

# MIFGASH

JOURNAL OF SOCIAL-EDUCATIONAL WORK

- › Future orientation among vocational education students
- › Students' inappropriate schooling behaviors as a case study of teacher–parent relationships
- › What makes a residential education facility successful? The students' perspective
- › Test anxiety: Intervention methods of school counselors in the Arab society
- › Truancy officers' views on reducing dropout processes in the Haredi education
- › Ultra-Religious Lithuanian fathers' coping with reading difficulties of their son



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# ABSTRACTS

## Future orientation among vocational education students in Israel: “Tomorrow is a new day, I don’t ask for more”

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**Nofar Eini**, Ph.D. Student, School of Social Work, University of Haifa, Israel

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This study examines the phenomenology of the future orientation of students in vocational schools in Israel. It is based on a qualitative methodology by means of in-depth interviews with 30 teenagers (16 boys and 14 girls) studying in vocational schools located in low-socioeconomic cities in Israel, also known as development towns. This research is important considering the multiplicity of social exclusion or structural vulnerability that these youth experience against the backdrop of poverty, belonging to ethnic and stigmatized groups, and being defined by the state authorities as failures of the educational system. The study findings reveal three key future orientations: (1) the vague use of the term “success” in the absence of an accompanying description of specific goals for achieving that success; (2) the future defined through “hard individualism” describes life and future with difficulties and constant struggles to achieve goals; (3) preference of occupational independence or being a solo self-employed individual, partially motivated by a desire to avoid future experiences of subordination, exploitation, and humiliation, namely factors characterizing their current employment. The discussion includes effects and implications of the structural vulnerabilities and experiences of social exclusion on the future orientations of vocational education and training students.

**Key words:** future orientation; vocational education; exclusion; hard individualism; solo self-employed, disadvantaged youth

## Students' inappropriate schooling behaviors as a case study of teacher–parent relationships

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The quality of teacher–parent relationships improves students' academic achievement, social functioning and also reduces problem behaviors. Students' schooling behavior is a joint intersection between school and home and is a fertile basis for parental involvement. This study focuses on inappropriate schooling behaviors as a case study of teacher–parent relationships. 104 teachers responded to two hypothetic scenarios about not wearing the school uniform and not bringing study materials to class. A qualitative and a quantitative semantic analysis was conducted, underpinned by the Educational Response Pyramid and the Positioning Theory. The findings show a low frequency of teachers who reported that they would contact parents regarding both scenarios. Approximately half of the teachers (43%) positioned parents in both scenarios as passive recipients of information through unidirectional communication with no opportunity for dialogue. The findings suggest that though the preparation for school is done at home and teachers do not have direct influence over it, they tend to address the events of inappropriate preparations independently, leaving little room for parents' involvement.

**Key words:** parent involvement; teacher–parent relationships; teacher–student relationships, schooling behaviors, discipline



## What makes a residential education facility successful? The students' perspective

**Maya Botvin**, Ph.D., Research and Knowledge Management,  
Ministry of Education, Israel

**Rivka Eisikovits**, Ph.D., Professor Emerita, Faculty of Education,  
University of Haifa; Israel

This study focuses on adolescents educated at three boarding schools located in youth villages. Most of the studies in Israel on adolescents at such institutions have focused on therapeutic-emotional aspects, and very few have addressed educational processes. Furthermore, no studies have dealt with institutional or personal success factors. Through group interviews and using the conceptual framework of learning from success, we examined the students' perspectives and definitions regarding what is considered a successful boarding school. Two main themes emerged in this study: a sense of belonging and significant educational staff. The study findings transformed tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge that may be relevant to those involved in this field.

**Key words:** boarding school, youth villages, learning from successes, sense of belonging, tacit and explicit knowledge

## Test anxiety: Intervention methods of school counselors in the Arab society

**Areej Barbara**, Educator and Teacher, Shiluv Program, Alaml Elementary School,  
Abu Snan, Israel

**Khawla Zoabi**, Ph.D., The Academic Arab College for Education in Israel – Haifa

Test anxiety is an emotional response to examination and evaluation situations expressed in individuals through psychological, behavioral and emotional changes. The phenomenon is common among pupils, adolescents and students. This can impair their quality of life. The study aim is to learn how counselors help reduce test anxiety among students. The study relied on the qualitative paradigm and data collection using an in-depth interview conducted among 15 counselors who work with students suffering from test anxiety. The findings show that the role of counselors in school is primary and central due to the training, knowledge and experience they have accumulated about the phenomenon of test anxiety with its various aspects. The findings

also show that collaboration between the educational staff, parents and the counselor helps build an appropriate individual and group intervention plan. Such a plan assists students in coping with anxiety and avoiding anxiety-related consequences such as latent dropout, low self-esteem and low achievement.

**Key words:** test anxiety, Arab counselors, intervention techniques

## When the apple falls far from the tree: The voices of truancy officers on reducing dropout processes in the Haredi education system

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**Yehudit Chassida**, Ph.D., Head of Academic Programs for Ultra-Orthodox Sector, Herzog Academic College. Israel

**Yafit Yazdi**, Municipal Truancy Officer, Elad Municipality, Israel

.....

The goal of this study was to examine the perspective of truancy officers in Israel on reducing dropout rates in the ultra-Orthodox education system, and to learn from their experience about the educational practices used by gender-separated and sub-sectorial schools within the ultra-Orthodox system to contend with this issue. The research used qualitative methods and was based on interviews with six truancy officers who work for the ultra-Orthodox division of the Ministry of Education. These officers identify themselves as ultra-Orthodox, and are responsible for reducing dropout rates in this sector. The findings from the interviews were processed using grounded theory, and three main themes emerged. The first is related to their perceptions of the differences between dropout rates and risk of dropping out among boys compared to girls. The second is their perspective on the attitudes of the various types of schools to student dropout. The third refers to how they perceive their role when interacting with school principals in the different denominations within the ultra-Orthodox community.

The findings of this study present an in-depth picture of student dropout in the ultra-Orthodox school system and how it is dealt with, from the perspective of the people responsible for overseeing and enforcing the Compulsory Education Law. Their accounts indicate that schools incorporate principles that reflect the variance within the ultra-Orthodox sector, and that the preferred methods differ between schools for boys and schools for girls. The study also highlights forces of inclusion and rejection within the ultra-Orthodox education system that shape the school's attitude towards reducing dropout rates. This study sheds light on how student dropout is handled in

the ultra-Orthodox world, exposes the diversity within this sector, and offers an opportunity for in-depth thinking about solutions for reducing dropout rates that are customized for the ultra-Orthodox community.

**Key words:** the ultra-Orthodox sector, truancy officers, schools

## Ultra-religious Lithuanian fathers' approaches and coping with reading difficulties of their sons who are educated in the "cheder" in Israel

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**Nurit Leibovich**, Ph.D., The Academic College of Education, David Yellin, Israel

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This essay is based on a large qualitative study that analyzed the problems that arise among parents in the Lithuanian ultra-Orthodox sector who cope with sons educated in the "cheder", who show signs of reading difficulties in the context of three environmental circles: familial, educational and socio-cultural. The data was collected by interviewing 15 parental couples and conclusions in relation to the three above mentioned environmental circles were drawn from the findings. This is a ground-breaking study due to the scarcity of research literature and findings concerning the Lithuanian-Haredi society in reference to reading difficulties among boys educated in the "cheder" in Israel. Furthermore, it addresses the lack of research that concerns reading with emphasis on culture and the connection between specific social groups and reading and comprehension. The article also refers to the population of fathers who are "avrechim" (torah learners) who participated in the research, and their outlooks, approaches and methods of coping in regard to the reading difficulties of their sons, and the effects of these difficulties on their conduct.

**Key words:** ultra-religious, Lithuanians, "avrechim" fathers, environmental circles, reading difficulties