

Globalization and Educational Reforms

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Many share the knowledge that the decrease in education endangers the future of Israel. The argument is about the solutions and ways to improve the quality of education of wide groups in the population. In the meantime, we are swamped with suggestions for reforms involving the crème de la crème from the business sector who think that it is possible to turn the school into a well-managed business firm and therefore to achieve a better high quality education. It is important to understand that these offers do not operate in a void. They are motivated by economic interests of the business sector and are an inseparable part of global processes serving mainly those who enjoy those processes, meaning, those who benefit from the globalization. Moreover, the suggestions for a reform in the educational system and high education reflect a significant change of values regarding the essence of education, especially the heavy pressure the business sector puts on governments to take over sectors that have not been "conquered" by them: education and health. In the background there is the will to train people to fit the global labor market and will not undermine the current order. In other words, the changes in global economy influence the targets, the quality and the structure of educational organizations. New values receive recognition when in fact it is all about instilling business values into the educational system in order to make profits. The values of the humanistic education system clear their place to a different set of values: emphasis on technical qualifications, avoiding development of critical thinking, research and analysis that might challenge the new values. Standard thinking and closed tests. Behind all this stands a teacher who most of the time deals with violence and reporting to his superiors. A teacher who must always test his students and not teach them. The teacher needs to cover technical material but not impart culture values. To be afraid of being fired and not deal with something which isn't technical. On the other hand, the students are bored and waste their childhood in cultural desolation, in disinterest and in a human emotional vacuum. All this happens when the faults of the public system intensify due to budget cutback and create a feeling that it is natural to expose the system to the market forces. What are those values who come to replace the humanistic education? Why do they receive a sweeping support? The main reason is that the real goals are not clear and things do not look appropriate. In order to grasp the essence of the changes we should ponder the cultural ramifications. To demonstrate we can talk about the following principles:

The responsibility of the individual

Parents' choice; efficiency

Accountability

Quality control

The student as a consumer

The communal model to most of the reforms around the world focuses on turning education into a product, by increasing tests, by standardizing tests and developing standards. Meaning, focusing on qualifications relevant to the labor market immediately and less on creativity and culture skills. The main characteristics of this approach are: an ongoing cutback of the public sector budget, including education and health; decentralization of authorities and budget; privatization and out-sourcing starting with supply of services and end with developing curriculums, closing "inefficient" programs directed straight to the needs of the business market and sector; the expansion of the use of tool for e-learning. Creating "prepared packages" of courses by companies for profits, which see the education as "negotiable" product.

Empowering the principal. This process is the beginning of privatization of education by an ongoing choking of the public education system, claiming it must become more efficient. The ongoing cutback of budgets destined for those purposes emphasizes the difficulty to deal with strong economic interests wishing to qualify a suitable labor for the global labor market. Decentralization and privatization in education led to the result of poor peripheral communities are not able to run a local policy, to get good teachers and to pay good salaries. Thus, if governments keep cutting back in education, significant parts of the population will not acquire human capital enabling to integrate in the global markets. In Israel, this process will lead to the decline of the advanced industries, to brain drain, to a decline in the capability of competition in the market, to the decrease in salary and renouncement of traditions and local-historical culture values, to breaking of solidarity and to social crumbling. The government's wish to renounce the responsibility for the education causes big parts of the population to move downward and join the poor. Children from these families do not stand a chance to acquire human capital. On the other hand, the groups that can move themselves easily or have the right skills for the global world enhance their status and disconnect themselves from the other groups. Whoever thinks otherwise than those who worship the corporate market economy emphasizes the children's needs out of humanistic point

of view. What do children need? Intellectual wealth, systematic thinking, a combination of academic excellence, with relevance to their lives;

Critical thinking

Hope, the possibility for change

Government budgeting

Reducing the size of the classroom

New resources especially financial and intellectual in order to change the neglect pattern of many years. An appropriate salary for teachers, a free time for reading, teacher professional training and planning; renovation of investments in buildings, equipment for labs and libraries; culture studies: art, music and dance and more of the above are a part of the argument about the future of the public education system, about health, environment, welfare and mostly the argument about which society will exist in the corporate Israel, a country which scares away the best of her sons, which is cruel to its citizens, renounces its responsibility to them, exploits its workers and denies rights from the poor and the old. Another important question is what the chance is that the injured population will commit a political change. However, this is a question for historians.

Discussion about the Importance of Labor in Teaching

The quality of the teacher is probably the central factor in creating a quality education. This argument is not supported solely among professionals and the public, but also strengthened by diverse research. The Mackenzie Report from Barber & Mushed (which investigated 25 education systems in the world indicated 3 factors most influencing the education system: attracting the right people, developing them and making them efficient teachers and assuring a high level of teaching for all students). In the Taube Report for the years 2011-2012, a review was conducted concluding the importance of the teachers' role in the students' achievements. Analyzing the researches checking the teachers' influence of students' achievements showed that the teaching force influence the students' achievements more than other systemic characteristics (for an extensive review of the research findings see Paz and Salant, 2012). The best example for it can be found in Henshuk's research (2011), which examine the economic value of improving the teaching force. This review shows that improving the teaching force is the most effective way substantially compared to other variants in order to improve students' achievements. In the calculation he conducted Henshuk found that if the USA will lead its students to the level of the students in Finland in the international tests, by improving the teaching force, it will be worth the growth of 100\$ trillion in America's annual output. Henshuk's article is a revolutionary one, because it sees the teacher as a producer of a great economic value, and sees the investment in the teacher as pure financial investment returned in the form of state product. Chart 6 Summarizes Henshuk's and Co's findings about manpower in teaching, a lecture he gave in September 2011 in Taube Center in Jerusalem. In view of the many challenges facing the education system and demand no less than excellent teachers, after all how can one expect the education system to create independent students with wide general knowledge, critical thinking and high articulation if their teachers are not as such? In addition, although the findings show the importance of the teachers' role it seems that measures haven't been taken yet to ensure that every student will get to meet quality teachers who will accompany them throughout their years in the education system. A significant number of people who were interviewed for this project referred to the importance of the teacher's role and the importance of doing everything possible to attract a high quality people to operate these positions. In this part of the project I will bring variety of ideas that came up in the interviews and talks conducted to form this project. Their main goal is to improve the quality of teaching by attracting excellent people to this domain and strengthening the position of the teacher, both as a social tool and as a tool, which will attract populations that will increase the human capital significantly. In the interviews, a few relevant issues came up regarding the topic of fostering the human capital and improving the existent. Some of them are failures and opportunities at the same time, if taken care of properly. In this part, we chose to focus on two opportunities we find have the greatest potential for developing the human capital in the Israeli economy: investing in weak students with emphasis on weak populations with low resources and investment in preschool education. These are the domains the research hold a high hope on improving the domain. Yet, the main condition to succeed in the investment, as pointed in the research, is quality-teaching force whose work will enable the promotion of every relevant program regarding the matter. In this chapter, we will refer to three more ideas that came up in the interviews, which welcome steps of strategic policy: alternative success rates for schools, creating a quality system for labor management, and finally, conceptual change and a move of the education system based on research and innovation. Here are the findings: investment and intensive work with low social-economic populations. This is one of the opportunities to indicate improvement in human capital. Localities with a great number of low social-economic status citizens, who suffer from low investment and resources for education, are with the greatest potential for a yield for the investment. This conclusion derives from the simple fact that the rise of education products in this localities meaning: basic skills of writing, reading, reading comprehension and math can cause a significant improvement in the human capital and therefore enabling an entrance to the labor market, coming out from the

cycle of poverty, reduction of government support and in certain cases prevention from entering to the world of crime. Another opportunity for improving the human capital in the system lies in investment and development of preschool education. In the research field there is almost no argument about them being the most critical education stages, therefore their financial feasibility. In the research examining the yield of investment in education, it was found that investment in preschool and elementary school yields a greater profit than investment in high school education.

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