

Abstracts

A questionnaire to check the self-efficacy of educational counselors in Israel

Limor Applebaum, Arie Cohen and Nir Madher

The purpose of the current study is to describe the Hebrew version of the Counselor Activity Self Efficacy Scale, its reliability, and validity. This version was tested on a convenience sample of 324 educational counselors working in various schools across Israel. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses yielded a shortened questionnaire consisting of 23 items ($\alpha = .90$) and five main factors: basic and management skills ($\alpha = .90$), session activities ($\alpha = .81$), client in distress ($\alpha = .78$), counselor-client relationship ($\alpha = .76$), and challenging client ($\alpha = .73$). The external validity of the overall score is supported by a moderate correlation with professional seniority, higher average scores of counselors in high schools compared to those in elementary schools, correlations with personality measures such as conscientiousness, openness to experiences, extraversion, and a negative correlation with neuroticism. The research findings indicate the personality characteristics of educational counselors and may help in selecting candidates for counseling studies and self-evaluation and raising awareness among educational counselors.

Keywords: Counselor Activity Self-Efficacy Scale (CASES), school counselors, school counselors, self-efficacy, The Big Five.

School counselors' perceptions regarding the inclusion of students with disabilities into regular education

Dana Aizenkot

This study examines the perceptions of school counselors regarding the implementation of inclusion policies for students with disabilities in regular education. Approximately 60% of students with special needs in Israel are integrated into regular education. A recent study revealed a decline in perceptions of school principals and educators regarding the contribution of inclusion and the willingness to include students with disabilities in regular education. The current study, which relies on qualitative methodology, was designed to study the perceptions of school counselors regarding the benefits, challenges, difficulties, and professional dilemmas that arise in relation to the implementation of inclusion. 58 school counselors answered an open-ended questionnaire developed for the study. The findings indicate the benefits of inclusion, alongside challenges arising from the way inclusion is implemented, including inadequate training, knowledge, and tools of educational teams, a lack of resources necessary for the success of inclusion, and challenging conditions in second grade. What type of inclusion is being implemented, namely the complexity and crowding in classrooms, which make it difficult for educational teams to allocate the resources needed for inclusion to succeed. The significance of the research findings and recommendations for the work of school counselors are discussed.

Keywords: inclusive education; students with disabilities; school counselors; inclusion policy.

Attitudes of elementary school principals in free schools and in Waldorf education toward the role of educational counselors

Amit Rottman and Galia Ostricher-Leon

Educational counselors have an important role. However, in Israeli elementary schools, the Ministry of Education does not force the employment of counselors. Therefore, we asked to examine school managers' attitudes regarding the profession. Particularly interesting are attitudes in alternative schools, which tend to conflict with mainstream values. The study examined managers' worldviews in "free" and Anthroposophy schools through 12 qualitative in-depth interviews. The findings indicate ambivalent attitudes toward the profession despite a recognition of its importance. School managers expressed concerns about the integration of counselors in their schools, both in free and Waldorf education, and only half of the interviewees employed counselors in practice despite their recognition of the role's contribution. Among managers who employ consultants, great satisfaction with the position was revealed. Moreover, it was found that exposure to the duty increased the recognition of its importance. Among managers who did not employ counselors, the most prominent explanation was the fear of external intervention. In addition, explanations were related to the institution's budget and unique organizational structure. The study shows that implementation of consulting in alternative schools requires managers' exposure to the role and creation of adjustments in the counselors' training, supervision, and actual practice.

Keywords: educational counseling; alternative education; democratic and anthroposophy schools; qualitative research; school managers; elementary schools.

From absorption to integration: The educational counseling model as a support and empowerment mechanism for Arab-Bedouin teachers at the beginning of their professional career in teaching

Aref Abu-Gweder and Amal Abu-Saad

The current study explores the significance of the educational counseling system in schools from the perspective of novice teachers in the Arab-Bedouin education system. Within this framework, we will investigate the role of educational counselors in the lives of novice teachers, examining aspects such as school culture, the supportive mechanisms provided by educational counseling for novice teachers, their capacity to navigate social and emotional experiences, and the utilization of communication models among novice teachers, as well as between school staff and parents.

Twenty-five teachers from ten elementary schools in southern Israel participated in the study. The research findings underscore the crucial role of educational counselors, particularly in offering personal support to both students and parents. However, there appears to be a lack of clarity regarding the role and components of educational counseling, especially among school administrators and experienced teachers. Based on the study's results, it is recommended to enhance awareness among school administrators and experienced teachers regarding the pivotal role of educational counseling. Additionally, fostering increased collaboration among administrators, teachers, and educational counselors is proposed to address various educational challenges and empower educational consultants within schools.

Keywords: Bedouin education system; educational consultant; beginning teachers; school culture.

The relationship between exposure of Arab adolescents in Israel to war-related content, anxiety, and cyberbullying

Dana Weimann-Saks and Islam Abed

This study was conducted during the "Iron Swords" war that erupted in October 2023 in Israel. The research aims to examine the relationship between students' exposure to war-related content, their levels of anxiety, and cyberbullying behaviors on social networks. The study involved 176 participants (students aged 11–18) from grades 5–12, exclusively from the Arab community, which faces a continuous identity crisis exacerbated during wartime. Data were collected using an online questionnaire.

The findings reveal a correlation between exposure to war-related content and levels of anxiety. Additionally, a connection was found between exposure to war-related content and cyberbullying behaviors. Furthermore, anxiety mediates the relationship between adolescents' exposure to war-related content and cyberbullying. Specifically, as exposure to war-related content increases, anxiety levels rise, and as anxiety levels increase, the frequency of cyberbullying behavior also increases.

These findings highlight the complex impact of adolescents' exposure to violent war content and underscore the need for targeted educational and therapeutic interventions. The results emphasize the importance of developing tailored strategies for Arab students in Israel to cope with anxiety and prevent cyberbullying, considering the cultural context of the Arab society in Israel. The study underscores the need for programs aimed at strengthening mental resilience, improving digital literacy, and enhancing support systems for adolescents. These findings provide a crucial foundation for future research and evidence-based policy development in the fields of education and mental health during times of crisis and war.

Keywords: war; social networks; Arab society; cyber bullying.

School counselors' occupational self-efficacy during the Iron Swords War: The role of psychological capital, social support, and well-being

Raaya Alon, Osnat Rubin and Reli Rosenthal

School counselors play a vital role in promoting the well-being of students and staff, both in routine and during crises. This study was conducted in Israel during the Iron Sword War and aimed to understand the factors that contribute to the occupational self-efficacy of school counselors. Occupational self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's ability to perform professional tasks and roles effectively and is essential for functioning during crises. The study involved 181 school counselors who completed questionnaires measuring their occupational self-efficacy, psychological capital, social support, and well-being. The findings revealed that psychological capital, particularly its hope component, had a significant contribution to the prediction of occupational self-efficacy. However, social support did not contribute to its prediction. The study highlights the importance of nurturing personal resources such as psychological capital to enhance occupational self-efficacy among educational counselors in times of crises and emergencies.

Keywords: occupational self-efficacy; psychological capital; social support; well-being; war.

The role of teachers in promoting inclusive policies in schools from the perspective of educational consulting

Osnat Zorde and Noam Lapidot-Lefler

The article discusses teachers' perceptions regarding their role in developing inclusive policy. Through teacher's communities and professional guidance, training is conducted following inclusive approach principles. The inclusion approach raises multicultural awareness and supports students with different needs (OECD, 2023). This qualitative study accompanied 156 teachers in communities for a year, aiming to understand teachers' perceptions of their role as inclusive educators. Findings indicate teachers interpreted inclusion as a concession to student demands, developing antagonism and reluctance toward individual student needs. Learning the approach and community sharing helped teachers experiment with inclusive work patterns. The study emphasizes educational consultants' importance in supporting teachers and accompanying implementation processes for the inclusion principle. Additionally, it highlights the need to build teacher-counselor relationships, transitioning from responsibility transfer to professional partnership. The research contributes to theoretical and practical knowledge regarding teacher development in communities.

Keywords: inclusion; teacher communities; emotional resilience; educational counseling.

The relationship between teachers' empathy and emotion regulation to classroom climate: Examining their contribution to an optimal classroom climate

Sehrab Masri

This study examined the relationship between empathy skills and emotion regulation on teachers' perceptions of classroom climate among Arab high school teachers, and how these factors influence classroom climate improvement from the teachers' perspective. The research questions focused on the connections between empathy, emotion regulation, and classroom climate perception, as well as differences in empathy levels between homeroom teachers and subject teachers in Arab high schools in Israel. The sample included 120 teachers from five Arab high schools in northern Israel. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between empathy and emotion regulation and teachers' perception of satisfaction and cohesiveness in the classroom climate. Additionally, a negative relationship was found between emotion regulation and perceived competitiveness in the classroom climate. Furthermore, a negative correlation was observed between empathy and emotion regulation and teachers' perceptions of classroom difficulty and friction. The study also identified significant differences in empathy levels between homeroom teachers and subject teachers.

Keywords: classroom climate; empathy; emotion regulation; Arab teachers in Israel.

The relationship between executive functions, global knowledge and reading comprehension among students with learning disabilities and without learning disabilities

Saied Bishara and Yitzhak Weiss

This study examined the relationship between executive functions, global knowledge and reading comprehension among students with and without learning disabilities. The study involved 80 fourth-grade students studying in integrated classes within regular education settings: 40 students diagnosed with learning disabilities and 40 students without learning disabilities. The students were tested using measures designed to assess executive functions, global knowledge, and reading comprehension. The study findings demonstrated significant relationship and differences between executive functions, global knowledge and reading comprehension. In addition, executive functions and global knowledge were identified as predictors of reading comprehension. Therefore, it is recommended that executive functions and global knowledge be extensively incorporated into teaching strategies for reading comprehension among all students, both with and without learning disabilities. This is because their use may contribute to improving the level of reading comprehension, to more effective planning of the curriculum, and to assist in identifying specific areas of difficulty in the regular education system that integrates students with learning disabilities, and thereby develop customized intervention programs for these students.

Keywords: executive functions; global knowledge; reading comprehension; learning disabilities.

"Zero Hour": The role of the education system in mediating reality for students during security threats and wartime events

Smadar Ben-Asher, Ronit Shalev and Ella Ben-Atar

This article examines the role of the educational system in mediating information and providing emotional support to students during situations of security threats and war, with a particular focus on the War of the Iron Swords. It highlights the emotional and social impacts on children exposed to war-related information, especially in cases where parents struggle to mediate such realities. The study explores the complexity of educational discourse on traumatic topics, such as hostages and captives, demonstrating that the educational system often assumes the responsibility of explaining and guiding children in place of parents.

The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collected from parent questionnaires. It investigates the challenges, communication patterns, and factors influencing discussions about the war. Findings indicate that families with less educated or lower-income parents are less likely to engage in discussions about the war, underscoring the educational system's critical role in mediation.

The article proposes guidelines for the educational system, including the development of empathetic environments, the incorporation of value-based discourse, pedagogical approaches for moderated disclosure and linguistic simplification, and professional training for educational staff. Effective mediation of information and emotions can help children develop personal resilience and cope more effectively with complex realities.

Keywords: children in war; parents; reality brokerage; mediation on sensitive issues; age-appropriate explanations; guidance in school.

Does digital distraction harm parent-adolescent relationships? Applied implications for educational counseling

Tsameret Ricon and Hila Gabizon

Technnoference is defined as a daily disruption in interpersonal interactions caused by exposure to digital devices. Research highlights situations where parents and adolescents are distracted by the frequent use of digital devices during family interactions, significantly reducing availability and relationship quality. This study aimed to examine the relationship between parents' and adolescents' digital distractions and its impact on the quality of their relationship from the parents' perspective.

A quantitative design was employed, involving 102 parents of adolescents who completed three questionnaires: a demographic questionnaire, a parental digital distraction questionnaire, and a parent-child relationship questionnaire. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between parents' and adolescents' levels of digital distraction. Additionally, a weak negative correlation was observed between digital distractions (both parental and adolescent) and the quality of their relationship, particularly in the dimensions of warmth and concern. Regression analysis showed that parents' and adolescents' digital distractions together significantly predicted the relationship quality. No differences were identified in parents' perceptions of adolescents' digital distraction by gender.

The results indicate that, from the parents' perspective, digital distractions disrupt the parent-adolescent relationship. Educational counselors, through their research-based knowledge and presence in schools, can play a critical role in identifying patterns of digital distraction and developing targeted intervention programs to enhance adolescents' interpersonal communication, particularly within their families.

Keywords: adolescence; parent-adolescent relationships; digital distraction; educational counseling; educational intervention.