

## TYPES OF EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE IN ISRAEL

**Elham Maree**

Principal of Eben Rushd elementary school – Qalansawe -Israel

A student in the Doctorate path in the scientific discipline "Organization and Management outside the Field of Material Production"

Varna Free University

**Abstract:** *The education system in Israel is diverse with public, private non-profit, and private profitable institutions that offer a wide range of educational opportunities. Private schools in Israel have more autonomy and offer specialized programs but are generally more expensive. Public universities in Israel are funded by the government and are prestigious and well-respected, while private non-profit universities are funded by private organizations and have a more specialized focus. Private profitable universities provide vocational training. There are also colleges and vocational schools that provide technical and professional training. The Ministry of Education oversees the education system and sets policies and guidelines. Universities in Israel receive funding from various sources including tuition and fees, government agencies, private organizations and donations*

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The education system in Israel reflects the diversity and the complexity of its society, especially the multiplicity of the sectors in it. The heterogeneity of the education system is expressed in different levels of the system's structure and budget, as well as in the existence of many types of educational institutions adapted to the needs of the various sectors (Arcavi, a. and Mandel-Levy, n., 2014; Blass, 2018). The structure of the education system in Israel is presented in four main sections: division according to stages of education, according to the legal status of the educational institution, according to the type of supervision and according to sector (Ministry of education, 2013). In this article, I will delve into the various structures within the education system and the overall structure of the system itself. I will explore the different categories of education divisions. Additionally, I will examine the ways in which these structures shape the education system in Israel and how they impact students and educators alike.

**Section by stage of education:** The education system in Israel is divided into five main stages of education, according to the age of the students:

**Pre-primary education:** pre-compulsory education - 3-5 years old. Pre-primary education in Israel leaning on educational programs for children before their entry to primary school, at age of 3. These programs can include both formal and informal education, such as preschools, daycare centers and mother- child groups. Formal pre-primary education is provided by kindergartens, which are typically run by the local municipality or by private organizations. Kindergartens offer structured educational programs that include activities such as play, art, music and language development. They also provide a safe nurturing environment for children to learn and grow.

Informal pre-primary education in Israel can include mother-child groups and daycare centers. These programs provide a more relaxed and informal setting for children to learn and socialize with other children of their own age. Overall, pre-primary education plays an important role in preparing young children for primary school and helping them develop the skills they need to succeed in their formal education (Seberski, 1990).

**Primary education** includes kindergartens and grades 1-6, and it is compulsory for all children aged 3-11 years old. During this stage, students learn the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic, as well as social studies, science, mother tongue (Hebrew or Arabic) and literature. In primary school, classes are usually divided by grade level, and students are taught by a single teacher who is responsible for all subjects. The curriculum is set by the Ministry of Education and is designed to provide students with a well-rounded education that covers all the essential subjects.

The education system in Israel in general, is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills they need for success in their future careers and as active citizens in the society. Primary education in Israel is compulsory for all children aged 6 to 11, and most students attend state-funded schools. However, there are also private and religious schools that are available for students.

**Post-primary** education refers to the level of education that follows primary education and precedes secondary education. It is also known as middle school education, and typically includes grades 7-9. In middle school, students continue to build on the foundation of knowledge and skills they acquired in primary school and start to specialize in certain subjects. They are also introduced to more advanced concepts and skills, such as critical thinking and research. In post-primary education, the curriculum is set by the Ministry of Education and is designed to provide students with a well-rounded education that covers

all the essential subjects. Classroom instruction is in Hebrew and in many schools, Arabic and English are also taught as second languages. Post-primary education is compulsory for all students aged 12 to 15 and most students attend state-funded schools. The post-primary education in Israel plays a crucial role in helping students make the transition from primary to secondary education and preparing them for the academic rigors of high school. It allows students to continue to develop their skills and interests and to start thinking about their future career and life goals.

**Secondary** education includes grades 7-12 and is also compulsory, till the tenth grade. During this stage, students major in certain subjects and prepare for matriculation exams, which are required for graduation and for entrance into higher education. Secondary education in Israel refers to the three years of schooling, typically starting at the age of 12, that follows primary education.

In secondary school, students are usually divided into three tracks: academic, technological-vocational, and semi-vocational. The academic track is intended for students who plan to attend university, the technological-vocational track is intended for students who plan to go into technical fields and the semi-vocational track is intended for students who plan to go into semi-professional fields.

In secondary education, the curriculum is set by the Ministry of Education and is designed to provide students with a well-rounded education that covers all the essential subjects. Secondary education is compulsory for all students aged 12 to 18, and most students attend state-funded schools.

In general, secondary education in Israel plays a crucial role in preparing students for higher education and for the workforce. It allows students to focus on their interests, strengths, and future career goals, and to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for success in their chosen field (Blass, 2018).

**Higher** education includes undergraduate and graduate programs at universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning. These programs typically include both theoretical and practical components, and lead to degrees such as bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. In addition, there is also vocational education, that provides students with the skills and training needed for specific careers or industries (Arcavi, a. and Mandel-Levy, n., 2014).

**Section by legal status:** There are three categories in the division of the education system according to legal status. The legal status of an educational institution is determined by its ownership and the degree of state control over it:

**Formal** education- state and state-religious educational institutions in Israel are owned and operated by the government or local authorities. These institutions include both primary and secondary schools, as well as vocational and technical schools. The teachers in these institutions are considered civil servants and are typically employed by the Ministry of Education. They are required to have appropriate education and qualifications, and they follow the curriculum and standards set by the government. The education provided in these institutions is usually considered to be of a high quality, and it is free for all students. Additionally, these state-religious schools integrate Jewish religious studies and practices into the curriculum, as per the laws of the state.

**Recognized non-formal** institutions that are not state-owned but have received some degree of government supervision in Israel include, private educational institutions that offer non-formal education programs, such as vocational training schools, language schools, and private adult education centers. These institutions are required to meet certain quality standards and regulations set by the government to operate, non-profit organizations that provide educational services and programs, such as youth centers, community centers, and organizations that provide programs for at-risk youth. These organizations receive about 75% funding from the government and are subject to government regulations and oversight. Religious educational institutions, such as yeshivas and religious seminaries, which provide education in Jewish religious studies and practices. These institutions are recognized by the government.

Some educational programs offered by the military, such as vocational training for soldiers, are provided by private institutions that have received some degree of government supervision.

These institutions play an important role in providing education and training opportunities to a wide range of individuals, and they are required to meet certain standards to ensure the quality of education they provide. Many of the recognized non-formal educational institutions belong to ultra-Orthodox education, and especially to the two major education networks in this sector - the Independent Education Center and the Torah Education Spring. However, there are schools in this class that belong to other religious communities, for example Arab-Christian schools that are considered private schools, as well as a significant number of non-religious schools, such as the democratic schools (1).

Even the four-year post-primary education institutions and the upper division, most of them are not official institutions, because they have not been declared as such in the

records, although some are owned by the local authority or private companies or the state. The teachers in these institutions are not civil servants.

**Exemption Institutions** - Haredi educational institutions recognized by the education system as institutions exempt from fulfilling the general conditions of the education system, and special conditions were set that exempt them from fulfilling the provisions of the Compulsory Education Law 5749-1949. Obligatory, and not to educational institutions, however over the years children who have been granted an exemption have been incorporated into certain educational institutions, hence the nickname "exempt institutions".

**Section by type of supervision:** Supervision is determined according to the characteristics of the populations of educational institutions and according to which there are three categories:

**State supervision:** educational institutions that are funded by the state and are subject to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education are under state supervision. This includes public schools, regional schools, and state-religious schools.

**Independent supervision:** educational institutions that are not funded by the state but are still subject to the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education, are under independent supervision. This includes private schools, as well as some religious schools, such as yeshivas.

**"Other" supervision** - Jewish-ultra-Orthodox educational institutions. Among the educational institutions under the supervision of "Other", there are no official institutions, but there is a division into institutions affiliated with the two major educational networks, which are: the "Independent Education Center" and the "Spring of Torah Education" and institutions that are not affiliated with these networks.

**Section by sector:** The education system is divided into two sectors, the Jewish sector, and the non-Jewish sector. The non-Jewish sector includes the Arab sector, the Circus sector, the Badawi sector and the Druze sector (1).

There are other structures in the education systems in Israel such as the Special education, which includes educational services and programs for children with special needs. These services are designed to meet the specific needs of children, such as those with physical, cognitive, or emotional disabilities. Special education programs are provided in a variety of settings like, within mainstream schools, with accommodation made to meet the needs of children with disabilities. There are also specialized institutions, some children with special needs may attend specialized institutions that provide specialized education and support services.

These institutions may include special schools for children with types of disabilities, such as schools for the blind or deaf. Children with special needs may receive support services through resource rooms, which provide additional support and specialized instruction to children with disabilities. Some children with special needs may be integrated into regular classrooms with support services in place to meet their individual needs. Additionally, there is home education where some children may be educated at home with support services provided by the local education authority with the supervision of the Ministry of education.

In Technical schools, which provide training in specific trades such as mechanics, electronics, and construction, Students learn the technical skills required for a particular trade and may also study relevant theoretical subjects.

Many vocational schools offer apprenticeships programs where students can gain hands-on experience working in their chosen field. In addition, there is the Dual education. This is an education system where students receive both theoretical and practical training in a vocational school and in a company in parallel, thus gaining the necessary skills to enter the job market.

Another type of schools is the private schools in Israel. They are independent educational institutions that are not owned or operated by the Ministry of education (Benyamini, K. & Klein, Z., 1971). They are typically operated by private organizations or individuals and are financed by tuition fees paid by students' families. These schools provide education at the primary, intermediate and secondary levels. Private schools in Israel offer a variety of educational programs, such as general studies, religious studies, and special needs education. Some private schools have a specific focus, such as arts, music, or science. Many private schools also offer specialized programs in fields such as technology, business, or health care (Woolf, 2019).

The curriculum and standards in private schools are usually similar or aligned with the state-owned schools. However, some private schools may have a different educational philosophy or approach (Wenenger & Zerd, 2014). Additionally, private schools have more autonomy over the curriculum and the hiring of teachers, which allows them to offer more specialized educational programs (Wenenger, A & Zerd, E., 2019).

Private schools in Israel are subject to government regulations and oversight, and they are required to meet certain quality standards. They are also more flexible to tailor their curriculum to the needs and interests of their students (Wurgan, Y. & Fidelman, I., 2009).

While private schools in Israel offer a high-quality education, they tend to be more expensive than state-owned schools and are not accessible to all students, especially those from low-income families.

Universities in Israel play a central role in the country's education system, offering undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide range of fields. They are also considered as an important institution in the country's research and development, and the Universities are considered as key players in driving the innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Public universities in Israel are funded by the government and are considered the most prestigious and well-respected institutions in the country. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, established in 1918, is the oldest and most well-known public university in Israel. It offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide range of fields including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, engineering, medicine and more. The Technion – Israel Institute of Technology, established in 1912, is the oldest university in Israel and is renowned for its engineering, science, and technology programs. The University of Haifa, established in 1972, is another well-known public university, which is in the northern city of Haifa and offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a variety of fields. The Bar-Ilan University is also a public research university located in Ramat Gan. Founded in 1955, it is named after Rabbi Meir Bar-Ilan, a religious leader and philosopher. The university has a diverse student population and offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide range of fields, including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, law, medicine, engineering, and more. It is also known for its strong programs in Jewish studies and Middle Eastern studies. Tel Aviv University (TAU) is also a public research university located in Tel Aviv, Israel. Founded in 1956, it is the largest university in Israel and one of the most prestigious in the country. TAU offers undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide range of fields, including the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, law, medicine, engineering, and more. It is also known for its strong programs in business, economics, and computer science. Universities are considered among the top research Universities in Israel and worldwide.

Private, non-profit universities in Israel are funded by private organizations and foundations. These universities tend to have a more specialized focus, offering programs in fields such as business, law, and computer science. They are also known for their flexibility in terms of program offerings and have a more diverse student population. Examples of these universities include the Interdisciplinary Center Herzliya (IDC), which was established in 1994 and offers undergraduate and graduate programs in business, law, communications, and

more; and the Open University of Israel, which was established in 1974 and offers distance learning programs for students who cannot attend traditional universities.

Private, profitable universities in Israel are owned by private individuals or corporations and are mainly focused on providing vocational training. They are considered as less prestigious compared to public and private non-profit universities, but they still play an important role in the country's education system by providing students with the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for certain professions. Examples of these universities include the Ruppin Academic Center and the Ariel University Center of Samaria.

In addition to these universities, Israel also has several colleges and vocational schools that offer technical and professional training. These institutions play a crucial role in providing students with the skills and knowledge needed to enter the workforce. These institutions offer programs in fields such as nursing, teaching, engineering, and more.

Technical colleges provide higher level vocational education and training. They offer diploma and degree programs in specific fields such as engineering, technology, and design.

In general, the structure of universities in Israel is diverse, with a mix of public, private non-profit, and private profitable institutions, each with its own unique characteristics and strengths. This diversity allows for a wide range of educational opportunities for students and provides a strong foundation for research and innovation in the country.

There are several sources of funding for universities, including tuition and fees. Universities generate revenue from tuition and fees paid by students. Universities may receive funding from federal, state, and local governments, or donations from individuals, foundations, and corporations (Ben-David, D. 2021). Universities may also receive funding from government agencies and private organizations to support research projects or may have endowments, which are funds that are invested, and the income is used to support the university. Universities may also generate revenue from investments made with their endowments or other funds, in addition they may generate revenue from sponsorship with companies or organizations.

The Ministry of Education in Israel is responsible for overseeing the country's education system, from pre-primary to higher education. The ministry sets policies and guidelines for the curriculum, teacher training, and other aspects of education, and works to ensure that all students have access to quality education.

The Ministry of Education is headed by a minister, who is appointed by the Prime Minister and is a member of the cabinet. The minister is responsible for setting the overall

direction of the ministry and for implementing the policies and programs set by the government.

Under the minister, there are several departments and divisions that are responsible for specific areas of the education system, which include, the department of curriculum and instruction, which is responsible for setting the curriculum and guidelines for teaching and learning in all subjects and at all levels, the department of teachers and educators, which is responsible for teacher training and professional development, the department of planning and budgets, which is responsible for managing the ministry's budget and for planning and implementing education programs, the department of inspection, which is responsible for monitoring the quality of education in schools and providing support and guidance to educators, the department of higher education, which is responsible for overseeing the country's universities and colleges. In addition, there are also regional and local education offices that are responsible for implementing the policies and programs set by the ministry in different parts of the country.

Overall, the Ministry of Education plays a crucial role in ensuring that the education system in Israel is of high quality and that all students have access to the knowledge and skills they need for success in their future careers and as active citizens in society

The Pedagogical Secretary is a position within the Ministry of Education in Israel that is responsible for overseeing the educational content and curriculum in the education system. The Pedagogical Secretary works to ensure that the curriculum is relevant, up-to-date, and aligned with the needs of students and society. It is responsible for developing and implementing policies and guidelines for the curriculum, and for ensuring that teachers and educators have the necessary resources and support to deliver high-quality instruction. This includes working with experts in various fields and with teachers to design and implement new programs, and to evaluate and improve existing ones.

The Pedagogical Secretary also works to ensure that the curriculum is inclusive and promotes equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their background or abilities. This includes addressing issues such as integration of students with special needs, cultural diversity and promoting gender equality.

The Pedagogical Secretary also plays a key role in the professional development of teachers and educators, by providing them with the training and resources they need to deliver high-quality instruction.

To summarize, the education system in Israel is divided into several types and structures, including formal education (primary, intermediate, and secondary), non-formal

education, higher education, special education, vocational education, and private education. The curriculum and standards in private schools are usually similar or aligned with the state-owned schools. The education system in Israel is centralized and supervised by the Ministry of Education and the official language of instruction is Hebrew. Special education includes educational services and programs for children with special needs, these programs are provided in a variety of settings such as mainstream schools, specialized institutions, resource rooms, inclusive education, and home education. Vocational education includes technical and vocational schools that provide training in specific trades and skills, and apprenticeship programs and dual education. Technical colleges provide higher level vocational education and training. The government has set regulations and guidelines to ensure that all children have access to appropriate education and services. Israel has several prestigious universities. These universities are known for their strong programs in areas such as computer science, engineering, and the natural sciences. They also have well-regarded programs in business, law, and the humanities.

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