

A STUDY OF THE EFFECTS OF
INTENSIVE JEWISH SECONDARY EDUCATION
ON ADULT JEWISH LIFESTYLES

SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

1976 - 77

STUDY DIRECTOR - SOL RIBNER, Ph.D.

Conducted by:

American Association for
Jewish Education

Financed by:

Federation of Jewish
Agencies of Greater
Philadelphia

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people have contributed to making this study possible.

Acknowledgment is hereby made to the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia for generating and financing this study.

Special recognition is due Ezekiel Pearlman, Associate Director of the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia, whose vision and perseverance initiated the project.

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My grateful appreciation is also extended to Dr. Charles Bahn, Professor of Psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice and to Dr. Isidor Chein, Professor of Psychology at New York University, for their insights and critical comments.

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Estelle Moskowitz patiently typed and retyped the many revisions of the text.

Finally, my thanks to my wife, Betty, who shared my enthusiasm and excitement throughout the entire project.

Sol Ribner

FOREWORD

The Jewish community (that is, federations, parents, school sponsors, educators, and former students) has been concerned, with good reason, about whether there is an observable and measurable relationship between types of Jewish education and subsequent Jewish behavior patterns. This concern has grown particularly in our open society in which adult Jewish lifestyles are affected by a variety of social and intellectual forces, and in which great faith has been placed in the educational process as an instrument for perpetuating Jewish identity and identification.

Is there really a relationship between education and lifestyle that can be separated out from the influence of such other variables as the home, the community, and social experiences?

This question increasingly occupies the attention of practitioners and financial supporters of Jewish education. They want to know whether they are making the most effective use of their time and their money. The demand for data has grown more compelling as more extensive and more costly types of education proliferate. Does the day school really exert a greater influence than the supplementary afternoon school? Is secondary Jewish education more important than elementary education? Does any Jewish education have more influence than none at all? Can one isolate the influence of Jewish education from other influences?

In an effort to respond to these and other questions, the American Association for Jewish Education initiated a national study in the early 1970's. Some doctoral studies had been conducted prior to that time, but each of them had its own limitations which made their separate and combined findings less than reliable. After several years of exploration with educators and social scientists, and after the expenditure of funds in drafting study proposals and designs, the AAJE regrettably was persuaded to abandon its efforts for lack of assurance that data could be collected for a reliable national study.

In the fall of 1974, Mr. Ezekiel Pearlman, Associate Director of the Federation of Jewish Agencies of Greater Philadelphia, approached Isaac Toubin, the Executive Vice-President of the AAJE, to discuss the possibility of conducting a local study in Philadelphia that would seek to ascertain what, if any, residual effect Jewish secondary school education in Philadelphia had on the Jewish lifestyle of its graduates. There are three institutions in Philadelphia which provide an intensive secondary Jewish education, and whose graduates are now old enough to have their own families, namely, Akiba Hebrew Academy (day school), the High School Department of Gratz College, and the Midrasha of Har Zion. Akiba Hebrew Academy has a four-year program requiring 11 to 12 hours a week of study for 35 to 36 weeks a year; the High School Department of Gratz College now requires, in its five-year program, nine hours a week for the first two years and 13 hours a week for the next three years for 35 to 36 weeks a year (25 years ago it was a four-year program with 11 hours per week); Har Zion has a five-year program, eight hours a week, 34 weeks a year, (similar to that of 25 years ago). The graduates of these three were proposed as subjects for this study. (Two of the schools are supported by the Federation Allied Jewish Appeal of Philadelphia. Federation has been making substantial annual financial investments in four local day schools and other educational agencies as well.)

AAJE agreed to conduct a study which would seek to ascertain whether there was, indeed, any measurable difference in Jewish lifestyle between two groups - the graduates of these three institutions who are now between 30 and 45 years of

age, and another group in the community, in the same age bracket, who had received either minimal or no Jewish education. Representatives of the Philadelphia Jewish community and the American Association also agreed that the development of such a study design might be replicated in several other Jewish communities to arrive at a reliable national pattern.

The study was initiated by the Federation Committee on Jewish Education, chaired by Mr. Mitchell E. Panzer, with Mr. Solomon Fisher as Vice-Chairman.

A Professional Advisory Committee was appointed for purpose of reviewing the study, objectives, methods, and design. Its members are:

Ezekiel Pearlman, Chairman

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Dr. Alvin Mars, Headmaster, Solomon Schechter Day School
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The Professional Advisory Committee met on several occasions with the director of the study before and during the conduct of the study. The final draft was submitted to the Advisory Committee for its review and suggestions. This report is now submitted to the Federation Committee on Jewish Education.

Dr. Hillel Hochberg, former director of the AAJE Department of Research, did preliminary work on the study. Subsequently, the AAJE engaged Dr. Sol Ribner, research psychologist and statistical consultant, to conduct the study. Dr. Murray Rockowitz, presently director of the AAJE Department of Research, was designated by the AAJE to monitor and edit the study. Methodological and sampling problems were encountered, and their resolution is described by Dr. Ribner in the body of the report.

The questionnaire that was developed to measure Jewish lifestyles included a variety of items related to behavior patterns, attitudes and values involving matters of Jewish concern. The term "Jewish lifestyle" was broadly inclusive and involved membership and activity in synagogues, membership and activity in Jewish organizations, degree of socializing with Jews, knowledge of Hebrew and/or Yiddish, Jewish artifacts in the home, visits to and financial support of Israel, ritual observance, religiousness of spouse both in observance and in activity in Jewish organizations, education of children, and knowledge of and participation in Federation activities and services.

The study sought answers to the following questions, among others:

1. Are there differences in the lifestyles of the two groups with respect to their behavior, attitude and values concerning Jewish matters?
2. Are there differences in how they perceive themselves as Jews?
3. To what extent can the differences, if any, between the groups be attributed to differences in their Jewish education?

The study was conducted between March 1976 and September 1976 through a mailed questionnaire.

Following several mailings of the questionnaire by the AAJE to all participants, the data were processed by Dr. Ribner who then proceeded to analyze the data and draft a written report.

This report was submitted to the Philadelphia Federation Committee on Jewish Education by the AAJE in the hope that its findings may begin a data bank which will guide communities, schools, parents and educators, in the most effective use of their separate and communal resources with respect to Jewish education.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY

A. Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of an intensive Jewish secondary school education on later adult Jewish lifestyles as reflected in behavior, attitudes and values.

The responses to the Adult Jewish Lifestyle Questionnaire by 265 graduates of Akiba Hebrew Academy, Midrasha of Har Zion Congregation, and the High School Department of Gratz College (all Jewish secondary schools in the Philadelphia area) were compared with responses by 153 individuals in Philadelphia who had little or no Jewish education. For the latter group, the maximum level of Jewish education was attendance at an afternoon Yiddish or Hebrew School on the elementary level. All respondents were between 30 and 45 years of age.

For the purposes of the study, the graduates of these Jewish secondary schools are referred to as the "intensive" group and those subjects with the lesser Jewish education are referred to as the "less intensive" group.

B. Findings and Conclusions

Differences between the Intensive and Less Intensive Groups in Lifestyles

The results of the study indicated that the groups differed not only in behavior, attitudes, and values but also in their perceptions of themselves as Jews.

1. Behavior

a. The intensive group belonged to more Jewish organizations and participated more actively in them.

b. The intensive group were more observant, attended services more frequently and were more active in the synagogue.

c. The intensive group read and studied Jewish issues more often. They subscribed to more magazines with Jewish content and their homes contained many more decorative, ceremonial, and cultural objects with Jewish themes.

d. The intensive group contributed more money to charity and a greater percentage of their donations was given to Jewish causes. They were more actively involved in the annual campaign of the Federation.

e. They visited Israel more often and for longer periods of time.

f. The intensive group dated non-Jews less frequently and had fewer intermarriages.

2. Attitudes and Values

a. The intensive group felt that the Jewish community should make its strongest efforts toward political and financial support of Israel while the less intensive group felt the major efforts should be directed toward defense against anti-Semitism. The intensive group felt that greater efforts should be

made in increasing knowledge of Jewish history and culture and preventing intermarriage than did the less intensive group.

b. The intensive group were more favorable toward eventual emigration of self and family to Israel.

c. The intensive group interpreted support for Israel in a context of active involvement in Zionist organizations, raising money, and seeking to influence United States foreign policy in favor of Israel. The less intensive group interpreted support for Israel mainly in terms of giving money, visiting Israel and defending it in discussions with friends and relatives.

d. The intensive group desired a higher level of Jewish education for their children.

e. It was more important to the intensive group that their children

- (1) have high regard for the Jewish heritage,
- (2) live in accordance with Jewish ethical standards,
- (3) take part in Jewish religious practices,
- (4) observe Jewish religious practices, and
- (5) be active in Jewish organizations.

3. Jewish Identity

a. The intensive group had a more organized and consistent concept of themselves as Jews. They were more concerned with behaving according to Jewish principles and were capable of integrating their Jewish experiences into their secular lives.

b. The intensive group felt more a part of a Jewish historical tradition. Major influences on their Jewish identity were family and Jewish education. They desired an intensive Jewish education for their children and felt more strongly that their children continue many Jewish traditions.

c. The less intensive group were most influenced by recent historical Jewish events and anti-Semitic experiences. Their Jewish identity was more diffuse and less integrated and they were acutely conscious of relationships with non-Jews.

- d. In essence, those in the intensive group subjects
- (1) possess a more clearly defined concept of themselves as Jews,
 - (2) feel part of a Jewish historical tradition,
 - (3) are more active participants in Jewish communal life,
 - (4) feel more intensely about Jewish matters,
 - (5) identify more with Israel,
 - (6) are more observant,
 - (7) contribute more to Jewish causes,
 - (8) are able to integrate their Jewish experiences into secular lives.

- e. Those in less intensive group
- (1) possess a more diffuse and less integrated Jewish identity shaped in large part by recent Jewish historical events and personal experiences and anti-Semitism,
 - (2) are acutely conscious of and sensitive to Jewish relationships with non-Jews, and
 - (3) profess deep Jewish sentiments, but many of them are not expressed behaviorally.

4. Comparative Effects of Home Environment and Jewish Schooling

After having established that the intensive group was more involved in Jewish affairs, attempts were made to determine the extent to which their Jewish education was responsible for their greater commitment. Parents who provide their children with an intensive Jewish education are more likely to raise them to be concerned about Jewish matters than those who do not. Were the differences between the groups primarily attributable to the differences between the parents?

The study explored this question specifically with regard to ritual observance and/or activity in the synagogue and other Jewish organizations. Parents of the intensive group were found to be more observant and active than were parents of the less intensive group. Nevertheless, the intensive group were still significantly¹ more observant and active than the less intensive group even after statistical adjustments² were made for the differences between the parents.

The results indicated that while parental differences did indeed contribute to a portion of the differences between the groups, there remained, nevertheless, sizable significant differences between them that exceeded those accounted for by parental differences.

The self reports of the respondents, however, suggest that the differences in Jewish education were primarily responsible for the remainder of the differences between the groups. Parents and Jewish schooling were rated by the intensive group as the two most important influences on their Jewish identity, both of which were significantly higher than either camping experiences or spouse. Over 47% of the intensive group rated their Jewish education as exerting a crucial positive

¹ The terms "significant" and "significantly" when applied to a difference between the groups refer to a difference so large that the probability of obtaining this difference by chance is reasonably precluded. In other words, one can be reasonably confident that the difference between the groups is real and not attributable to sampling fluctuations. At times reference will be made to differences significant at the .05, .01, or .001 level. This means that the probability of obtaining such differences by chance is less than 5%, 1% or .1% respectively. For the purposes of this study, the lower the level of probability, the more substantial the difference between the groups.

² The statistical technique used for the adjustments was a covariance procedure. Briefly, this technique compares the obtained differences found between the groups after first removing that portion of the difference that could be accounted for by the differences in parent behavior as reported by the respondents.

influence compared with 12% for those in the less intensive group who had received some Jewish education.

The relationship between Jewish schooling and parental upbringing is such that any large-scale attempt to study the influence of one independently of the other is, in effect, an attempt at "dismembering reality." As this study has shown, committed Jews are more likely to search for an intensive Jewish education for their children, and in turn, children receiving an intensive Jewish education are more likely to be committed Jews.

The conclusion of the study, based on the available evidence, is that the development of a lifestyle strongly committed to Jewish affairs is primarily the result of the joint influence and reciprocal reinforcement of an intensive Jewish education and a concerned Jewish home.

C. Limitations

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of an intensive Jewish secondary education on adult Jewish lifestyles in Philadelphia. This was accomplished by selecting two groups of subjects that were representative samples of the intensively and less intensively educated in the broader Jewish population of the city. The validity of any generalization from the sample group to the total population depends in large part on how well the sample actually represents the population.

Several factors in the study design resulted in obtaining greater similarity between the sample groups than one might expect to find between intensively and less intensively educated groups in the broader Jewish population.

1. Representativeness of the Sample Groups

Graduates of Orthodox-oriented secondary schools constitute a large percentage of the intensively educated in the Jewish population. In fact, in the United States, a majority of all children receiving a day school education are in schools of Orthodox orientation.

This study of adults between 30 and 45 years of age having an intensive Jewish education in the Philadelphia community involves only graduates of Akiba, the Midrasha of Har Zion, and the High School Department of Gratz College. Graduates from Orthodox schools were not included since they were not old enough to fall within the age range chosen for the subjects of this study.

A second limiting factor in the study derives from the method by which the subjects in the less intensive group were obtained. This group was selected from a random sample of the mailing list of the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. The mailing list is composed of those who have contributed at least \$10 to the Allied Jewish Appeal or have subscribed independently to the Exponent. In either case, some interest in Jewish affairs had been demonstrated by the group. People with lesser interest in Jewish matters were, therefore, precluded from being members of the less intensive group.

These limitations served to exclude subjects with more divergent points of view and consequently narrowed the differences between the sample groups, differences which may be in fact considerably larger in the broader Jewish population of the city.

In view of the aforementioned limitations, differences found between the groups warrant greater confidence in their reliability than do similarities. The presentation was consequently focused on these more valid findings.

2. The Effects of Higher Jewish Education

Some of the study's findings raise a question as to the educational levels of the group constituting the study. Ostensibly, the study compared graduates of Jewish secondary schools with those having a minimal Jewish education. However, 73% of the intensive group pursued their Jewish education at higher institutions of learning, and 61% of the number received an advanced degree. It is possible, therefore, that the differences between the intensive and less intensive groups are a result of higher Jewish education, and secondary Jewish education is of less than decisive consequence.

One cannot determine the effects of higher Jewish education simply by comparing those within the intensive group who received a higher Jewish education with those who did not. By comparing these groups, one would in effect be comparing respondents whose experiences with Jewish secondary education encouraged them to continue on an advanced level with those whose secondary Jewish education failed to generate any interest in furthering their studies. This would not be a study of the comparative effects of secondary and higher Jewish education but a comparison of the effects of different experiences with Jewish secondary education.

One can reasonably assume that the pursuit of higher Jewish education and its concomitant effects on Jewish lifestyle is in large measure a result of the experience with secondary Jewish education and, therefore, can be regarded as one effect, among many, of such education. Any attempt to separate advanced Jewish education from secondary Jewish education in the context of the present study would be artificial.

Proper resolution of this problem might be the subject of another study appropriately designed for that purpose.

D. Profile of the Respondents

The following is a brief review of how the groups responded to the questionnaire items:

1. Demographic Characteristics

- a. Sex. Both groups consisted of approximately 57% males and 43% females.
 - b. Age. The intensive group had a median age of 34.1 with 37% of the respondents over 35. The median age for the less intensive group was 38.5 with 63% over 35.
 - c. Occupation. In the intensive group, 95% were in the professional and management occupations while only 80% of the less intensive group were in these occupations.
 - d. Income. The median income of the intensive group was \$24,450 while that of the less intensive group was \$29,750.
 - e. General Education. In the intensive group, 94% were graduated from college and only 72% of the less intensive group were graduated from college. There was a greater number of Master's and Ph. D. degrees among the college graduates of the intensive group than among the college graduates of the less intensive group.
 - f. Marital Status. The overwhelming majority of both groups were married and had an average of 2.35 children.
3. Attendance at Resident Camps of Jewish Culture. In the intensive group, 63% had attended a resident camp with a program of Jewish culture at least once, while only 28% of the less intensive group attended such a camp. Of those attending, those in the intensive group found it more satisfying.

- h. Jewish Education of the Intensive Group beyond the Secondary Level. Seventy-three percent of the intensive group pursued their Jewish studies in institutions of higher learning. Sixty-one percent of these obtained certificates in Jewish studies.

2. Organization Involvement

- a. Membership and Activities in Jewish Organizations. In both groups, 60% belonged to at least one Jewish organization. Of those who belonged, the intensive group belonged to an average of 2.47 organizations. The average for the less intensive group was 1.69. The intensive group belonged to 1.4 times as many organizations as did the less intensive group.
Parents of the intensive group had been significantly more active than the parents of the less intensive group. When adjustments were made for the difference between the parents, the intensive group still attended significantly more meetings and were significantly more active in these organizations than the less intensive group.
- b. Type of Jewish Organization. The intensive group tended to belong to and be more active in religious-educational and Zionist-pro-Israel organizations while the less intensive group belonged to and were more active in community relations organizations.
- c. Membership in General Organizations. Approximately 60% of each group belonged to general organizations which were primarily occupation-related. The level of activity and the type of organizational affiliation were similar for both groups.

3. Jewish Identity

- a. Sources of Influence on Jewish Identity. Three major and equally important sources were perceived by the intensive group as positively influencing their Jewish identity. These were family, Jewish education, and recent Jewish historical events. The influential family members were parents, grandparents, children, and spouse, respectively. The most influential aspects of Jewish education were both the effects of the total Jewish educational experience and the specific influence of a particular Jewish educator. Recent Jewish historical events affecting Jewish identity were the Holocaust, the State of Israel, and the Six-Day War. Synagogue Rabbis, Jewish organizational and camping experience also contributed positively to Jewish identity.
The less intensive group identified two sources of influence--recent Jewish historical events and family. Personal anti-Semitic experience also exerted a positive influence on them.
Compared with the less intensive group, the intensive group perceived family as being significantly more influential and Jewish historical events as significantly less influential. Synagogue Rabbis and Jewish organizational activities did not exert a meaningful influence on the less intensive group.

- b. Attributes of Jewish Identity. The intensive group stressed observance of Jewish moral, social and ritual practices as part of Jewish identity significantly more than did the less intensive group. The less intensive group felt it significantly more important to earn the respect of Christian neighbors and were sensitive to relations with non-Jews.
- The intensive group had a better defined and more integrated sense of Jewish identity and felt more a part of a Jewish historical tradition than did the less intensive group.
- c. Jewish Cultural Interest at Home. The intensive group read and studied Jewish topics significantly more often than did the less intensive group. Their homes also contained a significantly greater number of ceremonial, literary, and cultural objects of Jewish character.
- d. Activities in Which the Jewish Community Should Engage. The intensive group believed that the Jewish community should make its strongest efforts toward the support of Israel both politically and financially. The less intensive group felt that the major efforts should be directed toward defense against anti-Semitism and discrimination. Although the intensive group believed defense against anti-Semitism and discrimination issues warranted a moderate to major effort, they nevertheless ranked it fourth in importance after support of Israel, perpetuation of Jewish cultural life, and increasing the level of knowledge of Jewish history and culture. The intensive group felt that significantly less effort be made in support of general humanitarian programs and a significantly greater effort be made at preventing intermarriage than did the less intensive group.
- e. Attitude toward Israel. Two sets of questions assessed attitudes toward Israel. One set of questions was designed to determine feelings toward political and financial support of Israel and the other a commitment toward frequent visits to Israel, and possible emigration of self and family.
- While both groups felt a positive obligation to help Israel, the intensive group perceived support for Israel in a context of raising money, belonging to Zionist organizations, and seeking to influence United States foreign policy in favor of Israel. The less intensive group interpreted support mostly as giving money, visiting, and defending Israel in discussion with friends and acquaintances. The intensive group felt significantly greater interest in visiting and settling there either at present or some future date than did the less intensive group. Over 50% of the intensive group had visited Israel while only 20% of the less intensive group had visited Israel. The intensive group had gone to Israel more often and spent more time there.

4. Religious Affiliation and Observance

- a. Denominational Identification. The majority of both groups identified themselves as Conservative Jews. The intensive group had a smaller percentage of Reform Jews than did the less intensive group. The intensive group had a greater percentage of those identified as

Orthodox as well as a greater percentage of those who had no religious identification.

- b. Synagogue Activity and Attendance. There were no significant differences in Synagogue membership with 67% and 60% of the intensive group and less intensive group, respectively, belonging to synagogues. However, subjects and parents in the intensive group were significantly more active in the synagogue than those in the less intensive group and their parents. Even after adjusting for the differences between the parents of both groups, the more intensive group was still significantly more active than the less intensive group.

Sixty percent of the intensive group attended Sabbath services regularly while only 42% of the less intensive group attended Sabbath services regularly.

- c. Ritual Observance. The intensive group as well as their parents were significantly more observant than the less intensive group or their parents. Differences between the groups were significant even after adjusting for the difference in the level of observance between the parents of both groups.

5. Marriage and Family

- a. Dating and Marriage. In the intensive group, 46% never dated a non-Jew compared with 24% of the less intensive group. Two percent of the intensive group were married to non-Jews whereas 5% of the less intensive group were married to non-Jews.
- b. Plans Concerning Jewish Education for Their Children. It was significantly more important to the intensive group that their children receive a higher Jewish education than it was to the less intensive group. Sixty percent of the intensive group desired a higher Jewish education for their children while only 16% of the less intensive group supported the idea of such an education. Forty percent of the less intensive group desired a maximum of afternoon elementary school education.
- c. Importance of Various Jewish Values Desired for Their Children. It was significantly more important to the intensive group than to the less intensive group that their children have: a) high regard for the Jewish heritage, b) live in accordance with Jewish ethical standards, c) take part in Jewish religious practices, d) observe Jewish religious practices, and e) be active in Jewish organizations. The general order of priority, however, was substantially the same for both groups.

6. Charitable Contributions

The intensive group contributed more money and a greater percentage was given to Jewish causes. They were more actively involved in the annual campaign of the Federation, U.J.A., and religious institutions, respectively, received the largest amount of the contributions.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Graduates of three Jewish secondary schools from the Philadelphia area were selected for the study. The schools were Akiba Hebrew Academy, the Midrasha of Har Zion Congregation, and the High School Department of Gratz College.

Midrasha is affiliated with the Conservative movement, and, although Akiba and Gratz are non-denominational, the curriculum and educational philosophy of the high school departments of the three schools are fairly similar and reflect a Conservative orientation.

Only those graduates presumed to have established stable lifestyles were included in the study. The age limit was, therefore, set at 30 and ranged up to 45, the approximate age of those in the earliest graduating classes of Akiba Hebrew Academy. The oldest graduates of the Orthodox Secondary School with a Philadelphia student body were below 30 and, therefore, were not included in the study.

The Adult Jewish Lifestyle Questionnaire (see Appendix A), with accompanying explanatory letters, was mailed to 600 graduates from lists provided by the schools. The respondents were asked to fill out anonymously and return the questionnaires in enclosed stamped and addressed envelopes provided for that purpose. Included in the mailing was a separate postcard and each respondent was asked to fill out his name and return the card to the study director after having sent in the questionnaire. In this way records of the respondents were maintained without sacrificing anonymity. Several weeks later a second mailing went out urging the cooperation of those who had not yet responded. A total of 265 graduates responded, representing a 40% response.

The group that received a more limited Jewish education was selected from the subscribers to the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. Using the same mailing procedures, questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 1,800 subscribers. About 540 people (30%) responded. However, only 153 met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Many of the respondents were not within the appropriate age range or had alternate kinds of intensive Jewish education. (The data obtained from those over 45 will be analyzed and reported separately.)

Those who were eligible had either no formal Jewish education, private tutoring, Sunday School education, or afternoon Hebrew or Yiddish school education on the elementary level generally provided by congregational schools.

Analysis of the respondents was focused on comparing the lifestyles of those with an intensive Jewish education with those who had a less intensive Jewish education. Consequently, no attempt was made to differentiate among the graduates of the three secondary schools. The graduates of the three schools were, therefore, combined and treated as one group for all analytical purposes.

Graduates of these Jewish secondary schools constitute the intensive group, and those who received less intensive Jewish education constitute the less intensive group.

There was a total of 418 respondents, 265 with an intensive Jewish education and 153 with a less intensive Jewish education. A small number of subjects omitted responses to some of the questions and, as a result, the total number of responses does not always sum to 418. Treatment of the data was based only on those responding and their number is reported in each table.

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Follow-up Study

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Is there really a relationship between education and lifestyle that can be separated out from the influence of such other variables as the home, the community, and social experiences?

This question increasingly occupies the attention of practitioners and financial supporters of Jewish education. They want to know whether they are making the most effective use of their time and their money. The demand for data has grown more compelling as more extensive and more costly types of education proliferate. Does the day school really exert a greater influence than the supplementary afternoon school? Is secondary Jewish education more important than elementary education? Does any Jewish education have more influence than none at all? Can one isolate the influence of Jewish education from other influences?

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The Professional Advisory Committee met on several occasions with the director of the study before and during the conduct of the study. The final draft was submitted to the Advisory Committee for its review and suggestions. This report is now submitted to the Federation Committee on Jewish Education.

Dr. Hillel Hochberg, former director of the AAJE Department of Research, did preliminary work on the study. Subsequently, the AAJE engaged Dr. Sol Ribner, research psychologist and statistical consultant, to conduct the study. Dr. Murray Rockowitz, presently director of the AAJE Department of Research, was designated by the AAJE to monitor and edit the study. Methodological and sampling problems were encountered, and their resolution is described by Dr. Ribner in the body of the report.

The questionnaire that was developed to measure Jewish lifestyles included a variety of items related to behavior patterns, attitudes and values involving matters of Jewish concern. The term "Jewish lifestyle" was broadly inclusive and involved membership and activity in synagogues, membership and activity in Jewish organizations, degree of socializing with Jews, knowledge of Hebrew and/or Yiddish, Jewish artifacts in the home, visits to and financial support of Israel, ritual observance, religiousness of spouse both in observance and in activity in Jewish organizations, education of children, and knowledge of and participation in Federation activities and services.

The study sought answers to the following questions, among others:

1. Are there differences in the lifestyles of the two groups with respect to their behavior, attitude and values concerning Jewish matters?
2. Are there differences in how they perceive themselves as Jews?
3. To what extent can the differences, if any, between the groups be attributed to differences in their Jewish education?

The study was conducted between March 1976 and September 1976 through a mailed questionnaire.

Following several mailings of the questionnaire by the AAJE to all participants, the data were processed by Dr. Ribner who then proceeded to analyze the data and draft a written report.

This report was submitted to the Philadelphia Federation Committee on Jewish Education by the AAJE in the hope that its findings may begin a data bank which will guide communities, schools, parents and educators, in the most effective use of their separate and communal resources with respect to Jewish education.

CHAPTER I

SUMMARY

A. Introduction

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the effects of an intensive Jewish secondary school education on later adult Jewish lifestyles as reflected in behavior, attitudes and values.

The responses to the Adult Jewish Lifestyle Questionnaire by 265 graduates of Akiba Hebrew Academy, Midrasha of Har Zion Congregation, and the High School Department of Gratz College (all Jewish secondary schools in the Philadelphia area) were compared with responses by 153 individuals in Philadelphia who had little or no Jewish education. For the latter group, the maximum level of Jewish education was attendance at an afternoon Yiddish or Hebrew School on the elementary level. All respondents were between 30 and 45 years of age.

For the purposes of the study, the graduates of these Jewish secondary schools are referred to as the "intensive" group and those subjects with the lesser Jewish education are referred to as the "less intensive" group.

B. Findings and Conclusions

Differences between the Intensive and Less Intensive Groups in Lifestyles

The results of the study indicated that the groups differed not only in behavior, attitudes, and values but also in their perceptions of themselves as Jews.

1. Behavior

a. The intensive group belonged to more Jewish organizations and participated more actively in them.

b. The intensive group were more observant, attended services more frequently and were more active in the synagogue.

c. The intensive group read and studied Jewish issues more often. They subscribed to more magazines with Jewish content and their homes contained many more decorative, ceremonial, and cultural objects with Jewish themes.

d. The intensive group contributed more money to charity and a greater percentage of their donations was given to Jewish causes. They were more actively involved in the annual campaign of the Federation.

e. They visited Israel more often and for longer periods of time.

f. The intensive group dated non-Jews less frequently and had fewer intermarriages.

2. Attitudes and Values

a. The intensive group felt that the Jewish community should make its strongest efforts toward political and financial support of Israel while the less intensive group felt the major efforts should be directed toward defense against anti-Semitism. The intensive group felt that greater efforts should be

made in increasing knowledge of Jewish history and culture and preventing intermarriage than did the less intensive group.

b. The intensive group were more favorable toward eventual emigration of self and family to Israel.

c. The intensive group interpreted support for Israel in a context of active involvement in Zionist organizations, raising money, and seeking to influence United States foreign policy in favor of Israel. The less intensive group interpreted support for Israel mainly in terms of giving money, visiting Israel and defending it in discussions with friends and relatives.

d. The intensive group desired a higher level of Jewish education for their children.

e. It was more important to the intensive group that their children

- (1) have high regard for the Jewish heritage,
- (2) live in accordance with Jewish ethical standards,
- (3) take part in Jewish religious practices,
- (4) observe Jewish religious practices, and
- (5) be active in Jewish organizations.

3. Jewish Identity

a. The intensive group had a more organized and consistent concept of themselves as Jews. They were more concerned with behaving according to Jewish principles and were capable of integrating their Jewish experiences into their secular lives.

b. The intensive group felt more a part of a Jewish historical tradition. Major influences on their Jewish identity were family and Jewish education. They desired an intensive Jewish education for their children and felt more strongly that their children continue many Jewish traditions.

c. The less intensive group were most influenced by recent historical Jewish events and anti-Semitic experiences. Their Jewish identity was more diffuse and less integrated and they were acutely conscious of relationships with non-Jews.

- d. In essence, those in the intensive group subjects
- (1) possess a more clearly defined concept of themselves as Jews,
 - (2) feel part of a Jewish historical tradition,
 - (3) are more active participants in Jewish communal life,
 - (4) feel more intensely about Jewish matters,
 - (5) identify more with Israel,
 - (6) are more observant,
 - (7) contribute more to Jewish causes,
 - (8) are able to integrate their Jewish experiences into secular lives.

- e. Those in less intensive group
- (1) possess a more diffuse and less integrated Jewish identity shaped in large part by recent Jewish historical events and personal experiences and anti-Semitism,
 - (2) are acutely conscious of and sensitive to Jewish relationships with non-Jews, and
 - (3) profess deep Jewish sentiments, but many of them are not expressed behaviorally.

4. Comparative Effects of Home Environment and Jewish Schooling

After having established that the intensive group was more involved in Jewish affairs, attempts were made to determine the extent to which their Jewish education was responsible for their greater commitment. Parents who provide their children with an intensive Jewish education are more likely to raise them to be concerned about Jewish matters than those who do not. Were the differences between the groups primarily attributable to the differences between the parents?

The study explored this question specifically with regard to ritual observance and/or activity in the synagogue and other Jewish organizations. Parents of the intensive group were found to be more observant and active than were parents of the less intensive group. Nevertheless, the intensive group were still significantly¹ more observant and active than the less intensive group even after statistical adjustments² were made for the differences between the parents.

The results indicated that while parental differences did indeed contribute to a portion of the differences between the groups, there remained, nevertheless, sizable significant differences between them that exceeded those accounted for by parental differences.

The self reports of the respondents, however, suggest that the differences in Jewish education were primarily responsible for the remainder of the differences between the groups. Parents and Jewish schooling were rated by the intensive group as the two most important influences on their Jewish identity, both of which were significantly higher than either camping experiences or spouse. Over 47% of the intensive group rated their Jewish education as exerting a crucial positive

¹ The terms "significant" and "significantly" when applied to a difference between the groups refer to a difference so large that the probability of obtaining this difference by chance is reasonably precluded. In other words, one can be reasonably confident that the difference between the groups is real and not attributable to sampling fluctuations. At times reference will be made to differences significant at the .05, .01, or .001 level. This means that the probability of obtaining such differences by chance is less than 5%, 1% or .1% respectively. For the purposes of this study, the lower the level of probability, the more substantial the difference between the groups.

² The statistical technique used for the adjustments was a covariance procedure. Briefly, this technique compares the obtained differences found between the groups after first removing that portion of the difference that could be accounted for by the differences in parent behavior as reported by the respondents.

influence compared with 12% for those in the less intensive group who had received some Jewish education.

The relationship between Jewish schooling and parental upbringing is such that any large-scale attempt to study the influence of one independently of the other is, in effect, an attempt at "dismembering reality." As this study has shown, committed Jews are more likely to search for an intensive Jewish education for their children, and in turn, children receiving an intensive Jewish education are more likely to be committed Jews.

The conclusion of the study, based on the available evidence, is that the development of a lifestyle strongly committed to Jewish affairs is primarily the result of the joint influence and reciprocal reinforcement of an intensive Jewish education and a concerned Jewish home.

C. Limitations

The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of an intensive Jewish secondary education on adult Jewish lifestyles in Philadelphia. This was accomplished by selecting two groups of subjects that were representative samples of the intensively and less intensively educated in the broader Jewish population of the city. The validity of any generalization from the sample group to the total population depends in large part on how well the sample actually represents the population.

Several factors in the study design resulted in obtaining greater similarity between the sample groups than one might expect to find between intensively and less intensively educated groups in the broader Jewish population.

1. Representativeness of the Sample Groups

Graduates of Orthodox-oriented secondary schools constitute a large percentage of the intensively educated in the Jewish population. In fact, in the United States, a majority of all children receiving a day school education are in schools of Orthodox orientation.

This study of adults between 30 and 45 years of age having an intensive Jewish education in the Philadelphia community involves only graduates of Akiba, the Midrasha of Har Zion, and the High School Department of Gratz College. Graduates from Orthodox schools were not included since they were not old enough to fall within the age range chosen for the subjects of this study.

A second limiting factor in the study derives from the method by which the subjects in the less intensive group were obtained. This group was selected from a random sample of the mailing list of the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. The mailing list is composed of those who have contributed at least \$10 to the Allied Jewish Appeal or have subscribed independently to the Exponent. In either case, some interest in Jewish affairs had been demonstrated by the group. People with lesser interest in Jewish matters were, therefore, precluded from being members of the less intensive group.

These limitations served to exclude subjects with more divergent points of view and consequently narrowed the differences between the sample groups, differences which may be in fact considerably larger in the broader Jewish population of the city.

In view of the aforementioned limitations, differences found between the groups warrant greater confidence in their reliability than do similarities. The presentation was consequently focused on these more valid findings.

2. The Effects of Higher Jewish Education

Some of the study's findings raise a question as to the educational levels of the group constituting the study. Ostensibly, the study compared graduates of Jewish secondary schools with those having a minimal Jewish education. However, 73% of the intensive group pursued their Jewish education at higher institutions of learning, and 61% of the number received an advanced degree. It is possible, therefore, that the differences between the intensive and less intensive groups are a result of higher Jewish education, and secondary Jewish education is of less than decisive consequence.

One cannot determine the effects of higher Jewish education simply by comparing those within the intensive group who received a higher Jewish education with those who did not. By comparing these groups, one would in effect be comparing respondents whose experiences with Jewish secondary education encouraged them to continue on an advanced level with those whose secondary Jewish education failed to generate any interest in furthering their studies. This would not be a study of the comparative effects of secondary and higher Jewish education but a comparison of the effects of different experiences with Jewish secondary education.

One can reasonably assume that the pursuit of higher Jewish education and its concomitant effects on Jewish lifestyle is in large measure a result of the experience with secondary Jewish education and, therefore, can be regarded as one effect, among many, of such education. Any attempt to separate advanced Jewish education from secondary Jewish education in the context of the present study would be artificial.

Proper resolution of this problem might be the subject of another study appropriately designed for that purpose.

D. Profile of the Respondents

The following is a brief review of how the groups responded to the questionnaire items:

1. Demographic Characteristics

- a. Sex. Both groups consisted of approximately 57% males and 43% females.
- b. Age. The intensive group had a median age of 34.1 with 37% of the respondents over 35. The median age for the less intensive group was 38.5 with 63% over 35.
- c. Occupation. In the intensive group, 95% were in the professional and management occupations while only 80% of the less intensive group were in these occupations.
- d. Income. The median income of the intensive group was \$24,450 while that of the less intensive group was \$29,750.
- e. General Education. In the intensive group, 94% were graduated from college and only 72% of the less intensive group were graduated from college. There was a greater number of Master's and Ph. D. degrees among the college graduates of the intensive group than among the college graduates of the less intensive group.
- f. Marital Status. The overwhelming majority of both groups were married and had an average of 2.35 children.
- g. Attendance at Resident Camps of Jewish Culture. In the intensive group, 53% had attended a resident camp with a program of Jewish culture at least once, while only 28% of the less intensive group attended such a camp. Of those attending, those in the intensive group found it more satisfying.

- h. Jewish Education of the Intensive Group beyond the Secondary Level. Seventy-three percent of the intensive group pursued their Jewish studies in institutions of higher learning. Sixty-one percent of these obtained certificates in Jewish studies.

2. Organization Involvement

- a. Membership and Activities in Jewish Organizations. In both groups, 60% belonged to at least one Jewish organization. Of those who belonged, the intensive group belonged to an average of 2.47 organizations. The average for the less intensive group was 1.69. The intensive group belonged to 1.4 times as many organizations as did the less intensive group. Parents of the intensive group had been significantly more active than the parents of the less intensive group. When adjustments were made for the difference between the parents, the intensive group still attended significantly more meetings and were significantly more active in these organizations than the less intensive group.
- b. Type of Jewish Organization. The intensive group tended to belong to and be more active in religious-educational and Zionist-pro-Israel organizations while the less intensive group belonged to and were more active in community relations organizations.
- c. Membership in General Organizations. Approximately 60% of each group belonged to general organizations which were primarily occupation-related. The level of activity and the type of organizational affiliation were similar for both groups.

3. Jewish Identity

- a. Sources of Influence on Jewish Identity. Three major and equally important sources were perceived by the intensive group as positively influencing their Jewish identity. These were family, Jewish education, and recent Jewish historical events. The influential family members were parents, grandparents, children, and spouse, respectively. The most influential aspects of Jewish education were both the effects of the total Jewish educational experience and the specific influence of a particular Jewish educator. Recent Jewish historical events affecting Jewish identity were the Holocaust, the State of Israel, and the Six-Day War. Synagogue Rabbis, Jewish organizational and camping experience also contributed positively to Jewish identity. The less intensive group identified two sources of influence--recent Jewish historical events and family. Personal anti-Semitic experience also exerted a positive influence on them. Compared with the less intensive group, the intensive group perceived family as being significantly more influential and Jewish historical events as significantly less influential. Synagogue Rabbis and Jewish organizational activities did not exert a meaningful influence on the less intensive group.

- b. Attributes of Jewish Identity. The intensive group stressed observance of Jewish moral, social and ritual practices as part of Jewish identity significantly more than did the less intensive group. The less intensive group felt it significantly more important to earn the respect of Christian neighbors and were sensitive to relations with non-Jews.
- The intensive group had a better defined and more integrated sense of Jewish identity and felt more a part of a Jewish historical tradition than did the less intensive group.
- c. Jewish Cultural Interest at Home. The intensive group read and studied Jewish topics significantly more often than did the less intensive group. Their homes also contained a significantly greater number of ceremonial, literary, and cultural objects of Jewish character.
- d. Activities in Which the Jewish Community Should Engage. The intensive group believed that the Jewish community should make its strongest efforts toward the support of Israel both politically and financially. The less intensive group felt that the major efforts should be directed toward defense against anti-Semitism and discrimination. Although the intensive group believed defense against anti-Semitism and discrimination issues warranted a moderate to major effort, they nevertheless ranked it fourth in importance after support of Israel, perpetuation of Jewish cultural life, and increasing the level of knowledge of Jewish history and culture. The intensive group felt that significantly less effort be made in support of general humanitarian programs and a significantly greater effort be made at preventing intermarriage than did the less intensive group.
- e. Attitude toward Israel. Two sets of questions assessed attitudes toward Israel. One set of questions was designed to determine feelings toward political and financial support of Israel and the other a commitment toward frequent visits to Israel, and possible emigration of self and family.
- While both groups felt a positive obligation to help Israel, the intensive group perceived support for Israel in a context of raising money, belonging to Zionist organizations, and seeking to influence United States foreign policy in favor of Israel. The less intensive group interpreted support mostly as giving money, visiting, and defending Israel in discussion with friends and acquaintances. The intensive group felt significantly greater interest in visiting and settling there either at present or some future date than did the less intensive group. Over 50% of the intensive group had visited Israel while only 20% of the less intensive group had visited Israel. The intensive group had gone to Israel more often and spent more time there.

4. Religious Affiliation and Observance

- a. Denominational Identification. The majority of both groups identified themselves as Conservative Jews. The intensive group had a smaller percentage of Reform Jews than did the less intensive group. The intensive group had a greater percentage of those identified as

Orthodox as well as a greater percentage of those who had no religious identification.

- b. Synagogue Activity and Attendance. There were no significant differences in Synagogue membership with 67% and 60% of the intensive group and less intensive group, respectively, belonging to synagogues. However, subjects and parents in the intensive group were significantly more active in the synagogue than those in the less intensive group and their parents. Even after adjusting for the differences between the parents of both groups, the more intensive group was still significantly more active than the less intensive group.

Sixty percent of the intensive group attended Sabbath services regularly while only 42% of the less intensive group attended Sabbath services regularly.

- c. Ritual Observance. The intensive group as well as their parents were significantly more observant than the less intensive group or their parents. Differences between the groups were significant even after adjusting for the difference in the level of observance between the parents of both groups.

5. Marriage and Family

- a. Dating and Marriage. In the intensive group, 46% never dated a non-Jew compared with 24% of the less intensive group. Two percent of the intensive group were married to non-Jews whereas 5% of the less intensive group were married to non-Jews.
- b. Plans Concerning Jewish Education for Their Children. It was significantly more important to the intensive group that their children receive a higher Jewish education than it was to the less intensive group. Sixty percent of the intensive group desired a higher Jewish education for their children while only 16% of the less intensive group supported the idea of such an education. Forty percent of the less intensive group desired a maximum of afternoon elementary school education.
- c. Importance of Various Jewish Values Desired for Their Children. It was significantly more important to the intensive group than to the less intensive group that their children have: a) high regard for the Jewish heritage, b) live in accordance with Jewish ethical standards, c) take part in Jewish religious practices, d) observe Jewish religious practices, and e) be active in Jewish organizations. The general order of priority, however, was substantially the same for both groups.

6. Charitable Contributions

The intensive group contributed more money and a greater percentage was given to Jewish causes. They were more actively involved in the annual campaign of the Federation. Federation, U.J.A., and religious institutions, respectively, received the largest amount of the contributions.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Graduates of three Jewish secondary schools from the Philadelphia area were selected for the study. The schools were Akiba Hebrew Academy, the Midrasha of Har Zion Congregation, and the High School Department of Gratz College.

Midrasha is affiliated with the Conservative movement, and, although Akiba and Gratz are non-denominational, the curriculum and educational philosophy of the high school departments of the three schools are fairly similar and reflect a Conservative orientation.

Only those graduates presumed to have established stable lifestyles were included in the study. The age limit was, therefore, set at 30 and ranged up to 45, the approximate age of those in the earliest graduating classes of Akiba Hebrew Academy. The oldest graduates of the Orthodox Secondary School with a Philadelphia student body were below 30 and, therefore, were not included in the study.

The Adult Jewish Lifestyle Questionnaire (see Appendix A), with accompanying explanatory letters, was mailed to 600 graduates from lists provided by the schools. The respondents were asked to fill out anonymously and return the questionnaires in enclosed stamped and addressed envelopes provided for that purpose. Included in the mailing was a separate postcard and each respondent was asked to fill out his name and return the card to the study director after having sent in the questionnaire. In this way records of the respondents were maintained without sacrificing anonymity. Several weeks later a second mailing went out urging the cooperation of those who had not yet responded. A total of 265 graduates responded, representing a 40% response.

The group that received a more limited Jewish education was selected from the subscribers to the Philadelphia Jewish Exponent. Using the same mailing procedures, questionnaires were sent to a random sample of 1,800 subscribers. About 540 people (30%) responded. However, only 153 met the criteria for inclusion in the study. Many of the respondents were not within the appropriate age range or had alternate kinds of intensive Jewish education. (The data obtained from those over 45 will be analyzed and reported separately.)

Those who were eligible had either no formal Jewish education, private tutoring, Sunday School education, or afternoon Hebrew or Yiddish school education on the elementary level generally provided by congregational schools.

Analysis of the respondents was focused on comparing the lifestyles of those with an intensive Jewish education with those who had a less intensive Jewish education. Consequently, no attempt was made to differentiate among the graduates of the three secondary schools. The graduates of the three schools were, therefore, combined and treated as one group for all analytical purposes.

Graduates of these Jewish secondary schools constitute the intensive group, and those who received less intensive Jewish education constitute the less intensive group.

There was a total of 418 respondents, 265 with an intensive Jewish education and 153 with a less intensive Jewish education. A small number of subjects omitted responses to some of the questions and, as a result, the total number of responses does not always sum to 418. Treatment of the data was based only on those responding and their number is reported in each table.