4 Sept 2023 - ETF-CBS workshop
The changing skills needs in Israel:
recent findings and policy implications

The bigger picture:
Adult basic competencies, monitoring hard and soft
skills, and the capacity of education systems

Iddo Gal
Dept. of Human Services
University of Haifa, Israel
iddo@research.haifa.ac.il

The changing skills needs in Israel:
recent findings and policy implications

Today's focus: Vocational education & training

My focus: The bigger picture of adult skills

1. About 'basic skills' (competencies)
The stepping-stone to learning, and upgrading many skills

2. How people (workers) react to a skill gap/mismatch

3. The situation in Israel, education system capacity

4. Summary & conclusions

Q & A
1. About basic skills (=competencies)
Needed for effective functioning in modern adult life

- Language Literacy
- Math. Literacy Numeracy (adults)
- Digital / Media literacy
- Scientific Literacy
- Statistical literacy Data literacy
- Risk Literacy Probability Lit

2. “Literacies” in specific functional/applied contexts:
   - Health
   - Financial
   - Consumer
   - Citizen

3. Other “basic” skills (incl. "soft" ones) - e.g.,
   - Problem-solving
   - Teamwork
   - Emotional Intelligence, ...
   - Learning to learn
   - Negotiation
   - Cultural competence, ...

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IBM Institute for Business Value | Research Insights
https://www.ibm.com/downloads/cas/NGAWMXAK

40% of workers will have to reskill in the next three years due to AI, says IBM study

Written by Sabrina Ortiz, Associate Editor on Aug. 18, 2023

What “basic skills” these people need to have, to reskill?
Skill (competency) - a complex construct

The capacity to cope effectively and flexibly with dynamic & challenging real-world demands (DeSeCo / Rychen & Salganic (2013))

A skill (in any domain) involves three *interacting* systems:

- **Cognitive tools**: knowledge + knowhow ('skill')
- **Dispositions**: motivation + beliefs + self-efficacy, ...
- **Behaviors**: adaptive practices, prior experiences, ...

♦ "Skill": much more than just 'technical' knowledge
♦ The level of skill proficiency (competence) can be shown on a continuum: minimal... basic......high...very high!

The "soft" side of hard skills: Dispositions

Example - Adult numeracy
cognitive knowledge vs. self-perception

Gal (2022) technical report:
"Monitoring adult numeracy for SDG 4.6.1: Options for using indirect and simple measures"
“Objective numeracy” Vs. “Subjective numeracy”:
Three key findings from surveys + studies

"How would you rate your current reading skills in [language]?"
Scale: Cannot read / poor / fair / good / very good


1. ‘Subjective numeracy’ correlates 0.2 to 0.6 with ‘Objective numeracy’
2. “Calibration” issues (in both directions)! many people have an 'un-calibrated' self-perception of their skill levels -- too high / too low compared to actual levels (measured in direct assessment)
3. Yet - 'Subjective numeracy' correlates positively (adds to explained variance) with outcome variables, after controlling for ‘objective numeracy’

Implications: What are skills, Training goals, Interpreting surveys

Beyond skills - to real-world behaviors (in the job-market & beyond)

2. What are the reactions to a skill mismatch / skill gap?

vertical mismatch (over/under qualifications)
horizontal mismatch (field of study/training)

Topic 1 - worker-level reaction: Change the job

"Job crafting": The actual changes employees make to balance their job demands and resources with their personal abilities and needs..... through altering tasks and their variety, relational/social aspects, and cognitive demands and boundaries of their job (crafting resources and support, emotional load & work pressure).

Job crafting can be assessed; workers can be trained to craft their jobs

Topic 2 - adult level reaction: Change myself - learn more

Research and ‘cumulative wisdom’ of practitioners in adult education & learning (ALE) and vocational development:

Decision to learn (improve skills) is affected by many factors:
- Actual skill levels (low-skilled learn less)
- Self-perceptions of skill (e.g., ‘subjective X’, calibration)
- perceptions of ease of learning (how much effort/pain) and barriers to participation (personal + structural)

Decision to persist with learning: Problems with dropout levels
A major hidden issue in educational systems

Topic 3 - organization-level reaction: changes and interventions at multiple organizational levels

3. The situation in Israel, education systems capacity

An idealized sketch of a basic skills system

1. Skills production systems for creating and upgrading skills
2. Demands for skills Supply of skills
   Distribution of skill levels
3. Skills policy
4. Monitoring Indicators, official statistics

In Israel:
1. Israel does not have a holistic skills policy
2. Skills production is fragmented. Impoverished adult education system.
3. Skill supply (distribution of basic skills) shows big skill gaps, equality issues
4. Lacking good monitoring in many areas: throughput but not learning quality
Selected examples:
Supply of adult basic skills in Israel
skill gaps and skill equality

Based on the PIAAC national report for Israel
Using a national stratified sample, adults 16-64
In 3 languages: Hebrew, Arabic, Russian

Israel PIAAC website + national reports (Hebrew):
https://www.cbs.gov.il/he/Surveys/Pages/%D7%A1%D7%A7%D7%A8-%D7%9E%D7%99%D7%95%D7%9E%D7%A0%D7%95%D7%99%D7%95%D7%AA.aspx

OECD country notes - PIAAC results in Israel (English):

![PIAAC Israel - READING by educ. level](image-url)
## Summary & (selected) conclusions

1. **Skill production:** should consider a wider range of "basic skills" (including "soft skills"+dispositions), given rapidly changing demands

2. **Monitoring:** should address the "lifecycle" of adult learning:
   - decision to study ➔ learning process ➔ learning outcomes (cognitive, dispositions) ➔ dropout
   
   Surveys need to expand beyond self-perceptions and simple practices, to encompass how people **react to** skill gaps and skill mismatch - differentiate by skill levels (low vs others)

   Each single survey/study is limited by design. What can we do?
   - coordinated large-scale + localized studies.
   - multi-level studies - workers within their organization.

3. **Need a national skills policy + better systemic capacity.** More coordination of formal learning and adult education opportunities
Thank you! Gracias! Obrigado! תודה
Questions? Comments? Better ideas? Let me know!

Iddo Gal
University of Haifa, Dept. of Human Services
Email: <iddo@research.haifa.ac.il>
Website: https://hw.haifa.ac.il/en/people/human/igal