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**FINLAND AND ISRAEL: A COMPARATIVE  
ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

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international relations and diplomacy**

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## CONCEPTUAL MARKINGS OF THE RESEARCH

**Actuality and importance of the topic addressed.** Educational policy in developed countries around the world, among others in Israel, expresses a system of values and norms formulated by government in partnership with local society, and that determines organizational norms and doctrines and devises procedures and framework to realize them. The role of the state in devising an optimal education policy and desired image in formulating individuals' identity in society, will be expressed by defining the aims of the overall education system. International comparisons of learning achievements are a politically and socially charged field awakening strong public debate in many countries. The scope and power of this debate grows the lower the country's place on the table of international achievements. None of the countries participating in various tests are satisfied with their students' achievements, even in those countries where achievements are top of the list, for example Finland, Singapore, and other countries. The power and scope of debate increase even more when government, and society, are aware of a low score in the table, without any success of making changes that will improve and show strategic outcomes over years. Therefore, decision makers, both doctrinally-professionally and government-legislation wise, search solutions that will leverage budgets and investments in favor of advancing students in all local education systems. Israeli government has been debating for years about the right way of leveraging students' achievements, but without much success. The contribution of a change in perceptions of education policy will allow both improvement in local systems, together with developing international relations with other countries. Analysis of the abilities and strengths of the Israeli education system, shows there are both organizational values and exploiting personality ability that can contribute to other countries. Hence, this study's relevance focuses on efforts and action to change overall educational policy starting with perceptual changes of paradigms about desired education policy in Israel .

**The purpose and objectives of the research** focus on examining and analyzing the educational system of both countries: Israel and Finland, on evaluating the mechanisms, advantages and disadvantages of each system. All this to assess the significance of the success of the Finnish system, its impact on society and the economy, and especially for the adaptation of the young generation to the competitive requirements of the 21st century. **The purpose** of the investigation can be achieved by satisfying the objectives related to four main factors: the status of education in the country, the educational policy, the status of the teacher and the curricula, which prepare the learner for the 21st century. The goal will be achieved only when the following **objectives** are satisfied: analysis of the ideology, political considerations and politics underlying the conduct and national priority in Finland and Israel; knowledge of the structure of the educational service in both countries; identifying the components of the educational policy in the management strategy, the management style, the level of autonomy granted to officials; revision and definition of the status of the teaching profession; evaluation of teaching quality, analysis of evaluation processes, selection and continuous training of teaching staff, interpretation of the characteristics of the prerequisites for integration in professional fields according to the requirements of the 21st century; analysis of decision-making processes and curriculum selection

considerations in both countries; analysis of the characteristics of the curriculum that fits the development of skills and abilities adapted to the present moment.

**Research hypothesis.** There is an interconnection between the research variables that include educational policies expressed in the education statute in Israel and Finland, and management policies, curriculum paradigms, managerial autonomy for decision-making and process application. The author assumes, that the success of the educational system in Israel depends on proper regulation, professionally directed, without political and budgetary pressures and shocks.

The study focuses on the comparative analysis of the Israeli and Finnish education systems, with the intention of mutual fertilization of different approaches to the organizational structure of education systems, achievement evaluation, teaching staff development and curriculum development. In chapter 3, specific reference is made to the procedural policy of the educational system in the Republic of Moldova adopted by the Moldovan administration to improve the education system and strengthen the human, economic and national capacity to deal with the brain drain, improving, at the same time, the competitiveness of higher education in the conditions of internationalization.

The policies of the education system of the countries in the 21st century is a public issue that concerns the world of research for two decades. The educational systems of Finland and Israel appear to be "opposites", but nevertheless they can be analyzed with the same tools and evaluated based on the same indices. The researcher performs a comparative analysis of the strategic policy in the educational systems of Finland and the State of Israel, from the perspective of the possibilities of application in practice.

**The theoretical-methodological basis.** In the process of researching the educational policy in Israel and Finland, reliable sources from each country were also used: the Central Bureau of Statistics, Almog Barkat & Dan [2], Ben David [4], Carlitz & Keshet [6], Dagan- Buzaglo[7], Fox et al [9] – Israel; Statistics Finland, Merilainen et al [43], Aho et al [23], Tanner [55], Morgan [45], Leijola [40], Saloviita [52] and Sahlberg [15]. To learn from the high-performing educational systems in the world, the author used the experience of Great Britain, the USA, Canada, China, Singapore, but also of the Republic of Moldova: Yuan [56]; Zhu [57]; Tanner [55]; Ramírez et al [53]; Ochs & Phillips [48]; Mundy [46]; Liang et al [42], Anatolii Grimalschi [38], Putină N.[50] and many others. In the last part of the thesis, in order to provide optional solutions in the research problem, I searched for examples of coping that are similar or close to the current research problem. Information analysis, methodology applied from the following sources: global policies, strategies, trends and processes in the field of education and their analysis by international researchers in the field, such as Adamali et al [22], Dervin et al [30], Eyal [8], Dagan-Buzaglo [7], Carmoy [26], Brauch [24] and, Hogan et al [37], who supported from this perspective, education and training processes for the challenges of the 21st century. In order to have a comprehensive review of the changes in education systems and the adoption of teaching methods, the updating of learning contents and the budgeting of educational systems, the researcher used the works of Burbules et al [25], Takayama [52], Dale [28] and Adam [21]. In analyzing the issues regarding the necessary correlations

between the state and the educational system, the author referred to the works of Fullan [32], Hay [36], Schriewer & Martinez [51].

**The scientific-theoretical support.** Information analysis, methodology applied from the following sources: global policies, strategies, trends and processes in the field of education and their analysis by international researchers in the field, such as Adamali et al [22], Dervin et al [30], Eyal [8], Dagan-Buzaglo [7], Carmoy [26], Brauch [24] and, Hogan et al [37], who supported from this perspective, education and training processes for the challenges of the 21st century. In order to have a comprehensive review of the changes in education systems and the adoption of teaching methods, the updating of learning contents and the budgeting of educational systems, the researcher used the works of Burbules et al [25], Takayama [54], Dale [28] and Adam [21]. In analyzing the issues regarding the necessary correlations between the state and the educational system, the author referred to the works of Fullan [32], Hay [36], Schriewer & Martinez [53]. The initial thesis, placed at the base of the research, is: every country that wants to maintain a competitive line in relation to its neighbors, near and far, must establish an orderly and innovative educational policy that satisfies economic, occupational, industrial needs, technology of all citizens, even from the maintenance system of employees and officials. Mundy [46], but also Resnik [14], Adam [21] and others are some of the researchers and experts who interpret the global dynamics caused by globalization and its influence on policy lines. These scholars and others connect globalization with educational flows and educational policy. Educational policy, influences, streams in education and definitions are presented by two main educational directions. The first is meritocracy in education, and its source provides a socio-political vision in which those with power are elected or appointed to their roles based on their ability. States therefore decree, through their educational systems, the cultivation of the skills of individuals so that they can fill the roles necessary to lead their states and civil areas. The second approach is constructivism (or knowledge structuring), which argues that every mental activity is based on the construction of knowledge and skills. Daun [29, p.7] summarized that constructivism (in education) is a theory that explains how knowledge is acquired [29, p.7]. It emphasizes the role of students in learning processes and encourages active learning. Learning takes place through a process, which by structuring knowledge educates learners to take responsibility for it. The author argues that both approaches are important and their integration into educational systems is recommended. The experience accumulated in the 27 years dedicated to the education system allows the author to justify the thesis multiple times: the education system is required to integrate both the belief in the abilities of the learners and the need to "build knowledge" to develop their abilities. Dale [28] argues that education reforms are the highest priority of most countries, but despite the large increase in education spending (according to UNESCO, in 2019 world education spending was 2 trillion USD) and despite ambitious efforts to change, performance in many education systems has hardly changed in recent decades.

**Research methodology.** The application of comparative analysis in the research of education systems between different countries leads us to the understanding of interdisciplinarity. Thus, the author decided to use various techniques and scientific methods adapted to one of them. First, the literature review chapter reviewed the

theories, models, advantages and disadvantages of national educational paradigms worldwide, all influenced and connected to globalization. From the policy lines, the author decided to focus on four main ones, which represent the research variables. In the investigation process, the author used: quantitative comparison, analysis and synthesis of research results, periodical reports, analysis of studies, carried out at the national level by the governments of Israel and Finland; monographs and articles, signed by researchers and opinion leaders; analyzing statistical data and using the inductive approach to infer from one datum to all other data. In addition, the author added a quantitative survey questionnaire to illustrate the situation of Israeli education employees regarding the research variables in order to have additional opinions to confirm or refute the research findings. The questionnaire was distributed to 156 educational teams in various teaching, leadership and supervisory roles.

**The scientific novelty of the obtained results** emerges from the main objective of the investigation to connect the education system in Israel to the requirements and conditions of the 21st century. The selected variables are: a) the status of education in the economic-social context, b) evaluation and testing methods in the education system, c) adapting the curriculum to the 21st century, d) the status of the teacher and his training course. Trends, legislation, policy and influences in each country were analyzed interdisciplinary for each variable. In this context, the experiences of the states that have overcome the subsistence state and aligned themselves with the developed states are presented. The author mentions that about 50 years ago, Singapore, Canada and Finland had failed education systems. Finland had one of the weakest economies in Europe and Singapore was going through a war. Currently, they are some of the most prominent educational powers in the world, as educational reform and strategies aimed at: 1) adapting the learning environment to the demands of the 21st century (emphasizing vocational, technical and mathematical education); (2) increasing the number of graduates of the education system (primary, secondary and university); (3) teaching staff training and teaching quality improvement; (4) improving the relative position in international tests.

Based on the analysis of positive experiences, the author notes that some countries put the issue of education in the list of national priorities, but do not really act to shape the culture of the country through the values of education, both of the individual and of the nation. The educational policies of Israel and Finland are reviewed and analyzed to identify the particularities of each system and to find solutions for the development of the Israeli system. The strength of the education system and its ability to perform come primarily from the legislation that regulates it. The complexity of Israeli society and its diverse human texture is reflected in the education system. From the analysis of the policy lines of the two countries, the author understands that they refer to a substantially different role of the education system. In the article: "The comparative advantages of the internationalized education system" the author describes the difference in the status and role of education. The link between the systems, the synchronization of the curriculum and the cultural aspect of the student's development are notable in the general assessment policy and student testing methods in Finland. Emphasis on developing independent thinking in social and personal contexts is replacing numerical assessment in Israel. As part of the cultural and socio-

political strategy, Finns invest a lot in the development of human quality as a citizen and the value of equality for all, and therefore create an open and egalitarian society that contributes to the development of the local economy. This spirit of thinking and perception leads them to adopt a more empathetic evaluation policy that includes long-term thinking and focus. It is a proven political direction in international tests. The relevance of the doctoral thesis in political sciences is also supported by the brief analysis of the education system in the Republic of Moldova, especially the "Moldova 2030" Program, in which the administration and program managers support the thesis, according to which strengthening the status of education will contribute to sustainable economic development and national resilience, and its social implications will boost employment. The reform of education and training in the Republic of Moldova began with a systemic approach to the training structure, which highlights the following age groups: (1) primary education; (2) secondary school; (3) high school; (4) professional, vocational education; (5) higher education. The quality of teaching power is also emphasized (figure 3.4) in the thesis.

**The theoretical importance and the applied value of the work.** Based on the content analysis of several scientific works, in which the requirements of the 21st century towards education and the education system are exposed, the author emphasizes that in the last two decades processes are attested worldwide, which accentuate the global trend in all areas of social life- political. They influence the economy, society, state administration, culture, customs and even the daily life of all inhabitants. The characteristic, the definition of some notions, phrases such as: globalization, the correlation between educational policy and the economy, the presentation and evaluation of policies and strategies for the development of the economy and education, etc. - constitutes the author's contribution to the development of contemporary political theory. The author develops the idea of Adamali, Cffev & Safdar [22] noting that reform or strategic change in the world of education or in the educational institution is a complex process. Its success or failure depends on the "interplay" of the characteristics of the change and the educational environment they seek to change. On the other hand, it depends on the interaction between the educational field and the local government, responsible for setting the policy.

**The structure and volume of the thesis.** The work consists of an introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography with 275 sources, 9 tables, 24 figures and 12 appendices. The volume of the work is 173 pages of basic text.

**Approval of results.** The conclusions of the investigation were presented in a chapter of the collective monograph "The interconnections of social integration and the strengthening of the national security system", in 8 articles published in scientific journals from the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Israel, in 9 articles published in collections, edited on the basis international scientific-practical conferences from Moldova.

## THESIS CONTENT

The introduction includes the relevance of the topic, aims, objectives and hypothesis of the research. The author defines and justifies the application of the research methods, appreciates the relevance of the research results for solving the highlighted problem.



**First chapter** title is *EDUCATIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGY, TRENDS AND PROCESSES* and it engages with description of trends, policy lines and educational strategy in globalization era. The researcher indicates that during the last two decades powerful worldwide processes are happening and sharpen the global trend in all life and state fields. These processes influence the economy, the society, the state administration, the culture and the customs, and even the daily life of all residents [25]. Within this chapter, terms as globalization, correlation between educational policy and economy, and presentation of policy and strategies for economy and education development are characterized and defined. Among the researchers and thinkers, we may find the publication of Daun [29] who claims that globalization is characterized by openness and removing political boundaries, and it allows fast transition of services and products, human and financial capital, movement of population information and ideas between countries [25]. Flood [31] believes that this is how globalization creates a more uniform human society, where societies, cultures and countries are combined and more dependent on each other. Ochs [47, 326 p.] even adds that countries, communities, economic companies and also individuals from all over the world have created tight connections with each other; economies, cultures and political movements are integrated; and people behave as if the whole world is one unit. Therefore, some call today's world a "global village" [52]. Mundy [45, 4 p.] refers to the economic aspect and explains that the very movement of capital, products, people and ideas creates a kind of reality design of global geography, of human activity, and poses new challenges to the individual in his relations with the community and with his country. Therefore, every country that wants to maintain a competitive line in relation to its neighbors, near and far, must establish orderly and innovative educational policy, which make the state economic – occupational – industrial and of course technological needs even with the system feeding the employees and officials, which is the education system. Mundy [45], Resnik [14], Adam [21] and others are some of the researchers and experts that their researches and definitions are presented, and interpret the worldwide dynamics globalization caused and the influence on policy lines. These researchers, and others, connect globalization with education streams and educational policy.

Educational polity, influences, streams in education and definitions are characterized by two main educational streams. The first is meritocracy in education, and its source is a socio-political view in which those with power are chosen or appointed to their roles on the basis of their ability. Therefore, states decree, through their educational systems, nurturing individuals' abilities so that they can man the roles needed to lead states and their civil areas. The second approach is constructivism (or structuring knowledge), in which it is argued that every mental activity is based on building knowledge and abilities. Daun [29, 7 p.] summarized that constructivism (in education) is an educational theory explaining how knowledge is acquired. This theory emphasizes the part of learners in the learning processes and encourages active learning. Learning occurs through a process of doing, by structuring knowledge and learners' responsibility for this knowledge. The researcher seeks to conclude that both approaches are important and it is recommended to integrate them both in educational systems. The researcher, from her 27 years' experience in the education system, can

refer to tens of cases in which the system is required to integrate both belief in learners' abilities, and the need to 'build knowledge' to advance their abilities.

Dale [28] claimed that reforms in education are at most countries' top priority, but despite the great increase in education expenditure (according to UNESCO, in 2019 world expenditure for education was 2 trillion USD), and despite ambitious change efforts, the performance on many education systems have almost did not change for many decades. **Adamali, Cffev & Safdar [22] seeks to clear that reform or strategic change in education world or in educational institution is a very complex process. Its success or failure depends on the "mutual play" of the change characteristics and the educational environment they want to change.** On the other hand, it depends on the interaction between the whole educational "field" and the local government, which is responsible for setting the policy. small and large countries made strategic changes in their educational space as a result of economic social insights, that its reasons related to the previous chapter subject – globalization influences. About 50 years ago, Singapore, Canada, and Finland had failing education systems. Finland had one of the weakest economies in Europe and Singapore suffered from an ongoing civil war. Today, these are some of the most prominent education powers in the world.

Fullan [31] add that education and culture status in every country is a result of strategic policy rooted in culture. Brauch [24] notes in his article that some countries do put education issue at their national top priority, but do not really act to shape the country's culture by the education values, both of the individual and the nation. The chapter presents the successful way of Singapore that has founded a program called "thinking schools, learning nation", that was aimed to prepare the education system to the 21st century. among the main goals set: (1) adjusting the learning environment to the qualities required in the 21st century (emphasizing vocational, technical and mathematical education); (2) increasing the number of the education system graduates (elementary, secondary and university); (3) training teaching employees and improving teaching quality; (4) improving Singapore's relative position in international tests [51]. The five-year national plan showed it is necessary to have a significant change regarding teaching manpower issue. Later in the chapter are also presented the models applied in Canada and in China.

The **second part** of the chapter referred to educational policy, definitions, streams, and influences. This section discussed the **issues of educational policy and the educational establishment interaction with the state**. Takayama [52] looked at the educational policy design as a tool for political implementation, enabled by conveying messages that ultimately create the public thoughts and social qualities. On the contrary Carmoy [26] claims that countries' education policy expresses the value system and norms formed by the society regarding the way its leaders see the next citizen generation. This policy will usually determine the arrangements, procedures, norms, and frameworks to realize education ideas and perceptions as policy leaders set [19, 7 p.]. The debate scope and intensity increase the lower the country is ranked in the international achievement table. Therefore, the researcher asks *what is educational policy?*

The educational policies of Israel and Finland are reviewed and analyzed in this thesis in order to identify the unique characteristics of each system, and in order to pull the Israeli system forward from its present status [16]. The education system

power and its performing ability stem first and foremost from the legislation regulating the education system. Israeli society complexity and its diverse human texture are reflected in its education system. The education system heterogeneity is expressed in various layers in the system structure and budget and the existence of many education systems types adjusted to the various sectors.

The methodology of this section first reviews the **educational policy in Israel** and then in Finland. First the educational system structure in Israel, its layers and structural characteristics are reviewed. Education layers, which was defined since the state establishment and continue, with minor correction, until now, are acceptable in Israel. These system layers include education institutes by "age section", namely by education stage. According to the Ministry of Education [12; 43], within the Israeli system division by ages there are four education stages: a. pre-elementary education, b. elementary education, c. secondary education: junior high and high schools (7th to 12th grades), d. post-secondary education and higher education – tertiary (academic higher education, vocational training). additional layer is by legal status.

The **policy and education system in Finland** are objectively reviewed, with little criticism, and its advantages and disadvantages are presented. The national policy leads long year strategy with several political – theoretical – philosophical schools that are applied in all life areas, but especially in the educational policy [23]. The idea of governmental responsibility for the system is expressed in public funding system for all the education system financial needs. the responsibility for "providing" education, buildings and funding is divided between the state and the local authorities or other education suppliers. This social value is expressed in full inclusion of all resident, immigrant and citizen populations regardless their gender, sector or religion. The education goal for immigrants is identical to the goal for residents – equality, bilingualism and multiculturalism. The system is built in a manner that education institute network covers the whole country. All students can register to study in high school, university or vocation education institutes all over the country.

The **second chapter** title is ***EDUCATIONAL POLICY ANALYZES IN ISRAEL AND FINLAND***. The current research theme focuses on the comparison between Finland and Israel. On one side of the comparison model, Finland operates advanced education system, for about two decades, leads in international tests and known in its educational approach of innovation and developing advanced tools and models. Its investment products are shown in accompanying economic changes [42; 51]. it is compared to the Israeli educational system, that on one hand, is known for its technological and medical innovation, but on the other hand, its national and global status is in unprecedented low, and placed low in grade and reform scale of the OECD. On the second chapter the researcher selected four main comparison variables for the logic comparison analysis. These four were selected for being essential and central in similar comparative researches in other countries. The selected variables *are*: **a.** education status on economic – social context, **b.** evaluation and testing methods in the education system, **c.** adjusting curricula to the 21st century, **d.** teacher status and his training course. The trends, legislation, policy and influences in each country were analyzed in interdisciplinary manner for each variable.

**Finland – education status in economic – social context.** First the policy lines of governmental expenditure for education are analyzed in each country. It was found that in Finland the budgetary investment in education is large but not unprecedented. Table 2.1 (in the thesis) presents the data on a time line in 2010-2019 and present budgetary development mainly in investing in early age, but on the other hand there is a decrease in investing in vocational education and university research budgets. In addition, private expenditure for education is analyzed and found to be very low, up to minimal. Aho et al [23] explains it is because Finland works by a uniform policy line aimed to apply compulsory education for all citizens. In principle, non-formal education is also free and funded by local authorities that receive a government. Therefore, the family does not have to worry about a family and private budget, and except for minimal expenses, there will be no cost at all. According to the economic – statistic website <https://www.ceicdata.com/>, the private expenditure for the last 20 years is about 0.4% of the general expenditure percentage of education (including tertiary education – learning in higher education institutes). Figure 2.1 (in the thesis) brings a proof for this approach and shows that the investment in budgeting the education system in relation to the products is not big and even decrease since 2012. Later the **correlation between education and employment** is analyzed. In this section the researcher brings updated data, and the analysis shows that the employee percentage constantly increases since 2010 (with slight decrease in 2020 due to the COVID19 pandemic). According to Halinen & Jarvinen [33], Merilainen et al [42], and Hancock [34], it is because vocational training and training for occupational career are popular in Finland and attract wide variety of people in different ages to study. Young people who have graduated comprehensive school and study for their undergraduate degree as well as adults who are interested to update their skills and develop their ability to meet labor life, apply to vocational training and improve their ability to integrate the labor market. Today, 2021, 72% of all high school students (ISCED 3) in Finland study in vocational training and education, while in the OECD countries the parallel datum is 42%. This chapter also presents and analyses Finland's education system structure (figure 2.3 in the thesis). Such moves and an educational-occupational policy led Finland for many years to **high productivity level in the employment market and income factors to the state from exports** [30].

The idea is that product growth comprised of changes in the physical capital, the labor input, human capital inventory and total productivity. Fertility and productivity are effectiveness indices and may be defined as the "number of hours" a labor or equipment unit produce. Productivity is calculated as the ratio between the output and the labor input and capital investment. Until 2020 Finland was one of the most advanced countries in its productivity level, which indicates effective and updated education and training processes. Since the beginning of the COVID19 crisis, there is a real harm in this datum that continues until now. Finland's product growth in the coming years is expected to remain 1.14-1.15 [27].

**Israel – education status in economic – social context.** It is known for years that the national expenditure for education in Israel is one of the highest among OECD countries. In 2019 the national expenditure for education in education institutes in Israel was 7.2% of the product comparing to 5.6% in OECD countries, as in-

licated in the international comparison made by the Central Bureau of Statistics [27]. The public expenditure part in funding education expenses in Israel in 2019, without pre-school education, was 81%, comparing to the average of OECD [48] countries that was 83%. In light of Israel status in international tests, there is public pressure demanding to increase the investment in education in all parameters required to straight with the successful countries.

In order to compare uniform indicators, table 2.2 in the thesis presents similar data to table of Finland (2.1). in the Israeli case we see constant yearly increase, namely general increase in the education budget components, except for significant decrease in vocational education and academic education supporting. Except for these two budget items, all the components mostly increase every year (2010-2019). However, **the private expenditure for education in Israel** is considered very high comparing to Western world countries and the OECD countries. Schriewer & Martinez [51] explains the trend to be a result of the family economic power to privately support the student during all his studying and training years, and without teaching quality or products the family will personally support. This reality causes significant social gaps between communities in Israel, and the state, by not interfering with clear policy that reduces private education investment, perpetuates the growing gaps between populations and geographic areas. The private expenditure for education in Israel is on average of **23.5%** (the OECD average is 15.7% and in Finland is 0.4%).

Further, with regard to the *national expenditure on education in relation to the gross domestic product*, there is a consistent increase every year (last decade) as shown in Figure 2.5 (in the thesis). The State of Israel does not particularly spare its investment in education [43]. The education system's budget is the largest second to the security expenditure factor. The problem that arises, and which cast a shadow on the large financial investment in education is in the structures of the system. Figure 2.6 (thesis) shows the structure of the education system, and therein, following the researcher's analysis and that of other experts whose opinion is presented, lies the problem. The analysis and organizational-methodological structure show that in contrast to the Finnish system, which is made stages of education, that relate to and mainly continues each other in a synchronized, documented, controlled, and planned manner, the stages of education in Israel do not work this way. The system is divided into stages of education that have nothing to do with continuity. The systems are not contents coordinated, there is no construction for continuity to the next stage (except for certain issues in early childhood). There are no working relationships in tertiary education (between the vocational system and higher education, academic one). There is a process of perennial "repression" of vocational education, and this lack of proper management brings the system to its low scores. As for the productivity of the employment market and the state's income factors from exports, it was found that Israel is in a very low place in relation to the OECD countries, and with a huge gap from Finland .

The gap mainly stems from low skill level in Arab society and ultra-orthodox sector. The research results indicated, inter alia, that the product per capita in Israel, according to purchasing power parity, is lower in 9.5% than the product per capita in OECD countries, and the product per labor hour is also lower in about 23% than the OECD countries. in 2019 the product per labor hour in Israel in purchasing power

parity terms was 46.9 USD, lower in about 20% from the OECD average. According to Belikoff [3], a factor complex may explain the fertility gaps, especially the physical capital inventory, human capital, labor intensity, regulatory background conditions and industry structure. Before the COVID19, there were in Israel lower unemployment rates comparing to world countries (less than 4%) and the population in Israel was more educated comparing to other countries. However, on the contrary, Israel gets lower grades in employee skills.

A second variable examined in comparison is **comparative analysis and distinction with regard to assessment and testing**. Assessment methods and the examination process is a process of discovery that helps to promote student achievement and improve teaching processes, because it provides findings-based data and enables setting concrete goals for improvement. Good mapping, during, and especially after the process, will guide teachers and influence how lessons are planned, ways of teaching, content, and learning of different students in the classroom. This line of policy is clear to all those involved the teaching the students, whether they are adults, or young people. But for some reason, there is a difference, deriving from educational policy, between the two countries - Finland and Israel.

**Finland - ways of assessment and examination.** The policy of assessment and examination of results in Finland allows students perceptual autonomy and encouragement of creativity rather than placing students in a competitive race for numerical results and achievements [30]. This line of educational policy is reflected in the following characteristics: (A) The assessment process begins at an early age, but in a broader, inclusive, and enabling approach. Already in the elementary ages (kindergarten + elementary grades) one of the values applied and tested is encouraging students to shape their opinions. Therefore, the system will place due emphasis to the views of learners. Assessment and examination during these years will focus on promoting children's health and well-being. The policy in assessment processes is that the Finnish system treats the young learners as individuals (unlike the traditional assessment methods that quantify students with statistical measures of numerical score), and the attempt is to reach students' full potential. (B) In middle school in Finland, students do not register for national tests until the age of 16. Examination and assessment processes are carried out by the teaching staff (of the system) who determine the assessment methods based on the objectives set for their teaching subjects. The general policy line is that the Finnish education system does not aim student learning in basic education as preparing to the standard tests. Instead, teachers get general evaluation instructions and evaluate the students. the Finnish system also encourage the students to develop self-evaluation skills and develop their own measures foe progress. The common approach, as part of the comprehensive education policy, and as national guiding line, is that instead of test, the Finnish government goal is to "support student growth towards humanity and responsible moral membership in society and provide them the knowledge and skills required to life" [the Finnish education System]. however, Finland uses an annual to evaluate school learning result. These tests focus on mathematics, native language and literary subjects. additional disciplines as art and multiculturalism are added according to the Ministry's goals.

**Israel - evaluation and examination methods.** The evaluation process and ex-

amination methods in Israel had minor changes along the years but are still based on product – result [13]. This is the policy since the state's establishment. The COVID19 crisis has created "pressure bubble" or opportunity in the educational system, and now it is going through a change process that may fundamentally change the evaluation and examination methods [Weisblai]. By the common approach in Israeli system in the "achievement evaluation" issue there are two main different approaches: (a) The *qualitative approach*, by which the evaluation is perceived as evaluation for learning, known as "formative evaluation". (b) The *quantitative approach*, by which the evaluation is perceived as evaluation of learning, known as "summative evaluation".

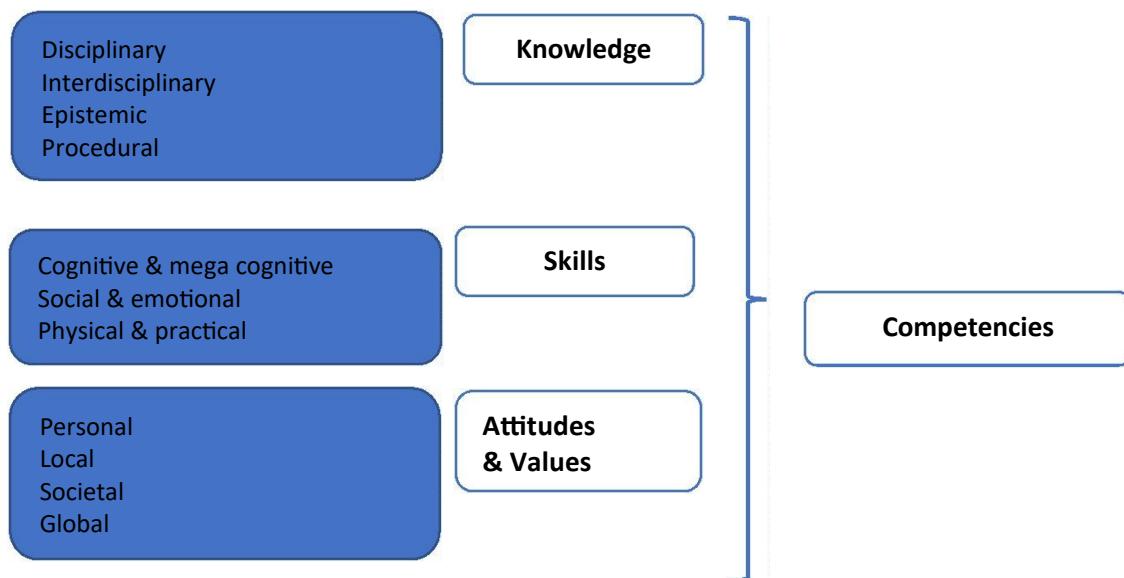
Although the education system in Israel combines the two approaches to a certain extent, it is afraid to give up on one of them [10, 16 p.]. Learners' assessment methods in Israel crystallize in a more numerical-quantitative direction as the years go by in the learning process, but from students' first year in an educational institution, they undergo a process of observing their emotional, motor, cognitive products, which are quantified into verbal assessment and numerical assessment (if improved along the timeline), and relative to peers in the organic group or in a statistical group. These ways of assessment will be reflected in each of the age stages in educational institutions: (1) Basic ages - Learners in Israel will be examined during their years in educational frameworks (kindergarten and elementary school) in almost every possible way. The teaching method is one that directs the teacher to examine the learning outcomes in order to produce maximum possible output in the timeline devoted to the subject being studied. (2) Middle and high school ages - methods of assessment and examination are similar to those of the basic ages, in accordance with the characteristics of the current age group. Then when they reach high school, there too they will undergo assessment and examination processes in accordance with the general policy guidelines that require numerical and verbal assessment nodes. As part of the assessment and examination processes, students will be tested through assignments, quizzes (short test), routine examinations, and finally also matriculation examinations [19; 4].

*Comparison discussion between the two countries.* The researcher understands from analyzing the two countries policy lines that the two countries refer substantially different role to the education system. The researcher article [7] "The comparative advantages of the internationalized education system" expresses the difference in education status and role. The connection between the systems, curricula synchronization and cultural aspect of learner development are very notable in the general policy of evaluation and testing methods of the Finnish learner. The emphasis on independent thinking development in social and personal contexts replaces the numerical evaluation in Israel. As part of cultural – social – political strategy, the Finnish invest a lot in developing man – citizen quality and in the value of equality to all, and therefore create open and egalitarian society that contribute in its wide base to local economy. This thinking and perception spirit leads them to take more empathic evaluation policy that include long-term thinking and emphasis. Policy direction that is proven in international tests.

**The third section**, entitled "*Comparative examination of curricula, training courses for 21<sup>st</sup> century*" analyzes the variable related to the comparison of curricula and the preparation of learners for the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This sub-chapter analyzes curriculum policies in both countries with regard to curricula guidelines, the

various subject-committees that construct and update curricula all in conjunction with programs offered worldwide such as the OECD Education Project 2030 [48].

**Finland.** The local education system directs the student mainly to exploit his abilities in order to shape his image as contributing person to himself and to his surroundings. The educational "climate" revolves social principles to which social-educational characteristics are added, such as equal rights, a subject that was analyzed earlier. According to Saloviita [50], a senior educator, the model for curricula development in Finland is based on responding several criteria: discipline literacy, skills development, and values education. Figure 1 shows the model principles and outline.



**Figure 1. Principles of education in Finland**

**Source:** made by the researcher [15]

Analysis of the model shows that curricula in Finland are driven by three main factors that include: constructing knowledge which is construction of cognitive abilities, improving skills and their current composition adapted to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and a system of personal and social values that will help learners integrate into society as factors contributing to self and environment (physical, organizational, ecological).

Analysis of policy lines, and examination and/or selection of curricula and skills, the issue of the relevant partners for developing the program is discussed. These partners are called "professional committees". The educational leadership in Finland understands that the applied curriculum has potential to significant impact by many stakeholders. Therefore, they select and involve different stakeholders even at the planning stage: academy factors, third sector organization specializing in education, factors from the educational field and the system's end customers – students and parents. Finland shares the idea of a national goal of preparation to labor market. Therefore, business sector and industry factors participate the study planning.

Another required stage is examination of the degree of curricula implementation compatibility to policy. Every year there is government supervision of curricula implementation, their success or failure, checkpoints, and the need for update or change (Ta-



ble 2.4 in the thesis). The State of Israel selects the subjects taught by a sub-department in the Ministry of Education called the Pedagogical Secretariat which is the highest pedagogical authority in the Ministry of Education [44]. By its authority, the secretariat is responsible for setting the Ministry's pedagogical curricular policy, as well as for defining all aspects and components (contents and pedagogy) in the areas of knowledge taught in the education system and supervising their teaching. One of the key components of the pedagogical secretariat's responsibility is determining the contents taught and the concept of teaching-learning-assessment in each knowledge area, for which it is responsible, the tangible expressions of which is a curriculum document, defining the goals, principles, contents and skills included in one subject matter in the education system, as well as the pedagogical guidelines addressing its teaching.

There is no actual evidence of stakeholders' involvement outside the Ministry of Education (except one member in each committee), and there is no transparent process indicating inter-ministerial openness (Ministry of Economy and Industry, Labor Branch, third sector parents) in determining curricula and consulting their implementation process. The emphasis is on the outcome aspect, and to that end, all systems are self-directed. These directions will be reflected in regulations, setting achievement goals, and especially the quantification of education in numerical products (grades, numerical assessments). Model-figure 2 presents the concept of developing curricula and skills in Israel.



**Figure 2. Key principles for the Israeli educational model**

**Source:** Made by the researcher [12]

Figure (2) reveals that there is gradual construction in stages and principles tailored to each age group, and three basic principles accompanying the curriculum, but in the researcher's view, the incomprehensible push to the result aspect at each stage causes significant damage, as it pushes teams to focus on grades and expected results and not on processes and the utilization of learner's differential abilities.

In the ensemble of partners for assembling curricula and choosing the strategy curricula production in the Israeli Ministry of Education have several partners headed by the "discipline supervisor". According to the Ministry of Education procedures, the coordinating supervisor in each discipline has to appoint the committee members and be assisted by them in setting the curricula and exams. Since he is the one who appoints the committee members, he can choose to appoint associates, or people he knows will not provoke much criticism. In fact, there is no representation of other

government ministries (economy, finance, industry, welfare, employment). The committee members who join are alone, and has no real ability to influence.

**The evaluation policy of the compatibility between the curricula and the implementation in Israel** is not regulated as a structured process within the Ministry of Education work [12]. In fact, the compatibility is not examined by the factors approving the curricula, and the control is performed by the Ministry of Education test division together with the educational system representatives in the geographic area (local authority / the Ministry of Education district). The Ministry of Education make regular control on all education institutes all over the country in order to supervise the implementation of the Ministry of Education instructions, the institute management routine, compliance with standards and proper use of allocated resources.

The last, fourth variable discussed is **comparative examination of teachers' status in educational system**. This variable addresses the professional status of the teacher and the teaching profession, a concept that refers to the social and professional prestige of teachers both as professionals in their own right and compared to other professionals. The status of a teacher and teaching profession as a whole is influenced by various variables, first and foremost the path to training that begins with preliminary requirements for undertaking the profession, the process of acquiring education and expected skills, all government inputs invested in the process, and what happens to teachers afterwards, work conditions and wages [10]. They will be joined by other factors of influence, such as a set of benefits related to the occupation, the degree of the professional field's influence on civil society, and more. Addressing the issue of teachers' status is not new. In fact, it seems that this issue has not been off the agenda in recent decades - in the media, in public discourse, in educational discourse, in academic research - in Israel and around the world [1].

For years, Finland has been known for the strategic line it takes regarding the obvious response to the issue of the teachers' status. In fact, the Finnish government recruits teachers at a particularly high academic level [20]. The analysis shows that the teaching profession is acquired by teachers in universities (and not in teaching colleges like those in Israel). The field of teaching accepts outstanding university graduates with a master's degree, is considered to be particularly sought after, and is ranked third in the level of demand to medicine and law. Until the reform in teacher education (which started in 1979), high school graduates could be integrated into teaching studies within the framework of the teachers' Seminaries. Since 1980 teacher education has changed. Over time, and owing to an orderly government program, teaching has become the second most sought-after profession after medicine, and many teachers aspire to a tertiary degree and persevere in the profession. The perception in Finland is that teaching should be a profession with a long-term lifespan, where people can grow to leadership positions and develop expertise in their field.

The thesis presents diverse opinions that criticize or justify ways of training in Finland, but the common denominator in all opinions is that the teaching process is committed to assessing the candidates' genuine abilities in order to "produce" quality teaching power that underpins the system's operation. In Israel the teacher professional status is a subject that engages policy makers in Israel, as well as in other countries for several decades. Several surveys that were published in the last years

indicate systematic and consistent harm in teacher and teaching status in Israel [8, 90 p.]. Teacher professional status preoccupies policy makers for many years due to economic, social and technological developments that undermine teacher status as a source of knowledge and authority and harm his ability to compete with other professions, both in terms of occupation attractiveness and the economic reward. Public and media "noises" have led to a reality where the number of unmanned teaching position is increasing year by year. On the one hand, the education system suffers from a lack of openings because of a differentially based policy of standards (socio-economic cluster and number of students), and on the other hand, a constant dropout of teachers from the system (as of the 2021-2022 school year). Teachers' status is ultimately concerned with its national positioning, and the status of education in general (the first variable for comparison). Therefore, we also see the pay gaps as they appear in table 2.6 (in the thesis), which shows the wage gaps between Finland and Israel in the four existing levels of education. The second chapter is summarized by the conclusions.

**The third chapter 'MODELS AND SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE EDUCATIONAL STRATEGY AND POLICY'** is concerned with the presentation of models and solutions whose purpose is to improve educational strategy and its necessary policy. At the start of this chapter, in the first sub-paragraph, successful and applied models from countries that had coped with similar issues in developing educational systems were presented. Reviewing models, emphasis was placed on how countries addressed those variables that researcher examined comparatively between Finland and Israel. Singapore, Moldova, Canada, and the U.S.A. were among those reviewed.

**Singapore** is considered to be one of the biggest Asian success stories, after it successfully developed in less than half a century (42 years) from a developing country into a modern, flourishing economy [54]. Singapore achieved this impressive economic development by putting on its national agenda the quality of education and successfully convincing its people and leadership of the right place of education, and its status as the key to a prosperous economy. Society in Singapore is multiethnic. English is the language of school teaching, workplaces, and government [48]. The strategic line of the successful model emphasized a number of core feature and principles, most of which are identical to the current study's variables. The first feature is *government spending on education*. In 2020, Singapore spent 3.6% of its gross domestic product on education, which constitutes 22% of government expenditure, the second largest after security expenditure [48, 392 p.]. The second feature is the structure and makeup of the system. The education system in Singapore is small with 526,000 pupils in approximately 360 school [41].

Since 1997, the Singapore Ministry of Education started to apply a strategic step called "*Thinking Schools, Learning Nation*", which was, primarily, preparing the educational system for the 21<sup>st</sup> century [41]. Among its main aims were: (1) Adapting learning spaces to qualities required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (with an emphasis on vocational, technical, and mathematical education); (2) Increasing the number of graduates from educational systems (elementary, secondary and university); (3) Training teaching personnel and improving the quality of teaching; (4) Improving Singapore's ranking in international tests. Singapore's innovative thinking framework for its system was created in 2004 by the local Ministry of Education. Three years later, in

2007 the program acquired the status of multiyear strategic plan [26]. Its innovative framework is made up of four separate, but interconnected components of a strategic vision: (1) vision for the entire nation; (2) vision for Singaporean education; (3) vision for educational change application; (4) vision for common structures – professional learning communities – essential to anchor changes in every school. Each component is fully applied by educational institutions, with quality control and regulatory processes ascertaining its existence [37]. Another country whose educational system develop model was explored was Canada.

**Canada** is a country whose educational system is very different in structure from many countries, and it is possible that its success story derives from this. According to Canadian law, the responsibility for education is the in the hands of each of its provinces, and they transfer a noticeable amount of authority to the field [45]. In contrast to Israel, in which the Ministry of Education is centralized and aggressive, Canada is a symbol of decentralized authority. Research conducted by OECD [48, 25] determined three possible criteria for Canada’s educational achievement success: Canadian culture, Canadian welfare policy and three specific factors in determining its policy: choosing teachers, equal funding, and curriculum. Educational reform existing in Canadian regions, including Alberta (2200 schools) was achieved through an agreement between its Ministry of Education and teachers' union, which testifies to an interesting direction: **reducing state involvement in individual educational demands and increasing teachers’ autonomy** [47, 326 p]. **At the center of this change learning and not teaching processes were emphasized.**

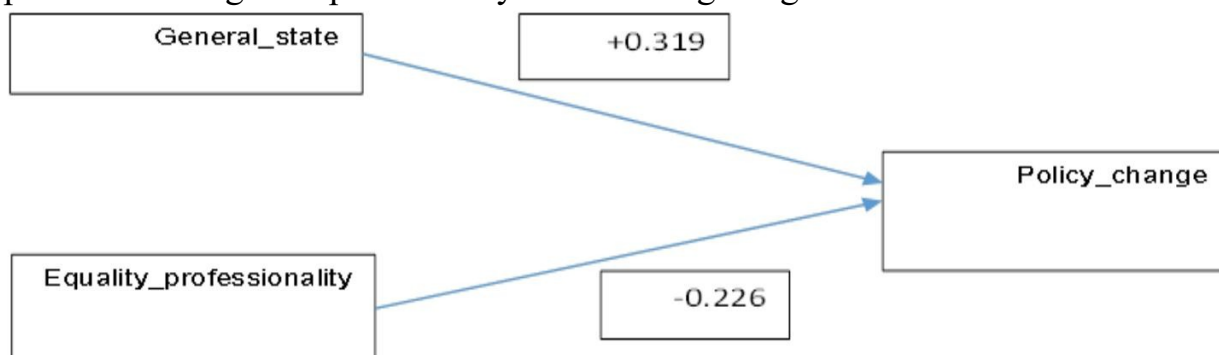
In other words, placing greater emphasis on developing skills in every knowledge area at the expense of reducing demands for content. The purpose was to strengthen **learning processes in schools to developing pupils’ skills and competences**, where knowledge acquisition occurs through developing and improving pupils’ competences. Despite existing decentralization features, when examining Canadian grade data, there are almost no gaps between geographical regions even though there is **no “head” Ministry of Education** managing regions. One of the explanations for this phenomenon is that the Canadian government, which attributes huge importance to education, and hence Canadian culture sanctifying learning and education. Another explanation for the system’s equality is the existence of a government ministry whose role is regulatory, to inspect and identify what is successful in various regions and share knowledge between them. The government ministry has the ability to compel its conclusions and create cooperation and balance between regions.

**Moldova.** Like other countries, which have understood the meaning of a firm and stable education system that has an educational vision derived from social-economic policy, Moldova has also chosen to connect to the Moldova 2030 program (figures 3.3, 3.5). within this program the administration acts to a national commitment for stages of education systems. The administration and the program planners are convinced that strengthening the education status will strengthen the economy and the national resilience and its social implications will incentive occupation. Therefore, the republic has begun with a systematic treatment in the training structure and built a new system that is based on the following age groups: (1) elementary edu-

education; (2) middle school; (3) high school; (4) vocational education; (5) higher education. The teaching power quality is also emphasized (figure 3.4) in the thesis).

The **U.S.A.** underwent a change with far reaching consequence in relation to its public education system in the 1990s. For the past 25 years or so, it has nurtured a strong public education system meeting the needs of all its populations. It is true there are differences between states, between educational streams, but the American government has succeeded in implementing a core program of contents and competences, while providing managerial independence and respecting every existing educational stream. The system's structure is similar to that in Israel in terms of age groups and division between elementary education, age in junior high school and high school studies. A summary of the benefits and strategic emphases in each country is presented in table 3.1 of the thesis.

In the second part of the third chapter, the researcher presented the results of quantitative research conducted with 158 participants in the field of education including teachers, inspectors, principals, and other role-holders in the Israeli education system. The purpose was to acquire an authentic picture of their perceptions and professional opinions of different research variables. Findings revealed an unequivocal picture confirming the research hypothesis and researcher's opinion that changing four research variables could indeed improve the state of the Israeli system. The model presented in Figure 3 presents key factors using a regression model.



**Figure 3. The main factors of change in educational paradigms in Israel**

Source: made by the researcher

The **regression model** revealed two factors linking teaching quality, content quality, teaching staff's quality and professionalism with general factors connecting government policy, status of education among decision-makers and funding investment, would lead to improved and changed policy. These findings upheld the researcher's hypothesis and led her to propose a paradigmatic change in education in Israel.

Later in the third chapter, the researcher presented a number of educational institutions that had adopted some of the thesis ideas, and together with their objective characteristics had produced a municipal flagship program or institutions representing municipal or institutional policy development leading the educational system to the same successful place and professional and social flourishing. Among these institutions was St. Joseph's school in Ramla. Ramla has been a leading municipal authority in education for many years. As a result of its population makeup (socio-economic makeup), the municipality understood years ago that the best way of addressing city problems was through education.

The researcher proposed her ideas to municipal education management, and it was decided to establish a municipal experiment at St. Joseph's school. The program has been in existence for two months (from the beginning of September 2021) and has had tremendous success and recognition from diverse stakeholders. In the City of Lod, where the researcher lives, the municipality decided to strengthen the status of education and thus has taken a number of steps including various programs at central junctions of municipal educational activity. All their actions, which are expressed in strengthening educational leadership and education staff, by nurturing respectful and personal dialogue in teacher-pupils' relationships and creating a unique learning environment inviting creative and activating teaching, in this framework, the city encourages and initiates diverse unique educational programs and initiative's.

From the literature review findings, comparative analysis conducted between Israel and Finland with regard to the research variables, an analysis of models existing in successful educational systems in other countries, and statistical research findings from research conducted on 158 Israeli educational system employees, the researcher proposes an organized program including innovation parts to respond to the variables examined and analyzed. Main details of the program will be presented in the Conclusion and recommendation chapter.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

### **Conclusions**

1. The State of Israel has been undergoing a constantly growing crisis in its education system for several years. The researcher, as a partner in the Ministry of Education's inspectorate team, has initiated a comparative study between Finland and Israel, the main point of which is an examination of the Ministry of education's educational strategy, and resulting policy outlines in the Ministry and educational institutions. For the benefit of the success and contribution of the research to the field and the world of science and theory, the editor decided to focus the comparative analysis on four key variables to guide the comparison. To get a comprehensive picture, the manifestations of the variables were also examined in Singapore, China, Canada and the USA, known for the improvement processes they have carried out in recent years, and today their education systems are very successful. The four variables are: status of education, ways of assessment and examination, learning contents and their adaptation to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the status of the teachers together with their training routes.
2. The educational policy in Israel and Finland, being appreciated based on the application of the comparative analysis, allowed us to ascertain the perceptual-substantial difference that presents a gap between two perceptions of the educational policy, translated into a national strategy and a work plan. Differences in educational policy guidelines and the general reference to the status of education are reflected in the structure of the system and the national approach to the budget. The differences are reflected in the interrelationship between the economic system of employment and the role of the local education system. Through a comparison of educational systems, the author establishes that the Israeli system is highly centralized, which conveys a lack of confidence in educational frameworks. All the "theoretical" fields of education in Israel are concentrated

in the hands of the "Pedagogical Secretariat" and it alone leads the development of learning contents. In contrast, the Finnish system features openness, delegation of authority and "territorial" participation in decision-making about the necessary pedagogy, including teacher evaluation and teaching processes.

3. The second variable examined refers to ways of examination and assessment employed in the education system. From an analysis of the findings, the editor concludes that Finland has designed a set of examination methods based on a structured and gradual "difficulty bar", which begins only at the elementary school years, and increases from that point on. The theory regarding the ways of examination is the desire of the system "to support the growth of students towards humanity and moral responsibility in society and provide them with the necessary knowledge and life skills." (According to Finnish Ministry of Education). Therefore, authority is delegated to the local educational body, which is most familiar with the target audience. Educational staff is given pedagogical independence that is under quality control, but not in the critical sense, but rather constructive control. In contrast, the Israeli approach concentrates on the process of quantifying (numerical) products and results. A process approach versus, a consequence approach (which in most cases is also immediate). These approach gaps are reflected in the results of international tests where Israel has huge, multi-year gaps, vis-à-vis Finland.

It is worth noting, and as part of the conclusions, that Israel's low results are due, among other things, to gaps between the populations of Israeli society. The Israeli establishment has not invested in promoting and nurturing minority populations, and therefore, over the years, gaps in knowledge and ability have been created which to this day affect the education system and hence the impact on the employment system, productivity at work and implications for the economy.

4. Finland operates according to the OECD Future of Education 2030 Project [48] and adheres to the strategy that accompanies its contents: literacy in the fields of knowledge, thinking and social-emotional skills, and education for values at the levels of society and individuals. The Finnish government directs curricula based on these content factors. Derived from this is the overall policy for updating or renewing contents, and the required teaching methods. The conclusion emerging from the summary of characteristics in Finland is that the country promotes educational innovation, equal and pluralistic organizational transparency in its approach to educational contents and the need to adapt learners to the requirements of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In contrast, the State of Israel has indeed embraced these principles, but has not translated them into any material changes. The system is still centralized, the curriculum remained as it was in the 1960s-1970s, as did the ways of examining and assessing learners. There is no meaningful nor purposeful discussion regarding changing / updating curricula. The strategy still remains adapted to the 1980s, and with the exception of "cosmetic" changes there was no perceptual change.
5. The fourth variable capitalizes on the status of teachers and the training process. In a deeper and interdisciplinary view of the teaching segment as a whole, the status of education subjects lies between the two cultures/states, and the budgetary policy of inequality, in relation to disadvantaged populations and the place of education on the public agenda and the media, prevails in the ways of examination, and their impact on the innovative updating - refreshing - of the curriculum, comes "as a

justification" for the low status of teachers. In Finland, the socio-economic status of teachers is high in society. Therefore, quality human capital is attracted to the teacher training bank, enabling meticulous screening processes that ultimately promote the best in teaching. In contrast, the status of teachers in Israel is at an all-time low (February 2022). The public's attitude towards teachers is shameful and scandalous and therefore the system hardly attracts the best candidates. A few candidates who are not suitable for teaching but attracted to the education system are enough. Thus, the Israeli system continues in a cycle of cause-and-effect pattern to this day, without any real effort or desire to change the situation.

6. The contents of the literature review together with the findings of the comparative analysis between the countries, and the presentation of the models and solutions given by other countries, lead the researcher the conclusion that the research hypothesis has been confirmed. These arguments are based on the fact that a direct and causal association has been found accompanied by the mutual effects between the research variables and proof of the difference between Finland and Israel. These effects include educational policy lines reflected in comparisons regarding the status of education in Israel (including budgetary implications), the policy of examination and assessment methods, paradigms regarding curricula and student preparation for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teacher status and training, and the state of the education system. In Israel. The educational establishment in Israel has reached a point where an overall perceptual change is needed - in order to develop an appropriate and innovative education system that will address the socio-economic challenges of Israeli residents in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Hence, these finding confirm the researcher's hypothesis and lead her to the proposal for changing the educational paradigm in Israel.
7. **The significance of the study for the Republic of Moldova is major. Based on the analysis of positive experiences, the author found that there are countries where the issue of education is included in the list of national priorities, but they do not really act to shape the culture of the country through the values of education, both of the individual and of the nation. In the last decade, the institutions of the Moldovan state adequately appreciate the role of the educational system in the sustainable development of society.**

### Recommendations

1. The researcher recommends an interdisciplinary regarding government ministries' involvement, not relying only on a Ministry of Education master plan, as was the case in previous years. The reason for this is that structural and perceptual reform will succeed only in the determining an orderly policy, over years, based on interdisciplinary treatment of all government systems, with the involvement of the business-industrial sector, and the third sector. The recommendations address each of the four study variables.
2. Regarding strengthening the status of education in Israel, the researcher recommends adhering to the following sections:
  - 2.1. Systemic treatment of excessive education – A reform is recommended pertaining to higher education training processes, and to provide a series of incentives directed towards of employment-adapted education. This will be



done by examining the average and median wage, as well as the acquired profession's employment positioning. Additionally, a 'behavior-directed policy' is recommended, pertaining to budgets and investments for populations that are known as less beneficial to the economy and society, such as demographically and ethnically weakened populations.

- 2.2. Recommendation to change tertiary education institutions budgeting model – The idea is to raise the value of relevant economy building education, rather than pursue a policy by which the contribution of many of the educated population are not productive, and thus the opposite step is taken.
  - 2.3. Multiple repeated investment in the vocational training system. At the same time as reducing subsidies for academic routes in professions at risk of unemployment, increased budgets should be directed to the vocational training system, in order to make it more attractive to relevant students.
  - 2.4. Re-establishment and increased establishment of vocational education within educational institutions in Israel while adapting it to the professions and especially skills required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This will be part of the required change also for updating and refreshing curricula.  
These and further steps, will strengthen the status of education and vocational training in Israel because they will create a new equation of socio-economic status, whereby on the one hand investing in the educational aspect and on the other hand, enjoying well-being and family.
3. The obvious emerging recommendation regarding assessment policy and methods of examination changes in educational institutions is aimed at varied, adapted to ways of teaching, and accompanied by constant feedback and student - teacher dialogue. This is most important for assessing achievements and receiving ongoing feedback on both teaching and learning. The researcher recommends the following steps:
    - 3.1. Assessment of achievements will be conducted throughout the learning process and will be called formative assessment, taking place while providing constant and detailed feedback to promote learning and improve teaching.
    - 3.2. Recommendation is to apply an innovative 'assessment for learning' process based on the following stages: (1) planning teaching and learning processes (2) setting assessment goals, (3) designing tasks and setting assessment criteria (4) assessing performance while producing formative feedback, (5) identifying strengths and weaknesses and replanning the process.
    - 3.3. As an outline for execution policy, the researcher proposes structured criteria for innovativeness in the world of content:
      - 3.1.1. Maintaining the connection between teaching, learning and assessment processes (throughout the school years, Kindergarten - University).
      - 3.1.2. Assessment will address learners' comprehension performance with regard to both the contents and in the area of thinking and learning skills
      - 3.1.3. Assessment will take place in the framework of an ongoing teacher-student dialogue to prove their ability and understanding of learnt material and the learning processes (including self-assessment and peer assessment).

4. The recommendation regarding innovativeness in curricula and preparing learners for the 21<sup>st</sup> century includes updates and innovativeness in learning contents, and here extra-educational factors are expressed, such as the Ministry of Economy and Industry, the business sector, and the third-social sector. There is no doubt that involvement of all stakeholders (government education - economy and employment - production and service sector) will lead to up-to-date products in everything regarding training human capital in Israel. This requires content policy program based on 3 main principles: (1) up-to-date and relevant literacy in knowledge areas and content knowledge (2) personal cognition and socio-emotional skills (3) Emphasis on education and social, community and individual values. Innovativeness is required in the following areas:
  - 4.1. Up-to-date and relevant literacy in the fields of knowledge areas and content knowledge: learning subjects will include innovations in the fields of arts, humanities, and social sciences with an emphasis on languages; emphasis on STEM subjects (technology, science, and mathematics); subjects in health and welfare fields (physical education, health education, religion, and ethics); subjects directed at the labor market. The researcher recommends interdisciplinary learning: in the context of innovativeness, it is proposed that the fields of study will base 21<sup>st</sup> century skills on integrative knowledge rather than on detached fields of knowledge.
  - 4.2. Skills in the field of personal cognition abilities, and in the socio-emotional field: (1) Significant abilities in the development of critical, independent, and creative thinking as well as on analysis and problem-solving skills. (2) Emphasizing different types of thinking. Imparting social and emotional skills contributes to an individual's ability to shape his or her personality and cope with a reality of uncertainty and frequent change.
  - 4.3. Teaching value-based knowledge and skills - it is therefore recommended integrating academic innovativeness to develop value abilities such as curiosity, initiative, determination, resolve and perseverance, both at the societal level such as tolerance for others, socio-cultural awareness, and ethics
  - 4.4. Project-based learning - Research programs - alternative grounds for the pedagogical process, which is more suitable for future challenges, is problem-based learning and students performing projects, while 21<sup>st</sup> century skills are acquired and practiced in the course of meeting project challenges.
5. Enhancing teachers' status in Israel is considered an urgent issue for change and improvement. The researcher understands from the findings that teacher status is a 'developing product' of standardization of the three previously analyzed variables. Recommendations for improvement include the following:
  - 5.1. Conceptualizing "teacher development" as a comprehensive systemic policy – recommendation is taking a different approach to teachers' development and creating policy that is orderly, binding, balanced and coordinated between recruiting quality candidates to the profession, training and absorbing them, their professional development, assessing and developing their professional path and ensuring they do not drop out of the system.

**5.2. Recommendation regarding building a profession in the field of teaching –**  
It is proposed that standards of taught subjects and contents be reformulated. Structural change in the structure of learning content in teaching routes. The thought is that such standards, which guide and condition the awarding a teaching certificate and teaching license, may guide teacher learning and affect the entry into the profession and perseverance. This policy will require budgetary commitment (teacher education institutions, Ministry of Economy and Industry) before enabling the development of such an innovation that shapes a new recruitment policy:

**5.2.1 Increasing teachers' supply and recruitment -** Strengthening the teaching profession requires reciprocity between standards, training, and support. The government must create a 'feasibility equation' regarding applications of candidates for teaching professions. Therefore, significant financial support is expected at the candidate selection stage. All candidates will receive the same quality training program.

**5.2.2 The training process -** Teacher training will continue until a master's degree is obtained prior to entering work. Furthermore, the process of obtaining a teaching certificate and license will be extended and accompanied by a program to significantly expand practical experience and deepens training for teaching heterogeneous student populations.

**5.2.3 Accompaniment during ongoing professional development -** The researcher recommends overall and comprehensive support whereby mentors who have received training at the training institution are recognized and rewarded on a promotion scale, and whose clear mission to support beginner teachers in their first two years of work.

**6. The improvement of the situation in the educational system of the Republic of Moldova can be ensured by the implementation of recommendations 1-5, by the capitalization of the good practices presented in the thesis. For each variable, analyzed in the thesis, in the Republic of Moldova there are difficulties, which can be overcome by achieving the objectives set out in the Education Code, in the Education Law, in the basic documents of the initiated Reform. We recommend respecting the continuity in promoting the values of each educational level.**

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## **LIST OF THESIS PUBLICATIONS.**

### **I.2. Collective monograph**

1. ROȘCA, S. **EL FAHEL, D.** Sistemul educațional din Finlanda: impact asupra dezvoltării durabile a societății, în *Interconexiunile integrării sociale și consolidarea sistemului național de securitate*. Monografie colectivă. Coord. L. Roșca.- Chișinău: AAP (tipogr. „Print-Caro”, 2022, - 436 pag. ISBN 978-9975-165-06-8, pp. 114-16.

### **II. Articles in scientific journal**

#### **II.2. In recognized foreign journals.**

2. **EL FAHEL, D., ROȘCA, L.** Caracteristicile sistemului educațional din Finlanda: impactul asupra vieții sociale, în *Relații internaționale Plus*, nr. 2(20), 2021. Pp. 9-22. ISSN 1857-4440.10.52327/1857-4440.2021.2(20).01.
3. **EL FAHEL, D., ROȘCA, L.** Characteristics of the finnish education system: impact on social life, în *Relații internaționale Plus*. nr. 2(20), 2021. Pp. 132-145. ISSN 1857-4440.10.52327/1857-4440.2021.2(20).15.
4. **EL FAHEL, D.** "We will not leave a child behind." The Wounded on the Battlefield". The intended meaning and concept, the response and the positive side in the comparison between the Finnish educational system and the Israeli educational system, în *ELARAB, economic – society*

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" لن تركز كالتد طفلا لفسد بكلرا" - لجرحى ا في ناديم مكعرملا "نعلم دقصوما موهفموا، تبستجالا بنلجاوا يبجايلإا"  
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5. **EL – FAHEL, D., SIROTA, J.** Teacher status in Israel, în *Administrarea Publică*, Nr. 2 (106), 2020. Pp. 132-138. Czu : 371.12(569.4). ISSN 1813-8489.10.5281/zenodo.3875074.
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7. **EL FAHEL, D., SIROTA, J.** Education policy in Finland, în *Preocupări contemporane ale științelor socio-umane*. Ediția 10, 5-6 decembrie 2019. Chișinău, "Print-Caro" SRL, 2020, Pp. 594-606. ISBN 978-9975-3371-7-5.
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### **II.3. In magazines from the National Register of professional magazines, indicating the category**

9. **EL FAHEL, D.** Structuring the curriculum of the educational system in Israel for the 21st century, în *Scientific Annals of the Academy "Stefan cel Mare" of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Moldova, Legal Sciences*, nr. 15, Chisinau: DEPARTAMENTUL ȘTIINȚĂ, Scientific Department 2022. Pp. 214-231. ISBN 978-9975-135-60-3 (Categorie B)
10. **EL-FAHEL, D, SIROTA, J** Equal opportunities in the educational sphere of Israel, în *EcoSoEn, Free International University of Moldova*, nr 1-2, 2019. Pp. 73-79. UDC: 37.06 JEL Classification: I21, I25. ISSN 2587--344X. Categorie B).

### **III. Articles in scientific collections.**

#### **III.1. In the proceedings of international scientific conferences (abroad).**

11. **EL FAHEL, D.** Appreciation of the purposes and objectives of education in modern political theory. In: *The Security Strategy of the European Union in the context of the Metamorphoses of International Relations*. Vol.2, April 22, 2022, Chisinau. Chisinau: Typogr. "Print-Caro", 2022. Pp. 258-268. ISBN 978-9975-56-873-9.
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13. **EL FAHEL, D.** Multiculturalism in Israel: educational policies, în *Contribuția tinerilor cercetători la dezvoltarea administrației publice*. Ediția a VII-a, 26 februarie 2021, Chișinău. Chișinău: Tipografia «Print-Caro», 2021. Pp. 98-101. ISBN 978-9975-3492-3-9.
14. **EL-FAHEL, D.** Incentives And Rewards for Teachers. The Case of Israeli Education System, în *Scientific Collection «InterConf», (47): with the Proceedings of the 2 nd International Scientific and Practical Conference «Experimental and Theoretical Research in Modern Science»* March 26-28, 2021. Chisinau, Moldova: Pp. 69-74. ISBN 978-5-368-01372-5.
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16. **EL-FAHEL, D., SIROTA, J.** Psychological service – part of the educational system in Israel, în *Performanța în educație: factor-cheie în asigurarea securității umane*. 9-10 octombrie 2020, Chișinău. Chișinău, Republica Moldova: Academia de Administrare Publică, 2020. Pp. 115-119. ISBN 978-9975-3492-0-8.
17. **EL-FAHEL, D., SIROTA, J., HAJAJRA, M.** Forming relationships in a multiculturalism Israeli system in order to resolve conflicts, în *Competitivitatea și inovarea în economia cunoașterii*. Ediția a 21-a , 27-28 septembrie 2019, Chișinău, Republica Moldova: Centrul Editorial-Poligrafic al ASEM, 2019. Pp. 342-345. ISBN 978-9975-75-968-7.



## ADNOTARE

la teza de doctor în științe politice: „**Finlanda și Israel: analiza comparată a politicii educaționale strategice**”, autor - **Dasman Al Fabel**, Chișinău, 2021.

**Structura tezei:** introducere, trei capitole, concluzii și recomandări, bibliografie cu 275 de surse, 9 tabele, 24 figuri și 12 anexe; 173 pagini de text de bază.

**Cuvinte cheie:** calitatea în educație, politica educațională, control pedagogic, dezvoltarea personalului didactic, strategie educațională, internaționalizare, sisteme educaționale, serviciu educațional, cooperare strategică.

**Domeniul de cercetare:** Teoria și metodologia relațiilor internaționale și a diplomației.

**Obiectivele cercetării sunt:** analiza ideologiei, a considerațiilor politice și a politicii care stau la baza conduitei și priorității naționale în Finlanda și Israel; identificarea componentelor politicii educaționale în strategia de conducere, stilul de management, nivelul de autonomie acordat funcționarilor; interpretarea caracteristicilor condițiilor prealabile pentru integrarea în domenii profesionale conform cerințelor secolului XXI.

**Scopul cercetării** se concentrează pe examinarea și analiza sistemului educațional a două țări - Israel și Finlanda, pe evaluarea mecanismelor, avantajelor și dezavantajelor fiecărui sistem, pe evaluarea semnificației succesului sistemului finlandez, impactul acestuia asupra societății și economiei și, mai ales, pentru adaptarea tinerei generații la cerințele de competențe ale secolului XXI.

**Noutatea științifică și originalitatea** constă în faptul că este pentru prima dată când se efectuează cercetări comparative între două sisteme naționale de învățământ, unde într-unul, cel al Israelului, există o dorință reală și un angajament real pentru schimbarea imediată și internalizarea metodelor inovatoare și abordare în sistemul educațional. În opinia autorului, pe de o parte, punctele forte existente în sistemul de învățământ israelian ar trebui consolidate, dar, pe de altă parte, este nevoie de adaptarea unei paradigme de management contemporane pentru a îndeplini obiectivele acestui studiu.

**Problema științifică** este redată de analiza factorilor politicii educaționale și a sinergiilor lor în consolidarea aportului la dezvoltarea economiei locale. Studiul aprofundat al diverselor aspecte a sistemului educațional, concluziile și recomandările autorului sunt orientate către îmbunătățirea politicii educaționale din Israel.

**Importanța teoretică** a tezei este justificată de aplicarea metodologiei științifice, bazată pe analiza multidimensională a politicii educaționale israeliene și finlandeze în vederea găsirii indicatorilor ce corelează politica educațională, accentul și procesele strategice din sistem și contribuția economico-ocupatională.

**Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării.** În baza cerințelor secolului XXI față de educație și sistemul de învățământ, autorul subliniază că în ultimele două decenii la nivel mondial sunt atestate procese, care accentuează tendința globală în toate domeniile vieții social-politice. Acestea influențează economia, societatea, administrația statului, cultura, obiceiurile și chiar viața cotidiană a tuturor locuitorilor. Caracteristica, definirea unor noțiuni, sintagme precum globalizarea, corelația dintre politica educațională și economie, prezentarea și evaluarea politicilor și strategiilor de dezvoltare a economiei și a educației etc. - constituie aportul autorului la dezvoltarea teoriei politice contemporane.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice** și-au găsit reflectarea în 17 articole publicate în reviste științifice din Republica Moldova, Israel, România și Materialele conferințelor științifice, dar și în comunicările din cadrul diverselor conferințe științifice naționale și internaționale.



## ANNOTATION

on the doctoral thesis in political sciences: "**Finland and Israel: comparative analysis of strategic educational policy**", author - **Dasman Al Fahel**, Chisinau, 2021.

**Structure of the thesis:** introduction, three chapters, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography with 275 sources, 9 tables, 24 figures and 12 appendices; 173 pages of basic text.

**Keywords:** quality in education, educational policy, pedagogical control, teaching staff development, educational strategy, internationalization, educational systems, educational service, strategic cooperation.

**Research field:** Theory and methodology of international relations and diplomacy. The objectives of the research are: to analyze the ideology, political considerations and politics underlying the conduct and national priority in Finland and Israel identifying the components of the educational policy in the management strategy, the management style, the level of autonomy granted to officials; interpreting the characteristics of the prerequisites for integration in professional fields according to the requirements of the 21st century.

**The purpose of the research is** to examine and analyze the educational system of two countries - Israel and Finland, to evaluate the mechanisms, advantages and disadvantages of each system, to evaluate the significance of the success of the Finnish system, its impact on society and the economy, and especially for the adaptation of the young generation to the skills requirements of the 21st century. The scientific novelty and originality lies in the fact that it is the first time that comparative research is carried out between two national education systems, where in one, that of Israel, there is a real desire and a real commitment to immediate change and the internalization of innovative methods and approach in the educational system. In the author's opinion, on the one hand, the existing strengths in the Israeli education system should be strengthened, but on the other hand, the adaptation of a contemporary management paradigm is needed to fulfill the objectives of this study.

**The scientific problem** is rendered by the analysis of educational policy factors and their synergy in strengthening the contribution to the development of the local economy. The in-depth study of various aspects of the educational system, the author's conclusions and recommendations are aimed at improving the educational policy in Israel.

**The theoretical importance** of the thesis is justified by the application of the scientific methodology, based on the multidimensional analysis of the Israeli and Finnish educational policy in order to find the indicators that correlate the educational policy, the emphasis and strategic processes in the system and the economic-occupational contribution.

**The applicative value of the work.** Based on the demands of the 21st century towards education and the education system, the author points out that in the last two decades worldwide processes are attested, which accentuate the global trend in all areas of social-political life. They influence the economy, society, state administration, culture, customs and even the daily life of all inhabitants. The characteristic, the definition of some notions, phrases such as globalization, the correlation between educational policy and the economy, the presentation and evaluation of policies and strategies for the development of the economy and education, etc. - constitutes the author's contribution to the development of contemporary political theory.

**The implementation of the scientific** results found their reflection in 17 articles published in scientific journals from the Republic of Moldova, Israel, Romania and the Materials of scientific conferences, but also in the communications of various national and international scientific conferences.

## АННОТАЦИЯ

к диссертации на соискание ученой степени кандидата политических наук  
**«Финляндия и Израиль: сравнительный анализ стратегической образовательной политики»**, автор - Дасман Аль Фахель, Кишинэу, 2023

**Структура диссертации:** введение, три главы, выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 275 источников, 9 таблиц, 24 рисунка и 12 приложений; 173 страницы основного текста.

**Ключевые слова:** качество образования, образовательная политика, педагогический контроль, развитие педагогических кадров, образовательная стратегия, интернационализация, образовательные системы, образовательная служба, стратегическое сотрудничество.

**Область научных интересов:** Теория и методология международных отношений и дипломатии. **Цель исследования:** анализ идеологии, политических соображений и политики, лежащих в основе поведения и национальных приоритетов в Финляндии и Израиле; знание структуры образовательной службы в обеих странах; выявление составляющих образовательной политики в стратегии управления, стиля управления, уровня автономии, предоставляемой должностным лицам; интерпретация особенностей предпосылок интеграции в профессиональные сферы в соответствии с требованиями 21 века.

**Задачи исследования** - изучить и проанализировать образовательную систему двух стран - Израиля и Финляндии, оценить механизмы, преимущества и недостатки каждой системы, оценить значимость успеха финской системы, ее влияние на общество и экономики, и особенно для адаптации молодого поколения к требованиям навыков 21-го века.

**Научная новизна и оригинальность** заключается в том, что впервые проводится сравнительное исследование между двумя национальными системами образования, где в одной, израильской, есть реальное желание и реальная приверженность немедленным изменениям и интернационализации инновационных методов и подходов в системе образования. По мнению автора, с одной стороны, существующие сильные стороны израильской системы образования следует укреплять, а с другой стороны, для выполнения задач настоящего исследования необходима адаптация современной парадигмы управления.

**Научная проблема** представлена анализом факторов образовательной политики и их синергии в усилении вклада в развитие местной экономики. Углубленное изучение различных аспектов системы образования, выводы и рекомендации автора направлены на совершенствование образовательной политики в Израиле.

**Теоретическая значимость** диссертации обосновывается применением научной методологии, основанной на многомерном анализе израильской и финской образовательной политики, с целью нахождения показателей, соотносящих образовательную политику, акценты и стратегические процессы в системе и хозяйственно-профессиональный вклад.

**Прикладное значение произведения.** Исходя из требований 21 века к образованию и системе образования, автор указывает, что в последние два десятилетия во всем мире отмечаются процессы, которые усиливают глобальную тенденцию во всех сферах общественно-политической жизни. Они влияют на экономику, общество, государственное управление, культуру, обычаи и даже повседневную жизнь всех жителей. Характеристика, определение некоторых понятий, словосочетаний, таких как глобализация, соотношение образовательной политики и экономики, представление и оценка политики и стратегии развития экономики и образования и др. - представляет собой вклад автора в развитие современной политической теории.

**Имплементация научных результатов** нашло свое отражение в 17 статьях, опубликованных в научных журналах Республики Молдова, Израиля, Румынии и в материалах научных конференций, а также в сообщениях различных национальных и международных научных конференций.

**DASMAN EL - FAHEL**

**FINLAND AND ISRAEL: A COMPARATIVE  
ANALYSIS OF STRATEGIC EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

**SPECIALIZATION: 562.01** – The theory and methodology of international relations and diplomacy

Summary of the doctoral thesis in political sciences

Rezumatul tezei de doctor în științe medicale

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