

BAR- ILAN UNIVERSITY

**Differences of School Performance According to Years in which
Internal and External Standard
Tests are Performed**

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Abstract

Nowadays, Israeli education system is gradually moving from being centralized to a decentralized one. This process is accelerated due to many other social processes that take place in Israeli modern society as well as in other countries in order to educate the future generation according to the future standards. (Sui-Chu Ho, 2006)

In the last two decades Israeli educative system encourages the development and foundation of schools that work according to the principles of local self-management. In accordance and cooperation with local educative authorities, the number of areas with free registration to school is increasing, which results in additional competition between schools. In spite of numerous advantages of school self-management system, there are some fears rising as for the level of teaching – learning process that will differ from school to school according to the local needs and will not stand the standards of the Ministry of Education. As a result, there is a need of use of a centralized educative core program (Fullan&Watson, 2000), doing centralized tests (like "Meitsav" tests), taking state final exams ("Bagrut" exams) and international exams. In addition, school teaching – learning process must be clear to the school society (students and their parents) as well. External Ministry tests in Math, Hebrew, Science and English (Meitsav Tests) are conducted in each Israeli school once in four years. Internal Ministry tests on the subjects mentioned above take place in all the schools every year, whereas the results are not transferred to the Ministry of Education but serve the internal school needs only. According to the figures and numbers that come from different places in different areas of the country, the school principals have to add extra lessons to the core subjects' schedule in case the school is tested externally in order to keep up with the Ministry standards. It can be done only by reducing the number of hours for the rest of the subjects. All said above proves that quite intensive teaching and learning takes place on the core subjects the years school is tested externally comparing to the years of internal testing. (Friedman,2005) Thus, the Ministry testing system and the standards themselves can be questioned a lot. The purpose of the present research work is to examine whether the diversion of resources really take place in schools on the years of external testing. Whether the whole teaching – learning process in schools on the years of external testing differ from the years of internal testing.