

## ***Statistics of Jewish Education in the Diaspora: Objectives, Topics and Procedures***

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Statistics of Jewish education in the Diaspora are intended to supply quantitative data for management, planning and policy, as well as for researchers and other interested persons. In this respect they are like other statistics of public services, which measure and describe the respective institutions, activities and personnel, and the particular sector of the population which is being served.

Researchers of Jewish education in the Diaspora ought to be aware of the potential benefits of statistics. These can provide an overall quantitative picture, assist in making generalizations and furnish yardsticks to essentially qualitative studies. Educational research in depth can, by its very nature, investigate only selected instances of the respective phenomena. Hence statistical data and analyses can facilitate generalization from particular findings by providing information on the overall frequency of the phenomena under study. Moreover, techniques of quantitatively assessing qualitative phenomena – e.g., methods of tuition, or teachers' views – have been developed.

This chapter, however, will mainly confine itself to a consideration of the basic statistical data recommended for the rational functioning of a Jewish – or any other – educational system. In addition, studies of Jewish-educational attainment and its effects during adult life will be included here; these topics can be investigated through representative sample surveys of Jewish populations, such as demographers conduct.

The compilation of statistics of Diaspora Jewish education comprises the usual stages of statistical work: planning, collection, processing, evaluation, analysis and publication of the data. Statistics of Jewish education can be used for purposes of description, comparison or prediction. They can be local, national or international in keeping with the geographical dispersion of

the Jews. They will primarily deal with basic topics for which regular updates are needed. In addition, one-time or periodic in-depth studies can be conducted on subtopics or special areas of interest.

The multi-phase process of producing statistics – from the initial conception to eventual publication – is time-consuming, particularly so if carried out on an international scale. Therefore planning for statistics should take place in time for the data to be available when needed.

Planning for statistics must obviously take into account practical considerations of feasibility, such as the availability of professional personnel, funding and its limitations, and the likelihood of satisfactory response by the institutions or persons from whom the information is to be collected. Good response will depend not only on the nature, number and detail of the questions to be asked, but also on the standing and practical influence of the body under whose auspices the information is collected from the Jewish institutions or public. A precondition for successful planning of any statistics is clarification and definition – in advance of collecting or processing the data – of the relevant concepts, terms, categories, etc. Pretesting is an indispensable step in the course of producing statistics whose topic or procedure is new. These and many other well-known features in the orderly production of statistics apply equally to the study of Jewish education in the Diaspora.

Data collection may extend to all educational institutions or to a statistically representative sample. Population studies of Diaspora Jewries usually consist of sample surveys. Data collection should be multi-purpose when possible, especially if it involves population surveys. However, the methodological aspects of gathering statistical information, processing and presentation of data are not discussed here.

In the planning for international statistics of Jewish education much importance is to be attached to comparability of the basic information for the various Diaspora communities. This should produce an overview of the main features and trends in Jewish education from the information collected locally and nationally. The creation of a body of international statistics on Jewish education requires not only data collection in a great many countries but also standardization in order to achieve comparability. The need for standardization derives from the differences between educational regimes in different countries and even within certain countries. It should be feasible to compare Jewish education in a country to general education in the same country and to Jewish education in other countries. Targets for standardization are the topics of investigation, concepts and definitions, methods of data collection, processing and presentation of data.

However, even given standardization, limitations of international comparisons may exist and should be recognized. Problems of comparison also occur within the general educational systems of most countries, and even with regard to the same type of institution – for instance, because of different

quality of tuition in various institutions, which may be the result of their location in a higher- or lower-class neighborhood. In the case of international comparisons of educational information and statistics, such problems are virtually inevitable. Sources of particular difficulties with regard to international comparisons of Jewish education are the prominence of supplementary education, which is less regular than day school education, as well as qualitative and quantitative differences with regard to the Jewish content of the education provided.

The second part of this chapter contains a list of selected topics that are suitable for inclusion in a comprehensive statistical system for Jewish education in the Diaspora. The list is divided into seven main groups of topics as follows:

- I. The Jewish education system
  - A. General characteristics (such as type, level and Jewish ideological orientation)
  - B. Institutions
  - C. Teaching posts and teachers
  - D. Classes
  - E. Pupils
- II. Informal Jewish education
- III. Enrollment rates of Jewish children in Jewish education
- IV. Projections of the future number of pupils in Jewish education
- V. Family background of pupils receiving Jewish education
- VI. Level of Jewish-educational attainment among the Jewish population
- VII. Influence of Jewish education received in childhood on the behavior and attitudes of adults regarding Jewish matters.

The topics in the list that are not of a specifically Jewish character are analogous to those familiar from educational statistics in general or from data on educational attainment of general populations, such as can be found in appropriate national or international publications. Despite its apparent length, the list indicates only selected topics. This length results, on the one hand, from the separate itemization – for analytical reasons – of many sub-topics for which the information can be gathered jointly (e.g., by one and the same school census). On the other hand, this list is intended as a long-range framework of targets for Jewish educational statistics in the Diaspora. For a good many items, the chances of implementation will vary according to place and time, depending on the resources available and on the particular order of priorities adopted.

Group I contains the basic information concerning the educational system, which requires the most frequent updating. However, the other groups also are of profound importance for an assessment of the actual role and effi-

cacy of Jewish education within the Jewish community, and they – especially group VII – represent intellectually rewarding research challenges.

The list summarily indicates each topic, without entering into the formulation of questions or categorization of answers (except for a few instances of the latter kind that were inserted in order to clarify the substance of the respective topic). The potential sources of the various statistics will be briefly stated.

### ***List of Topics for Jewish Educational Statistics in the Diaspora***

#### **I. The Jewish Education System**

*Sources:* Educational institutions (but see the notes to sections C and E).

##### **A. *General Characteristics***

1. Type of education: day school, supplementary school (i.e. part-time education).
2. Educational level: kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school (where applicable), high school.
3. Jewish-ideological orientation: the situation and terminology differ as between countries. In the United States, the main denominations are Orthodox, Conservative, Reform.
4. Body in charge of the educational institution: educational network, Jewish community, synagogue, Zionist organization, association maintaining the particular school, etc.
5. Size of institution according to number of pupils.
6. Size of Jewish and general populations in locality.
7. Data for a particular year, especially the current one; data on changes over a period of time. Data on changes can be obtained by comparison of statistics from different years, or through direct inquiry using retrospective questions.

##### **B. *Institutions***

*Notes:* a. An institution may encompass several educational levels (the maximum being from kindergarten through high school). Therefore the sum of institutions functioning at the specified levels is greater than the number of institutions considered integrally as administrative units.

b. Topics 3–9 should be studied according to class grades. Therefore, these topics will also appear in the section on classes.

1. Basic data: numbers of pupils, classes and teaching posts.

2. Grades existing in the institution; range of pupils' ages (standard ages for the existing grades).
3. Number of boys/girls among the pupils.
4. Number of non-Jewish pupils.
5. Number of days of instruction per week (and which days?); number of weekly hours of instruction (at what time of the day?).
6. Courses of study and specializations.
7. Number of weekly hours devoted to Jewish studies.
8. Curricula: especially for Jewish studies and Hebrew.
9. Textbooks, audio-visual and other educational aides (especially for Jewish studies).
10. Location: community center, synagogue building, separate location, etc.
11. Housing of the institution; other functions of building (if any), classrooms, etc.
12. Informal education provided by the institution (see section II).
13. Budget: sources and amount of income, expenditures by type and amount.
14. History of the institution, especially: time of foundation, mergers, splits, changes in enrollment.

### ***C. Teaching Posts and Teachers***

*Notes:* a. A teacher may be simultaneously employed in several teaching posts at different schools (and even at several levels of the same school). Therefore the sum of occupied teaching posts is greater than the number of individual teachers involved.

b. Detailed information regarding characteristics of the teachers must be collected directly from them. The data can be collected either by the school itself or with the help of a list of names and addresses supplied by the school, and either from all teachers or from a representative sample.

1. Teacher's current employment in the educational institution:
  - Number of teaching hours and/or hours of employment in general.
  - Subjects taught.
  - Grades in which the teacher gives instruction (with or without information on the subjects taught).
  - Additional functions (other than instruction) carried out by the teacher in the school.
2. Other current employment:
  - Instruction in other Jewish schools.
  - Instruction in general schools.
  - Jewish religious functions.
  - Other Jewish communal services.
  - Other.

3. Number of years of teaching or detailed job history of the teacher:
  - In particular institution.
  - In any Jewish educational institutions.
  - In educational institutions in general.
4. Demographic characteristics: sex, age, marital status, country of birth (if born abroad – year of immigration to country of residence).
5. General education (highest level or all levels):
  - Level of study.
  - Duration of study.
  - Place of study.
  - Degrees or diplomas.
6. Jewish education: particulars as in 5.
7. Pedagogical training: General or Jewish – particulars as in 5.
8. Conditions of employment:
  - Tenured or untenured.
  - Salary.
  - Pension rights.
9. Teachers from Israel: *shlihim*, ex-Israelis, etc.
10. Non-Jewish teachers.
11. Teacher turnover and its causes.
12. Demand for teachers and vacancies, according to subjects and special requirements.
13. Sources and procedures for recruitment of teachers.
14. Opinions, assessments, and suggestions of principals and teachers (current or past) in Jewish educational matters.

#### **D. Classes**

*Note:* Several classes may operate in the same grade.

1. Grade.
2. Parallel classes.
3. Size of class (according to number of pupils).
4. Distribution of pupils' ages in the class.
5. Number of boys/girls in the class.
6. Number of non-Jews in the class.
7. Number of days of instruction per week (and which?), number of weekly hours of instruction (at what time?)
8. Courses of study and specializations.
9. Number of weekly hours devoted to Jewish studies.
10. Curricula, especially for Jewish studies and Hebrew.
11. Textbooks, audio-visual and other educational aids (especially for Jewish studies).

### **E. Pupils**

*Note:* Detailed information regarding characteristics of the pupils must be collected directly from them (or their parents). The data can be collected either by the school itself or with the help of a list of names and addresses supplied by the school, and either from all pupils or from a representative sample.

1. Demographic characteristics of pupils: sex, age, Jews or non-Jews, etc.
2. In supplementary Jewish education: general education of the pupils (level, schools attended).
3. Educational attainments.
4. Flow of pupils, especially between school years: promotion to higher grade, transfer to another Jewish school of the same type, transfer from day to supplementary education or vice versa; entry to Jewish education (initial or after a break), or drop-out from Jewish education.

## **II. Informal Jewish Education**

*Sources:* Data can be obtained from the bodies organizing the activities, from surveys among participants (current or past), or from general surveys of Jewish populations.

1. Types of activities: religious activities, study groups (which?), optional subjects (which?) at school, social activities (which?), sports and excursions, summer camps (programs?), visits to Israel, etc.
2. Organizing body: school or educational network to which it belongs, the Jewish community, synagogue, Zionist organization, youth group, etc.
3. Framework and location: school, youth club, meeting place of youth organization, sports club, etc.
4. Frequency and duration of activity.
5. Instructors:
  - Total number.
  - Status: teachers, adult instructors, senior students, etc.
  - Demographic characteristics: sex, age, etc.
  - General education.
  - Jewish education.
  - Pedagogical training.
  - Special training or experience in the specific kind of instruction.
  - Number of years as instructor.
  - Additional jobs: teacher, religious or other Jewish functionary, other work, student, etc.
  - Instructors from Israel; *shlichim*, ex-Israelis, etc.
  - Non-Jewish instructors.

6. Participants:
  - Number.
  - Demographic characteristics: sex, age, etc.
  - General education.
  - Jewish education: level, type (day school or supplementary), number of years of study, currently studying or discontinued, etc.
  - Duration of participation in the specific activity.
  - Concurrent participation in various activities.
7. Opinions, assessments and suggestions on informal Jewish education from:
  - Directors and instructors.
  - Participants.
  - Parents of participants.

### **III. Enrollment Rates of Jewish Children in Jewish Education**

*Sources:* Data on the number of pupils receiving Jewish education (see I above) and data on Jewish children of school-age.

*Note:* Enrollment rates reflect not only the demand for Jewish studies but also the availability of institutions and appropriate grades, their proximity, quality of tuition, etc.

1. General enrollment rates – for example, the number of pupils receiving Jewish education per 1,000 Jewish children between the ages of 3 and 17.
2. Specific enrollment rates, according to detailed age groups and sex.
3. General or specific enrollment rates over a period of years for study of trends.

### **IV. Projections of the Future Number of Pupils in Jewish Education**

*Sources:* Projections for the number of pupils will be based on demographic projections and empirical enrollment rates. Recent trends in enrollment rates should be taken into consideration as well as factors that might affect future enrollment rates, such as: the availability of Jewish institutions on the various levels from kindergarten through high school, and practical plans for expansion of the Jewish education system; attitudes toward Jewish education and parents' readiness to send their children to Jewish schools in the future. (The latter information can be obtained from general or specific surveys of the Jewish population, see Section V.5).



*Note:* Despite their conjectural nature, such projections are necessary for rational medium- and long-term planning of the Jewish education system and of informal Jewish education. Preferably, the projections should be age-specific (see Section III.2).

## **V. Family Background of Pupils Receiving Jewish Education**

*Sources:* Data collected by Jewish educational institutions (or at least, with the help of lists of names and addresses supplied by them), or data from surveys of Jewish populations that show whether a family has children who receive Jewish education.

1. Demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of parents, including the Jewish education they themselves received.
2. Characteristics of brothers/sisters (if any) of the pupil, and what Jewish education they received.
3. Behavior and attitudes of parents with regard to various Jewish matters (see Section VII).
4. Opinions of parents about the existing Jewish education, and suggestions for changes.
5. Parents' plans for continuation of the child's Jewish education, and for attendance of younger and future children in institutions of Jewish education.

## **VI. Level of Jewish-Educational Attainment Among the Jewish Population**

*Source:* Surveys of Jewish populations.

*Note:* The listed items of information may relate either to the highest level or to all levels of Jewish education received in the past, or being currently received, by the individuals in the Jewish population.

1. Level of Jewish education.
2. Type of Jewish education (day school, supplementary).
3. Number of years of study.
4. Age at time of study.
5. Number of weekly hours devoted to Jewish studies.
6. Country of study.

## **VII. Influence of Jewish Education Received in Childhood on Adults' Behavior and Attitudes regarding Jewish Matters.**

*Source:* Surveys of Jewish populations.

*Note:* The influence of Jewish education received (see Section VI) on many Jewish matters can be studied (in this context, religious observance in the parental home should also be taken into account). These matters include, among others, those listed below.

1. Preference for a specific branch of Judaism (such as the Orthodox, the Conservative, or the Reform movements).
2. Synagogue membership.
3. Frequency of synagogue attendance.
4. Sabbath observance.
5. Observance of specified holidays.
6. Kashruth.
7. Other ritual observances (specify).
8. Out-marriage of those surveyed or of specified family members.
9. Giving a Jewish education to one's children.
10. Membership and activity in Jewish organizations and institutions.
11. Donations to Jewish causes (in the country of residence and/or Israel).
12. Attitudes and opinions with regard to specified Jewish problems in the locality or country of residence.
13. Knowledge of Hebrew, Yiddish or Ladino.
14. Reading of Jewish literature and press.
15. Interest in current Jewish problems (outside Israel).
16. Attitude toward Israel.
17. Family ties with Israelis.
18. Visits to Israel.
19. Intent of those surveyed or of specified family members to go on aliyah.