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A PROPOSAL FOR A MASTER PLAN FOR RESEARCH OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL
ASPECTS OF EDUCATION IN ISRAEL.
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        TWO MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS OF
ISRAEL'S SOCIAL STRUCTURE SINCE THE THIRTIES
(SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES, ESPECIALLY JEWISH IMMIGRATION
FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, AND A RAPID TRANSITION TO A
TECHNOLOGICALLY BASED SOCIETY) HAVE NECESSITATED THE
DEVELOPMENT OF A MASTER PLAN FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH. THE
RESEARCH PLAN INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING STUDIES--(1) AN
EXAMINATION OF THE EXISTING MECHANISMS OF SOCIAL SELECTION
THROUGH EDUCATION, ESPECIALLY AT THE POST-PRIMARY LEVEL, (2)
INVESTIGATION OF THE ADJUSTMENT PROCESS OF EDUCATIONAL
ADMINISTRATION, (3) STUDIES OF THE CAUSES OF DIFFERENTIAL
SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT CONNECTED WITH MEMBERSHIP IN COMMUNAL
AND DURATION-OF-RESIDENCE GROUPS AND EXAMINATION OF STEPS
TAKEN BY THE AUTHORITIES TO REDUCE DISPARITY IN ACHIEVEMENT,
(4) AN INVESTIGATION OF THE FUNCTION OF EDUCATION IN THE
PROCESS OF MODERNIZATION OF GROUPS WHICH HAVE NOT YET
UNDERGONE SOCIAL AND/OR CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION USUALLY
ASSOCIATED WITH WESTERN EDUCATION, (5) AN EXAMINATION OF THE
EFFECTS OF CHANNELING GROWING NUMBERS OF ORIENTAL PUPILS TO
SECONDARY AND HIGHER EDUCATION, (6) STUDIES OF METHODS USED
IN SELECTING GIFTED PUPILS AND IN EVALUATING ACHIEVEMENT, (7)
STUDIES OF YOUTH CULTURES, AND (8) BROADER COMPARATIVE
IMPLICATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS OF EDUCATION IN PROCESSES OF
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION. (HW)

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THE ELIEZER KAPLAN SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, AND SOCIAL SCIENCES,
  THE HEBREW UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

A PROPOSAL FOR A MASTER PLAN FOR RESEARCH OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

Prepared by
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Presented to the Department of Education, U.S. Government.

Part I

The enclosed Master Plan for educational research is so designed as to take into account the specific social structure of Israel. Israel society has been undergoing – especially since the establishment of the State – continuous processes of change, development and modernization. It is therefore suggested that within a comparative framework of analysis studies of educational problems in Israel be carried out.

A.   Trends of Development of Israel Society

The following major characteristics of the patterns of development of Israel's social structure from the period of the thirties to the time of the establishment of the State can be discerned.

a)   Israel society has been undergoing socio-demographic changes mostly related to the Jewish immigration from the developing countries.

b) Israel is undergoing a rapid transition to a technologically based society.

c) There is a significant relationship between the above two processes.

* * * * * *

The main characteristics of the demographic changes in the Israel society following mass immigration are the following.

a) A three-hundred-percent increase in Israel's population - due to immigration - over the period of her first fifteen years of independence. This volume of growth is of special significance because of its relation to qualitative changes in socio-demographic structure. In contrast to the marked homogeneity of the pre-State population, mass immigration from the developing countries of North Africa and the Middle East has produced a population far more heterogeneous than that of any other modern, immigrant-receiving country. This heteregoeneity is expressed in demographic features such as average family size, birth rates and age at marriage, and in such b sic social features as the location and importance of the family in the social structure, the mechanisms of power relations and commitment to democratic tradition, the standards of education and vocational training, and the type and importance of religious traditions.

b) Heterogeneity of population and consequent social and cultural diversity present a serious problem both for national unity and for the requirements of autonomous political existence.

c) The majority of the immigrants concentrate in lower occupational and economic strata, i.e. the division between the well-to-do and the poorer sections of the population coincide in large measure with communal and duration-of-residence divisions. This connection generated between membership in a particular community or duration-of-residence group and low economic status constitutes a grave social problem and presents a challenge in view of the dominant social ideology. Egalitarian values and orientations have held a central position within the ideological structure since the first Jewish settlement in Palestine and all subsequent social planning in Israel must be considered in relation to them.

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The transition to a technologically-based society has been manifest in the following.

a) Proliferation of industrial enterprises to an extent unknown in the pre-State period. This process is similar to that undergone by Western countries at the time of the "Second Industrial Revolution".

b) Constant expansion in state activities accompanied by increasing professionalization and formalization in governmental administration.

c) Emergence of a new type of worker - a specialist - replacing the former "man of calling".

d) Changing criteria for evaluation of economic and professional activities. A shift of emphasis from criteria associ-

ated with pioneer socialist-zionist ideologies to those based on efficiency, technical competence and professional achievement.

* * * * *

The above listed processes of change are interrelated in several ways. The labor force has grown as a result of immigration and economic concerns have expanded proportionately. However, the specific composition of the immigration has been such as to produce discrepancies between the requirements of the economy and the man-power and skills available. Large segments of the immigrant population are not yet ready to effectively participate in the processes of modernization of the economy both with regard to their occupational background and their value-orientation. Hence the effort towards absorption of different groups and reduction of differences between them is also a function of economic and develop-mental requirements. Plans for development and rapid economic change cannot succeed unless adequate manpower resources are made available to fill the emerging roles.

B. The Place of Education in Relation to Socio-economic Development

In common with the rest of the world Israel is aware of the importance of education as a vital mechanism in the integration of manpower with the processes of technological change. In Israel's case this also implies the task of closing the social and educational gap between the veteran residents and the newcomers, especially those from North Africa and the Middle East.

a) Like other countries undergoing rapid technological change Israel has given special attention to vocational training, technical and adult education and adequate secondary and higher education. School education in the pre-State period presented two major alternative channels, viz.,

(1) From kidergarten via the eight-year primary school to the secondary schools; these presented successful pupils with Matriculation certificates, thus ensuring entrance to institutions of higher education.

(2) From kindergarten, via the above type of primary school, to the residental agricultural schools which prepared their pupils for a life of pioneer farming.

This system imposed a rather uniform education until the age of 14, followed by some slight differentiation at the post-primary level. With the establishment of the State this uniformity has been modified - though not entirely deliberately - and new educational forms and frameworks have been established, e.g. the expansion of technical education, vocational training within industries, differentiation of levels and types within academic high schools or external matriculation.

As a result of the social developments the educational system has taken on additional significance in the process of selection for social roles in general and for occupational roles in particular, emphasizing differential scholastic achievement.

Correlated with changes in the substantive social function
of the Israel educational system are changes in the structure and
processes of educational administration. The qualitative and
quantitative growth of the educational network puts additional
demands on its administrative components and requires readjustment
and reorganization generating strains and tensions.

b) The expansion and differentiation of the postprimary
education network alone cannot adequately answer the needs of a
rapidly changing society. Indeed, we are witnessing a distinct
growth and elaboration of Israel's institutions of higher learning.
This, in turn, puts additional demands on the postprimary education
which - it should be noted - is so far neither compulsory nor free.

The expansion of higher education is both affecting and
affected by the needs of the occupational structure of society.

c) Like in all modern states education is considered a
basic human right which should be made available to all. The
assumption by the society of the responsibility for the provision
of equal educational chance to all citizens is congruent with the
national and social ideology of the veteran community. Moreover,
the immigrants themselves, for many of whom this is the first contact
with a modern educational system, demand this service since they have
come to recognize its central importance as a vehicle for social
mobility and since they regard it as one of the symbols of acceptance
and status in society. However, the rate of scholastic failure

among the children of immigrants from oriental countries is very high.
This poses a very serious problem for the future of Israel society.

It ought to be mentioned here that Israel faces the problem
of school failure of yet another ethnic group, i.e. children of the
Arab citizens.   It might well be that some causes of failure are
common to this and the Jewish immigrant groups; however the Arab
group is a special case because in addition to being culturally
different it is also a national minority group.

d)   The trends and developments in the educational field in
Israel have certain not easily reconcilable aspects.   The most
salient and controversial problem is that of incompatibility between
absorption within the secondary school system of growing numbers of
Oriental - often scholastically handicapped - children on one hand,
and maintenance of reasonable scholastic standards of secondary
education on the other.

The extremely high (statistically significant) percentage
of failure of Oriental children in free and compulsory elementary
schools shows that increased public or state support and consequent
expansion of secondary school system alone will not eliminate the
problem of severe underrepresentation of Oriental children in
secondary schools.   No way has so far been found for effective use
of the educational machinery in the process of social and cultural
absorption and transformation of children of socially and culturally
backward parents.

C. Youth Culture and Peer Groups

Israel "youth culture" merits a few remarks bearing on its
changing role with regard to socialization in general and absorption
of immigrant youth in particular.

During the pre-State period the Youth Movements associated
with the various political and settlement organizations were con-
sidered standard-bearers of the pioneering and social-rebirth
ideologies.   They demanded from members total commitment to
fundamental national and social values and their personal realization.
Thus considerations of individuals' future were intimately linked
with those of the society as a whole.   By providing the individual
with an outlet for adolescent stirrings and his need for meaningful
role-playing, and training for future roles and positions the
Movements acted as prime socializing and elite forming agent.

With the establishment of the State the main political aim
became realized through attainment of independence, while social
tasks were taken over by specialized government agencies.   Though
replacement of idealistically motivated voluntary bodies by formal
organization, and growing institutionalization and bureaucratization
made planning of personal development in terms of overall social growth
no longer expectable the Movements have modified their ideological
content only slightly.   However, the ideology of social revival
has lost - following actual or apparent realization of its component
goals - its power to attract youth to voluntary organizations bearing

this ideological message. We are witnessing in Israel, as elsewhere in the West, the rise of new youth cultures parallel to and sometimes replacing completely the ideological Youth Movements. These new groups, widespread in the modern city, are typically emphasizing expressiveness and "having a good time" while lacking the more permanent structures of social relationships. It is interesting to note that adolescents of the relatively deprived strata (such as the Oriental communities which are as yet outside the influence of centralized spheres of activity) have also developed similar types of youth culture. Those activities are distinguished by continuous restlessness and lack of foci and often become destructive. It appears that this type of youth culture, common to the metropolis, has its roots in the marginality of the social groups in which they emerge.

A few words are in order on the fate of the Youth Movements in centers populated by Oriental immigrants. Despite similarity of their social conditions to those prevailing in the European centres which had produced the Yout Movements at the beginning of the century, namely:

 a) rapid social change, due to immigration and technological development,

 b) breakdown of traditional structures and consequent loss of future-status-security,

c)   distance from the main centres of social activity and
consequent search for communicative channels to these centres, - Youth
Movements have had only a limited success among new immigrants,
especially those from Oriental communities.

D.   Relationship Between Formal Education and Youth Cultures

All Israel youth, irrespective of social background, faces
a complex problem.   They are expected, on one hand, to coordinate
their personal development with the social demands of bodies
striving towards fulfilment of social ideals, while, on the other
hand, they are encouraged to maximalize personal achievement in
formal education so as to be able to adequately contribute to vital
social operations.   They are, however, fully aware of the selective-
ness of the educational system which - though open - does not
guarantee the desired personal mobility.   In contrast to the most
uniformly successful completion of studies by the homogeneous,
middle class student population in the pre-State period, the influx
of the new social strata into the educational system caused a rate
of failure of fifty percent among secondary school pupils.   This
results in a cross-pressure of demands whereby youth is expected to
affiliate with the collectivist Movement structures on one hand and
to strive individualistically for uncertain goals in secondary
education on the other.

Part II

The Master Plan for Research in Sociological Aspects of Education In Israel

The above analysis of social developments in Israel and of the attempts to adapt her educational system to consequent changes and requirements suggests a number of problem areas open to research in the coming years. It is hoped that such research will both deepen our understanding of the problems involved and yield results applicable for the shaping of the educational policy of Israel and countries facing similar social problems.

The research plan includes the following studies.

A. An examination of the existing mechanisms of social selection through education, especially at the postprimary level.

   a) Relationship between selection for various types of secondary education and the trained manpower needs of the economy.

   b) The nature of education given by the secondary schools in relation to the economy's needs for special forms of skilled manpower.

   c) The non-institutionalized process of selection, i.e. drop-out at the postprimary level and its effects on the economy's requirements of skilled manpower.

(1) Role allocation for those dropping out.

(2) The number and type of skilled roles which could be
    filled through prevention of drop-out or decrease in
    its rate.

d) The relative cost of different types of education and the
differential economic benefits accruing through them for the
individual and for the economy.

e) Relationship between the following variables: demand for
trained and professional manpower, its supply, and students'
motivation for higher learning.

B. Investigation of the adjustment process of educational administration

a) Changes that have taken place in the organization of the
educational system, especially on the level of macro-structure
(ministries and municipalities); the mechanisms which brought about
these changes, and the main resistances which were overcome.

b) Profiles of career patterns, values and self-images of
higher executives in educational administration, related to quality
of their performance.

C. Studies of the causes of differential scholastic achievement
connected with membership in communal and duration-of-residence
groups and examination of steps taken by the authorities to reduce
disparity in achievement.

a) Relationship between differential rate of failure in
various communal and duration-of residence groups and the charac-

teristic features of traditional socialization processes in the respective groups.

b) Methods used to encourage Oriental pupils for higher scholastic attainment and their effect on pupils' aspirations.

> (1) Methods based on differentiation, such as the newly introduced "streaming".
>
> (2) Methods based on supplementation of the normal educational process, such as the "extended study day" and the special school programs for the "culturally deprived" children.

This study will include an assessment of the pupils' involvement in Israel society and their involvement in and attachment to their own group of origin.

c) Problems in the education of a national minority group, i.e. local Arab children.

> (1) Possible formation of dual allegiance or standards;
>
> (2) Possible deepening of the gap between the educators and the educated and their respective groups.

School failure in this group will be investigated in regard to the above variables as well as in relation to more general variables.

D. <u>An investigation of the function of education in the process of</u> <u>modernization of groups which have not yet undergone social and/or</u> <u>cultural transformation usually associated with Western education.</u>

a) Modifications and adjustments of the school system needed to successfully compensate for lack of appropriate socialization in the preschool ages.

b) Relationship between stages of modernization and scholastic acheivement.

c) Personality factors in modernization. An attempt to reach a better understanding of

(1) the specific personality traits responsible for success in school and effective adaptation to mdoern social and occupational patterns.

(2) the specific educational methods and structures conducive to such success,

through an investigation of the school history, career patterns, attitudes, expectations and role behavior of those students of Oriental origin who have successfully completed their post elementary education.

E. <u>An examination of the effects of channelling of growing numbers</u> <u>of Oriental pupils to secondary and higher education</u>

a) Relation between the level of effective demands of schools and the achievements of the Oriental pupils.

b) Occurrence of social contact between Oriental immigrant and native-born youth in the framework of secondary education.

c) Social mobility and occupational roles attained by Oriental youth upon completion of postprimary education.

Recent social developments have imposed two apparently incompatible demands on the Israel educational system. On the one hand education is rapidly becoming the prime mechanism of social selection and differential economic advancement. On the other hand efforts are being made to use it as a means to reduce disparities between social strata. This investigation is undertaken with a view to contributing to the solution of this dilemma.

F. Study of methods used in selection of gifted pupils and in evaluation of achievement.

a) The selective tests used for determination of scholastic ability, especially the "Eighth-Grade Survey" and the Matriculation Certificate

b) The training given at special secondary schools for gifted Oriental children.

G. Studies of youth cultures

a) Factors producing the different types of youth cultures typical of Israeli cities. Connection between type of groups and the changes in the function of the ideological demands directed to youth on one hand and the tensions produced by the postprimary school system situation on the other.

b) The role of Youth Movement in the crystallization of its members' identity

> (1) The extent to which Youth Movement has remained a channel for the communication of values and continues to assist members in establishing future status images

> (2) Channels of value-communication for those who are not members of a Movement, their sources of status imagery and role-concept and mechanisms of crystallization of their self-identification.

c) Types of youth culture developing among Oriental youth related to the latter's socio-economic background, their educational marginality and the current changes in traditional family structure

> (1) The exact nature of these youth cultures (are they, in fact, deviant?)

> (2) The nature of social marginality, including scholastic failure, and family status on such youth cultures.

> (3) The relationship between various types of adolescent groups in the backward strata and emergence of apathy towards mobility.

d) The varying success of Youth Movement operations in various Oriental immigrant centers related to educational frameworks and methods.

(1) Possible connection between success of Youth Movement and separate or common educational frameworks, seen against the background of ethnic groups contact and extent of interaction.

(2) Relation between the degree of adaptive modification by a Movement of its approach to the new type of potenital members and the degree of acceptance by these members of the ideological concepts of the Movement.

H. Broader Comparative Implications of the Analysis of Education in Processes of Social and Cultural Transformation

Some of the developments and problems discussed in Part I are not specific to Israel. They are inherent in the process of modernization as such hence should be similar in other developing countries. The coexistence in Israel of institutions of a developed Western society side by side with processes of mdernization enables us to attempt a comparative study in terms of a higher order of abstraction of concepts.

a) Relationship between the structure and selective mechanisms of the educational system and the requirements of social and economic development.

b) Relationship between different stages of cultural and
social transformation on one hand and

  (1) different educational facilities available

  (2) differential response to such facilities

  (3) differential scholastic standards achieved within
       school systems

  (4) varying degrees and types of adaptive modifications
       of school systems in view of highly differential
       standards of achievement

  (5) different types of youth organizations and youth
       cultures developing as a reaction to modermization
       of education.

Organizational Note

The purpose of the enclosed Master Plan is to serve as a framework for the development of specific research projects. Towards this purpose it is proposed to establish a coordinating committee. This committee will be chaired by Prof. S.N. Eisenstadt and administered by Mr. C. Adler, and will include other scientists from related fields.

Enclosed are some specific research projects, prepared within the framework of the Master Plan. Additional proposals will be submitted in the future.