

**EDUCATION AND ITS IMPLICATIONS IN THE AGE OF COVID-19**  
**AND ITS CONSEQUENCES**

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***Abstract:** The global coronavirus has brought with it difficulties and challenges both economic, social and educational. Due to long lockdowns, isolation and distance learning, gaps have been created in the field of learning among Israeli students. The gaps not only in relation to the regular sub-grade but also within the classroom itself between the students were created due to subtractions, isolations, etc.*

*The Ministry of Education has issued a budget called "Reducing COVID-19 Gaps" Basic and middle schools will receive a budget through the LPN system (managerial pedagogical flexibility) for use by the systems to reduce gaps in schools by reinforcing educational services from a pool of educational programs.*

*Each principal must identify the difficulties and gaps in his school and submit an organized work plan aimed at reducing the educational and social gaps in the school (both in regular and special education).*

***Keywords :**covid 19, gaps, budget, state, social, cultural, economic*

The purpose of the budget is to advance the students and provide equal and fair opportunity according to the mapping and age level, social and educational responses, reinforcements, social programs, emotional response, and expansion of emotional therapists in schools.

1. The COVID-19 crisis has disproportionately affected weaker students, leading many to drop out of school. The Ministry of Education still lacks a comprehensive plan to reduce educational gaps or prevent dropouts. There is little chance that we will see comprehensive reform during the transitional government, even if principals are granted more autonomy. This institutional gap is not unique to the education sector but reflects a broader failure in national crisis coordination. As Angelov (2024b) notes, “the unwillingness of the state leadership to manage the course of the emerging crisis... led to difficulties in managing the country during the crisis caused by the pandemic” (p. 180). The lack of strategic coordination at the national level has affected all sectors, including education.

The Bank of Israel report published two weeks ago cites a study according to which schoolchildren in advanced economies can expect 2%-5% damage in their income due to the loss of skills in the closure of the education system during the coronavirus pandemic. The Bank criticizes Israel's education system for being much more closed than comparable systems around the world. Therefore, it is also likely that the damage to Israeli students will be much closer to 5 per cent than to 2 per cent.

But the damage will not be uniform. In a survey of 6,000 teachers in Israel, 73% answered that distance learning harmed students from weaker socioeconomic backgrounds. Data from the United States show, according to the bank, that disruption of studies during the coronavirus pandemic may cause students from weaker backgrounds to lose knowledge equivalent to 1.2 years of schooling, while students from strong backgrounds will not be harmed at all.

A study conducted in the Netherlands examining the lockdown period found that the education loss of students from weaker backgrounds was 55 per cent higher than that of others.

A senior official in the education system explains that one of the reasons it is difficult to conduct a dialogue about educational gaps is that while the education system was closed, there were no assessment tests and therefore they were not measured. The Bank of Israel report also notes that "no comprehensive study has been conducted in Israel examining the

effect of disruption during studies on student achievements, neither in the short term nor in the long term. "[calcalist.co.il](http://calcalist.co.il)) p 103-104

2. Prof. Anat Zohar of the Hebrew University's School of Education estimated in February that the dropout rate of pupils from the education system due to the coronavirus would be higher than 10%. The national dropout rate in 2019 was 2.3 per cent, meaning the dropout rate will increase fivefold. Zohar explains that her assessment is based on two sources. One is an OECD study that predicts an average dropout rate of 10% in OECD countries.

The second is the assessment that the situation in Israel is worse than average, "because the social and economic gaps are particularly large, and therefore there are populations that are prone to calamity."

Of course, the system should have a big interest in picking up dropouts as early as possible before they catch up. In practice, there is no national plan for locating and returning dropouts, and the ministry left the issue to the initiative and resourcefulness of the teachers and principals.

COVID-19 greatly facilitated the phenomenon of hidden dropouts, i.e., attendance at studies without studying. At Zoom, all that was needed was a black window. As part of the Ministry of Education's struggle to open the system, it published a figure according to which the hidden dropout rate stands at 30%. Apparently, he is one of three students. In practice, it is reasonable to assume that this is 5% in strong localities and more than half of the pupils in weaker localities.

Former Education Ministry Director General Michal Cohen, now director of Rashi's foundation, which works to reduce social gaps, says that what is needed is a program to increase budgets using a differential method, meaning that the weak receive more, but "these things don't happen." She said budgets should be flexible to allow managers to purchase assistance according to needs.

The ministry says the narrowing of gaps will continue until the end of next school year. The return to school allows mapping of dropouts and many who were considered dropouts return. The ministry claims that the size of the gaps created during the coronavirus

is very dependent on the quality of management, and therefore mapping is necessary and it is not possible to invest solely according to socioeconomic classification.

3. Since the beginning of COVID-19, there has been a constant discourse about the coronavirus as an opportunity for revolution in the system, both because of the experience of large-scale online learning and because of the independence given to principals and local authorities. Cohen, for example, says that "if the opportunity is missed, the education system will go much further back. We need to bring the education system to a place of more autonomy for principals. Without that, the system won't move forward."

A revolution obviously won't happen. Comprehensive reform requires a functioning political system. Throughout the crisis, there was no approved budget, and for much of the crisis there was a transitional government. It is unlikely that a minister in a transitional government will decide to permanently reduce matriculation exams or decide to give principals the option of giving up subjects of study. Nor is it reasonable to do so when the next minister might think just the opposite.

Michal Menkes, deputy director general of education and society at the Local Government Center, believes that principals can do quite a lot even without reform by the Ministry of Education. "I would like schools to continue learning in open spaces, continue to divide students into designated groups, and hold online learning days." Her message to principals is that "as long as you don't reduce teaching hours and don't harm teachers and systems, the sky's the limit." <https://www.sharvit-win.co.il> p. 100

4. Two significant changes have already taken place in the education system, but it is too early to predict how much of an impact they will have. Before the crisis, only 56% of principals in Israel said their teachers had the technical and pedagogical skills to integrate digital tools into teaching, compared to an OECD average of 65%. COVID-19 has forced the vast majority of teachers to learn how to operate online video software, even if many of them probably don't really know how to do it in a way that will keep students engaged and benefit from the benefits of video. The big question is what will remain of video learning after the crisis and how it will be integrated into the curriculum. If it is not incorporated in the near future, it may well be a missed opportunity.

The second opportunity was created by distributing 140,000 computers to families without a computer. Unfortunately, this happened only after the second lockdown, when most of the damage to students who did not participate in online learning had already been done. And yet this brought us for the first time to the state of a computer for every family with school-age children. For the first time, these children have free access to Google and the worlds of knowledge of the Internet other than through a small screen of a mobile phone. It is likely to change the lives of a small number of them. How much this will create a revolution is very difficult to know. It depends on whether there will be teachers who will encourage them to use computers for knowledge and education.

#### 5. Not the entire

Education system has already returned to school. The education classes (additional curriculum), which parents pay for, are still not being held, which leads to a shorter school day. Avi Kaminsky, chairman of the Association of Directors of Education Departments, explains this in the need to continue opening the education system gradually and estimates that the Talan will open in two weeks. A problem along the way may be caused by the fact that the Education Committee of the previous Knesset approved charging only partial payment for the Talan. If there are school girls who want more, it is not certain that it will be possible to approve it

6. Throughout the crisis, the teachers' unions made sure to sit on the stretcher instead of getting under it, prioritizing their interests over the national and educational interests. This happened when they refused to donate even one school day during the previous summer vacation due to distance learning. During this vacation, there was not even an attempt to get vacation days from them, and it was decided in advance that classes in July would be held using the method of schools for the summer vacation, that is, a kind of summer camp. They will be taught only by teachers who wish to do so. The main benefit of studying during the summer vacation is supposed to be completing the material in the core subjects. If it's not regular classes and regular teachers, it probably won't happen. Very few students want to go to summer camps beyond elementary school age. In any case, the ministry is now conducting a demand survey among parents.

Netanyahu and Galant presented the plan as part of the election campaign and in order to hold the eyes of parents who choose as if the school year will be extended.. The cost of the program for one month is NIS 2.5 billion. After the elections passed, it seemed better to stop the game, and for middle and high schools, it's just a waste of money. <https://www.globes.co.il/news/article> p. 102 -106

7. On the way to filling the gaps in education, there is another obstacle: the psychological damage caused to the students. Menkes says, "The most important thing is to address the mental and emotional damage. What is not dealt with now will drag on for years. There are not simple manifestations of social phobia and avoidance of leaving the house. Only after the soul is treated can we slowly begin to catch up with the educational gaps." Chairman of the Association of High School Principals Menashe Levy has harshly criticized in the past the fact that the psychological-educational counseling system is not being significantly increased. On the other hand, Menkes says that "even if the standards were doubled, unfortunately there is a shortage of educational psychologists and there will be no one to staff." She suggests "partnering with the community and recruiting volunteers to help the teams." Kaminski says educational psychologists are really very hard to find, but educational counselors are. This means that from a health perspective, the coronavirus mainly harms the weaker members of society, and as a result, they also suffer economic and educational damage. It is precisely in localities located in the socioeconomic periphery that the education system is closed for an extended period of time, while in the stronger localities studies continued as usual. Even before COVID-19, there were large gaps between the authorities in scholastic achievements. Thus, for example, the average number of those eligible for a high-quality matriculation certificate is 25% in the bottom decile, 44% in the second, and 55% in the third. In the seventh decile, on the other hand, it stands at 68%, in the eighth it is 79%, and in the tenth it is 93%. The high incidence of COVID-19 in localities in the lower deciles, which leads to the closure of the education system, will further deepen the gap, in a way that will be difficult to correct in the future.-

Equality in education requires that a student from the weaker socioeconomic strata receive at least one and a half times what a student from the stronger socioeconomic strata receives. We are a long way from there: the differential budgeting reform that gives priority to weaker localities has only been partially implemented, and there is still no response to the budgets provided by wealthy municipalities for the benefit of their students. The days of COVID-19, which are deepening the gaps in the education system, are the time to decide on real differential budgeting, which will enable real equality of opportunity in the Israeli education system.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped the landscape of education globally, leading to unprecedented challenges and transformations. Institutions were forced to pivot to online learning, educators had to adapt their teaching methods, and students faced a new reality that impacted their learning experiences and mental health. This paper explores the implications of these changes and offers insights into the future of education post-pandemic.

### **Transition to Online Learning**

The sudden shift to online learning was one of the most significant changes brought about by the pandemic. Schools and universities scrambled to implement virtual platforms to continue education. This transition highlighted both the potential and the limitations of digital learning.

1. **Access and Equity:** One of the most critical challenges was the digital divide. Many students lacked access to reliable internet and devices, exacerbating existing inequalities in education. According to a report by the Pew Research Center, nearly 15% of U.S. households with children did not have a high-speed internet connection, which significantly hindered students' ability to participate in remote learning (Pew Research Center, 2020).

2. **Quality of Education:** The rapid shift led to concerns about the quality of education being delivered. While some educators quickly adapted to online teaching, others struggled with the technology and pedagogical approaches. A study by the Brookings Institution found that online learning produced lower engagement levels and learning outcomes compared to traditional in-person instruction (Dorn et al., 2020).

## **Mental Health Implications**

The pandemic not only affected academic performance but also had profound mental health implications for students and educators alike.

1. **Increased Anxiety and Stress:** The uncertainty of the pandemic, coupled with social isolation, led to increased anxiety and stress among students. According to a survey conducted by the CDC, mental health challenges among adolescents escalated during the pandemic, with reports of anxiety and depressive symptoms soaring (CDC, 2021).

2. **Support Systems:** Schools traditionally play a vital role in providing social support for students. The closure of physical campuses disrupted these support systems, highlighting the need for mental health resources within educational institutions. Many schools implemented telehealth services and increased access to mental health professionals to address these needs.

## **Long-Term Consequences**

As we move forward, it is essential to consider the long-term implications of these changes on educational systems.

1. **Hybrid Learning Models:** The pandemic has accelerated the adoption of hybrid learning models, combining online and in-person instruction. Future educational systems may need to embrace flexibility, allowing students to choose the format that best suits their learning needs.

2. **Rethinking Curriculum:** There is a growing recognition of the need to re-evaluate curricula to include digital literacy, critical thinking, and socio-emotional learning. These skills are becoming increasingly essential in a rapidly changing world.

3. **Policy Implications:** Policymakers will need to address the disparities exposed by the pandemic, ensuring equitable access to resources for all students. This includes investing in technology infrastructure and mental health services in schools.

crucial to learn from these experiences and create educational environments that are equitable, flexible, and supportive of mental health.

## **Innovations in Teaching and Learning**

The pandemic has catalyzed significant innovations in teaching methodologies and learning environments. As educational institutions adapted to remote learning, many educators embraced new technologies and pedagogies that can enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.

1. **Flipped Classrooms:** The concept of flipped classrooms gained traction as educators recorded lectures for students to watch at home and used in-class time for interactive activities and discussions. This approach encourages active learning and allows educators to provide personalized support to students (Bergmann & Sams, 2012).

2. **Gamification:** Many educators incorporated gamified elements into their lessons to maintain student engagement in an online environment. Platforms like Kahoot and Quizizz made learning interactive and fun, enabling students to participate actively (Kapp, 2012). Research has shown that gamification can improve motivation and retention of information.

3. **Collaborative Learning Tools:** Tools like Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom became essential for fostering collaborative learning. These platforms enabled group projects, peer reviews, and virtual discussions, helping to recreate some aspects of the social learning environment that in-person classes provide (Garrison & Vaughan, 2008).

## **Teacher Training and Professional Development**

The pandemic underscored the need for ongoing professional development for educators, particularly in digital literacy and online pedagogy.

1. **Training Programs:** Educational institutions began offering training programs focused on online teaching strategies, technology integration, and digital assessment methods. Studies indicate that when teachers receive adequate training, they are more confident and effective in delivering online instruction (Hodges et al., 2020).

2. **Peer Support Networks:** The crisis led to the formation of peer support networks where educators could share strategies, resources, and emotional support. This collaboration fostered a sense of community and helped teachers navigate the challenges of remote education (Gonzalez, 2021).

### **Impact on Early Childhood Education**

The early childhood education sector experienced significant disruptions during the pandemic, which had both immediate and long-term effects on young learners.

1. **Developmental Concerns:** Experts express concerns regarding the impact of prolonged remote learning on social, emotional, and cognitive development in young children. Limited opportunities for social interaction, play, and hands-on learning may hinder developmental milestones (McGowan & McIvor, 2021).

2. **Parental Involvement:** The pandemic shifted some educational responsibilities to parents, who often had to balance work and facilitating their children's learning. Research indicates that engaged parents can positively influence their child's learning outcomes, highlighting the need for schools to provide resources and support for families (Harris & Goodall, 2008).

### **Global Perspectives**

While the pandemic has brought challenges, it has also provided insights into how different countries approached education amidst the crisis.

1. **Differing Strategies:** Countries like Finland, known for their strong educational systems, focused on maintaining student well-being and providing equitable access to technology. Finland's emphasis on trust in teachers and holistic approaches to education allowed them to adapt more smoothly to remote learning (Sahlberg, 2020).

2. **Collaborative Global Efforts:** The crisis spurred collaborative efforts across countries to share resources and best practices. Organizations like UNESCO led initiatives to support governments and educational institutions in developing effective remote education strategies (UNESCO, 2020).

### **Looking Ahead: The Future of Education**

As we look beyond the pandemic, there are several critical considerations for the future of education.

1. **Blended Learning Environments:** Educational institutions should consider adopting blended learning models as a standard practice. This approach can offer the

flexibility to meet diverse student needs while also preparing educators and students for a more integrated digital future (Graham, 2013).

2. **Focus on Equity:** Addressing the disparities highlighted during the pandemic should remain a priority. Schools and policymakers must commit to providing resources and support to underserved communities, ensuring all students have access to quality education (Darling-Hammond, 2021).

3. **Lifelong Learning:** The pandemic has emphasized the importance of lifelong learning and adaptability in an ever-changing world. Educational institutions can play a crucial role in fostering a culture of continuous learning that supports both academic and personal growth (Schilling, 2020).

### **Conclusion**

The COVID-19 pandemic has irrevocably changed education, presenting both challenges and opportunities. By reflecting on these experiences and implementing lessons learned, educational systems can evolve to create more inclusive, equitable, and effective learning environments. As we navigate the post-pandemic landscape, it is imperative that all stakeholders—educators, students, parents, and policymakers—collaborate to ensure that education remains a powerful tool for personal and societal growth.

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This expanded overview delves deeper into various aspects of education during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, innovations, and future directions for educational systems.