**Research Article**

# DEVELOPMENT OF ARAB EDUCATION IN ISRAEL

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| A R T I C L E   I N F O | A B S T R A C T |
|---|---|
| | Public education system plays a significant and a central role in young people's lives in any society. In School, young people acquire education and get the opportunity to acquire personal and interpersonal skills and qualifications needed for them later in life.<br>In every society there is a certain level of education most young people aspire to achieve. Students who struggle in school and have not achieved the sufficient level of education, often find themselves at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and have difficulty finding a job with adequate pay. Public education system in Israel is divided into two groups - the Jewish education system (also divided into sub-systems – State secular education, state religious education, etc.) and the Arab education system. Each system has its own Students, its own teachers, and educational content of its own Arab schools provide only partial knowledge to Students, which is limited and basic, and preserves the socio-economic inequality existing in Israeli society<br>The historical development of the Arab educational system in Israel shows that it's not in the hands of the Arab minority and is controlled by external factors which represent,the ruling culture and its worldview, while ignoring the culture, the heritage and identity of Palestinian Arabs. |

## INTRODUCTION

Public education system plays a significant and a central role in young people's lives in any society. In School, young people acquire education and get the opportunity to acquire personal and interpersonal skills and qualifications needed for them later in life. Moreover, acquiring education is considered as a protective factor which has a central value in modern society.

In every society there is a certain level of education most young people aspire to achieve. Students who struggle in school and have not achieved the sufficient level of education, often find themselves at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder and have difficulty finding a job with adequate pay. Moreover, Students who struggle in school are in a constant risk of dropping out of school, which can lead to a deterioration, violence and crime. These phenomena affect young people's ability to cope in society and deprive them the opportunities to create proper and meaningful social relationships with their peers (Abu-Saad, 2011, 2015; Al-Haj, 1995; Mar'i, 1978).

Public education system in Israel is divided into two groups - the Jewish education system (also divided into sub-systems – State secular education, state religious education, etc.) and the Arab education system.

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Each system has its own Students, its own teachers, and educational content of its ownArab schools provide only partial knowledge to Students, which is limited and basic, and preserves the socio-economic inequality existing in Israeli society (Golan-Agnon, 2004, 2006; Swirski, 1995; 1990, Abu-Saad, 2004, 2015). Arabs standard of living substantially lower than that of the Jews, and so is the educational standard at every level, accommodation, infrastructure, labor market participation and even life expectancy. (Statistical abstract of Israel, 2016; Mautner, 2008; Peres and ya'ar-Yuchtman, 1998). One of many examples of significant differences in resource allocation for education in Israel from the State Comptroller's Report of 1997: The average amount allocated from the Ministry of Education per Student in Israel is 601 NIS; the amount allocated to the various local authorities, Arab and Jewish, ranging from 74 to -3,638 NIS per Student. Among the 50 municipalities that received the lowest amount, 41 were Arab municipalities (State Comptroller, 1997, Report No. 48, p 313). Furthermore, a study evaluating the budgetary allocation to schools exposed; thatfor each Jewish Student, schools could use an average of 4,935 NIS a year, While for every Arab Student, schools could use an annual amount of 862 NIS only. Division by sub-sectors exposed an even greater gap between allocations For each Student in Bedouin Schools in the Negev, which Stood at 270 NIS per year, and schools of settlements in the West Bank, which was about 6,906 NIS a year (Golan-Agnon, 2006).

In addition, inequality is also evident in the uneven distribution of the financing funds for special programs given by Ministry of Education to non-governmental bodies and organizations operating outside the education system, and this has an important impact. As explained by Golan-Agnon (2004), chairman of the committee for equality in education in the Pedagogic Secretariat, Ministry of Education 1999-2001. In 1999, Ministry of Education granted 1,309,679 NIS to associations, less than 1.5% of those are Arab associations, which means that every year the Ministry of Education helps promoting associations and organizations working for education (youth movements, newspapers, sermons, etc.) but hardly helps Arab associations… In the current situation, lack of access to education ministry budgets is so great, that anyone who is not close to the plate does not know how to ask to eat from it.The dominant concept should be that education budgets are for all of us and should be divided according to all Students needs in Israel. We are far away from this situation (pp. 76-77).

Since the establishment of Israel, discrimination against Arab population is reflected in the allocation of state resources.For example, the budgets allocated by government ministries for Arab municipal authoritiesare lower, to this very day, than those provided to Jewish settlements (Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2016). Moreover, Jewish civil society and Arab civil society differ from one another greatly (Peres and ya'ar-Yuchtman, 1998; Mautner, 2008).This article deals with the issues and dilemmas related to the historical development of Arab education in Israel during the military government, and discusses the goals and objectives of public education and curriculum and teaching materials in Arab schools.

In 1949, the Knesset passed the "Compulsory Education Law", which applies to both Arabs and Jews. According to the law, the state has committed, in cooperation with local authorities, to provide eight years of free compulsory education for children between the ages of five and thirteen. The state has taken upon itself the responsibility ofteachers' recruitment, their training and payment of their salaries and the preparation of curriculum.Maintenance of official educational institutions including buildings and their furnishingsis the responsibility of the local education authority. (Al Haj, 1995; Jiryis, 1976). Compulsory Education Law has defined, in more detailed way, the following responsibilities to the state and parents:

Compulsory education applies to all children aged 5 to 13, inclusively, and all teenagers, who did not complete their basic education (Section 2-a);parents of the children (or teenagers as defined above) have a twofold duty: to register the child or the teenager in an appropriate local education authority (Section 3-B); and to ensure that the child or teenager will visit a recognized educational institution in a regular manner (Section 4-A); duty of the state is also double: to provide education to the child or adolescent, and to provide this education for free (Quoted in: al-Hajj, 1996, pp. 48-49).

Israeli authorities were not strict about enforcing compulsory education among the Arab minority (Abu-Saad, 2015, 2011; Bashi, 1995; Bashi, Kahn, Davis, 1981). The implementation of Compulsory Education Law received a low priority as the new state institutions were engaged in the absorption of Jewish immigrants (Abu-Saad, 2006, 2011, 2015; Swirski, 1999). Following the 1948 war, many of the Arab Palestinian teachers and administrators dispersed in all directions with the majority

of Arab population. In addition, a large part of the infrastructure in Arab society was destroyed, and the educational system that has developed during the British Mandate, nearly collapsed completely. The disastrous results of the Nakba, which struck the Palestinians, are reflected clearly in the numerical data describing the Arab education system in -1948/49. Out of 900 schools (including eight schools in post-primary and three teacher training seminars) in -1947/48 only 46 remained (in which there was not even one high school or even one teacher training seminar), and out ofa total number of 4,600 teachers in -1947/48 only 170 remained (Statistical abstract of Israel, 2005, Tables No. 2.2 and 2.3). Reconstruction of the Arab educational system was delayed not only because of the lack of buildings, facilities and physical infrastructure, qualified staff and teaching materials, but also because of the supervision and control mechanism of the military government (Abu-Saad, 2006, 2015).

### Arab Education under the military government

The military government (1948-1966) has isolated the Arab population in Israel, both physically and cognitively from the rest of population, fostered dependency, helped in systematic expropriation of their lands,Prevented formation of meaningful institutions for Arabs and made them reservoir voters that were supposed to support the ruling political party,and through it in the existing socio-political order (Kimmerling, 2004) Benzamin and Mansour (1992 p 70) Imagine the gloomy situation of Arab population under military administration; In fact the Arab population was under military rule, which created a heavy burden upon it… the Policy that was implemented by military government and Arab affairs adviser, forced Arab minority to an absolute Dependency on the system that has dominated them and limited their freedom, movement and freedom of expression, confiscated their lands and damaged their economic advancement. This policy has created a kind of ghetto in which Arab population lived, in a large isolation from the core of daily life that has developed in the state.In addition, according to a letter sent by the military governor of Nazareth, Elisha Soletz, on 30 September 1948 to The Ministry of minorities, that asked him to provide a report on his activities:

I bring to your attention that we do not follow instructions given to us by the State Secretariat. We receive instructions directly from the Military Government in the administered territories. According to instructions that I have received from the headquarters of the Military Government in the administered territories, I have no permission to pass information and reports to ministers of state (State Archives, the Ministry of Minorities, 302/65; 304/17 cited in: Benzamin and Mansour 1992, p 32).

During the military government, very difficult conditions prevailed in the educational institutions in many Arab villages.The classes were very crowded, even when in some places the school was held in two shifts (both of which were very crowded). Often there was no basic furniture (tables and chairs) and Students were forced to sit on boards, boxes, windowsills and even on the floor. Many of the buildings in which schools were located were in terrible shape, and some of them were damaged during the warand as a result of violence acts that followed (Cohen, 1951). The state did not make a serious effort to help Arab communities in the construction of new schools and standard classrooms.We can learn about this

from the appeal of Moshe Sharett, the Minister of Foreign Affairs then, to the Education Minister Zalman Shazar, asking him to take care of providing any budget to build new schools or expanding the existing ones:

It seems like the committees that were discussing the issue of distributing the development budget in the Ministry of Education have forgotten the existence of Arab schools in Israel.And they divided the funds made available to them entirely between the Jewish settlements, without leaving anything for Arab villages. I would like to mention my fault: the period in which the distribution of this budgetwas discussed and was possible, I was serving as Acting Education Minister, but I was not too alert to oversee the distorted situation(C / 1733 file 145 quoted in: Swirski, 1990, p 70).

Many Arab school buildings during the period of military government were not suitable at all to be used in teaching, as described by one of the earliest Arab teachers, NimerMurkus. The first teaching job for Murkus under military government in Israel was in Arraba village in the Western Galilee, and that's how he described the learning conditions that were prevalent there:

The School in Arraba village had rooms that were built of stone and concrete during the British regime, but these rooms were used as classrooms for only a small part of the Students.The rest of the students, they were learning in rented rooms throughout the village ... the vast majority of my weekly teaching hourswere in one of these rented rooms ... The room was very small.Half of the Students were sitting on rickety and old chairs, and the other half - on a concrete ledge that was built against the walls around the room. A margin of only one meter separated the board and the first row of Students' seats, where I stood to teach (Murkus1999, P.115).

After one year of teaching in Arraba village, Murkus was transferred to a school in another village, al-Bi'na, the conditions which prevailed there were even worse. Classes were held in rented rooms throughout the village. Murkus' classroom was at a residence of farmer's family, and those entering had to pass through a barn with two oxen and a donkey living there. The room had no furniture, and Students were sitting on a concrete ledge that was built against the walls around the room or on stools which they brought from home. That's how Rudge (1987) described the state of rented classrooms in Umm al-Fahm:

The size of an average room is 16 square meters, in which 30 Students were learning, 4 are sitting at a table of one meter width, designed for two. One lamp is the only source of light. In winter the teacher has a choice: to open two windows for light and suffer from cold, or close them and choke from stale air (p. 4).

There was a shortage of the most basic equipment in Arab schools, such as chalk, so sometimes the Students were sent by teachers to the hills to search for white soft chalkstones to be used for writing on the board. Sometimes teachers were buying the chalk with their own money, when they had the opportunity to travel to the big city (Murkus, 1999). There was also a shortage of textbooks, and the existing books were mostly remaining from the British Mandate.In addition, in many cases the board was used instead of a personal textbook:In order to be used as a textbook to the whole class,

entire paragraphs of the book were written on it(Mar'i, 1978; Jiryis, 1976; Murkus, 1999).

According to the Education Ministry inspector, Saad Sarsur: "Arab children in the fifties were learning without books. The Arab teacher would explain to his Students the study material in the first part of the lesson and in the second part he dictated to them the material (1985, p 488). In addition to shortage of textbooks, educational contents in history, in Arabic literature and in Palestinian Arab heritage were distorted. In Teachers' Union annual conference in July 1958, an Arab teacher raised the question of why do Students in Arab schools study the Bible and not the Koran (Ha'aretz, 09/07/58). Moreover, according to a letter, which was sent on 15.06.1956 by members of the Culture Committee of the Christian Brothers Association in Haifa, in this letter the committee members complained about the situation of curricula in Arab schools:

Not enough attention is being paid to teaching Arabic language. Arabic literature is being taught without books and in a distorted way, and therefore, Students cannot appreciate the rich heritage of their people. In addition, large parts of national liberation literature are deleted, accordingly with the policy of pressure and the attempt to suppress national pride among them.

As for teaching Arab history, it was given a very limited time in primary schools' curriculum. This program only lasts for eight years and the short time dedicated to it - prevents Students from learning the history properly. In addition to that, in the book (Al-a'asr al-Had'r, from Tamimi, for high school grades), the part that was dealing with the Arab rebellion against the Turks was removed (State Archives, 1351/1616 / Gal, quoted in: al-Hajj, 1996, p 102).

Many factors have shaped the image of personnel working in Arab education in Israel after 1948: loss of a large part of the educated Arab-Palestinian population during the 1948 war, preference of security considerations over educational needs; The complicated bureaucracy of the military government; And a general shortage of properly qualified teachers. All these factors severely affected the development of Arab education in Israel. One of the main difficulties that arose due to these factors is the creation of Overcrowded classroom with Students in relation to each teacher. For example, the average ratio of Students' number per teacher in 1949 in the western Galilee, where most of Arab population in Israel was concentrated, was 61 Students per teacher. In other places the ratio was even higher than that. Compared to the Jewish sector, where the average number of students per teacher was 35-40, and in schools in kibbutzim the average was much lower.Generally, the Arab teacher had to teach twice the number of Students compared to Jewish teacher, and yet, he received only half Jewish teacher's salary (Cohen, 1951). From a Letter that was sent by the Arab Education Division Director to the Accountant General of Finance Ministry regarding the employment conditions of one of his inspectors, we can understand the difficulties that Arab teachers were dealing with in receiving their salaries, that were originally lower:

Mr. Moskowitz serves as a provincial supervisor of Arab education and His work area is stretching from Haifa in the north to Beersheba in the south.The number of Arab and Jewish teachers working in schools under his supervision reaches to 275 ... Mr. Moskowitz has no office and is forced to do the office work at his private home in Netanya. All

pedagogical and administrative workload falls on Mr. Moskowitz's shoulders and he is doing it himself without any help... In the current situation there is no way Mr. Moskowitz can prepare by himself 275 checks each month for the payment of salaries to 275 teachers in his district ...Payment of teachers' salaries by checks is not practical in many cases due to the large number of teachers working in remote villages under military administration. Those teachers will have to lose time and money to obtain a movement license from the military governor and to travel from their villages to the nearest town to cash the check at the bank.We must remember that in many places there is no regular transportation and teachers are wasting a lot of time to get to the city ... The method used today is that the supervisor, Mr. Moskowitz in Netanya or Mr. Hanna Khazen in Nazareth, gets the check ...He rents a car and takes with him the money needed for that day and passes from village to village to pay the salaries. The Supervisor gets back the car expenses by collecting payment of approximately 200 penny from each teacher... (C/1733 file 145. quoted in: Swirski, 1990 p 69).

### Development of Education System in Numbers

Table 1 summarizes the growth and development of Arab education system during the military government, and on the other hand the growth and development of the Jewish education system in those years. The table data strengthen the feeling that Palestinian Arabs were "present-absentees". Until 1963/64 school year there was not even one school for Palestinian Arab children with special needs. When such a school was established, it had to serve all Arab population from the Negev to the Galilee (and we have to remember the limitations of Transportation, which increased the difficulty of traveling in those days). The first High School was established in 1952\53, and until the end of military Government period, the number of high schools intended for Arab population had risen to only eight (in the Negev there was not even one high school Until 1969, which was built as a growing division, from ninth grade) (Abu-Saad, 2011). Vocational and agricultural schools were opened in the Jewish sector within two years from the state establishment, but they did not even exist in Arab educational system until 1959 / 60 and 1962-1963 (respectively). Even then, in the Arab sector there were 4-5 Vocational schools and 1-2 agricultural schools. The most glaring absence was perhaps the fact that the first seminar for training Arab teachers was established only ten years after the

establishment of Israel, despite the severe shortage of teachers following the disintegration of Palestinian society in Israel in 1948.

In 1948/49 school year, 6,780 Arab Students were learning in educational institutions and they have formed 6.3% of the total population of students in Israel (From primary school age up to high school) (see Table 2). In 1972, the Applicability of free compulsory education was expanded for two more years, the ninth grade and tenth grade (Ages 14-15) (Mar'i, 1978),In the late seventies, Palestinian Arabs constituted 19.6% of the population of students in Israel, From primary school age up to high school. The most recent data available to us refer to the 2015/16 school year and indicate that this percentage increased to 25.9%.

A similar increase, although not parallel, was also marked in the number of schools and classrooms in Arab education system.Since the 1948 war, which led to dispersion of many Palestinian Arab teachers and administrators and paralyzed the educational system, the first step taken by the Israeli government towards a change in the Arab Education was the establishment of new primary schools (Jiyris, 1976). In the school year 1948/49 there were 46 Arab schools, which constituted 7.7% of all schools in the state (see Table 3). By the end of seventies, the number of schools in Arab education system increased to -371, which constituted 15.7% of all schools;as of 2014/15 school year, Arab education system had 1,011 schools, which constituted 21.0% of all schools in the state.Figures indicate that the increase in schools' number could not follow the growth in the population of Palestinian Arab students, which in 2014/15 school year, constituted 26.7% of the total population of students in Israel.The average number of Palestinian Arab Students per school is higher in any case than the number of Jewish Students per school.

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2008 Table No. 8.8, 2015 Tables No. 8.8, 8.19

Table4 summarizes the increase in classrooms' number in Jewish and Arab education system in the years 1948-2015. The data indicates a growth trend consistent with Jewish and Arab Students' rate in the population of students- rather than growth trend in schools' numbers. However, since the late seventies, classrooms rate in Arab education system, is still lagging behind the actual rate of Palestinian Arab Students in the entire population of students.

**Table 1** Schools and seminars for teachers according to the Jewish sector and Arab sector during the military government

|  | 9/1948 | 1/1950 | 3/1952 | 5/1954 | 7/1956 | 8/1957 | 9/1958 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Jewish sector** | | | | | | | |
| Kinder gardens | 709 | 1,090 | 1,669 | 1,885 | 1,894 | 1,900 | 1,936 |
| Elementary schools | 467 | 722 | 945 | 945 | 1,042 | 1,100 | 1,132 |
| Schools for disabled children | - | 39 | 74 | 51 | 60 | 64 | 74 |
| Vocational Schools | 26 | 42 | 41 | 42 | 46 | 52 | 55 |
| Agricultural Schools | | 28 | 32 | 34 | 36 | 37 | 31 |
| Seminars for teachers | 12 | 17 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 25 | 31 |
| **Arab sector** | | | | | | | |
| Kinder gardens | 10 | 87 | 91 | 81 | 104 | 109 | 116 |
| Elementary schools | 46 | 99 | 108 | 114 | 115 | 119 | 131 |
| Schools for children with special needs | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Post-Primary Schools | - | - | 1 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| Vocational Schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Agricultural Schools | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Seminars for teachers | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel: 1962, Table No. 1; 1963, Table No. 1; 1966 Table No. T/1

This means that on average, Arab Students are learning in classes with a greater number of Students compared to Jewish Students.

**Table 2** The number of Jews and Palestinian Arab Students in elementary and post-elementary education 1948 – 2015

| years | Number of Jews (%) | Number of Arabs (%) | Total in numbers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1948/49 | 101,351 (93.7) | 6,780 (6.3) | 108,131 |
| 1959/60 | 429,586 (93.1) | 31,905 (6.9) | 461,491 |
| 1969/70 | 531,698 (88.1) | 72,018 (11.9) | 603,716 |
| 1979/80 | 652,989 (80.4) | 159,261 (19.6) | 812,250 |
| 1989/90 | 799,128 (79.4) | 207,807 (20.6) | 1,006,935 |
| 1999/00 | 1,025,931 (78.6) | 279,027 (21.4) | 1,304,958 |
| 2002/02 | 1,044,661 (76.5) | 319,199 (23.5) | 1,363,860 |
| 2003/04 | 1,042,084 (75.7) | 335,170 (24.3) | 1,377,254 |
| 2006/07 | 1,065,750 (74.1) | 372,547 (25.9) | 1,438,297 |
| 2007/08 | 1,067,085 (73.6) | 381,817 (26.4) | 1,448,902 |
| 2009/10 | 1,106,313 (73.3) | 402,801 (26.7) | 1,508,902 |
| 2014/15 | 1,229,157 (73.3) | 447,584 (26.7) | 1,676,741 |

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel,2008, table No. 8.11, 2015 Tables No. 8.09, 8.20.

**Table 3** The number of Jewish and Arab schools, 1948-2015

| years | Number of Jewish schools (%) | Number of Arab schools(%) | Total in numbers |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1948/49 | 565 (92.4) | 46 (7.7) | 611 |
| 1959/60 | 1,854 (92.7) | 146 (7.3) | 2,000 |
| 1969/70 | 2,064 (89.6) | 256 (10.4) | 2,320 |
| 1979/80 | 1,996 (84.3) | 371 (15.7) | 2,367 |
| 1989/90 | 2,012 (82.7) | 420 (17.3) | 2,432 |
| 1999/00 | 2,957 (83.6) | 582 (16.4) | 3,539 |
| 2002/03 | 3,134 (82.7) | 657 (17.3) | 3,788 |
| 2003/04 | 3,112 (88.0) | 682 (12.0) | 3,794 |
| 2006/07 | 3,159 (80.8) | 749 (19.2) | 3,908 |
| 2007/08 | 3,145 (80.8) | 749 (19.2) | 3,894 |
| 2009/10 | 3,480 (79.8) | 878 (20.2) | 4,356 |
| 2014/15 | 3,807 (79.0) | 1,011 (21.0) | 4,818 |

sector (100%) and in the Arab sector (75.2% and 88.4%, respectively) (Statistical Abstract of Israel 2014, Tables no.8.5, 2.3 see Figure 1).



**Figure 1** Registration rates in nursery schools and in state kindergartens among Jews and Arabs (including day care centers) in the school year 2013/14

## Dropout and educational achievement

because education as a rule Has become a prerequisite for successful Socio-economic integration in most societies, especially in developing countries, The success of the educational systems must be measured according to many variables, Not only according to Students Attendance Counts in the classroom. To estimate the educational successproperly, we should aim to assess the level of achievements and the level of the opportunities, the skills and tools that Students acquire in school.One of the main elements which helped state education system in Israel to oust the Arab minoritywas the fact that this minorityreceived poor quality education; this phenomenon has been well documented (Abu-Saad, 2015, 2011; Al-Haj, 1995; Human Rights Watch, 2001; Mar'i, 1978). The results are clearly evident in the low level of educational achievement and high dropout level in Arab schools compared to Hebrew schools.
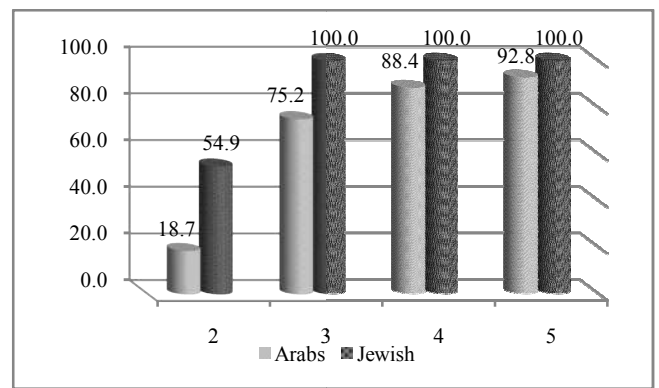
**Table 4** The number of classes in Jewish and Arab Education System

| | 49/1948 | 60/1959 | 70/1969 | 80/1979 | 90/1989 | 00/1999 | 03/2002 | 04/2003 | 08/2007 | 10/2009 | 15/2014 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **total** | 4,546 | 14,824 | 22,491 | 30,409 | 36,168 | 48,986 | 51,383 | 51,731 | 54,530 | 57,958 | 66,391 |
| **Jewish Education System** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elementary schools | 3,364 | 12,030 | 14,768 | 16,964 | 18,135 | 22,763 | 23,257 | 23,286 | 23,377 | 26,137 | 29,704 |
| junior high schools | - | - | 252 | 2,633 | 4,019 | 6,336 | 6,285 | 6,186 | 6,265 | 6,501 | 7,222 |
| high schools | 507 | 1,706 | 4,532 | 5,694 | 7,294 | 10,515 | 11,048 | 10,952 | 10,735 | 11,327 | 12,770 |
| total | 3,871 (%85.2) | 13,736 (%92.7) | 19,552 (%86.9) | 25,291 (%83.2) | 29,448 (%81.4) | 39,614 (%80.9) | 40,590 (%79.0) | 40,424 (%78.1) | 41,647 (76.4%) | 43,965 (75.8) | 49,696 (74.8) |
| **Arab education system** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Elementary schools | 667 | 1,057 | 2,663 | 4,045 | 4,622 | 6,130 | 6,980 | 7,088 | 8,130 | 8,681 | 9,801 |
| junior high schools | - | - | 93 | 451 | 875 | 1,454 | 1,680 | 1,944 | 2,128 | 2,413 | 3,066 |
| high schools | 8 | 31 | 183 | 622 | 1,223 | 1,780 | 2,133 | 2,275 | 2,625 | 2,899 | 3,828 |
| total | (%14.8) 675 | (%7.3) 1,088 | 2,939 (%13.1) | 5,118 (%16.8) | 6,720 (%18.6) | 9,365 (%19.1) | 10,793 (%21.0) | 11,307 (%21.9) | 12,883 (%23.6) | 13,993 (24.2) | 16,695 (25.2) |

Source: Statistical Abstract of Israel, 2008 Table No. 8.9, 2015 Tables No. 8.8, 8.19

The largest gap between Arab and Jewish education is found in the level of pre-compulsory education / kindergartens.In 1984, the Compulsory Education Law was amended and the age of compulsory education decreased from five to three. The amendment also states that this change will be implemented by the end of 2000, but in fact that did not happen.So far, the state continues to provide only minimal funding to pre-compulsory education in Arab communities. The impact of this fact is evident in the gap between the percentage of Students in pre-kindergarten- (Children aged three to four)- in the Jewish

Figure 2 shows the data Published by annual data of the Central Bureau of Statistics for the years 1999-2015 about the trend in dropout rates, as they were calculated in 9thgrade in subsequent years among the Jewish population and the Arab population. Among Jewish Students, Dropout rates ranged from highest rate of 6.1% in 1999/2000 and in2005/06 to 3.9%, although in 2014/15 they decreased to 2%. Among Arab Students, dropout rate decreased from 18.9% in 1999/2000 to 7.4% in 2014/15 (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2000-2015).
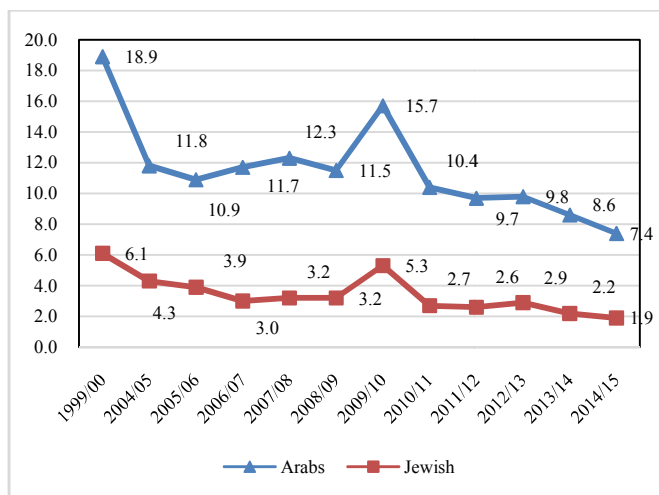
**Figure 2** School dropout rates among Jewish and Arab 9th Grade (1999-2015)



**Figure 3** Dropout rates among Jewish and Arab students in 7th through 12th gradesin2013/14 to 2014/15

Figure 3 shows that the highest dropout rate from 2013/14 school year to 2014/15 school year- was recorded among Arab Students, in transition from 8th grade to 9th grade (7.4%) compared to 1.9% Among Jewish Students. Among Jewish Students, in transition from 10th grade to 11th grade (5.0%)- compared to Arab Students (3.7%). Dropout rates were higher among Arabs than they were among Jews until 10[th]grades. It is interesting that in transition from 10th grade to 11th grade, dropout rates among Arab students are less than Jewish students (Statistical Abstract of Israel 2015, Table 8.35).
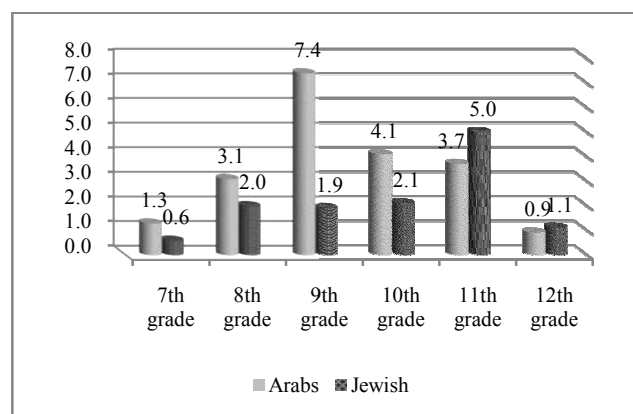
The data arising from reports of Growth and Effectiveness Measures for Schools (GEMS -Meitzav) - from school year 2001/02 to 2015/16 (see Table 5) Show a wide gap between the achievements of Students both in Jewish sector and in Arab sector.Achievements of Arab Students are significantly lower compared to the achievements of Students in Jewish sector in all basic subjects in which Students were examined (first language, mathematics, English, science and technology) and over the years (RAMA, 2007; 2016). In Matriculation Exams (the Bagrut) - Which are a prerequisite for obtaining Matriculation Certificate and college admission– the achievements of Palestinian Arab Students who continued

**Table 5** The level of achievement (exams GEMS) 5th grade and 8th grade, among Arab and Jewish schools, 2001-2016

| Population group | years | Grades | Science and Technology | English | Math. | Arabic/ Hebrew Languish |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arabs | 2001/02 | 5th | 48 | 66 | 58 | 43 |
| | | 8th | 57 | 55 | 39 | 48 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 65 | 74 | 75 | 74 |
| | | 8th | 68 | 77 | 50 | 64 |
| Arabs | 2002/03 | 5th | 52 | 63 | 50 | 46 |
| | | 8th | 53 | 66 | 37 | 49 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 70 | 76 | 73 | 71 |
| | | 8th | 64 | 83 | 58 | 68 |
| Arabs | 2003/04 | 5th | 56 | 69 | 57 | 54 |
| | | 8th | 65 | 65 | 54 | 76 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 71 | 71 | 73 | 70 |
| | | 8th | 79 | 78 | 65 | 68 |
| Arabs | 2004/05 | 5th | 68 | 72 | 57 | 62 |
| | | 8th | 64 | 51 | 47 | 53 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 85 | 81 | 74 | 77 |
| | | 8th | 79 | 72 | 65 | 77 |
| Arabs | 2005/06 | 5th | 69 | 73 | 54 | 71 |
| | | 8th – Primary | 69 | 73 | 60 | 74 |
| | | 8th – Secondary | 60 | 52 | 44 | 65 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 82 | 79 | 73 | 76 |
| | | 8th – Primary | 73 | 79 | 67 | 81 |
| | | 8th – Secondary | 71 | 67 | 60 | 78 |
| Arabs | 2009/10 | 5th | 60 | 70 | 56 | 73 |
| | | 8th | 55 | 50 | 39 | 62 |
| Jewish | | 5th | 66 | 78 | 70 | 82 |
| | | 8th | 61 | 67 | 50 | 75 |
| Arabs | 2012/13 | 5th | - | 78 | 63 | 82 |
| | | 8th | 62 | 51 | 41 | 69 |
| Jewish | | 5th | - | 83 | 73 | 84 |
| | | 8th | 71 | 69 | 53 | 75 |
| Arabs | 2015/16 | 5th | - | 82 | 62 | 82 |
| | | 8th | 65 | 51 | 43 | 68 |
| Jewish | | 5th | - | 84 | 74 | 84 |
| | | 8th | 71 | 69 | 57 | 79 |

Source: Ministry of Education and Culture; RAMA, 2007, 2010, 2013, 2016

their education until 12th grade was not as good as the achievements of their Jewish counterparts.

Data published by Central Bureau of Statistics for the years 1996, 1998, 2000-2014 (Statistical Abstract of Israel, 1997; 1999; 2001-2016) Show gabs in the percentage between Jewish and Arab students.Among Jewish Students the percentageincreased from the same class passing their matriculation exams - From 51.7% in 1996 to 62.3% in 2014 (see Figure 4).The Arab Students' rate that passed their matriculation exams also increased consistently,from41.8% in 1996 to 58.3% in 2014.
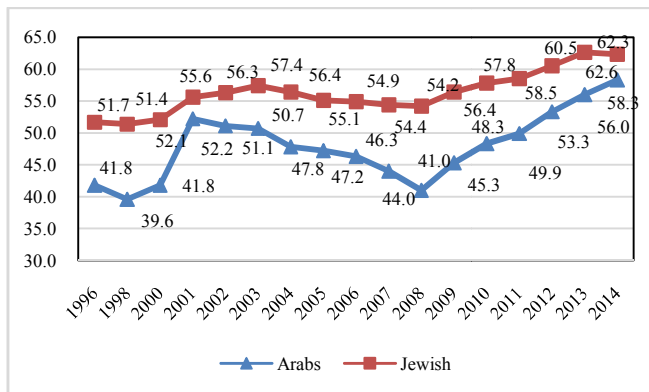


**Figure 4** Success rate in matriculation exams among Jews and Arabs students (1996-2014)

Not all Students who pass the matriculation exams continue to Post-secondary education, and this is due to Variety of reasons, including low matriculation results, which prevent their admission to university or college, economical constraints and more. Some Students who wish to continue their studies fail to pass the hurdle of the psychometric test. This is a capability assessment That Arab educators define as a cultural bias test, which is nothing but a direct translation of anexam which is designedfirstly for Jewish education system Students, especially at the university level (Abu-Saad, 2009).

Figure 5 shows that the ratio between studentseligible for Bagrut certificate among Jewish population and Arab population, who started academic studies within eight years of the matriculation exams, actually increased from school year 1999/00 to school year 2006/2007, Both among Jews (from 46.3% to 49.5%) and among Arabs (from 25.2% to 30.2%), Although the rate was consistently higher among Jews (Statistical Abstract of Israel 2008-2016, Tables 8.39, 8.43, 8.47, 8.48).
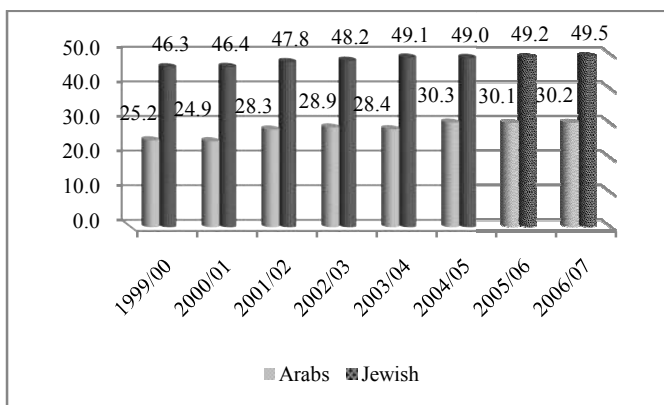


**Figure 5** Eligible for Matriculation certificate that began to study at universities within a period of up to eight years after the end of their high school studies

In conclusion, Despite the increase in schools and Students' number, and the Improvement in constant attendants' rate in Educational framework, And the Bagrut eligibility among Arab Students in public education system, their Educational level remained low compared to their Jewish counterparts (see Figure 6).In 2014, the rate of Arabs with ten years of education or less was at least twice as high as that of their counterparts in the Jewish sector (37.8% and 13.7%, respectively). On the other hand, proportion of Jews with 13-15 years of education (24.1%) and 16 years of education or more (28.9%) Was more than twice higher compared to Arabs (11.8% and 13.5%, respectively) (Statistical Abstract of Israel 2015, Table 8.3).
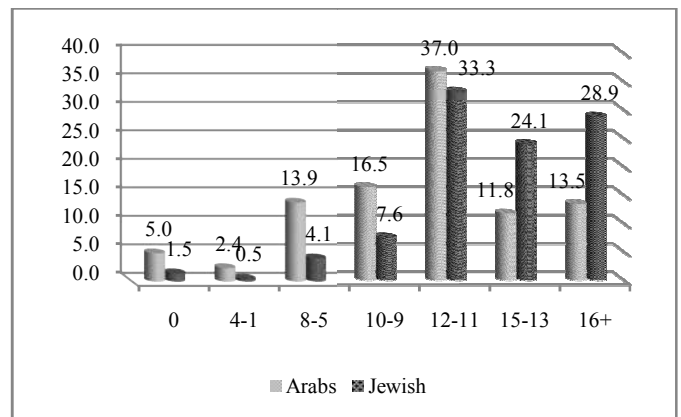


**Figure 6** Education level Rates among Jewish and Arab 15-year olds or more in 2014

In 1978, Arab educator and researcher, Sami Mar'i described the status of Arab education within the Israeli public school system in the following terms which, unfortunately, still provide an accurate description over 30 years later:

Arab education is a victim of Israeli pluralism, not only in that it is directed and managed by the majority, but it is also a tool by which the whole minority is manipulated… [It] is not only an example of the Israeli pluralism by which Arabs are denied power, it is also a means through which the lack of power can be maintained and perpetuated. Arab citizens are marginal, if not outsiders…. The Arab Education Department is directed by members of the Jewish majority, and curricula are decided upon by the authorities with little, if any, participation of Arabs. Arab participation does not exceed writing or translating books and materials according to carefully specified guidelines, nor does it extend beyond implementing the majority's policies. (Mar'i, 1978, p. 180).

Educational reforms effort have repeatedly failed to bring about change, since none of the recommendations of the many committees appointed by the government to improve the Arab education system have ever had any binding power (Abu-Saad, 2011, 2015; Al-Haj, 1995). As such, Arab students continue to be subjected to a curricular and educational program designed to address the needs and meet the concerns of the ruling majority, and ensure the marginalization and subordination of the minority.

In conclusion, the historical development of the Arab educational system in Israel shows thatit's not in the hands of the Arab minority and is controlled by external factors which represent,the ruling culture and its worldview, while ignoring the culture, the heritage and identity of Palestinian Arabs.

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