



Faculty of Education:

CHAIRS, CENTERS, INSTITUTES AND LABORATORIES

Advancing Research and Community Engagement

Dean of Faculty: Prof. Zehavit Gross



**Faculty of
Education**
Bar-Ilan University

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Table of Contents

alphabetic order

INTRODUCTION - DEAN SPEAKING	4
CHAIRS	9
Machado Research Chair on Cognitive Modifiability and Human Development	10
The Rabbi Dr. Ochs Chair for the Teaching of Jewish Religious Studies	14
UNESCO Burg Chair in Education for Human Values, Tolerance and Peace	16
CENTERS	19
Baker Research and Promotion Center for toddlers and children with developmental and intellectual disability	20
Da-Gan Center – The National Center for STEM Education in Preschool	24
Hadad Center – Learning Disabilities Diagnosis, Research, and Intervention Lab	28
HaLev Center for Simulation in Education	30
The Center for the Development and Support of Junior and High Schools Biology Laboratories	34
The Sal Van Gelder Center for Holocaust Research & Instruction	38
INSTITUTES	41
The Institute for Integration	42
LABORATORIES AND RESEARCH GROUPS	47
Autism, Research and Intervention Laboratory	48
Diversity, Culture & Leadership Research Team	51
Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice (EDS) LAB	54
Learning and Cognition Lab	57

Research and Innovation in Higher Education Lab	59
The Brain and Language Lab	63
The Center and Research Lab of Advanced Technologies for Children with Special Educational Needs	66
The Emotion Socialization and Neuroscience (ESN) Lab	68
The Harris Program for Infants, Toddlers and their Families	71
Trauma Coping and Growth lab	76
Virtual Reality Education Lab: Learning Beyond Imagination	82
Concluding Remarks	85

[Table of Contents >>](#)



INTRODUCTION - DEAN SPEAKING



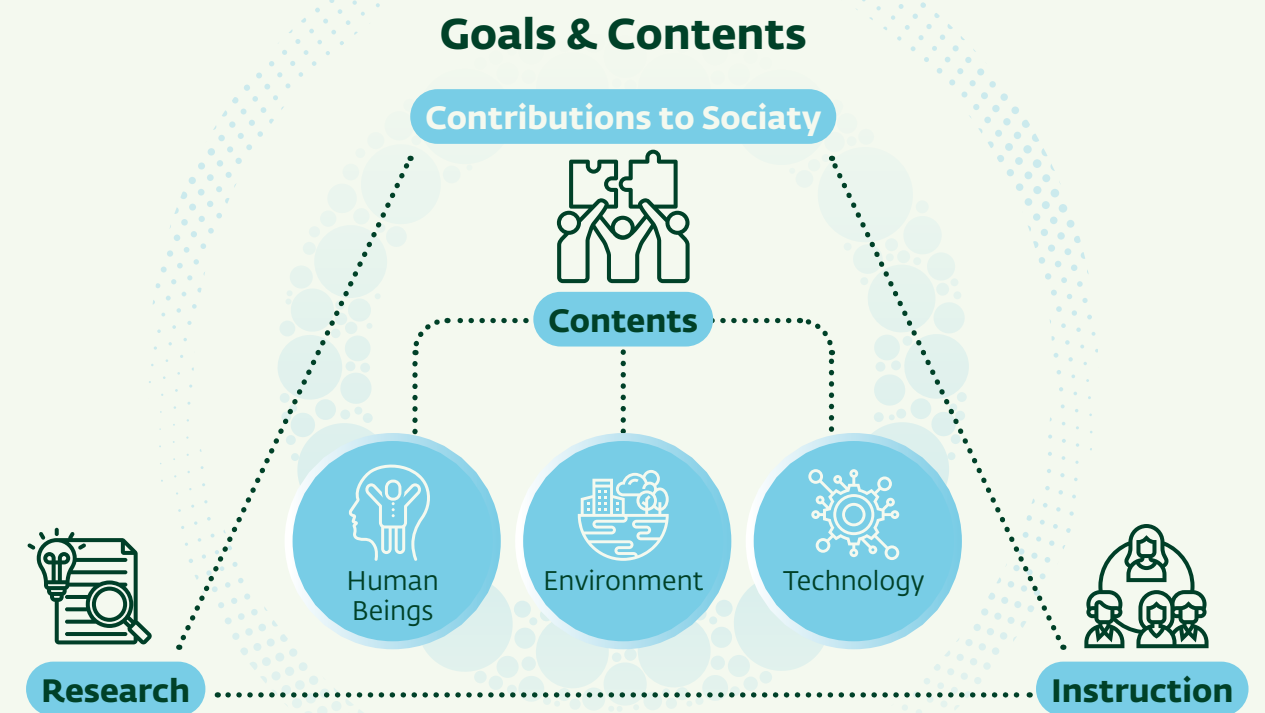
Prof. Zehavit Gross

Prof. Zehavit Gross,
Dean, Faculty of Education, Bar-Ilan University

This catalog summarizes the scientific activities of the Faculty of Education at Bar Ilan University, as expressed through the work of its chairs, research centers, institutes, and laboratories. After many years of work, I felt that the time had come, as Dean of Faculty, to reorganize the functioning of the academic chairs and align them with the faculty's vision, goals, and the core themes that we, as researchers, engage with in our scientific work.

Higher education has three main goals: research, teaching, and community contribution. Upon taking on the role of Dean, I decided to change the order of priorities: **the primary goal is community contribution, the second is research, and the third is teaching.** I believe that by emphasizing community engagement, our research will become more relevant, and our teaching will be more adaptive.

Three central themes occupy the faculty: the relationship to human beings, the environment, and technology. These themes represent some of the most significant educational challenges of the 21st century, and they are addressed through the faculty's chairs, centers, institutes, and research labs, which are aligned with the latest knowledge and developments in the field.



1. Relationship to Human Beings:

Focusing on people involves exploring the psychological, social, and cultural aspects that shape our lives. Modern scientific and psychological advances provide deeper insights into human behavior, cognitive and emotional development, and social needs. Education in this context seeks to foster empathy, respect, and tolerance for all individuals, recognizing their intrinsic worth and rights. It emphasizes the connections between individuals, communities, and social systems, and aims to nurture teamwork, conflict resolution, and healthy interpersonal relationships.



2. Relationship to the Environment:

Sustainability and environmental responsibility have become more critical than ever in light of global climate challenges. Environmental education in the 21st century is not just about ecological knowledge; it also involves embedding behavioral principles and promoting personal and collective responsibility for preserving our planet. The faculty strives to equip students with a deep understanding of the ecological system and address moral questions related to resource use, overconsumption, and environmental impact. The goal is to encourage sustainable and socially responsible lifestyles, with a concern for our shared future.



3. Relationship to Technology:

Technology is a driving force of the 21st century, rapidly transforming how we live, work, and learn. It holds immense potential to enhance quality of life and accessibility to knowledge and resources. However, it also presents significant

ethical challenges such as privacy, dependency, and digital divides. Education in this era aims to develop critical thinking regarding technology, understanding its potential and risks, and promoting responsible innovation. Additionally, it addresses the implications of automation and artificial intelligence on the labor market and the need to adapt to rapid technological changes.

In essence, these three themes reflect the need for holistic education, which integrates human understanding, environmental awareness, and the ability to thoughtfully and responsibly engage with advanced technologies. This approach prepares the next generation not only for the world of tomorrow but also for the challenges of today.

The chairs, institutes, centers, and research labs of the Faculty of Education play a pivotal role in developing and embedding these three core themes in the following ways:



1. Relationship to Human Beings:

- **Research in Psychology and Education:** Chairs & labs focus on human development, psychology, and social sciences lead studies on improving mental well-being, developing socio-emotional skills, and coping with modern-day challenges. Research sheds light on issues such as fostering empathy, conflict resolution, and social integration.
- **Educational Community Projects:** Creating innovative educational programs that incorporate values of tolerance, acceptance, and collaboration within the community. Research institutes develop educational models focusing on personal development, social leadership training, and ways to nurture positive community relations.



2. Relationship to the Environment:

- **Research in Sustainability and Ecology:** Research institutes examine the impact of human behavior on the environment, develop new green technologies, and promote sustainable living models. They focus on measuring and assessing environmental impacts on individual and societal values and education.
- **Collaborations with External Bodies:** Chairs, institutes, centers, and laboratories collaborate with environmental organizations, industrial companies, and government bodies to develop better environmental policies and implement educational and clean energy projects.



3. Relationship to Technology:

- **Technological Research and Development:** Technology institutes and labs develop innovative solutions for the responsible use of technology. Their research focuses on areas such as artificial intelligence, robotics, immersive environments, virtual reality, advanced simulations, and the ethical implications of advanced technologies.

- **Technological Education and Digital Literacy:** Research institutes promote a deeper understanding of existing and emerging technologies, emphasizing their impact on society, the economy, and individuals. Integrating technology into teaching and learning processes enhances knowledge accessibility and modernizes the educational experience.

The chairs, centers, institutes, and research laboratories of the Faculty of Education serve as a bridge between theoretical research and the practical application of ideas, enabling the benefits of research knowledge to develop solutions for global challenges and preparing the next generation to address them responsibly and wisely.

The Core Themes and Faculty's Overarching Goals:

The three core themes—relationship to human beings, the environment, and technology—are closely connected to the faculty's overarching goals of research, teaching, and community contribution. They shape how the faculty operates across all domains.



1. Research:

- **Relationship to Human Beings:** Research at various institutes and chairs in psychology, education, and social sciences help deepen our understanding of human needs, behavior, and ways to enhance personal and social well-being. These studies contribute to developing new theories and models aimed at promoting interpersonal understanding and improving quality of life.
- **Relationship to the Environment:** Scientific research in ecology at the centers and laboratories focuses on sustainability and environmental sciences, enabling the development of methods for conserving natural resources and innovative environmental solutions. The goal is to investigate human, particularly educational, impacts on the ecosystem and find ways to correct and improve the environment long-term through socialization.
- **Relationship to Technology:** Research in advanced technologies conducted by the institutes includes the development of artificial intelligence, robotics, immersive environments, virtual reality, and simulations. This research seeks to understand and improve the digital tools we use daily, directing them towards educational work with diverse populations, from typical to those with special needs across all ages. It also addresses ethical and social aspects of technology to ensure responsible and thoughtful use.



2. Teaching:

Faculty members, who also teach courses, play a role in embedding the core themes of human relations, environmental understanding, and technology.



- **Relationship to Human Beings:** Teaching aims to train students to be not only skilled professionals but also individuals with socio-emotional skills, empathy, and effective communication. Courses combining psychology, social sciences, and other disciplines help students understand others' needs and act respectfully and tolerantly.
- **Relationship to the Environment:** Teaching emphasizes environmental education and imparts knowledge and tools that allow students to understand current environmental challenges. Courses combining theory and practice on ecology, sustainability, and conservation prepare the next generation of educators, scientists, and professionals with high environmental awareness.
- **Relationship to Technology:** Education in technological fields aims to equip students to handle digital age developments. Courses provide theoretical and practical knowledge in areas such as programming, operating various technologies, and training students on how to develop, use, and apply new technologies ethically and responsibly in education.



3. Community Contribution:

- **Relationship to Human Beings:** Activities that promote social well-being and community cooperation, such as educational workshops, psychological counseling and support, or programs that strengthen socio-emotional skills. These activities also include partnerships with social and community organizations to promote equality, understanding, and acceptance of differences.
- **Relationship to the Environment:** Developing community projects aimed at raising awareness of environmental issues and promoting sustainability, like community gardens, "Pack Your Trash" initiatives, recycling programs, and efforts to reduce the carbon footprint. This contribution encourages the community to work together for local environmental improvement.
- **Relationship to Technology:** Through the support of chairs, institutes, centers, and research laboratories, the faculty promotes community programs related to digital literacy, technological entrepreneurship, and the accessibility of digital tools for underprivileged populations. Collaborations with industries and technology organizations can provide resources and tools that assist in digital and community empowerment.

In summary, each of these three themes directly relates to the faculty's overarching goals, aiming to expand students' knowledge and skills, advance cutting-edge research, and positively and productively impact the society and environment in which we live.

CHAIRS

Machado Research Chair on Cognitive Modifiability and Human Development.....10

The Rabbi Dr. Ochs Chair for the Teaching of Jewish Religious Studies.....14

UNESCO Burg Chair in Education for Human Values, Tolerance and Peace16





Prof. Hefziba Batya Lifshitz

Machado Research Chair on Cognitive Modifiability and Human Development

Head: Prof. Hefziba Batya Lifshitz

About us

Empwerment-Ozmot Project: Three stages of inclusion in the academic world of students with ID.

The project was launched in 2012 as part of the Lois Alberto Machado Research Chair on Cognitive Modifiability and Human Development and the Etel Lab for Research and Promotion of Persons with Intellectual Disability (ID).

The project includes three stages:

- Stage 1. Separate Model:** *Adapted Enrichment Courses.* Students with ID study academic courses at the Faculty of Education (Psychology, Self-Advocacy, Library, and Computers) adapted to their level. The lecturers are MA students at the Faculty of Education's ID program. We are the first in the world to open a college academic track for adults with severe ID who need extensive support. They do not attend the university, we conduct the academic enrichment course in their day center.
- Stage 2. Mixed/Hybrid Model:** Students with ID are included in a BA research seminar on Lifelong Learning of Individuals with Disability where they conduct a research study together with students with typical development.
- Stage 3. Fully Inclusive Model - BA degree:** Six highly capable students with ID are fully integrated into undergraduate courses. Accompanied by an academic facilitator who is a graduate of the MA program in ID, the students, passed the exams, performed class tasks, and completed 32 academic credits after 5 years. Based on

their success, Bar-Ilan University (Dean of the Faculty of Education, the Rector, the Academic Secretary, and the budget department manager) decided to register them as regular students. By the 2023 academic year, they had completed the 64 academic credits that were needed for the BA degree.

Principal achievements

In 2024 these six students were the first ever adult cohort with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) in Israel to receive their bachelor's degree. They received their degrees at the graduation ceremony of Bar-Ilan's Faculty of Education in the presence of Israel's First Lady Michal Herzog. A reception in their honor took place before the ceremony with the participation of Michal Waldiger MK.

International Engagement

International workshops about the Empowerment project were given at the University of Antwerp - Belgium, the University of Hamburg - Germany, and the University of Salzburg - Austria.

Prof. Lifshitz is a secretary of the SIRG of Inclusive Education, the IASSID

Impact

All Empowerment Project activities are followed up by research.

In the study: *The Contribution of Post-secondary Academic Courses on Crystallized and Fluid Tests of Adults with Intellectual Disability with/without Down Syndrome* (Lifshitz, Nissim, Shnitzer, & Weiss, 2023), we found that participation in PSE contributed to semantic fluency, homophones, and the Raven matrices - crystallized and fluid tests.

In another study, *Training Program Reveals Typical Brain Lateralization in Adults with Intellectual Disabilities with and without Down Syndrome* (Mashal, Yankovitz, & Lifshitz, 2020), we found typical brain lateralization in non-specific ID and Down syndrome.

An innovative study *Post Secondary University Education Increased Crystallized and Fluid Intelligence of Students with Intellectual Disability* (Lifshitz, Shnitzer-Meirovitz & Vakil, 2023) - indicated improvement in FSIQ and Verbal IQ of the PSE students with ID after 4.5 years of participation in the Empowerment Project. The IQ of the BA group exceeded the mild ID diagnostic cutoff (IQ<70-75).

Significant Employment: The students have been admitted to the certification program in Librarianship at David Yellin College in Jerusalem. After their graduation, they will begin working as librarian assistants in public libraries.

Empowerment Ozmot project: conducting psychological assessments of potential candidates: A new cycle of students with Intellectual Disabilities (ID) will pursue a BA degree



Publications

Lifshitz, H., Verkuilen, J., Shnitzer-Meirovich, S., & Altman, C. (2018). Crystallized and fluid intelligence of university students with intellectual disability who are fully integrated versus those who studied in adapted enrichment courses. *PLoS ONE*, 13(4), Article e0193351.

Altman, C., Avraham, I., Lifshitz, H., Shnitzer-Meirovitz, (2022). How do students with Intellectual Disabilities tell stories? An investigation of narrative macrostructure and microstructure, *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*.

Lifshitz, H., Eden, S., Gur A., Snitzer-Meirovitz, (2022). The Contribution of Distress Factors and Coping Resources to the Motivation to Use ICT among Adults with Intellectual Disability during COVID-19. *Education and Information Technology*.

Lifshitz, H., Shnitzer-Meirovitz, S. & Vakil, E. (2023). Postsecondary university education increases crystallized and fluid intelligence of adult students with intellectual disability. *European Journal of Special Needs and Education*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2023.2177944>.

Lifshitz, H., (2023). Post-secondary academic enrichment contribution to cognitive performance of adults with intellectual disability and their attitudes toward the program. *Education and training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities*, 58(2), 235–249

Our team

Head: **Prof. Hefziba Lifshitz**

Director: **Dr. Shoshana Nissim**

Academic Counselor: **Dr. Dalia Tal**

Lecturer: **Dr. Irit Chen**

Academic Facilitator: **Dr. Noa Bustan, Matanya Rieger, Morag Karadi, Avital Weiss.**



The six students received their degrees at the graduation ceremony of Bar-Ilan's Faculty of Education in the presence of Israel's First Lady Michal Herzog.

Contact Information

For more information and registration for the program: [Prof. Hefziba Lifshitz](#)

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9:00-13:00



Prof. Elie Holzer

The Rabbi Dr. Ochs Chair for the Teaching of Jewish Religious Studies

Head: Prof. Elie Holzer

About us

The Chair seeks to pioneer and advance scholarly inquiry into 'Pedagogies of Jewish Spiritual Teaching and Learning', with a particular emphasis on Hasidic texts. This emerging field requires foundational research to establish its theoretical framework and methodologies.

Principal activities and achievements

To achieve this goal, we aim to engage leading educators in Israel and North America in this evolving scholarly discourse. We facilitate the development of a theoretical framework, promote the exchange of insights and practical experiences, and foster a scholarly community dedicated to advancing this field.

The inaugural project brought together prominent master teachers of Hasidic homiletics from around the world. Participants were introduced to this innovative approach to inquiry, leading to the drafting of scholarly articles that detailed their pedagogical methodologies, nuanced interpretations, and key challenges. They later convened for a three-day conference to refine and advance this new area of scholarship. Following the conference, participants submitted revised and enhanced versions of their articles. These sixteen articles are scheduled for publication in the Fall of 2024 under the title: Elie Holzer (editor), *Renewed Hasidic Spirituality* - Teaching Hasidic Homilies in a Post-Secular World, Boston: Academic Studies Press.

International Engagement

A new project is currently underway in partnership with The Mandel Center for Studies in Jewish Education at Brandeis University, MA, USA.

Impact

Both of the aforementioned research initiatives intentionally involve master teachers from diverse Jewish educational backgrounds. Coupled with the pedagogical focus of the forthcoming publication, this work is expected to resonate with and influence a significant number of practitioners in the field of Jewish spiritual teaching and learning. Furthermore, it aims to encourage the participation of additional master teachers, thereby enriching an emerging research community that bridges scholars and practitioners in meaningful collaboration.

Contact Information

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Faculty of
Education
Bar-Ilan University

The Josef Burg Chair in
Education for
Human Values,
Tolerance & Peace

Prof. Zehavit Gross

UNESCO Burg Chair in Education for Human Values, Tolerance and Peace

Chairholder: Prof. Zehavit Gross

About us

The Chair's mission is to promote awareness of multiculturalism, pluralism, tolerance, and human rights, with a particular focus on Israeli society. Its goal is to equip educators with the research, insights, and practical tools necessary to contribute meaningfully to the ongoing processes of change and renewal in Israel and around the world. The Chair emphasizes the need for peaceful coexistence within three key areas of Israeli society:

1. Relations within Jewish society,
2. Relations between Jews and Arabs
3. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict

Our Mission

The mission of the Dr. Josef Burg Chair in Education for **Human Values, Tolerance, and Peace** is to empower scholars within Bar-Ilan University's Faculty of Education to provide educators with research, insights, and practical guidance on fostering mutual understanding, tolerance, and the integration of new immigrants. This work aims to contribute to the development of a strong, healthy, and democratic society. Faculty members and doctoral students are actively engaged in research and training on issues related to values, tolerance, and peace. The research team brings together expertise in both Jewish particularistic values and broader humanistic and universal values. Reflecting the diversity of Israeli society, Bar-Ilan's student body encompasses various religious, secular, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds, embodying a synthesis of these communities.

Aims

1. **Theoretical-philosophical research:** Clarifying issues related to education for values, human rights, tolerance, and peace as a foundation for specialized learning programs.
2. **Historical-social research:** Analyzing conflict and conciliation between nations and within societies by uncovering the roots of past conflicts to draw lessons for peaceful coexistence today.
3. **Applied research:** Developing models and assessing various aspects of tolerance in Israeli society—religious, ethnic, political, and minority-related.
4. **Research on “Education for Democracy”** within Israeli society.
5. **Designing unique educational programs** aimed at clarifying values through the lens of Jewish tradition and universal humanistic traditions, with the goal of instilling the values of tolerance, democracy, and peace.
6. **Examining the role of schools** in enhancing students' understanding of society and their ability to internalize core values.
7. **Evaluating intervention methods** to assess the effectiveness of the programs.

Areas of Activities

- Facilitating academic exchanges between Israeli and international scholars through conferences
- Initiating and supporting research projects that advance educational goals
- Developing and publishing educational materials for all levels of education
- Conducting tolerance workshops within the Faculty of Education's teacher training programs
- Collaborating with Israeli and international organizations, such as UNESCO and the Anti-Defamation League, to create programs for the Israeli education system
- Establishing a data center to provide research, literature, and curriculum resources for educators and academics both in Israel and globally, with a focus on community engagement

Our team

Prof. Pascale Benoliel, Prof. Yaniv Efrati, Dr. Yael Richler Friedman, Dr. Ela Luria, Dr. Yosef Abd Alagani, Hanan Serchan, Emman Sfadi Saab





Community Engagement

Imams, rabbis, and Jewish and Arab students come together to study religious texts from both Judaism and Islam, promoting dialogue and mutual understanding. Additionally, tours in mixed cities allow participants to engage with local leaders, exploring the challenges and opportunities of coexistence firsthand.

International Engagement

Lectures and workshops abroad: University of Berkley, Columbia University, Cornell University Mofet Institute.

Impact



Grants

ISF- Holocaust Education among Arab and Jewish Schools in Israel



Publications

Abd Algani, Y. & Gross, Z. (2023). Effectiveness of Digital Versus Printed Arabic Text on the Literacy mathematics tasks of Seventh - and Eighth-Grade Students. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*

<https://royalliteglobal.com/advanced-humanities>

Abd Algani, Y. & Gross, Z (2024) A Holistic View Practicing Mathematics in the Israeli Educational System. Cambridge Publishing



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CENTERS

Baker Research and Promotion Center for toddlers and children with developmental and intellectual disability.....20

Da-Gan Center – The National Center for STEM Education in Preschool.....24

Hadad Center – learning disabilities diagnosis, research, and intervention lab.28

HaLev Center for Simulation in Education.....30

The Center for the Development and Support of Junior and High Schools Biology Laboratories..... 34

The Sal Van Gelder Center for Holocaust Research & Instruction 38



Baker Research and Promotion Center for toddlers and children with developmental and intellectual disability

Head: Prof. Hefziba Lifshitz

Head: Dr. Varda Sobelman-Rosenthal

Unit & Field Application Coordinator: Dr. Shoshana Nissim

About us

Early childhood is a critical period for optimal brain development, characterized by rapid growth in language, cognition, motor skills, and socio-emotional domains. The developmental outcomes of children are influenced by ecological systems within their environment and the interactions between these systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 2020; Guralnick, 2001). These systems include: (1) Microsystems: The child's immediate environment, including interactions with family, friends, and professionals, (2) Macrosystems: Cultural and societal attitudes and beliefs, (3) Chronosystems: The interactions between various systems and their effects over time (Rose & Tudge, 2013).

Developmental delays are often defined as deviations from normative milestones, which may manifest as delays in cognitive, language, motor, or socio-emotional development. Developmental disabilities encompass a range of childhood conditions, including intellectual disabilities, vision and hearing loss, autism, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. These conditions are approached differently across various settings and cultures.

The Baker Research and Promotion Center focuses on children with developmental and intellectual disabilities, drawing on several theories, including early intervention

theory (Guralnick, 2009), mediated learning experience (Feuerstein, 2003; 2011), and normalization, participation, and inclusion theory (Wolfensberger, 2002; 2010). Our goal is to promote and enhance development in children with developmental and intellectual disabilities, particularly in the cognitive and communication domains.

Baker sections

- **Section A:** promoting Cognition Affect Behavior - More Intelligent Sensitive Child (CAB-MISC) Model affect, behavior, and cognition through the interaction between mothers and infants with ID
- **Section B:** Promoting affect, behavior, and cognition (CAB-MISC Model) through pre-primary teachers and staff in kindergartens of children with Intelligence Deficiency (ID).
- **Section C:** Promoting academic skills (reading and learning, strategies, math, and communication skills) to children with Developmental Delay (DD).
- **Section D:** Peer mediation: children with typical development mediate stories through an electronic book to children with Down Syndrome.

Dr. Shoshana Nissim and Dr. Varda Rozental-Sobelman

Lecture series “Restoring the Spirit”: Special preparation in the current war, Iron Sword war

At the onset of the Iron Sword war, when universities were closed to on-site activities, the Baker Center provided a free, concentrated 2-session training program for parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays. Subsequently, we launched a lecture series titled “Restoring the Spirit,” which included six paid sessions led by experts in the field, aimed at parents and caregivers of children with developmental delays. Approximately 40 participants attended these sessions, including parents, caregivers, managers of support frameworks, and students. About 40 participants took part in the meetings: parents, caretakers of children, managers of frameworks, and students.

Principal activities and achievements

Special Reading Program

Dr. Varda Rosental-Sobelman developed a specialized reading program tailored for children with (DD). In alignment with the UN agenda for individuals with disabilities, which emphasizes ensuring autonomy and self-determination, the MISC (Klein, 2003) was updated to include parameters for autonomy and self-decision-making. The 12 parameters were consolidated into three main components: Cognition, Affect, and Behavior, which are facilitated through interactions between staff and children with DD (Lifshitz, 2020).



Virtual Reality Project

In collaboration with [Prof. Tova Michalsky](#), we are developing a program that uses virtual reality to teach parents and kindergarten staff the CAB model. This model aims to enhance children's affect, cognition, and behavior through interactive virtual reality techniques.

Research in Preparation

Research has shown that child development is significantly influenced by their parents. Consequently, our center is focusing on studying the perceptions of stressors, psychological flexibility, and growth among the parents and siblings of children with DD.

Research studies are currently being prepared by MA and Ph.D. students in collaboration with **Dr. Ayelet Gur**. The following PhD studies proposals are co-supervised with Prof. Hefziba Lifshitz.

Atallah A., *The Contribution of Stress, Psychological Flexibility and Social Support as Mediators to Personal Growth and Well-being of Arab Mothers of Children with Intellectual Disabilities in Three Time Periods.*

Ben Ziv L., *Contribution of Psychological Flexibility, Stress, Parental Feelings, and Coping Strategies, on Parental Reflective Functioning, Self-Efficacy, and parent- child quality of the interaction.*

Dimri, S., *The Contribution of Resource Loss, Knowledge, and Involvement in Caregiving to Self-Determination and Emotional Well-Being among Siblings of Adults and Adolescents with Disabilities: IDD, Autism and Typical Development: A perspective of the conservation of resources theory.*

Ben Tora E., *Help-Seeking Behaviors, Engagement in Therapy and Personal Growth among Parents of Children with Developmental Delay and with ASD (0-6 years): A Theory of Planned Behavior Perspective.*

Our Team

Mrs. July Baor: Learning to read and developing thinking strategies through the use of an ActiveSand.

Mrs. Avital Weiss: Developing mathematical thinking:

Mrs. Sharon Kenig: Communications therapist - Development of communication and language skills:

Community Engagement

The center maintains strong connections with all major public organizations that provide services to individuals with (DD), including AKIM, Yated, and Tismotek. We actively collaborate with these organizations to enhance service delivery and support.



International Engagement

Prof. Lifshitz is a member of the SIRG of early intervention of the IASSID

Contact Information

 [Website](#) (Hebrew)

For details and registration:

The secretary of the center **Ms. Avital Weiss:**  054-5707678

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Dr. Ornit Spektor-Levy

Da-Gan Center – The National Center for STEM Education in Preschool

Academic Head: Dr. Ornit Spektor-Levy

Head: Dr. Taly Shechter

About us

Da-Gan Center is the National Teacher Center for STEM Education in Preschool. Established in 2007, the Da-Gan Center has been operated since then as part of the Science Teaching Center at the Faculty of Education, Bar-Ilan University. It is one of a series of national teacher centers established, funded, and supervised by the Ministry of Education, aimed at advancing leadership in the teaching of scientific and technological subjects within the Israeli education system. The Da-Gan Center is unique in that it is the only center focusing on all STEM fields, with a specific emphasis on STEM education in early childhood.

The Da-Gan Center is an academic institution that conducts international-level research in STEM education. Serving as a professional hub for preschool teachers, the center supports them in bridging the gap between the National Science & Technology preschool curriculum, the mathematics curriculum, and the latest academic research in these fields. The national center is dedicated to training and developing leadership among preschool teachers, offering comprehensive support by creating and implementing diverse and innovative training programs at an academic level, utilizing the most up-to-date research-based and applied knowledge in STEM and STEM education.

Our Mission

Promoting STEM and Environmental Education in Preschools (ages 3-5): We are dedicated to advancing STEM and environmental education in early childhood settings.

- **Developing Leadership and Expertise:** We aim to cultivate leadership and expertise in early STEM education among preschool educators.
- **Creating Quality Instructional Materials:** We focus on developing updated, age-appropriate, and high-quality instructional materials in STEM areas.
- **Introducing Inspiring Learning Environments:** We are committed to creating dynamic STEM learning environments, such as The Lab Center, Engineering and Construction Center, Design Center, and outdoor spaces, that foster collaboration, entrepreneurship, innovation, problem-solving, and inquiry processes.
- **Collaborating with the Ministry of Education:** We work in partnership with the Early Childhood Education Department to enhance STEM and environmental education in preschools nationwide and across various sectors.

Principal activities and achievements

Academic Programs and Initiatives

- Offering a wide range of continuous professional development courses throughout the year.
- Organizing seminars and conferences.
- Managing a website, Facebook page, YouTube channel, and multiple WhatsApp communities.
- Publishing a journal.
- Establishing a communication network that connects preschool teachers with STEM professionals across the country and worldwide.
- Creating and maintaining a resource center that provides equipment, instructional materials, research literature, and more.
- Supporting new initiatives in the field.
- Conducting research and developing measurement tools to assess the impact of instructional interventions.

Significant Research Areas

- The scientific inquiry abilities of preschool children.
- The development of engineering thinking in preschoolers.
- Mathematical thinking and problem-solving skills in preschool children.



- Metacognitive thinking and self-regulation skills during inquiry processes and engineering problem-solving tasks in preschoolers.
- The cognitive and emotional benefits of outdoor learning.
- The impact of inspiring STEM learning environments on preschool children's STEM capabilities.

Notable Achievements

- Reaching and supporting over 13,000 preschool teachers across all sectors of Israeli society.
- Implementing cutting-edge technology in preschools, including robots, tablets, digital cameras, telescopes, and various apps.
- Publishing academic papers and book chapters.
- Delivering invited lectures both locally and internationally.

Collaborations

Da-Gan Center collaborates with many institutions, for example: The Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, The Ministry of Environmental Protection, The Ministry of Science, Technology and Space, Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael-Jewish National Fund, SpaceIL.

Community Engagement

The professional team at the Da-Gan Center supports both local and national initiatives. These include projects like selling vegetables grown in preschool gardens to nearby neighbors and donating the proceeds, as well as participating in national campaigns such as "Take Your Garbage With You", "Hug and Protect a Tree", and "Flying with SpaceIL to the Moon".

International Engagement

Presenting academic studies in collaborative symposium sessions at international conferences, hosting delegations of preschool educators and policymakers from abroad, presenting invited lectures and workshops in universities abroad, submission of research proposals to international funds.

Impact

The Da-Gan Center is well-known for its high-level proficiency among educational policymakers and preschool teachers. Consequently, since 2007, it has won the Ministry of Education tenders and receives generous budgets annually.

Numerous MA theses and PhD dissertations were approved, and academic papers were published following research conducted by the team of the Da-Gan Center.



Selected recent publications:

Fridman, R., Eden, S., & Spektor-Levy, O. (2020). Nascent inquiry, metacognitive, and self-regulation capabilities among preschoolers during scientific exploration. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1790. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01790

Shechter, T., Eden, S., & Spektor-Levy, O. (2021). Preschoolers' nascent engineering thinking during a construction task. *Journal of Cognitive Education & Psychology*, 20(2), 83.

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Allon Da-Gan journal:

[Da-Gan Journal \(Allon\)](#)



Prof. Rachel Schiff

Hadad Center – Learning Disabilities Diagnosis, Research, and Intervention Lab.

Head: Prof. Rachel Schiff

About us

The Hadad Center aims to inform intervention programs designed to improve the academic achievements of Hebrew language learners. It has developed diagnostic tools and implemented various intervention programs for students with learning disabilities across Israel. Additionally, the Hadad Center trains interns to become professionals in the field of learning disabilities.

Principal activities and achievements

The Hadad Center focuses on studying the literacy, linguistic, and cognitive abilities of both adults and children with learning disabilities, with a particular emphasis on dyslexia. Its main research areas include reading acquisition, morphological knowledge, implicit learning, literacy, and interventions targeting cognitive and executive functions.

Clinical Activities:

- Diagnosing and treating reading and language disorders
- Training professionals in the field of learning disabilities
- Developing diagnostic batteries
- Creating K-12 intervention programs for students with learning disabilities across the country
- Training educators to support students with learning disabilities

Clinical Collaborations:

We collaborate with education departments in various cities throughout Israel.

Community Engagement

The Hadad Center has developed intervention programs specifically designed to teach reading to students with reading difficulties, particularly those from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Additionally, the Center has created programs aimed at reducing educational disparities among students in grades 1-6, with a focus on enhancing literacy skills and promoting cognitive and executive function development.

International Engagement

Research Collaborations: We collaborate with universities outside of Israel.

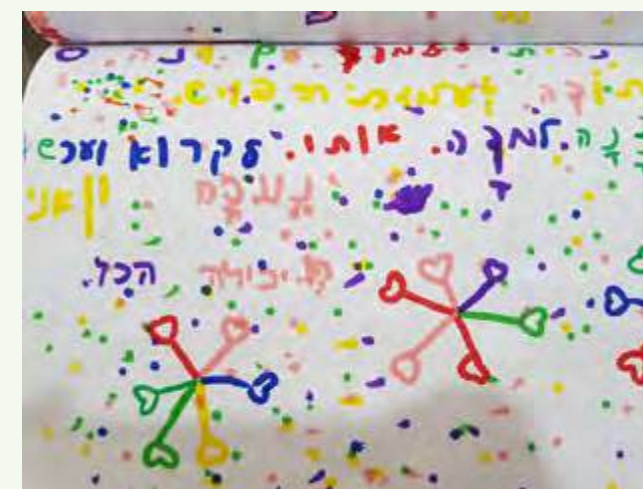
Impact

"From Challenges to Excellence - The central impact of Hadad is leading students with learning disabilities and difficulties to academic excellence through developing literacy skills from kindergarten to university students."

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Reflection from a 1st-grade student at the end of a reading intervention program: 'Dana taught me how to read, and now I can read everything, and I love reading.'



Gaming is learning. Games can develop learning, thinking and literacy skills.



Prof. Yaacov B. Yablon



Dr. Shira Iluz

HaLev Center for Simulation in Education

Academic Director: Prof. Yaacov B. Yablon

Director: Dr. Shira Iluz

Head of Content and Training: Sharon Hollombe

About us

HaLev Center is Israel's first simulation-based educational training facility. We develop innovative workshops tailored to the unique needs of each educational institution, fostering effective, meaningful, and impactful learning experiences. We specialize in conducting simulation workshops that focus on enhancing interpersonal communication skills crucial for today's educational landscape. The primary aim of our workshops is to provide participants with new and complex perspectives on the challenges they face in their daily professional lives. By engaging in realistic simulations, educators gain invaluable insights and practical skills to navigate difficult situations more effectively.

Our programs cater to a wide range of education professionals, including:

- Early childhood educators, Primary/elementary school teachers, Secondary school teachers
- Special education teachers, School administrators and principals, Curriculum developers
- Educational counselors and psychologists, Higher education faculty, Educational policymakers

Principal activities and achievements

Workshops - Funded by the Ministry of Education, our workshops are offered free of charge to education professionals. Combining active experimentation with comprehensive feedback and debriefing sessions, participants engage in realistic scenarios drawn from their daily professional lives, performed by trained actors. We offer both in-person and online workshops, available as single sessions or extended series for deeper engagement.

Instructional Videos - Access our extensive library of instructional videos showcasing common conflict scenarios in educational settings. Each video offers practical tools and communication strategies for constructively managing complex interpersonal situations with students, colleagues, parents, and others.

Research - As part of the Faculty of Education at Bar-Ilan University, HaLev Center is committed to advancing the field of educational simulation. Our research focuses on evaluating the impact of simulative experiences on educational personnel throughout their careers, from student teachers to seasoned professionals.

Community Engagement

Inclusive Approach - We serve participants from all educational networks and streams in both formal and informal education systems, including: State schools, State-religious schools, Chabad network, Arab society schools

Our programs cater to all age ranges, from early childhood education through high school, and higher education. HaLev Center has collaborated with the Israeli Ministry of Justice in training legal and administrative employees. HaLev has ongoing collaborations with the Trump Foundation focusing on advancing mathematics education, and the Amit network, collaborating on enhancing professional development opportunities for educators.

International Engagement

The staff of HaLev has engaged in several international collaborations:

- **2022:** Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, Hungary, through the Erasmus+ program.
- **2023:** Faculty of Education, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic.
- **2023 and 2024:** Two visits to the Teacher Training and People and the World Program at EDE Christian University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands.



Impact

Established in 2011 in partnership with the Teaching Staff Administration of the Ministry of Education, HaLev Center pioneered simulation workshops in Israeli education. Our achievements include:

- Hundreds of simulation workshops conducted annually
- Tens of thousands of education professionals trained



Recent publications :

Yablon, Y. B., Iluz, S., & Eisenheimer, M. (Eds.). (2022). *Simulative Experience in Teaching and Learning: Theoretical and Research Aspects*. MOFET Institute. (Hebrew)

Hollombe, S., Yablon, Y. B., & Iluz, S. (2024). Navigating conflict in the multicultural classroom: The use of simulation-based learning for peace education in teacher training. *Zeitschrift für Pädagogik und Theologie*, 76(3), 1-12. <https://doi.org/10.1515/zpt-2024-2029>

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Upcoming Activities

In the upcoming academic year, a joint course with CHE University is planned, featuring integrated simulation workshops that focus on handling conflict situations from an intercultural perspective.





Prof. Michal Zion

The Center for the Development and Support of Junior and High Schools Biology Laboratories

Academic Head: Prof. Michal Zion

Academic Director: Dr. Shoshy Herman

Deputy Academic Director: Dr. Pirchi Waxman

Center Chairman: Dr. Bruria Agrest

About us

This unique center, located in Israel and known around the world, with many years of outreach experience in enriching practical biology teaching for junior and high schools.

Principal activities and achievements

1. Developing experiments and teaching materials for lab activity for all post-elementary schools, with an emphasis on a six-year continuum of study.
2. Directing a supply center for materials and organisms required for conducting inquiry projects and experiments in school labs (by a web shop).
3. Providing continuing professional development for teachers and lab technicians through exposure to innovation, expanding the database of activities with new methods, and opening access to additional sources of information.
4. Providing guidance and consultation for schools' biology staff member
5. Increasing the contribution of open inquiry-based teaching to biology education.
6. Developing new pedagogical methods for incorporating meta-cognition, motivation, and future-oriented pedagogy within biology education issues (such as homeostasis, health, environmental and sustainability, molecular biology, and more).

Our teams

Management team

Prof. Michal Zion, Academic Head

Dr. Bruria Agrest, Center Chairperson

Dr. Shoshy Herman, Academic Director

Dr. Pirchi Waxman, Deputy Academic Director

Development team

Mrs. Sara Werthimer, Mrs. Efrat Link, Mrs. Tami Ben Dor, Mrs. Bergman Hagit, Dr. Shoshy Israeli, Mrs. Natali Shalev

Lab assistants team

Logistic administrator: **Mrs. Zila Hafner**

Lab technicians: **Mrs. Michal Yakobi, Mrs. Rutzy Yarom, Mrs. Moran Shalom, and Mrs. Bety Balanga**

Community engagement

The center develops experiments and teaching materials to enhance students' biology knowledge and their understanding of biological processes and inquiry skills, with a strong focus on issues that directly impact the quality of life. By leading citizen science projects, students actively engage in hands-on learning, exploring topics such as biological control, food security, genetic, and the implications of climate change on our lives. These projects not only deepen students' scientific understanding but also encourage them to think critically about how biology intersects with social justice. Through these efforts, students are empowered to contribute to real-world solutions and become informed advocates for sustainable and equitable practices in their communities.

Pedagogical development for teachers and lab technicians

We develop new experiments that expand the activity database for teaching in classrooms. We help teachers and lab-technicians become familiarized with new methods, exposing them to these methods with an emphasis on inquiry-based teaching. Our pedagogical development courses are held in our teaching labs and are conducted by a professional and veteran staff that is supported by an academic staff, depending on the subject, enabling us to provide expansive enrichment on the same subject.

International engagement

The center collaborates with researchers and scientists (educators, and biologists) in Israel and across the globe. We focus on creating platforms that facilitate cooperation between science education researchers and between teachers and their students around the globe, fostering a collaborative learning environment. Additionally, we organize and participate in conferences both in Israel and abroad, ensuring that educators are connected to the latest scientific advancements and global educational practices.

Impact

The center serves as a national leader in advancing inquiry-based pedagogy in Israel. Representatives from many countries have visited to learn from its work. The center's members actively participate in decision-making forums within various Ministry of Education committees that focus on scientific education. Additionally, the center plays a key role in organizing the Inquiry Biology Olympiad for high school students. Over the years, the center has published science education studies in leading international journals and received grants from competitive funding sources, including the Israel Science Foundation (ISF), the Chief Scientist of the Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Science and Technology.

A recent article has described Prof. Zion's research group as the leading group worldwide in the field of open-inquiry teaching. Prof. Zion won a prize for scientific innovation in the field of science and environmental education: [The impacts of open inquiry on students' learning in science: A systematic literature review](#)

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Practical work in the biology laboratories





Prof. Zehavit Gross

The Sal Van Gelder Center for Holocaust Research & Instruction

Head: Prof. Zehavit Gross

About us

The goals of the Van Gelder Center: The Van Gelder Center focuses on researching Holocaust education in schools in Israel and around the world, with diverse Jewish and non-Jewish populations. The Center conducts research, seminars, conferences (international and national), research workshops, and practical workshops for teachers, principals, and educational policymakers on Holocaust education in both formal and informal education. The Center emphasizes issues of identity, memory, and socialization in a world without survivors, the intergenerational transmission of Holocaust memory to the second and third generations, and the tension between particularistic and universalistic aspects.

- **Theoretical-philosophical research:** clarifying the problems and challenges of Holocaust education.
- **Historical-social research:** Exploring conflict and conciliation among nations and within societies by uncovering the roots of past events to draw meaningful conclusions for reconciliation and peaceful coexistence in the present.
- **Applied research:** Creating models, evaluating different parameters of anti-Semitism and tolerance worldwide, interreligious, ethnic, political, and minorities.
- Research in the area of "Education for Human Rights and Reconciliation" in Israeli society and worldwide.

Principal activities and achievements

- Facilitating exchanges between Israeli and International academics through conferences
- Initiating and supporting research
- Producing and publishing educational and instructional materials for all education levels.
- Establishing cooperation between Israeli and International institutions such as UNESCO and Creating programs within the Israeli educational system.
- Service to the Community and the Educational System.

Research under the auspices of the Center:

- **Yael Richler Friedman:** The influence of teachers' sense of efficacy and their pedagogical content knowledge (P.C.K) of primary school teachers on their pedagogical goals and teaching strategies in teaching controversial issues. The case of Holocaust education in Israel.
- **Yael Shtaubert:** Tourist Guidance in Heritage Sites and Institutions Commemorating the Jewish people Holocaust: An exploratory research (Together with Prof. Poriya from Ben Gurion University)
- **Sarit Levy:** "Hashahar 6" High School Students with Special Needs Journey to Poland.

Community Engagement:

- The Center aims to provide educators with research and practical guidance regarding Holocaust education in Israel and worldwide.
- The Center's research agenda includes clarifying the problems of Holocaust education from a historical, sociological, psychological, and philosophical perspective.
- Research conducted under the auspices of the Center includes studies on Holocaust Education and perceptions of citizenship in the world, the socialization and values of minority groups, values of education, teachers' professional socialization patterns, and perceptions of reconciliation and conflict management.
- Conferences to the community on Ten Tevet and Yom Hashoa.

International Engagement

- The Center has developed a theoretical framework in collaboration with international institutions to revisit the concepts of the Holocaust and genocide, using them as a lens to reexamine anti-Semitism from an innovative perspective. Additionally, the Center has designed a curriculum on ethics, social justice, gender equality, and violence, intended for use in high schools.
- The Van-Gelder Center organizes international conferences and cooperates with UNESCO Chairs and similar institutions and Centers worldwide.

Impact

- Prof. Gross was invited to participate in an international symposium at the UN on the Future of Holocaust Education
- The center organizes annual international conferences with prestigious universities in Austria, Germany, the UK, the USA, Australia, and China
- The Center collaborates with the International School of Bar-Ilan University



Prof. Gross with Elie wiezel



Congratulations to Professor Zehavit Gross on receiving the 2024 Premier Award from the Prime Minister of NSW, Australia

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INSTITUTES

The Institute for Integration.....42

**Prof. Orly Shapira- Lishchinsky**

The Institute for Integration

Head: Prof. Orly Shapira- Lishchinsky

About us

The Institute of Integration was established in 1982.

The institute is dedicated to reducing gaps and making meaningful contributions to both society and the economy. Our mission is to bridge connections between the community and Bar-Ilan University, fostering collaboration and engagement. We champion an integrative approach that supports students and adults across various educational levels, from K-12 through higher education and continuing education. Additionally, we are committed to facilitating employment opportunities for both BIU students and the broader community, ensuring that our initiatives have a tangible impact on individual and collective advancement.

The institute's field of activity encompasses a range of research-based processes and programs designed to address specific needs of stakeholders. We focus on developing tailored intervention strategies that effectively meet these needs while leading integrative processes in training and development for leadership and human resources. Additionally, we are involved in creating and implementing curricula for the Ministry of Education, covering subjects such as mathematics, science, and music. Our approach ensures that all initiatives are grounded in research and are adapted to support educational and developmental goals across various contexts.



Principal activities and achievements

- Conducting intervention and training programs tailored to the context of diverse organizations and communities, with academic evaluation of these processes.
- Developing long-term learning programs for K-12, higher education, and continuing education.
- Leading in math, science, and music education in K-12.
- Focusing on building leadership and resilience, and fostering mental strength in communities and organizations, both in routine and during times of crisis.
- Facilitating employment opportunities for BIU Students and the Community.
- Reducing gaps and contribution to the society.
- Collaborating with leading organizations, and leading processes that impact the Israeli economy and community.
- Flexibility and immediate response in times of crisis.

Community Engagement

The Institute for Integration collaborates with a diverse range of entities to advance its mission. We work closely with the Ministry of Education to develop and implement educational programs and curricula. Our partnerships extend to various communities, including all Israeli sectors, army retirees, and the Israel Prison Service, ensuring a broad societal impact. We engage with municipalities across the country to tailor solutions to local needs and collaborate with leading companies to drive innovation and integration. Additionally, we partner with the Fund for Reducing Gaps in Society and public organizations such as the Israel Prison Service and government offices to address and mitigate social disparities effectively.

Impact

- The Institute excels in providing mathematics, science, and music textbooks and online programs for K-12 education.
- The Institute leads in developing and assimilating training programs for students, teaching staff, municipalities, and the community.
- The Institute is actively involved in intervention processes across various organizations.
- The Institute focuses on building leadership and resilience, and fostering mental strength in communities and organizations, both in routine and during times of crisis.
- The Institute offers unique musical concerts to approximately 20,000 students nationwide each year.
- The Institute has been recognized with a prestigious national award for its exceptional work.



Objectives for future activities

- Accreditation of Professional Courses
- Expanding Leadership Activities Across K-12 Education, Higher Education, the Ministry of Education, and the Community
- Expanding Collaborations and Enhancing Social Impact in the Public and Business Sectors
- Collaborating with Different Units in the University, toward Impacting the University's Systematic Approach.

Training programs in the community for children after school:



Mathematics and Science teaching as part of the research and assessment division taught in hundreds of schools throughout Israel:



Science and Mathematics thinking for excellent students in the community:

- Music Concerts
- Holocaust course in Petach Tikva



Adult programs (i.e., Educational clowning, Educational trainer dog programs):

- The Ministry of Education - Programs of leadership and resilience
- courses for the Ultra-Orthodox Community
- "Rowad"(a national program) - The program's main goal is to increase Arabs' access to higher education



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The Institute for Integration



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LABORATORIES & RESEARCH GROUPS

Autism, Research and Intervention Laboratory	48
Diversity, Culture & Leadership Research Team.....	51
Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice (EDS) LAB.....	54
Learning and Cognition Lab.....	57
Research and Innovation in Higher Education Lab.....	59
The Brain and Language Lab.....	63
The Center and Research Lab of Advanced Technologies for Children with Special Educational Needs.....	66
The Emotion Socialization and Neuroscience (ESN) Lab	68
The Harris Program for Infants, Toddlers and their Families.....	71
Trauma Coping and Growth lab.....	76
Virtual Reality Education Lab: Learning Beyond Imagination	82
Concluding Remarks	85





**Autism Research & Intervention
Lab - The ARI Lab**
 Faculty of Education
 Bar-Ilan University

Prof. Nirit Bauminger-Zviely

Autism, Research and Intervention Laboratory

The ARI LAB

Head: Prof. Nirit Bauminger-Zviely

About us

Prof. Bauminger-Zviely's ARI laboratory at the Faculty of Education is at the forefront of basic and applied research on the social-emotional development and peer relations of children with autism including novel manualized evidenced-based social interventions. Over the last three decades, Prof. Bauminger-Zviely's ARI Lab developed multidimensional evidenced-based social intervention as well as assessment procedures and scales to evaluate the autism social phenotype.

Principal activities and achievements

The ARI lab's research activities span two main areas:

1. **Development of Evidenced-based ecological national and international well-recognized peer and social intervention protocols:** The *Preschool Peer Social Intervention (PPSI)* (Bauminger-Zviely, Eytan, Hoshmand, & Rajwan Ben Shlomo, 2020, 2021); *Communicating Without Words: School-based RCT social intervention* in minimally verbal peer dyads with ASD (Bauminger-Zviely et al., 2020); *Cognitive-Behavioral-Ecological (CBE) Intervention* (Bauminger, 2002, 2007a,b; Bauminger-Zviely, 2013); and Multitouch Collaboration Technology: *No-problem* and *Join-in* technology (Bauminger-Zviely et al., 2013; Gal et al., 2016; Weiss et al., 2016; Zancanaro et al., 2014).

2. Development of a naturalistic assessment procedure to evaluate the autism social phenotype

- To evaluate peer interaction and friendship – Social Interaction Observation (SIO; Bauminger et al., 2002, 2003, 2007a,b); Autism Peer Interaction Observation Scale for Preschool (APIOS- Bauminger-Zviely & Shefer, 2021); Friendship Observation Scale (FOS) for school ages and adolescence (e.g., Bauminger et al., 2008a,b, 2010a,b; Solomon et al., 2011); FOS-Young (FOS-Y) for preschoolers (e.g., Bauminger-Zviely & Agam Ben Artzi, 2014);
- To evaluate socio-communication – Peer talk: Pragmatic Rating Scale-Young (PRS-Y), adaptation of the PRS for preschoolers (Bauminger-Zviely et al., 2014, JCPP); Speech acts: adaptation of the Speech Acts Taxonomy (SAT) to Hebrew and autism (Bauminger-Zviely et al., 2017)

The ARI research team

The ARI's laboratory provides research fields for many MA, PhD, and post-Doc students (over 100 past and current) and works very closely with the autism MA specialization program at the faculty of education headed by Prof. Bauminger-Zviely.

Current research team:

1. **Post-Doc students**
2. **Dr. Shahar Bar-Yehuda; Dr. Yael Estrugo; Dr. Einat Karin**
3. **PhD students**
4. **Roni Poyas Naharan; Moti morgan**
5. **MA students**
6. **Miri Yardeni; Michal Maman; Tamar Gerbi**

Community Engagement

The ARI labs' evidenced-based intervention protocols are ecological which means that they are operated within schools and preschools by the psychoeducation staff supported by the ARI's research team, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, and autism associations such as ALUT and Otti-children's at-risk association. We provide many workshops on our intervention models and assessment procedures to psychoeducational staff across Israel. In addition, the intervention protocols are being studied and practiced in our clinical practicum during the autism MA studies.

International Engagement and Impact

The ARI Lab research activities yielded so far 2 books at Guilford and Springer, numerous book chapters and journal articles as well as national and international presentations on the field of autism and peer relations, friendship, social intervention, social emotions,

social cognition, and social communication. Ari's research activities are well-supported by grants (e.g., ISF, BSF, EU) and we provide international workshops on our intervention models (e.g., the PPSI workshop at the Ministry of Education in Geneva).

The ARI laboratory research products are widespread nationally and internationally!

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 [Autism research and Intervention Laboratory-The ARI Lab](#)



Prof. Pascale Benoliel

Diversity, Culture & Leadership Research Team

Head: Prof. Pascale Benoliel

About us

Within the realm of educational research, an expansive avenue of inquiry revolves around the dynamic interplay among religious, cultural, and socio-economic attributes, and how they intersect with educational leadership. We are deeply immersed in a multifaceted research endeavor that meticulously examines the nuanced interplay among cultural influences, human resource dynamics, and their profound impact on academic performance metrics. This multidimensional exploration extends further to investigate their profound implications for teacher effectiveness, school improvement initiatives, and the prevention of violence within educational settings. At the heart of this scholarly endeavor lies a collaborative effort led by two diverse teams. United by their passion for advancing knowledge, they embark on a journey of quantitative research, meticulously collecting data from a myriad of educational sectors.

The first team diligent efforts span across a broad spectrum, encompassing minority communities, including but not limited to ultra-orthodox and Arab populations. This research initiative delves into the intricacies of socio-economic diversity, exploring multiple levels of socioeconomic status (SES) and their influence on educational outcomes. With a keen focus on inclusivity, the team navigates through various school levels, ranging from elementary to secondary education, in pursuit of a comprehensive understanding of the educational landscape.

The second team focus extends beyond traditional measures like PISA scores to encompass a holistic assessment that includes financial literacy evaluations and measures of student resilience, thereby offering a comprehensive understanding of educational outcomes across diverse contexts within various OECD nations. At the core



of our research initiative lies a commitment to unraveling the intricate implications of global governance structures within the field of education. By delving into the complex dynamics shaped by cultural nuances and human resource practices, we aim to illuminate the pathways through which these factors intersect and influence educational equity and inclusion on a global scale. Our dedicated team of four aspiring scholars is diligently engaged in analyzing the rich dataset derived from the 2022 PISA study. Through rigorous quantitative analysis and meticulous examination of qualitative insights, we seek to uncover hidden patterns and trends that offer profound insights into the factors shaping educational outcomes across different cultural contexts and socio-economic landscapes.

Through their rigorous investigation, the teams endeavor to uncover insights that transcend conventional boundaries, aiming to unravel the complex web of factors shaping educational leadership and effectiveness. Their findings hold the promise of informing the development of evidence-based policies tailored to enhance school leadership practices, foster greater effectiveness, and promote inclusivity within educational institutions.

Principal activities and achievements

Several papers have been published, accepted for publication, and presented at national and international conferences.

Our team

Minority, leadership Culture and School Outcomes: Dr Misaa Nassir, Dr Nechama Nadav

PhD students: Ayala Zadok, Yasmine Abd Al Qader, Iris Maabari, Chani Friedman

Globalization, Culture, Leadership, and Student Achievements:

PhD students: Naom Ben-Ari, Raheli Friedman, Gaelle Ferreras and Ravit Mizrahi



Sample of publications

Nassir, M., & Benoliel, P. Participative decision-making in the Arab educational system in Israel: The implications for teachers' organizational commitment and school violence. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*.

Nassir, M., & Benoliel, P. (Accepted for publication, 2024). The implications of paternalistic leadership on school violence mediating by teachers' job satisfaction in the Arab educational system in Israel. *Journal of School Violence*.



Nadav, N., Benoliel, P., & Schechter, C. (Early online publication, 2024). Principals' systems thinking and student outcomes: The intervening role of school structure. *International Journal of Educational Management*.

Zadok, A., & Benoliel, P. & Schechter, C. (Early online publication, 2024). Teacher-leaders' personality traits of extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience and transformational leadership: The implications for collective teachers efficacy. *Teaching and Teacher Education*.

Nassir, M., & Benoliel, P. (Early online publication, 2024). Teacher well-being in Arab educational system in Israel: The implications of teacher involvement in decision-making and organizational commitment. *School Psychology*.

Abad Alkader, Y., & Benoliel, P. (2024). The implications of principal leadership styles on teachers' organizational commitment in the Israeli Arab educational minority. *Psychology in the School*, 61(3), 813-831.

Nassir, M., & Benoliel, P. (2023). The differences in the implications of participative decision-making and paternalistic leadership for teachers' perceived stress in the education system of the Israeli Arab minority. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 61(6), 623-645.

Nassir, M., & Benoliel, P. (2023). Promoting school effectiveness: Examining the mediating role of teachers' organizational commitment and the moderating role of a school cultural sector. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 17411432231167715.

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Prof. Iris BenDavid-Hadar

Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice (EDS) LAB

Head: Prof. Iris BenDavid-Hadar

Chair of BOD: Dr. Zehorit Dadon-Golan

About us

The Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice Lab was established by Prof. BenDavid-Hadar in 2009 at the Faculty of Education, Bar Ilan University. Its mission and main objectives are to advance research and promote understanding in the critical areas of educational equity, diversity, and social justice. The lab focuses on examining systemic inequities in education finance (inputs) and educational outcomes (outputs), developing innovative policy solutions to address disparities, and fostering improvement in education alongside promoting social justice.

Through rigorous academic studies, collaborative projects, and community engagement, the lab aims to identify barriers to equitable education and propose evidence-based strategies for improvement. Additionally, the EDS lab's Forum titled "Economic aspects of Education Policy" serves as a hub for scholars, educators, and policymakers to exchange ideas and work towards creating a more just and thriving society that benefits all students, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Principal activities and achievements

Significant research areas:

Education Finance and Policy, Economics and Education, Equity, and Equality in Resource Allocation to Education, Redistribution Mechanisms, Funding Formulae, Equity in Educational Outcomes, and Educational Improvement Models.

Principal achievements

Developing Longitudinal Non-Linear Multivariate Educational Improvement Models.

Our Team:

Equity in Education Finance Policy & Resource Allocation (ISF Funded Project) Post Doc Fellowship: Dr. Karen Sauer, Doctoral Students: **Mr. Sammy Attar, Ms. Ruth Meoded, Ms. Yafit Gorman, Ms. Elinor Ben-Levy**

Equity in Education Outcomes **Dr. Zehorit Dadon-Golan**, (National Insurance Funded Project), **Ms. Sigal Duany**, and Doctoral Student **Ms. Michal Tzadoky**

Equity in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Policy **Dr. Yaara Shilo, Ms. Hilla Nagar**

Rural (periphery) **Dr. Amor Amosi-Nissan**

Inclusion Policy (ultra-Orthodox) Doctoral Student: **Ms. Yael Leby**

Inclusion Policy (Students with SEN) **Ms. Lidor Edry**, Doctoral Student: **Ms. Revital Bar**

Equity in Language Policy (Arabic Speaking Students) Doctoral Students: **Ms. Fatina Sarsor, Ms. Sharon Malki-Levy**

Financial Education for Reducing the Gaps **Mr. Yaniv Haddad, Ms. Hilla Nagar, Ms. Or May Yazdy**

Community Engagement:

- Member of Israeli Forum for Promoting Equality of Education Opportunities (EEO)
- Presenting at the Israeli Parliament at the Education Committee
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Labor
-

International Engagement

- Member of the BOT at the National Education Finance Academy, US.
- Founder and Chair of the Economics and Finance of Education SIG at the Comparative International Education Society (CIES)
- UNESCO
- Education Commission

Impact

International and Global level

The LAB is at the forefront of developing innovative financial mechanisms to support the education of children in humanitarian crises, contributing to the Education Commission's Learning Generation Report under the leadership of Mr. Tony Blair, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom. We provide expert advice for UNESCO's Equity in Education Finance Report, ensuring equitable access to educational resources globally. Additionally, we offer strategic guidance for the World Bank's Equity Report, focusing on education finance in Sub-Saharan African countries. Our involvement in these high-impact initiatives underscores our commitment to advancing educational equity and addressing critical challenges in humanitarian contexts.

National level

We are engaged in developing indicators and measuring equity in educational outcomes to enhance the World Bank's EGini index. Our work includes creating a comprehensive resource allocation method for the Israeli education system, involving a new funding formula and allocation mechanism to ensure equitable distribution of resources. Additionally, we are developing a tailored allocation method for the Israeli Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector, focusing on reconceptualizing financial policies to support and promote the sector's growth and effectiveness. These initiatives aim to improve educational equity and optimize resource use, fostering a more robust and equitable education system.

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Dr. Vered Halamish

Learning and Cognition Lab

Head: Dr. Vered Halamish

About us

We apply cognitive psychology to education. Our research focuses on learning, memory, and metacognition among both adults and children. We are mostly interested in understanding the conditions that promote effective and long-lasting learning.

Principal activities and achievements

Research Area: Learning and Cognition, Metacognition

Our team

Head: **Vered Halamish, PhD**

Lab manager and post-doctorate student: Yael Meer (PhD)

PhD students: **Tzipora Vapur, Gal Pedael, Dviral Amor**

MA students: **Rachel Hachmon, Sapir Cohen, Avital Turm, Liat Eliasaf, Ayelet Berkov, Sapir Israelov**

International Engagement

International Collaboration: **Prof. Alan D. Castel**, UCLA; **Prof. Monika Undorf**, Technical University of Darmstadt

Impact

Funding: The lab is funded by grants from the Israeli Science Foundation (ISF) and (formerly) the German Israeli Foundation GIF.

Our research is published in high-profile journals such as Computers & Education, Metacognition and Learning, Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, & Cognition, and Memory & Cognition.

Contact Information

 Head: **Dr. Vered Halamish** vered.halamish@biu.ac.il

 Lab email: learning.biu@gmail.com

 Lab website



Dr. Annette Bamberger

Research and Innovation in Higher Education Lab

Head: Dr. Annette Bamberger

About us

The Research and Innovation in Higher Education Lab, established in 2022 by Dr. Annette Bamberger at Bar-Ilan University's Faculty of Education, is dedicated to advancing rigorous research in higher education policy, administration, and leadership. By conducting critically oriented, theoretically informed, and empirically robust studies, our lab provides foundational analyses that advance socially just, innovative, and effective leadership within the higher education sector.

Our lab strives to be a dynamic hub, fostering connections across the higher education ecosystem: academia, industry, civil society, and government. Through collaborative projects and critical dialogues, we aim to empower educational leaders and policymakers to drive innovative change in higher education.

Principal activities and achievements

Significant research areas: higher education policy; administration; internationalization; international higher education; global governance; globalization; innovation and entrepreneurship in (higher) education; diversity, equity and inclusion

We are collaborating closely with the Academic program of MA in Education Leadership, Policy and Organizational Development, specialization in Higher Education, Faculty of Education.



Our Team

Post-Doctorate students: **Dr. Yaniv Weinreb**: “Supervising International Research Students: Strategies and Rationales”.

PhD students: **Yossef Katanov**: “Ethnical Dilemmas around International Postdoctoral Mobility: National, Institutional and Individual Perspectives”; **Yishai Fraenkel**: “Parliamentary research bodies and higher education research: Walking the line between relevance and legitimacy”; **Keren Sagi**: “Higher Education Policy:

Administrators as Agents of Change”; Reut Shochat: “Global education policy: a critical analysis of the OECD’s creativity regime across schools and higher education”; Manxi Liu: The University’s Third Mission in China.

MA students

Maya Avital: “Marketing Higher Education to Underrepresented Populations: the Case of Ultra-Orthodox in Israel”; **Naama Alfasi**: “Social and Emotional Learning as a Novel Concept in Israeli education system: Principals’ Perspectives across Religious and Secular Schools in Israel”; **Reut Osher**: “AI as Disruptive Innovation in Education: Comparative Perspectives of Principals across Schools in Israel”.

Community Engagement

Israel Comparative Education Society

National Erasmus+ Office

Council for Higher Education

WISER Post-doctoral Mentorship Program

International Engagement

Associate Member: Centre for Higher Education Studies (CHES), UCL Institute of Education, London, UK

Editorial Board Member: *Teaching in Higher Education*; *European Journal of Education*; *Higher Education Quarterly*

EU COST Network: Rising Nationalisms Shifting Geopolitics and the Future of European and Research Openness (Israel delegate)

EU COST Network: European Network on International Student Mobility (Working Group Member)

Awards Committee Service, Higher Education SIG, CIES



Impact

Academic Impact: Our lab consistently contributes to scholarly dialogue through peer-reviewed publications in prominent journals.

Educational Impact: We enhance the MA in Education Leadership, Policy, and Organizational Development program, focusing on shaping future higher education researchers and leaders. The program blends theoretical insights with practical skills, enabling graduates to effectively influence and advance the field of higher education. This commitment not only professionalizes higher education administration and leadership but also elevates the standard of research and practice both in Israel and globally.

Practical Impact: We produce reports and develop evidence-based solutions aimed at improving practices within higher education policymaking, administration, and leadership. These initiatives are designed to translate research findings into actionable strategies that address real-world challenges.

Contact Information



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Inaugural Conference: June 24, 2024

Ivory Towers?: Universities Leading Innovation and Societal Transformation in Times of Crisis

Keynote Speaker: **Prof. Noah Drezner**, Teacher’s College, Columbia University

Prof. Pascale Benoliel, Prof. Zehavit Gross, Dr. Annette Bamberger, Prof. Noah Drezner





Dr. Annette Bamberger, Prof. Pascale Benoliel, Prof. Iris BenDavid, Prof. Noah Drezner, Prof. Chen Schechter



Mr. Maor Pinko, Prof. Zehavit Gross, Prof. Pascale Benoliel



Prof. Nira Mashal



Dr. Oded Meiron

The Brain and Language Lab

Head: Prof. Nira Mashal

Director: Dr. Oded Meiron

About us

Different clinical populations suffer from difficulties in language, executive functioning, and pragmatics understanding necessary for proper functioning in daily life. The Brain & Language Lab studies the ways to improve cognitive, verbal, and pragmatic abilities in clinical populations including people with ASD, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder (ADHD), intellectual disabilities, and schizophrenia. A thorough understanding of these difficulties and the development of training programs to improve those difficulties requires a combination of careful diagnosis with relevant theoretical knowledge. On the other hand, Mashal's lab has set itself the goal of improving an individual's unique and creative thinking ability. The research methods used in the lab are electrical brain stimulation (tDCS), neuropsychological experiments, electrophysiology (ERP), and examination of hemispheric differences (DVF).

Principal activities and achievements

The **MA Neuroeducation** program was established 3 years ago to implement the mission to apply the growing body of knowledge in neuroscience and psychology in the educational field. Despite the widespread knowledge accumulating in the neurosciences, very little is leaking into the education system and special populations in particular. The overarching goal of the program is to equip program learners with research-based tools and intervention programs so that they can improve an individual's cognitive, pragmatic,

and verbal abilities. As part of the program, students will receive an extensive theoretical basis of various developmental disabilities and will be exposed to studies in the brain sciences that link these disabilities to the relevant brain function.

Our team

Prof. Mashal; Dr. Meiron, Dr. Anat Barnea, and Dr. Haim Raviv

Community Engagement & International Engagement

We collaborate with medical centers (e.g., BioKeshev) and research centers such as the CCNY Neural Engineering Group (NY) that study the effects of electricity on the human body and apply this knowledge toward the development of medical devices and electrical safety guidelines.

Contact Information


 Email: nira.mashal@biu.ac.il


 For publications and more information



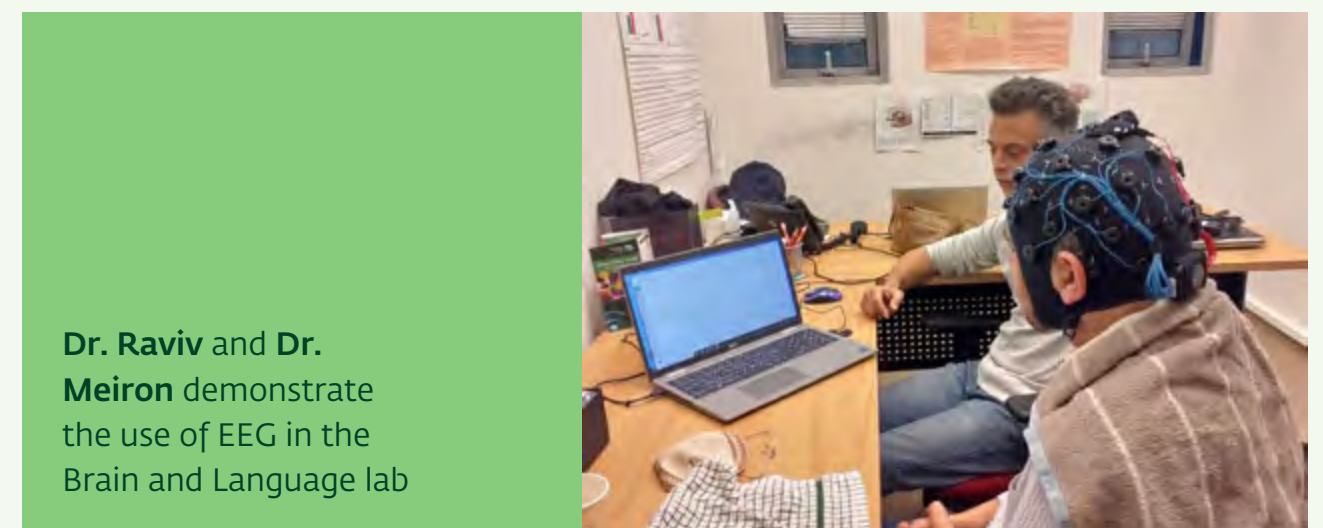
A visit of the 2023-2024 course cohort to Herzog Medical Center, led by Dr. Meiron, who presented brain stimulation devices for the treatment of depression.



Neuroeducation program students. One of the highlights of the talk was the demonstration of EEG recording of Shoshi Shilon's brain waves with the assistance of Renana Vaknin Harel. It exemplified the power of scientific methodologies in unraveling the mysteries of human conditions.



Guest lecturer and EEG demonstration during **Prof. Mashal** Language and Brain class



Dr. Raviv and **Dr. Meiron** demonstrate the use of EEG in the Brain and Language lab



Prof. Adina Shamir

The Center and Research Lab of Advanced Technologies for Children with Special Educational Needs

Head & Founder: Prof. Adina Shamir

About us

The main goal of the Center & Research Lab is to advance young children with special needs, via advanced, timely, age-appropriate educational technologies. To achieve this goal, as part of an Ecological approach, the center operates in four dimensions: clinical, training professionals, Parents' guidance, and follow-up research.

The Clinical Dimension. Using state-of-the-art technologies adapted especially to the child's specific difficulties, the clinic centers on building academic skills using individual and group interventions. An individual intervention program is planned for each child after undergoing a diagnostic process in the clinic. It should be indicated that preference is given to children from a low socioeconomic background.

The Training Professionals Dimension. Training is provided for professionals working in the field is delivered on two levels: (a) Training workshops aimed at using Advanced Technologies; (b) Following the child's intervention period, the child's educator is provided with guidance and advanced tools. In addition, children's parents participate in a workshop that provides them with Technological mediation tools.

Parents' guidance. Parents are provided with updated mediation tools and learn how to adapt various technologies for promoting learning with their children.

The Research Dimension. The Center is committed to developing new knowledge by closely following the clinical work and training of professionals with sound cutting-edge research. Faculty research leaders in the field and students are involved.

Impact

Through innovative clinical work, state-of-the-art training, and cutting-edge research, the center and research lab of Advanced Technologies is devoted to contributing to the community and helping children with learning disabilities grow and advance to their full potential.

Contact information

 Head: Prof. Adina Shamir: Shamira@biu.ac.il





Prof. Reuma Gadassi-Polack

The Emotion Socialization and Neuroscience (ESN) Lab

Director: Prof. Reuma Gadassi-Polack

About us

The ESN lab focuses on understanding how neurobiological and interpersonal factors support typical and atypical emotional development, with an emphasis on the development of depression during adolescence and the parent-adolescent relationship. We use a combination of methods to assess subjective emotional experience (daily diaries, behavioral observations) with objective measures focusing on neural and hormonal activation (fMRI, cortisol, and oxytocin). While most of the research on parenting focuses on the parent, and most of the developmental research focuses on the child, the ESN adopts a dyadic perspective.

Principal activities and achievements

This year will focus on setting up the new lab in BIU and designing research protocols as well as running two studies: (1) an online study on the interpretation of social situations and interpersonal emotion regulation in adolescents, and (2) a study in Tel-Aviv Medical Center, Ichilov on well-being and emotion regulation in families in which the children have Neurofibromatosis 1 (NF1).

Our team

The current team includes two international Ph.D. students, a postdoctoral fellow, and six M.A. students from the Academic College Tel-Aviv Yaffo. As this is my first year at BIU, I am looking for new students (B.A., M.A., and Ph.D.) interested in my research.

Community Engagement

The ESN lab has ongoing collaborations with **Dr. Haran Sened**, **Dr. Noga Cohen**, and **Dr. Joy Bentov** from Haifa University, **Dana Lassri** from The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and **Dr. Hagit Toledano** from The Tel-Aviv Medical Center – Ichilov.

International Engagement

The ESN lab has ongoing collaborations with **Dr. Jutta Joormann** from Yale University, Dr. Hedy Kober from Berkley University, **Dr. Jonas Everaert** from Tilburg University, **Dr. Michael Bronstein** from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, and Dr. James Gross from Stanford University.

Impact



Sample publications:

Gadassi Polack, R., Mollick, J. A., Keren, H., Joormann, J., & Watts, R. (2023). Neural responses to reward valence and magnitude from pre-to early adolescence. *NeuroImage*, 120166. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2023.120166>

Gadassi Polack†, R., Bronsteint, M. V., Questel, M., Edelman, A., Vinogradov, S., Kober, H., Joormann, J., Everaert, J. (2023). Interpretation flexibility as a resilience factor for emotional reactions to social situations in children and adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology*, 35(5), 2352-2364. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579423000834>

Beech, A., Edelman, A., Yatziv, T., Rutherford, H., Joormann, J., & Gadassi-Polack, R*. (2023) Stress-Induced Cortisol Response in Pregnant and Nulliparous Women Longitudinally Predicts Depressive Symptoms during population level stress. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 340, 33-41. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2023.07.093>

Gadassi Polack, R., Paganini, G., Zhang, A. K., Dworschak, C., Silk, J., Kober, H., & Joormann, J. (2024). It's a balancing act: The ratio of maladaptive (vs. all) emotion regulation strategies is associated with depression. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.brat.2024.104600>

Gadassi Polack, R., Questel, M., Sened, H., Marshall, H. E., Chen, G. J., Geiger, E. J., Bar-Yosef, T., & Joormann, J. (in press). Interpersonal emotion regulation and depressive symptoms in parent-adolescent dyads: A daily-diary investigation. *Emotion*. 10.31234/osf.io/epj5z

Full list of publications can be found in:

<https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Reuma-Gadassi-Polack>

Media mentions (this year):

-  Haaretz Website
-  Walla Website

Contact Information

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Faculty of
Education
Bar-Ilan University

The Harris
Program
For Infants, Toddlers &
Families in Israel

Prof. Esther Adi-Japha

The Harris Program for Infants, Toddlers and their Families

Head: Prof. Esther Adi-Japha

About us

The Harris Program for Infants, Toddlers and their Families at the Faculty of Education at Bar-Ilan University, founded in 1996 by the late Prof. Pnina Klein, is an academic professional body that mediates theoretical, research-based, and up-to-date knowledge in the field of early childhood development and pedagogy, and daily application in working with infants, toddlers and their families. The program aims to promote the quality of care and education that infants, toddlers, and preschool children receive.

Our long-term goal is to support the optimal development and mental health of each infant and toddler in Israel, including those from low-income groups, diverse ethnic groups, minority populations, immigrants, and children with special needs.

Our short-term goals are:

- To develop, implement, and assess early intervention and prevention programs for at-risk infants and toddlers and their families.
- To promote the quality of education and care provided to infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarteners by providing interdisciplinary knowledge and training professionals and caregivers.
- To initiate, design and support applied research on infant and toddler care and education provided in daycare, at home, and in community centers.

- To promote the dissemination of information and knowledge on infant and toddler mental health, development, and educate through conferences, workshops, a website, and publications.

Principal activities and achievements

The Harris program at Bar-Ilan University includes two units:

- Clinical-developmental unit
- Training center for enhancing educational quality

Through these units, the program provides a service to a variety of population groups in Israel by operating intervention programs, guidance, training, and counseling for parents and professionals as well as for organizations, municipalities, and policymakers.

We developed a set of specialized courses and intervention programs. The MISC-SR (More Intelligent and Sensitive Child – Self Regulation) Mediation Intervention for sensitizing caregivers and enhancing self-regulation for clinical professional staff (Jaegermann & Klein, 2010); and the MISC – DAP (More Intelligent and Sensitive Child – Developmentally Appropriate Practice) based interventions as well as the early childhood curriculum program (Shohet, Givon, & Adi-Japha, 2021) for early childhood and care caregivers.

- **The Clinical-developmental unit, headed by Dr. Nurit Jaegermann and Ayelet David** is active at the university clinic and in various projects in the community with populations at risk, for example: Well Baby clinics and the Shekma Ramat Gan Preschool Center. The intervention program taught and implemented in the unit (the MISC-SR) is focused on promoting self-regulation abilities and the quality of parent-child interaction with preschool children with developmental challenges. Courses with the intervention program are given throughout the country.
- **The Training Center for Enhancing Educational Quality unit, headed by Ravit Rosenfeld-Kraft** is active at the university and in various projects in the country with out-of-home education and care staff, for example in the Tel-Aviv municipality. The intervention programs taught and implemented in the unit (The MISC-DAP, and ECEC curriculum) are focused on promoting the quality of care, based on the developmentally appropriate practice (DAP) program.

These Harris activities are county-wide spread, and we are in continuing contact with policymakers. For example, the national early childhood curriculum in Israel was written by the Harris program members.

Our Team

Clinical-developmental unit: **Dr. Nurit Jaegermann** and **Ayelet David** who are both experienced Occupational Therapist (OT).

Training Center for Enhancing Educational Quality: **Ravit Rosenfeld-Kraft** who is an OT and expert on counselling early childhood education and care staff.

Community Engagement

Clinical-developmental unit

- On going project in Well Baby clinics, Ministry of Health
- The Shekma Ramat Gan Preschool Center for children with special needs
- Working with children with special needs and their parents who were evacuated from their homes in the south and north of the country and live in Kfar Ha'Maccabiah during the current *Iron Sword* war. The team continues to follow and guide some of the families even after they have returned to their homes.
- Continuous training on a weekly basis for therapeutic staff at Matia (Ministry of Education) in Netivot.
- Training on mutual regulation in parent-child interaction for teams from the health professions - Ministry of Education North Region.
- Nationwide theoretical and practical training for developmental occupation clinics of general health services.
- Project of playgrounds in the Takuma region (surrounding Gaza) - training of professional staff to work with parents and preschool children in playgrounds (Ministry of Health).
- Continue training for the staff of the rehabilitation day care centers of the Alvin association in the north of the country (toddlers with special needs). The association introduced the intervention model to work with parents within the dormitory.

Training Center for Enhancing Educational Quality

- Development-appropriate practice courses operated on two levels: one through local authorities for instructors of that authority (financed by the authority, e.g., Tel-Aviv, Ramat Negev) and the other, in the private sector for instructors, managers and supervisors who wanted to pay for the subject.
- MISC-DAP courses - a basic course and an advanced course in mediation in birth-three settings were given this year to managers and counselors: Or Yehuda municipality.
- Training in the Arab Society for principals of educational settings operating without a license: Kfar Qasim, Kfar Bara and Jaljulia.
- Development of tools and training for daycare administrators that focus on identifying managing risk situations in today's daycare centers in Israel: The south district Ministry of Education and Or Yehuda municipality.
- Establishing and leading a group of supervisor supervision colleagues in the local authorities (Tel Aviv-Jaffa (guidance of about 65 guides), Givatayim, Hod Hasharon, Tel Mond, Hadera, Or Yehuda, Hebal Modi'in Regional Council, Kfar Saba, Nesher, Afula, Bat Yam, Ramat Negev Regional Council, Yeruham, Dimona and Kiryat Ono.

- Writing a chapter on early childhood and care staff training in the Ministry of Education's Department of Procedures for operating day care centers

International Engagement

The Harris program at Bar-Ilan university works under the Harris Foundation. The Harris Foundation is a philanthropic foundation that supports leading university teams throughout the US and Israel who are engaged in promoting the mental health of young children and their families to ensure better emotional wellbeing and developmental outcomes.

The Harris program is involved in implementing the MISC program in different regions of Africa (NIH funded project, as part of a collaboration with **Prof. Carla Sharp**, Huston University, USA).

Impact

Numerous publications by the Late **Prof. Klein**, **Prof. Korat** who headed the Harris program 2015-2024, and now by **Prof. Esther Adi-Japha**.

Recent grants

2024-2027	Ministry of Education Evaluation of a Diploma course for daycare caregivers PI: Prof. Yair Ziv (Haifa University) and Prof. Esther Adi-Japha
2022-2023	National Insurance Research Funds Early Childhood Allowances and Academic Achievements: The Impact of Allowance Cut in 2003 on Meitzav Test Scores. PI: Prof. Esther Adi-Japha AND Prof. Yossi Shavit (Tel-Aviv University)
2022-2023	Ministry of Education Assessment of the instability in early childhood education settings due to the Corona epidemic: Implications for education staff, parents, and children. PI: Dr. Anat Moed (Bar-Ilan University) and Prof. Esther Adi-Japha

Contact Information


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The Harris program holds a bi-yearly conference and accompanies a book series in Hebrew for the general public.





Prof. Einat Levy-Gigi

Trauma Coping and Growth lab

Head: Prof. Einat Levy-Gigi

Manager: Ms. Shir Porat-Butman

About us

The lab is designed to study the unique nature of repeated traumatic exposure and its relation to brain mechanisms, behavior, and functioning. We challenge the traditional approach, which distinguishes health from illness, and aim to explore a wider and more complicated range of trauma consequences. This is done while trying to identify and predict different trajectories of repeated traumatic exposure and develop possible interventions for individuals before and after traumatic exposure.

Principal activities and achievements

Studies conducted in our lab focus on the possible hidden price and the potential benefits of such exposure. We work with a wide variety of populations, including the Israeli police, the Israel fire and rescue service, and civilians who live in conflict regions, to better define these effects and how they are reflected in clinical symptoms and daily functioning. This is done using neuroimaging and behavioral tools such as computer-based paradigms and Ecological Momentary Assessment (EMA).

Many alternative treatments are available for people experiencing anxiety and mood-related symptoms. Recent cross-sectional and prospective studies conducted in our lab demonstrate the significant role of cognitive and emotional regulation flexibility in the relationship between repeated traumatic exposure and the tendency to develop and maintain clinical symptoms. In our studies, we develop and apply novel neurocognitive, cognitive flexibility, and interpersonal emotion regulation interventions to reduce symptoms and improve adaptive functioning in various populations.

Community Engagement

The lab voluntarily works with the “Women to Women” initiative, which aims to help women who suffer abuse become a part of society. As part of this project, we assess the process of mentors training and their pairing with women from different shelters, trying to identify the factors that predict successful adjustment.

International Engagement

The lab actively collaborates with labs in Israel and around the world.

Childhood Maltreatment: Childhood maltreatment is associated with altered responses to social stimuli and interpersonal signals. Our previous study found that individuals who experienced greater child maltreatment prefer to keep a larger distance from both friends and strangers. This may suggest a general tendency to keep a social distance and an impaired ability to react differently in close and distant relationships. Here, we aim to test the role of updating biases in childhood maltreatment as a function of social closeness. The results may shed light on possible mechanisms that account for maladaptive social behavior in individuals who experienced childhood maltreatment and may pave the way to develop personalized interventions that treat social-related updating biases.

The countries collaborating on this research are:

- Singapore Institute of Technology
- Kurume University, Japan
- Federal Armed Forces University, Munich
- Koç University School of Medicine, Turkey
- Universidad Peruana de Ciencias Aplicadas, Peru
- University of Barcelona, Spain
- Koç University School of Medicine, Turkey
- Mid Sweden University, Sweden
- University of Zurich, Switzerland
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay, Mumbai
- University of Fribourg, Switzerland
- University of Zurich, Switzerland
- McGill University, Canada
- Saarland University, Germany

Repeated Exposure to Trauma: Responses to repeated trauma exposure are varied; whereas some individuals develop psychopathological symptoms, others do not. Our goal is to understand the differences between individuals, particularly how cognitive and



regulatory flexibility moderates the relationship between repeated trauma exposure and the development of psychopathological symptoms. As part of these studies, we collaborate with Columbia University, NYC.

Cognitive Mechanisms of Social Anxiety: Difficulties in flexibly updating social behaviors are associated with social anxiety (SA) and may impair adaptive social functioning. Previous studies have found that individuals with higher levels of social anxiety struggle to update negative social information even when presented with new, positive feedback. This could indicate a broader issue with adjusting social behaviors based on new information, which might affect close and distant relationships. Our studies explore the role of these updating biases in social anxiety, specifically focusing on the differences in response when hidden information about unchosen social options is explicitly revealed. The findings may provide insights into the mechanisms underlying maladaptive social behaviors in individuals with social anxiety. They could inform the development of targeted interventions to address these specific updating biases in social contexts.

As part of these studies, we collaborate with Yale University, NH, USA and the Psychology Department at Bar-Ilan University.

Flexibility and Balance as Characteristics of Adaptive Self-Regulation: We investigate the roles of flexibility and balance in self-regulatory behavior and mental well-being. Our research focuses on two main themes: flexibility, which refers to adapting behavior according to different contexts, and balance, which involves managing conflicting considerations crucial for achieving goals and maintaining long-term well-being. Flexibility suggests that no single strategy is inherently adaptive or maladaptive, as the most effective response varies depending on the situation. Balance requires weighing different factors that may conflict but are each important for success and well-being. While the significance of flexibility and balance is widely acknowledged, how individuals regulate themselves in these domains is poorly understood. This project aims to fill that gap by exploring these regulatory processes in depth.

In these studies, we collaborate with Saarland University, Germany. Levy-Gigi is a Mercator Fellow in a joint Research Training Group Grant, funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG).

Empathy and brain mechanisms in emotional processing studies: The relationship between empathy and trauma exposure is linked to alterations in brain mechanisms involved in emotional processing and understanding others' feelings. We aim to investigate possible changes manifest after traumatic events and how they affect empathy and clinical symptoms.

As part of these studies, we collaborate with Leiden University, in the Netherlands and with the Psychology Department at the University of Haifa

Tech Tools for Stress Management: Teachers face school-related stress. Our research is focused on developing a technology-based tool to train educators to cope with school stress. As part of these studies, we collaborate with Jyväskylä University, Finland



Impact

Trauma, Coping, and Growth lab has significantly impacted international academic communities by advancing the understanding of cognitive and affective mechanisms of anxiety and mood-related disorders. Through collaborations with global institutions such as Columbia University, Yale University, and others in different countries, we have published many papers in important outlets. Our research has led to the development of innovative interventions aimed at improving mental health outcomes in diverse populations. This work is internationally recognized, influencing both academic and clinical practices.



Selected Publications for the Past Three Years

Haim-Nachum S, Sopp MR, Lüönd AM, Afzal N, Åhs F, Allgaier AK,... Levy-Gigi E,...Pflatz M. (2024). *Childhood Maltreatment is Linked to Larger Preferred Interpersonal Distances Towards Friends and Strangers Across the Globe*. *Translational Psychiatry*.

Nizri H, Hemi A, & Levy-Gigi E. (2024). Regulatory flexibility and school climate moderate the relationship between stress exposure and depression severity in school educators. *Scientific Reports*, 14, 11543.

Zabag R, Kivity Y, Gilboa-Schechtman E, & Levy-Gigi E. (2024). Better social reversal learning is associated with more social approach across time. *Scientific Reports*, 4, 8443.

Haim-Nachum S, Kube T, Rozenkrantz L, Lazarov A, Levy-Gigi E, Michael T, Neria Y, & Sopp MR. (2024). Does disconfirmatory evidence shape safety- and danger-related beliefs of trauma-exposed individuals? *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 15, 2335788.

Levy-Gigi E, Rachmani M, & Defrin R. (2024). The relationship between traumatic exposure and pain perception in children: The moderating role of posttraumatic symptoms. *Pain*





Zabag R, Rinck M, Becker E, Gilboa-Schechtman E, & Levy-Gigi E. (2024). Although I Know it: Social Anxiety is Associated with a Deficit in Positive Updating Even When the Cost of Avoidance is Obvious. *Journal of Psychiatric Research*, 169, 279-283.

Treitel C, & Levy-Gigi E. (2023). The Dual Role of Time Perception in Trauma-Exposed Individuals:

A Conceptual Review . *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*

Levy-Gigi E, Sudai E, & Bar M. (2023). Context as a barrier: Impaired contextual processing increases the tendency to develop PTSD symptoms across repeated exposure to trauma. *Journal of Anxiety Disorders*, 100, 102765.

Naor R, Shamay-Tsoory S. & Levy-Gigi E. (2023). The effectiveness of interpersonal emotion regulation and the role of anxiety in parent-adolescent relationships. *Cognitive Therapy & Research*, 47, 648-654.

Hemi A, Sopp MR, Perel A, Holmes EA, Levy-Gigi E. (2023). Cognitive flexibility moderates the efficacy of a visuospatial intervention following exposure to analog trauma. *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry*, 81, 101858.

Harel O, Hemi A, Levy-Gigi E. (2023). The role of cognitive flexibility in moderating the effect of school-related stress exposure. *Scientific Reports*, 13(1):5241.

Hemi A, Sopp MR, Bonanno GA, Michael T, McGiffin J, Levy-Gigi E. (2023). Flexibility predicts chronic anxiety and depression during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic: A longitudinal investigation of mental health trajectories. *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*

Zabag R, Azoulay R, Rinck M, Becker E, Levy-Gigi E*. & Gilboa-Schechtman E* (2023). You never get a chance to undo a negative first impression: Social anxiety is associated with impaired positive updating of social information. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 203, 111993. *Equal contribution

Levy-Gigi E, & Shamay-Tsoory S. (2022). Affect labeling: The role of timing and intensity. *PloS One*, 17(12), e0279303.

Hemi A, Sopp MR, Schaefer S, Michael T, & Levy-Gigi E. (2022). Adaptive responding to prolonged stress exposure: A binational study on the impact of flexibility on latent profiles of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to the COVID-19 pandemic. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 30(6): e6163-e6174.



Haim-Nachum, S, Sopp MR, Bonanno GA, & Levy-Gigi E. (2022). The lasting effects of early adversity, updating ability, and the tendency to develop PTSD symptoms following trauma in adulthood. *Cognitive Therapy and Research*, 46,1101-1112.

Zabag R, Gilboa-Schechtman E*, & Levy-Gigi E. (2022). Reacting to changing environment: Updating patterns in social anxiety. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 157:104159.

Pfaltz M, Halligan S, Haim-Nachum S, Sopp MR, Åhs F, Bachem R, Bartoli E, Belete H, Belete T, Berzengi A, Dukes D, Essadek A, Iqbal N, Jobson L, Langevin R, Levy-Gigi E, ... & Seedat S. (2022). Social functioning in individuals affected by childhood maltreatment: Establishing a research agenda to inform interventions. *Psychotherapy and Psychosomatics*, 91(4):238-251.

Sopp MR, Haim-Nachum, S, Wirth BE, Bonanno GA, & Levy-Gigi E. (2022). Leaving the door open: Trauma, updating, and the development of PTSD symptoms. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 154:104098.

Recently completed projects: Mental health, burnout and emotion regulation in Israeli parents during the Israel-Hamas (Iron Swords) war – a longitudinal study (in collaboration with **Prof. Noga Cohen** and **Dr. Joy Bentov** from Haifa University and **Dr. Dana Lassri** from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem).

Ongoing projects: Interpretation of social situations and interpersonal emotion regulation in adolescence.

Upcoming projects: Intra-personal and interpersonal emotion regulation in parents and children: The case of NF1 (in collaboration with **Dr. Hagit Toledano**, Ichilov Medical Center).

Contact Information



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Prof. Tova Michalsky

Virtual Reality Education Lab: Learning Beyond Imagination

Head: Professor Tova Michalsky

About us

The **Virtual Reality Education Lab: Learning Beyond Imagination** is at the heart of our efforts to transform education in underserved communities. This cutting-edge lab is dedicated to advancing innovative educational practices by harnessing the power of immersive technology. As part of the **Institute for Community Education and Research**, the lab is crucial in bridging educational gaps in disadvantaged areas. Through a range of programs designed to stimulate learning processes among students and promote the professional development of teachers in the periphery, we are working to create opportunities for future generations and support educators in their vital roles.

Prof. Michalsky and her lab team have developed the innovative “PfS” (Pedagogical Frameworks for Self-regulation) method, designed to enhance preservice and in-service teachers’ “professional vision” (PV) for self-regulated learning (SRL). This method enables teachers to analyze SRL-teaching events using video cases of expert educators. The “PfS” method integrates computer-based observation tools to analyze and code both quantitative and qualitative classroom pedagogical scenarios. Additionally, Prof. Michalsky and her team have established a unified, interdisciplinary research agenda focused on exploring the use of immersive technologies—such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MR)—to study, measure, understand, teach, and train self-regulation (and metacognition) among both human and artificial teachers and learners in STEM education. These technologies open up innovative avenues for integrating educational, psychological, instructional, engineering, and computing sciences to address pressing educational, instructional, and training challenges. The

lab’s research contributes to a transformative agenda aimed at advancing the science of learning, teaching, and instruction. By systematically addressing 21st-century educational challenges, Prof. Michalsky’s work seeks to make significant and measurable progress in overcoming contemporary issues facing education and training on a national and global scale.

Principal activities and achievements

Clinical Simulations in Education: clinical simulations provide a controlled ,realistic environment for students to practice and refine their skills ,particularly in fields like medicine ,psychology ,and teacher training .These simulations allow for experiential learning ,enabling participants to respond to real-world scenarios without the risks associated with actual practice.

Immersive Virtual Reality Learning Environments (VRLEs): Immersive Virtual Reality Learning Environments offer learners an engaging, interactive space to explore complex concepts and scenarios.

Diversity in Classrooms: Diversity in classrooms encompasses cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, and learning differences among students. This area explores strategies for creating inclusive classrooms, promoting equity in education, and addressing systemic barriers.

Adaptive Teaching Strategies: Adaptive teaching involves tailoring instructional methods to meet the unique needs of individual learners. Adaptive teaching research explores how technology can support personalized learning pathways and improve outcomes for students with varying abilities and needs.

Our team

Prof .Tova Michalsky

PhD students :Zorit Yassin ,Sharon Offri ,Sharon Sofer ,Odelia Ozeri

Community Engagement

Education department: Ofakim, Ber-Sheva, kibbutz Capri, Eshel Hanasi, Holon and Caduri

International Engagement

Grants EFG- EARLI

Impact

Grants: EFG EARLI

The Emerging Field Group (EFG) initiative aims to support researchers engaged in innovative and promising fields. An EFG is composed of a small, internationally active

group of researchers focused on learning and instruction within a newly emerging area of study. EARLI provides these researchers with the opportunity to collaborate intensively over a short period, exploring new possibilities and advancing knowledge within their shared field of interest.



Publications:

Ader, E. & Michalsky, T. (in press). Self-Regulated Learning in Immersive Virtual Reality: A Case Study on a Pre-Service Teacher's Behavior and Perceptions. *Computers in Human Behavior Reports*.

Michalsky, T. (2024). Contribution of Metacognitive Questions to Accuracy of Judgment of Learning in a Digital Environment. *Heliyon*. e40055 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e40055>

Michalsky, T. (2024). Metacognitive Scaffolding for Preservice Teachers' Self-Regulated Design of Higher Order Thinking Tasks. *Heliyon*, 10 (2), e2480. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e24280>

Michalsky, T., & Avigail Cohen (2021). Prompting Socially Shared Regulation of Learning and Creativity in Solving STEM Problems. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 722535. [doi: frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg](https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.630197)

Michalsky, T. (2021). Preservice and Inservice Teachers' Noticing of Explicit Instruction for Self-Regulated Learning Strategies. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 63097. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.630197

Michalsky, T. (2021). When to Scaffold Motivational Self-Regulation Strategies for High School Students' Science Text Comprehension. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 658027. doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.658027

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Concluding Remarks

As you come to the end of the Faculty of Education's Digital Catalog, we hope you have gained a comprehensive understanding of the diverse academic and research activities within our faculty. This catalog not only highlights our academic achievements but also showcases the extensive work carried out by our chairs, laboratories, and research centers, reflecting our strong commitment to societal impact, international collaboration, and community engagement.

Our faculty thrives in a dynamic environment, continuously advancing education through interdisciplinary research and innovative methodologies, contributing meaningfully to our shared mission of fostering knowledge and practice in education.

This catalog offers a rich visual and descriptive journey through our diverse research initiatives, highlighting the innovative solutions and impactful contributions our work brings to both academia and the broader community. By showcasing these achievements, we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of our faculty's dynamic efforts to address real-world challenges, emphasizing their relevance and practical applications.

Through this collection, we celebrate the collaborative spirit driving our projects and the meaningful partnerships formed with local and international stakeholders. We aspire to inspire future collaborations, foster interdisciplinary research, and strengthen our global relationships, positioning our faculty as a hub for academic excellence and societal impact.

We thank you for your interest in the Faculty of Education and look forward to forging new connections that will further expand our academic community and impact.



Prof. Pascale Benoliel

Head, International Relations and Affairs Unit

Faculty of Education, Bar-Ilan University

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