the main mechanisms in separation was the theoretical and vocational mechanism. The education was directed primarily to the Jewish population and to the Mizrachi population from a lower class.

Explanations for the Development of Vocational Education. *The Modernization Approach.* The first reason that can be placed under the title of the modernization approach is that vocational education was a need for the job market and the students. Vocational education was a fact of the reality, in light of the opening point of the new Mizrachi immigrants. The job market needed in these years strong industrial development in the State - many factories were established and they required manual labor. In addition, the military required technically skilled manpower to a steadily increasing extent, and thus it was necessary to increase the vocational education for the industry and the military. Vocational education was perceived as a solution for students with difficulties continuing the theoretical education. The second reason was the reduction of the dropping out. In these years, there was a very great problem of dropping out. A question that was greatly deliberated by the senior officials in the Ministry of Education was the dropping out of students and primarily immigrant students. This was not an Israeli invention but an idea imported from the United States, Sweden, and England, where vocational education was significant in scope and was perceived as appropriate for students from a low status. In Israel, this was a solution for the Mizrachi students and thus they could be integrated in the job market.

Conflict Approaches. In contrast to the functionalist approach, the conflict approaches emphasize the status and ethnic tensions in society and processes in which there was intentional exclusion directly/partially and was intended to preserve advantages in the hegemonic group, in a process of barriers. One type of analysis is from a class approach that emphasizes the

control of material resources as the most main factor in society. The argument is that the one who controls the capital controls the society. According to this argument, vocational education was intended to create a class of workers to serve the stronger groups in society. Since in the 1950s and 1960s a group of people lacking in means and political relations came to Israel, the government directed this group to the creation of a working class in Israel. This group was found to be unsuited to theoretical studies. From an empirical perspective, there were many Mizrahi Jews who failed in the studies and dropped out from them. The system, according to this perception, saw this population as suited to be the working class. The Mizrahi immigrants did not hold positions of social, political, and economic power and therefore found it difficult to deal with the decisions of the establishment.

In the State there is a large group for which the question of the vocational or agricultural high school is a matter of life or death. I am referring to the developmental regions, which for the most part population by new immigrants. In these regions, the establishment of an academic high school will miss the point (Minister of Education, Zalman Aran, in the opening session of the Committee for the Examination of High School Education, July 1957).

I think highly of the theoretical school, but there is no doubt in my heart that under the conditions of the State in this stage there is still preference for the vocational school. I would not like for the development towns to become snobbish, to put the child into the [theoretical] high school, this even hurts the child. This snobbishness causes thousands of children who are pushed by their parents to the high schools to not complete their studies (Minister of Education, Zalman Aran, in a Conference for Educators in the City of Dimona, December 1963).

In this process, the State directed the population of the Mizrahi immigrants to the development towns and determined at the same time that there was no point to establish theoretical schools but not comprehensive or vocational schools. The parents of these students did not necessarily want to send them to the vocational education but preferred to develop theoretical education. The Minister of Education saw the parents' tendency to send them to the theoretical schools as snobbishness that harms them.

Tzvi Tzameret spoke about the productivization of the members of the Mizrahi communities. The leaders of Mapai, who had despaired of the transformation of the Ashkenazi population into manual laborers according to the socialist Zionist vision, directed this goal towards the Mizrahi immigrants.

If there is no productivization of most of this youth in the State of Israel, a state in which there are no goyim [non-Jews] ... then our entire culture will be hanging

by a threat and there will be a degenerate culture. We will remember that our fundamental foundation is to exist on a life of work (Minister of Education, Zalman Aran, June 1966).

Tzvi Zameret holds that it was not that the ruling party, Mapai, acted maliciously towards the Mizrachi population. Rather, it acted according to its ideology, which was socialist and believed in work. Mapai despaired of the Ashkenazi bourgeoisie and wanted to continue to cultivate the ideology that states that it is necessary to restore the Jew to manual labor, and the way was through the Mizrachi population.

The Survey Test. The survey test was conducted from 1955 until 1972 for all eighth grade students. This test examined the students' mastery of the learned material. The original goal of the test was to identify students with a high level of abilities who are from a low socioeconomic status and to give them a scholarship so their tuition would be low or zero, through a mechanism of affirmative action. Very quickly this test became the main factor that sorted students for vocational and theoretical education.

This test showed a very large gap between Mizrachi and Ashkenazi students. It provided scientific justification for those who asserted that the Mizrachi students did not have the ability for theoretical studies. This gap can be explained in that it is clear that a population that had just arrived in Israel, through a difficult process, that did not know the language, and whose parents frequently were unemployed would clearly have reduced chances of success. The test, which was supposed to measure achievements, was found highly correlated with the socioeconomic background and also with the ethnic origin. The conclusion was that the Mizrachi students were not suited for continued theoretical education. At some point, a second norm, a lower threshold for the test, was determined, and yet many Mizrachi students did not pass this test, too. In this situation, the State could make all sorts of decisions, when the decision to refer to vocational education was one of them. There was the additional possibility of referral to theoretical studies and providing help throughout the studies. Instead, the test outcomes constituted a basis for the decision to establish comprehensive schools with a vocational orientation in the development towns and in the Mizrachi immigrant neighborhoods. The conclusion was when schools were constructed in the development towns, it is necessary to build schools that were primarily vocational, and this is indeed what happens.

The Policy of Cultivation. The term 'disadvantaged' started to be used in the beginning of the 1950s. Fundamentally, this is an optimistic concept that assumes the possibility of cultivating children and youths whose start-

ing point was lower as a result of their family, social, or economic situation. The approach on the disadvantaged population was influenced by psychological research studies that addressed cultural, social, and economic lacks that characterize the low classes and minority groups (deficit theory). Today there is considerable criticism of the deficit perception because of its Eurocentric character.

Karl Frankenstein, a central figure in Israel in all that pertained to the field of education and social work, who even won the Israel Prize in 1965, led the research and policy regarding the disadvantaged population. He differentiated between primary retardation (organic), which cannot be healed, and secondary retardation, which derives from social and cultural reasons. In the beginning of the 1950s he published articles that addressed the primitiveness of the Mizrachi population and the relation between this primitiveness and secondary retardation and the lack of scholastic success of members of the Mizrachi communities. Some maintain that this is not research but rather the drawing of conclusions from a non-representative sample.

Frankenstein developed a theory and educational methods for remedial teaching that is supposed to surmount the initial lacks on the part of the disadvantaged students. This method is based on the understanding of the student's personality problems, the students' disconnection from their natural environment, and the students' adjustment to the modern form of thinking.

It is important to emphasize that Frankenstein's goal was not a racist objective. His goal was to rehabilitate people with secondary retardation. He assumed that people with primary retardation cannot be rehabilitated but that those with secondary retardation can be. His interventions were intended to promote the population, but the outcome was negative. This approach states that to address secondary retardation it is necessary to disengage the students from the environment that causes this retardation and to attempt to rehabilitate the damaged personality. He saw this population as very primitive and asserted that the primitive man has a tendency to project everything onto outside factors and not to take responsibility for himself. When the decision makers thought about what to do with the Mizrachi population that is not succeeding in the studies, they saw Frankenstein's articles, and no doubt their approach was shaped by them.

The cultivation policy had some positive implications. Affirmative action was introduced for schools that serve the low socioeconomic population. The disadvantaged index exists until today. Furthermore, this policy re-

sulted in the introduction of compensatory education, in which additional educational services are provided for weak populations, such as activity in the kindergarten, enrichment programs, learning centers, and so on, as well as the investment in the development of educational approaches for the promotion of weak populations.

However, it is clear that the cultivation policy also had some negative implications.

- Lack of success in the closing of the gaps and even the exacerbation of the gaps following the intensive use of the separation policy.

- Establishment of an 'objective' scientific foundation (secondary retardation) for the cultural and educational inferiority of the Mizrahi population, which justified the tracking and grouping approaches.

- Labeling of populations as 'disadvantaged'.

The cultivation policy also had mixed implications. The Mizrahi students with high achievements were referred to the residential schools of the Association for the Promotion of Education. In the 1960s a process commenced in which Mizrahi students were identified and placed in residential schools. They paid a heavy price for the disconnection, and in addition these students with high abilities did not become the heads of the Mizrahi leadership. If they had remained in their population and had not left it, then perhaps they could have represented this population.

Changes in the Educational Policy at the End of the 1960s and Beginning of the 1970s

At the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, significant changes occurred in the educational policy in Israel. This is a reform in the structure of the system. A synonym is integration. At the end of the 1960s, the country was in its twenties and still there was a clear geographic separation on socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds. People began to voice that something was not right, that all the attempts at a 'melting pot' in Jewish society are not right and did not succeed, and that therefore a change was necessary.

The first change, and perhaps the most significant one, was to extend the law mandating compulsory free education. According to this reform, the students were committed to the elementary school until the age of fourteen. The government understood that it was not logical and that fourteen was too young to leave the educational system, and thus it was decided to extend the law by two years. The law was passed in 1949 when it begins at the age of

three years, and only this year, 2016, were some of the daycare centers opened from age three according to the Compulsory Education Law and there are still places that are struggling with this law. The second course of action was the establishment of middle schools. In the past, the school was from first grade to eighth grade, when afterwards there was high school that not all students attended. The third need was the establishment of the policy of integration. At this time, it was very easy to identify where every population lived and where it studies. There was no inter-mixture. The idea behind the integration policy was to obligate the children to come to the institution, where the strong students would strengthen the weak ones. It is possible to understand that there is a certain social development. The State, which had been established for twenty years, could now expand its attention from issues of security to social issues.

Prawer Committee. In the year 1963 the Prawer Committee was established by the Minister of Education, Zalman Aran, with the goal of examining the extension of the Compulsory Education Law by a further two year period. The members of the committee attempted to examine whether it was right to extend the law. After two years, the committee submitted its recommendations (1965), stating that it is necessary to extend the Compulsory Education Law. In the first stage, it was to be extended by one year. The second recommendation was to implement a structural change in the educational system and to create middle schools between a six year elementary school and a three year high school. The middle schools would be established according to the creation of a number of models of the operation of middle schools. At this stage, it was not clear how to build the middle schools – whether new ones should be constructed or whether the studies should be continued in the existing schools.

The Committee recommended a trial year since there were additional aspects, beyond the localized problem with the structural change of the ninth grade. The first problem was that until then the attendance of high schools was voluntary. However, beforehand there was the filtering of students. Who was entitled to attend the high school? There was an attempt to prevent this idea or postpone it to the tenth grade. An attempt was made to understand how to prepare the children for a softer landing in high school, in the world of the 'big people'. There was here a very significant issue of inequality and the attempt was made to build a uniform system equal for all. How is it possible to build a 'melting pot' in a more successful manner?

The most severe problem with this report was that it was shelved. It was not implemented. This was a professional committee, but there was a dis-

connection between it and the political world. The committee was simply set aside. There were very strong objections to this course of action on the part of the Teachers' Union of the elementary schools, for the teachers in the seventh and eighth grades were to be taken to be middle school teachers, and the Union did not want to lose these teachers to another organization. At this stage, there was success in the struggle against this process.

The Rimlet Committee: The Parliamentary Committee for the Examination of the Structure of Education. However, the Minister of Education, Zalman Aran did not give up. He insisted that it was possible to create a change. He established another committee in the year 1966, although it was a parliamentary committee. He appointed a minister from the government to be the head of this committee. Aran was certain that all the conclusions and recommendation would be passed rather easily through political discussions. The Committee submitted its recommendations in the year 1968.

1. Elementary school education would be for six years (first to sixth grades).

2. Secondary school education would be for six years and would be divided into middle school and high school.

3. The middle school would be a period of adjustment for students between the elementary school and the high school and would allow the students and their parents to decide upon the continuation of their educational path.

4. All sixth grade students will continue to the middle school and all ninth grade students will continue to the high school, with the exception of special cases.

5. The survey test would be cancelled and there would be no selection in the transition to the high school studies. In other words, there was no longer a need for the test, and this was one of the most significant changes in the approach until this time. Now all students could study for twelve years of education.

6. The separation into study programs (theoretical, vocational, agricultural) would be undertaken only in the tenth grade. Another conclusion was to separate the students into study tracks not in the ninth grade but in the tenth grade. The idea was to attempt to postpone the end with the separation into tracks, to allow the student to adjust and absorb a bit more, to understand a little more what every track is, and only then to sort the students into the tracks.

7. Two years were added to the Compulsory Education Law, which provides free mandatory education (until the age of sixteen).

8. The middle school and high school would operate in the framework of a comprehensive school that serves a broad population.

9. It is necessary to encourage the local authorities to unite the existing high schools under one roof (this proposal was the focus of strong objection in the Committee and did not receive majority support). The accessibility to higher education did not change considerably. The entire issue of the laws and this reform must come on the part of the local governments, which need to agree to accept the high schools and comprehensive schools. It was necessary to encourage the local governments to take part in it. The local governments were not all eager to take part in this endeavor and thus it did not happen in all of them.

10. Not all the existing secondary education institutions were required to merge into comprehensive schools, and thus there continued to be separate theoretical, vocational, and agricultural high schools. The Settlement Education and the Kibbutz Education organizations were strong politically and requested an exemption from the integration and received it. The preference was to exempt them as opposed to not having the law at all. In addition, the Ultra-Orthodox population was also removed from the application of this law.

11. The reform would be implemented in cooperation with the local government and the Ministry of Education.

12. The training of the teachers for secondary education would be on an academic level. There is a significant difference between teaching in the elementary school and in the high school. Elementary school teachers needed to have graduated from a teaching seminar, while high school teachers required an academic education, at least an undergraduate degree, and then a teaching certificate. There is an entire system that needs to be managed. It was decided that all middle school teachers would need to have this training.

13. The study tracks in the high school were diverse, and one explanation was to attempt to retain as many students as possible in the system. Thus, there was curricular flexibility so as to accommodate as many students as possible. This was also a way to implement tracking, since when there are many more tracks, then the chances that people from a different background will choose the same track are low.

14. On the topic of social integration, it is desirable to re-examine the issue of registration districts for the elementary schools in the city, in the rural

communities, and in the regions of the local councils, so as to bring the children from different ethnic and socioeconomic groups together in the framework of elementary education as soon as possible. Aside from the fact that in the middle schools the issue of integration is enforced, here an attempt is made to promote it at yet an earlier stage, since the middle school is a stage too late to do so.

The recommendations were all accepted. The thought was that when there would be a middle school, the parents and the children would be accustomed to speaking in terms of a school that is not the elementary school and this would encourage the children to continue since they already were found in the school and were not finishing a part of it, which made it easier to leave. The public understood that following the elimination of the survey test it was easier to remain in the educational system. This was a structural reform that succeeded and it exists until today. While at the beginning of the 1970s only 30% of the students who attended the seventh to ninth grades, today at the beginning of the 21st century the percentage is far higher, slightly more than two-thirds.

Integration was not a main component in the recommendations of the Rimlet Committee; however, it became, for political reasons, the banner of the reform. The issue of social integration barely appeared in the documents and in the discussions before the reform. On the one hand, it is possible to see that, in the process of the preparation of the reform, the topic of integration was barely expressed. However, after the reform was implemented it had a most central place. The reason did not come from the field of education but from broader aspects. It was clear that in the State of Israel there are two countries. First, there is the Ashkenazi Israel in the main cities. This is the richer Israel. The second Israel is the Mizrachi Israel at the periphery of the country. The apex of the protest was in the protest of the Black Panthers, an Israeli protest group of young people, the second generation of the immigration to Israel from the Arab countries, which was established in the year 1971. The public awareness of the social topics in Israel increased greatly following the actions of the Black Panthers, and the topics promoted by the movement and its activists became part of the public agenda of the State of Israel.

The government was very concerned about the gaps between the Mizrachi population and the Ashkenazi population, both in poverty and in employment. The Black Panthers attempted to enter politics, but this transition was not especially successful. The educational system was perceived as a main instrument of social change. It is possible to analyze this politically,

when one of the ways of the government to cope with criticism is to create a policy that promotes the equal opportunities for the Mizrahi and Ashkenazi populations through a program of integration, the opening of the high schools to all students. This integration program was a program that was very easy to 'sell' to the Israeli public, for it appeared very logical and reasonable. The idea of integration was influenced by the policy of de-segregation that characterized the American educational system in the 1960s. The basic idea behind the de-segregation was to provide opportunities for students from weak populations. In the United States, the idea was implemented by transporting Black students to schools of white students. The integration indicates the transition from a psychological approach of classification that was characteristic of the 1950s and the 1960s to a social approach that emphasizes the encounter between the different groups in Jewish society. At the end of the 1960s, we see a U-turn of the government from the policy of separation to the policy of integration. It also fits well with the Zionist idea of the 'intermingling of the Exiles'. This was a very significant change, at least on the level of the policy of education. It is possible to see as an admission of the failure of the policy of cultivation of the 1950s and 1960s. The objection to the integration was that in the place of the segregation *between* the schools there will be segregation *in* the schools. Thus, for example, the integration did not eliminate the tracking and perhaps even increased its impact. Haim Adler from the Hebrew University cautioned in the year 1969 that much hope should not be placed in the integration in light of the elementary school education in the disadvantaged neighborhoods.

On the one hand, the integration was a very important political instrument for the decision makers so as to promote the reform. In the Israeli public the integration was well received. Most of the politicians supported it. On the other hand, the public perhaps supported the process but it objected to this course of action, when this pertained to them personally. We identify a number of groups that objected to this process.

- The Teachers' Union was the main objector to the reform, primarily to the structural reform and less to the integration. However, since they were connected, the Union opposed both of them. In essence, this reform weakens them politically; it reduces their numerical power. The middle schools were perceived as a part of secondary education, and this process shifted some of their teachers to the competing organization, to the secondary teachers. The Teachers' Union attempted to delay the reform in general.

- State religious education. The first reason of this objection is that this education is very divided in it. It has a relatively strong group, which is for

the most part from an Ashkenazi background. On the other hand, there is a great majority of students from a Mizrachi origin. They are less religious, from a lower socioeconomic status, and possessed of weakest achievements. In this education sector, the parents objected to the reform, with the argument that this will harm education. In ethnic-religious terms, in some of the places where integration was coerced in state religious education, parents from a more established status left the school and established independent schools.

- The settlement education did not agree to accept students from the rural communities that were primarily Mizrachi. They received an exemption from the integration. The Minister of Education was an important member of the kibbutz movement, and in his speeches he praised the integration but when it pertained to his personal camp he granted an exemption to the kibbutz movement.

The realization of the integration depended largely on the willingness of the local government to cooperate. The strong local governments objected to the fulfillment of the structural change and the integration and some succeeded in preventing or delaying the fulfillment of the reform in their area.

Groupings - Segregation in Integration. In the year 1970 the Pedagogical Secretary in the Ministry of Education published a document with guidelines for the operation of the middle schools. The document introduced groupings as a structured part of the middle school. The guidelines included in this document state that:

The use of grouping in the seventh grade will allow the student to learn three subjects at a pace, depth, and scope suited to his personal ability. Every student will learn the subject in the group suited to him. The student can learn in the advanced group in one subject and in the intermediate or slow group in another subject.

Thus, segregating tools were introduced into the integrating middle schools. On the one hand, there is an integrating ideological and structural frame of the integration of students from different populations, but there are intra-school mechanisms that erode the integration. When the school holds classification tests for the students, then students from a weak background will be directed to weak groups and students from a strong background will be directed to the higher groups. Even if the school does not know anything about the students, in the test of the result the weak groups will contain far more students from South Tel Aviv and the strong groups will have students from North Tel Aviv. The question that arises is therefore as follows. Are there heterogeneous classes and from these classes there are groupings or are the classes ahead of time arranged only according to the groupings?

There is a difference in this topic between the different schools. Research studies conducted in Israel and in other places show consistently that the groupings increase the inequality in the school.

Tracking - Segregation in Integration. The integration created an encounter of people from different classes and different ethnic groups in the same school but simultaneously enabled the schools to separate between them through groupings and separate learning tracks. In actuality, we find in many places that the implementation of the integration in the schools barely exists. Research studies conducted in the 1970s showed that schools use different methods so as to maintain the separation:

- Homogenization of the homeroom classes: A full separation was created every year, division of the classes according to the students' level.

- Failure to prevent dropping out and even intentional causing of dropping out of 'weak' students: Weak students were prevented from entering the school or caused to drop out. (A student was permitted to enter the school and after a year or two he dropped out of the school.)

- Increase of the referral to special education (most of the students who came to special education were Mizrachi students).

Therefore, what did the reform achieve? Today, considerable criticism is leveled against the middle schools, and some people even call to eliminate this scholastic stage. Their arguments against the middle schools include:

- The students enter too soon a school that is too big.

- There are problems with discipline and violence.

- There is an argument about the use of groupings in this stage.

The findings of research studies on the achievements of students from the weak populations in society indicate that, as expected, in the scholastic field, the integration had a certain positive impact on the students from a low socioeconomic background. If we compare between students who went to the integrated schools and students who did not attend these schools, then the students who attended integrated schools have slightly better achievements. The integration primarily helped the stronger students from the weak socioeconomic group; they are the main beneficiaries of the integration. However, weak or average students from a low socioeconomic background lose, since they transfer to a strong school but are found in the weak groupings. Last, there is lower esteem of the teachers because of the reference group (despite the increase in their students' objective achievements).

The findings of the research studies regarding the social encounter indicated that, contrary to expectations, there was no social explosion. The

schools did not become especially violent (perhaps because of the separation into the learning tracks and groupings). Conversely, if friendships are looked at, when research studies examined who is a friend with whom, they found that there are relatively few friendships that are inter-ethnic. When an attempt is made to identify the reasons, the main reason is not a reason related to ethnicity itself but to the school segregation. If the school separates the students according to ability, then it separates the schools according to social background. In addition, research studies asked the students who are the students who are most admired in the class and the situation was clearly asymmetric, in which all the students tended to mention the Ashkenazi students as esteemed students. One of the points found in the research studies is that students from a low socioeconomic background suffered from low self-esteem in the integrated school, even if they had been strong students in their local schools, since they compare themselves to the strongest students. In the long-term, the integration harmed a considerable number of students since it lessened their educational aspirations.

Criticism was also leveled against the integration from the multicultural direction. It appeared that the implementation of the integration was very partial and the integration did not succeed in realizing its objective of the reduction of gaps.

- The integration is based on the assimilation of the weak groups into the strong groups and not on an equal multicultural perception.

- The assimilation is performed under asymmetric power relations, when the strong group sets the rules. Another criticism is that the integration is not a two way process but rather a one way process. It perpetuates the hierarchies existing in society; it takes weak and Mizrahi students and puts them in strong schools of the Ashkenazi students. The contents are of course determined by the strong group, the Ashkenazi group. This issue is also related to the school ceremonies, the scholastic contents, and the holidays.

- The policy of segregation in the integration empties the content from the idea of the social encounter.

- The integration does not allow the empowerment of the weak groups but rather further solidifies their subordination to the strong groups.

- The integration is contradictory to the ideas of freedom of choice and cultural diversity.

Today it is known that the integration in the educational system in Israel was a resounding failure. In the 1980s as a result of the lack of effectiveness of the reforms implemented to that point the system returned to the idea of

equality. This led to pedagogical changes that emphasized excellence, pluralism, individualism, and economic efficiency. This transition reflected an international tendency that perceived the state systems as bureaucratic and cumbersome and as unable to provide essential services efficiently and effectively.

In Israel of the 21st century, there is still an economic and social gap between different populations, on the background of their social stratification. Social stratification refers to one of the forms of expression of social difference. The different social groups are different from one another in the ownership of social resources (prestige, authority, riches). Therefore, it is possible to rank them into levels in the hierarchical structure, and each one of the members of society is affiliated to one of these levels, which determine which level is above another level or under another level, in an agreed-upon hierarchical order.

The social classes in Israel are influenced both by the process of social stratification and by the process of socialization that the child and the student undergoes in the Israeli educational system. The student's social experience is also the basis for the formation of the student's relatively stable personality, patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior.

Every enlightened and cultured society with a democratic regime aspires to grant equality to its citizens. In addition to the laws that grant equal rights, the State is acting in the framework of its educational institutions with the main role to train the young generation for the different goals of society.

For hundreds of years, the assumption was that people whose origin is families from the upper class would remain in this class. Some societies even granted this authority through the relationship of Divine order and thus the social class passed by inheritance from generation to generation. Then industrialization came, which led to modern industrialized society, in which the class was defined through ownership of property, which grants the family a higher status. The resources, the knowledge, the relations, and the influence – all these are necessary to achieve advantages in education (a good school, tutors, etc.). Education leads these children to employment opportunities that will position them in a place similar to their parents' place.

In contrast, the economic difficulties faced by members of the lower classes, poverty, illness, large number of children, and the need to help in the livelihood of the family, pushes aside their possibility of achieving an improved status in education.

To conclude, it is possible to note a number of points in the development of the educational system in Israel from the establishment of the State: the framework of uniform education from the end of 1948 until the conclusions of the Fromkin Committee in 1950 and the integration from 1968. The

changes of policy reflect the historical changes that occurred in the social economic discourse and that shaped the development of the state of Israel. The system began its path as controlled by the center and as supporting social equality. After failed attempts to correct the difference that reigned between groups of students, reforms in the system, such as the implementation of the integration program, led to the presentation of a new policy, such as affirmative action. Following another failure, reforms were presented, and an attempt was made to return to the idea of equality through the presentation of analysis and evaluation related to the quality outputs of the system. Israel faces many challenges to improve its educational system, and it has the duty to persevere with the reforms it has initiated in the subject of education. Education is one of the most important investments that the State can make to improve its future.

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