

Transition from primary to secondary school

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Key Words

Transition – movement, passage, or change from one position, state, stage, subject, concept, etc., to another; change: the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

This is the term for when something goes from one place or condition to another place or condition.

Transition - Change from one form, state, style, stage or place to another, the period of time during which something changes from one state or stage to another.

The Meitzav tests - The Meitzav tests students' competence in English, math, science and technology and each student's native language, as well as a questionnaire on the school's pedagogic environment, and are administered in the fifth and eighth grades. Second-graders take only the native-language exam.

The external Meitzav- is conducted in two subjects every two years, meaning each subject is tested once every four years. The questionnaires accompany every external exam.

The internal Meitzav- for each subject is given in any year in which either there is no external Meitzav, or the external Meitzav doesn't cover that subject. Thus internal Meitzav tests on each subject are given in three out of every four years.

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Abstract

This study is a part of doctoral research aiming to verify the hypothesis that examines the effect of the transition from elementary school to junior high student in terms of academic achievements. I chose two schools six years that the very first school transition programs structured cooperation between primary school and division, by: management, teachers, parents, counselors, students, and administrators director education council, and policy makers.

The other school does not keep a crossing. The comparison in terms of promoting academic achievements chose the profession of science that eight grades were tested a standardized and unified nation test.

Introduction

The Junior High school is the second step in the educational career for pupils, an intermediate stage between primary and High schools. Junior High school is part of the formal educational system in Israel, where pupils study from 7th to 9th grade (ages 12-15). Junior High schools have been established in the Israeli educational system in 1968, with the introduction of an educational system reform. As part of this reform, is the number of study years included in the mandatory study law up to the 9th grade, and it has been decided on an establishment of Junior High school, which first two years have been taken from Primary school and the top grade has been taken from High school.

The Junior High school is usually operated as an independent institution, and occasionally, the Junior High and the High school are in a single campus that is termed "a six-year school". Accordingly, in the majority of cases the composition of educational establishments for ages 6-17 is as follows: primary school (grades 1-6), following that the Junior High school – 3-year (grades 7-9) and then finally the High school – 3-year (grades 10-12). In observing the reasons for pupils dropping out of studies in High school, it has been found that one of the reasons for pupils leaving the orderly educational environment as early as age 14-15 is the harsh transition of an adolescent for the framework of a Primary school to that of a Junior High school. When studying period has been prolonged according to the Mandatory Study Law, until the 9th grade and the establishment of Junior High school, a decrease has been expected in dropping out of pupils from studying or at least a postponing of the drop-out generally until the 9th grade – age 15.

Junior High school is perceived as an organizational environment where significant social changes are supposed to take place: reduction of social gaps in study achievements, social merging and integration and the promotion of achievements of pupils in general. Studies have proven that a transition to Junior High school does entail a fair amount of anxieties, fears, concerns and a decline in achievements.

The differences between primary school and secondary school

<i>THE PRIMARY SCHOOL</i>	<i>THE SECONDARY SCHOOL</i>
Generally small buildings	Large spread out buildings
Generally one teacher teaches a range of subjects	Subject specialists teach their own subject only. Many contact members of staff.
Pupils usually have a good knowledge of everybody in their class and of the teacher and Vice versa.	Pupils can not have a sound knowledge of all others in their groups or the teachers that teach them and vice versa especially in the early stages of transition
Parents and teachers meet readily	Parents and teachers generally meet at parents evenings only.
Pupils in 6 th grade are the oldest in the school	Pupils in 7 th grade are the youngest in the school
Levels of responsibility in the school are generally given to 6 th grade pupils.	Levels of responsibility in the school are generally given to the higher year groups.
Levels of responsibility in the school are generally given to 6 th grade pupils.	Levels of responsibility in the school are generally given to the higher year groups.
Children generally come from the immediate local community. The modernising schools agenda may influence this	Pupils come from the wider community and often are bussed to school.

<p>Opportunities for enhancing self esteem are enhanced when there are fewer pupils to target for such things as musical productions and sports teams.</p>	<p>Opportunities to be involved in school representation are often less, when there is a larger number of pupils to choose from. Esteem may not be enhanced as readily.</p>
<p>Learning difficulties can be easily identified when there are fewer contact staff.</p>	<p>Pupils who have learning difficulties may not be identified as readily when there are more contact staff.</p>

Social concerns during the transition period are also paramount. Adolescence is a period when social acceptance is typically perceived by students to be of great importance, *Gerner & Wilson* [2005]. This is greatly intensified during primary to secondary transition, when the formation of new social groups is at its peak. In a study of English students, *Chedzoy and Burden* [2005] found that students identify ‘fitting in’ and making friends as being of utmost importance during the transition period.

Transition from primary to secondary school has been shown to be a stressful event in the lives of all adolescents, *Rice, Frederickson & Seymour* [2010], and it follows that *Lazarus’* theory can be used to investigate the situation. If a student were to perceive transition as a challenge, or an opportunity to master the situation, then emotions such as eagerness, happiness and excitement would follow, *Sirsch* [2003].

accessible teachers in high school, a strong peer network and an older sibling have been identified as facilitating successful transitions, *Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm & Splittgerber* [2000]. ‘Teachers’ ability to support students is a crucial element for quality learning environments. Students who feel supported by teachers are found to have a positive motivational orientation to school work and they experience positive social and emotional wellbeing’, *Bru, Stornes, Munthe & Thuen* [2010, 519-520].

Furthermore, considering that many of the problematic aspects of transition stem from the differences that exist between the primary and secondary school environment (for

example, increased focus on grading, *Benner & Graham*, [2009], increased size, *Demetriou, Goalen & Rudduck* [2000], different teaching styles and school organisation (NTCOGSO, 2005), there may be some benefit in reducing some of these differences. This may be achieved through increasing student familiarity with the new school environment. The concept of induction days has been found to be helpful in supporting positive transitions from primary to secondary school, *Graham & Hill* [2003].

The importance of peer relationships was corroborated by *Ashton* [2008], who investigated primary school children’s feelings prior to moving into secondary school and found that social aspects (for example, concerns about friendships, bullying, getting lost, teachers’ and their choice of school) were most important, while academic outcomes were rarely mentioned.

Acceptance, the number of friends, the quality of friendships, loneliness, depression, self-esteem and involvement before transition into high school (usually Year 10 onward) predicted loneliness, self esteem, school involvement and academic achievement after transition, *Kingery, Erdley & Marshall* [2011].

It is perhaps not surprising that young people with higher levels of social skills had high quality friendships before and after the transition from primary to secondary school.

Subsequently, these positive peer relationships promoted adjustment to the new environment. In supporting these peer relationships teachers can play an important role. Teachers who were more attuned to peer group affiliations promoted more productive contexts and had students with improved views of school social climate and adjustment during the school transition period, *Hamm, Farmer, Dadisman, Gravelle & Murray* [2011].

The table below shows the advantages and the short-comings of school structures deduced by the research and information center, *The Knesset* [June 2010, p. 17] :

Table (1): the advantages and the short-comings of school structures

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	Primary 8-year school	Independent Junior High school	Junior High School from a six-year comprehensive school
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High achievements • Small school • Personal relation • Safe climate and less violence • Length development and preparation for high school. • Suitable teachers' training • Canceling the need for additional transition between the educational stages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postponing selection for study courses • Increasing the rate of participation in post-Primary education • Integration • Adjustment to adolescence challenges • Specialist professional teachers • Descent in self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority of transitions • Better preparation for matriculation • Rich equipment and a variety of opportunities and elaboration

	Primary 8-year school	Independent Junior High school	Junior High School from a six-year comprehensive school
Short-comings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make the selection and tracking for 8th grade earlier • Social tagging for 8 years • Absence of professional disciplinary response and response to cognitive abilities • A limited variety of study subjects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease in achievements • Violence and badgering • Additional transition to High school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early tracking • Friction with older pupils (especially regarding young pupils)

Conclusions

The beginning of secondary school is a critical time for students. It evokes a variety of emotions, behaviour and concerns for both young adolescents and their parents or other caregivers. For many it is considered a major stepping stone on the way to becoming an adult. It can also provide students with an opportunity for a fresh start as they are introduced to the culture and expectations of their new school.

Transition to secondary school is marked by several changes in educational expectations and practices. In most primary schools, students are taught mainly in single classrooms, with a familiar set of classmates, by one to three teachers. However, once students reach secondary school, they interact with many more students, in different classrooms, with more teachers, and often with different expectations for both performance and responsibility.

A well-designed transition can maintain the strong sense of belonging that students felt in Primary School – so important if they are to continue to enjoy and succeed in academic tasks.

The advantages of transitions from Primary School to a six-year Junior High school, are:

- A single transition.
- Good preparation for matriculation.
- Rich equipment and a variety of specialization and deepening opportunities

Thus, the structure of a Junior High School in a six-year school, where the committee has recommended an examination of means to increasing of effectively of Junior High School in an educational sequence, *The Knesset* [June 2010, p. 11] :

- Division of the study levels in school for a six-year education Primary education and six-year post-Primary education is common presently much more than the structure of an 8-year Primary education and a 4-year post-Primary education.
 - In post-Primary education, a certain tendency begins to show its signs in recent years, of preferring six-year schools (Junior High and High schools), which number has been significantly higher than that of independent Junior High schools which number is in a descent.

The school must be a safe, warm and protecting place for all those who come and stay at its premises. Teachers and pupils spend in the kindergarten and school a significant part of their time and they are entitled to stay in a welcoming and safe place. The behavior of pupils in a school is to a much degree a function of its climate. Nurturing of the physical environment of a school as a place that respects all who are in it, a creation of an atmosphere of acceptance, true interest in and attentiveness to pupils, development opportunities for a significant concourse between a teacher and a pupil, alongside with a fair and consistent upholding of binding principles and proper behavior, guarantee, in most cases, a pleasant conduct of teachers and pupils.

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