

## Press Release

**A new study by the Taub Center indicates that inequalities in educational inputs and outputs continue to exist – although they have been declining – after decades of affirmative action policies.**

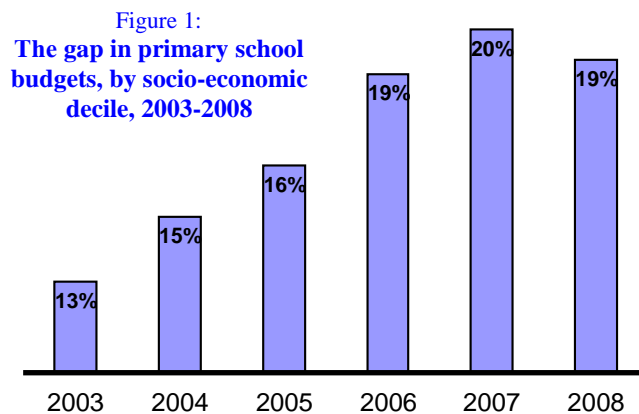
### Additional findings:

- **Differential budgeting per pupil provided a measure of affirmative action. But the new budgeting guidelines in effect since 2008 endanger this.**
- **Teachers' salaries are higher in schools that serve pupils who are from weaker socio-economic backgrounds.**

A new study out today by the Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel finds that over time there has been a continual narrowing of gaps in terms of the various educational inputs of the education system, including manpower. In terms of output, this is expressed in rates of learning in the system and in rates of certification for matriculation. Criticism regarding the continued existence of inequalities in the education system should not diminish the positive achievements of the system and of the affirmative action. With this, though, the advancement of weaker groups occurred in parallel with the strengthening of the strongest groups who continued to maintain their advantage especially in those areas where advancement has not yet met its potential, as in the area of higher education. This development is similar to what is seen in other Western countries.

A central finding of the study is that the differences between the weakest pupils (in socio-demographic terms) and more well-off pupils and between Jewish and Arab pupils are still quite large. The researchers feel that there are negative implications to these differences in both societal and ethical terms, and their influence also has serious economic consequences. The Jewish sector still has significantly larger proportion of its children in pre-school education, secondary schools and higher education.

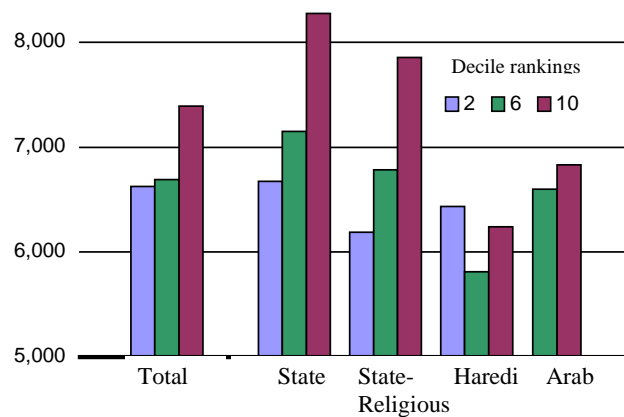
The study “Inequality in the Education System: Israel 2009 – The Way It Is” was conducted and written at the Taub Center by senior researchers **Nachum Blass and Prof. Chaim Adler**. It presents data and findings that are in some cases in direct conflict with accepted ideas. For example, Figure 1 (based on Table 1 in the report) shows that since the implementation of the differential budgeting per pupil method in elementary schools in 2004, the budget gap in favor of those schools serving weaker populations actually grew, from 13% in 2003 to 19% in 2008.



Source: Blass and Adler, Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel

- Two additional findings that go against findings in other countries that relate to teachers show that:
- A. The average monthly salary for teachers in schools serving children from weaker socio-economic populations is higher than the average salary of teachers in schools that serve children from more “established” populations. In 2003, the average salary for teachers in the lowest decile schools was NIS 7,393 while the average salary in the highest decile schools (12%) was NIS 6,626. These wage differentials exist especially in the secular and state-religious school systems (24% and 27% respectively) and do not exist in the *Haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) system (in this sector the average salary in the weakest decile schools is 3% less (see Figure 2).
- B. The level of education and seniority of teachers in schools serving pupils from the weaker populations are a little lower if at all from the education level and seniority of teachers in the more “established” schools (see Table 5 in the report).

Figure 2  
Average monthly salary for primary school teachers, by socio-economic deciles, by sector, 2003 (NIS)



Source: Taub Center, Inequality in Education (based on Blass and others, 2008)

Despite this, Blass and Adler point out that the achievement and educational gaps between population groups in Israel are some of the largest amongst Western countries. The large size of these differentials and the relative size of population groups (see the previous press release that discussed other Center research on the composition and growth of different pupil populations) with the lowest achievements represent a basic injustice, a threat to social solidarity as well as to the character of Israeli society as a whole and the quality of life. These differentials, say the Taub Center researchers, weaken the Israeli economy’s competitive edge in the global market and also take a heavy economic toll.

In this study, Blass and Adler also conducted comparative analyses of Israel’s achievements and placement in the six international tests in which the pupil populations participated. Examining the data led the researchers to conclude that although the pupils’ achievements were low in every aspect, Israel’s changes in placement in the past decade are more the result of the participation of new countries in the testing process, as opposed to changes in pupil scores. In fact Israel’s place when compared just to the countries that participated in the relevant tests did not change.

The Taub Center for Social Policy Studies in Israel, **headed by Prof. Dan Ben-David**, is an independent, non-partisan socio-economic research institute based in Jerusalem. The Center conducts quality, impartial research on socio-economic conditions in Israel, and develops innovative, equitable and practical options for macro public policies that advance the wellbeing of Israelis. The Center strives to influence public policy through direct communications with policy makers and by enriching the public debate that accompanies the decision making process.

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