We can assume that there are two main reasons, both political and educational, for the increase in inequality in educational achievements in this period. Politically, in 2005 Israel conducted a unilateral disengagement from Jewish settlements in Gaza; this decision, taken by the Israeli government in 2004, led to numerous scholastic difficulties both before, during, and after the disengagement. According to Weisblai (2009), the disengagement greatly affected young people’s educational achievements, and gave rise to problems with attention deficit, transfers between educational establishments, and dropping out and partial school attendance (we hypothesize that this is also the reason for the acute rise in inequality in achievements in the period 2004-2006). Moreover, in 2006 Israel went through the Second Lebanon War, which lasted around 40 days and negatively impacted on the proper conduct of the *bagrut* (matriculation examinations) in this period. Further, in terms of education, during this period two major educational reforms occurred. The first reform involved changes in budgeting methods in the wake of the Shoshani Report, while the second involved the implementation of the “New Horizon” program, which centers on the importance of developing teaching and learning. This reform was accompanied by a change in the number of education ministers in this period, which gave rise to numerous administrative and academic difficulties. Like Romer (1998), we believe that the State must sever the link between a student’s circumstances and her educational achievements. This is based on the assumption that a good quality matriculation certificate will promote equal opportunities in admission to higher education institutions, and subsequently higher earning potential. Therefore, the policy recommendations arising from this study point to the need to reduce inequality in educational achievements among students in Israel through a number of significant changes: reducing the number of students per class, which will improve personal and educational teacher-student relations; changing budget allocation methods to a differential budgeting system that promotes additional budgeting for students with a weak background (for example, Arabic-speaking students or students from the Israeli periphery) (Author, 2018b); and empowering leading teachers in areas characterized by a weak social background to help students realize their inherent potential, and thus reduce inequality in educational achievement.  In addition, this study’s findings indicate a need for further research based on the index developed here, in order to conduct an annual estimate of the extent of inequality in educational achievement in Israel.

Weisblai, A (2009). The government’s treatment of evacuees from Gush Katif. Knesset Research Center. Jerusalem, Israel.