

SOCIAL SECURITY
ISRAEL JOURNAL OF SOCIAL POLICY



Published by

THE NATIONAL INSURANCE INSTITUTE OF ISRAEL

June 2020

No. 110

EDITORIAL BOARD

Israel (Issi) Doron, *Editor in chief*

Daniel Gottlieb, *Chairman*

Suliman Abu Bader

Leah Achdut

Jon Anson

Liat Ayalon

Orly Benjamin

Nissim Cohen

Sylvie Fogiel-Bijaoui

John Gal

Jochanan Stessman

Aviad Tur-Sinai

Managing Editor: Maya Orev-Attal

Copy Editor: Hava Rimon

Typesetting: Onit Computer Services Ltd.

Contents

Intergenerational tension in the age of the Covid-19 outbreak

Liat Ayalon

The coronavirus crisis and the labor market in Israel

Leah Achdut

The impact of recession and policy on the standard of living, poverty and inequality – in the wake of the coronavirus

Miri Endeweld, Oren Heller and Lahav Karady

Some thoughts on the current crisis of the Israeli health care system

Abraham Doron

Informal use of information and communication technologies by social workers

Mona Khoury-Kassabri, Edith Blit-Cohen⁴, Rachel Shenhav-Goldberg and Faye Mishna

The intelligence of caregiving: a new framework for understanding the emotional components of quality care

Yafit Cohen

Summaries of the main articles

Intergenerational tension in the age of the Covid-19 outbreak

*Liat Ayalon*¹

The novel Coronavirus, or Covid-19, has introduced the public to an old-new phenomenon, ageism towards older adults. The description of an entire public of older people as vulnerable and dependent has increased ageism towards older adults as well as intergenerational conflict. At the same time, not only the public perception of old age and aging has changed, but also practices based on chronological age have become more common, including the age-based preferences for medical treatment. This paper discusses the need for a social change in order to live in a world for all age even during the age of the Corona.

The coronavirus crisis and the labor market in Israel

*Leah Achdut*²

The Coronavirus crisis first occurred in the health arena, but almost immediately surfaced into an economic crisis. It unexpectedly landed and escalated in just few days to almost complete closure without employers and employees being prepared. It is reflected at the same time on the supply side as production and marketing have shrunk, and on the demand side due to the decline in households' income. Many employers faced with the choice of whether to dismiss employees or send them on unpaid leave.

The paper reviews the main trends in the labor market since the outbreak of the epidemic until the implementation of the first phase of the exit strategy in the second half of April 2020. It focuses on the employers' response to

1 Louis and Gabi Weisfeld School of Social Work, Bar Ilan University

2 Ruppin Academic Center

the measures taken by the government to curb the epidemic as well as on government policies for providing income support to persons losing their jobs, primarily through easing the conditions of eligibility for unemployment benefits and extending the period of their payment.

Since the beginning of March 2020, the number of new job seekers jumped almost to a million people and unemployment rate soared to 27%. Nearly 90% of the new jobseekers were sent by their employers on involuntary unpaid leave and only 7% were fired from their jobs. Against the background of the widespread and almost exclusive use of unpaid leave, the paper discusses the advantages and disadvantages of this mechanism, particularly during the Coronavirus crisis, which is perceived "as a force majeure" event. It also points out some of the weaknesses that have characterized government's response, particularly with regard to: (a) the absence of any supplementary arrangement with the employers, such as helping firms to adjust working time and preserve jobs, in order to reduce the use of the unpaid leave channel and, (b) the extent to which unemployment insurance program provides an adequate and equitable response for all workers who lost their livelihoods during this crisis.

Finally, this paper includes several policy measures recommended to be introduced by the government during the reopening of the economy and thereafter. In formulating these recommendations, it has been taken into account that the crisis hit disproportionately the most vulnerable workers as those with low-wage and insecure jobs, young and women, and that there is a great uncertainty about not only the development of the epidemic, but also about the pace at which the economy and the labor market will recover. The proposed policy measures are: to encourage firms and businesses that re-absorb workers that were forced to be on unpaid leave or hire new workers by means of financial assistance; to pursue measures, as have been already taken when the crisis broke out, to facilitate unemployed persons' eligibility for unemployment benefit and for a longer period; to make the option of paying partial unemployment benefits, while the unemployed person takes a low-wage job, more attractive; and to invest in human capital through vocational training for low-skilled unemployed.

The impact of recession and policy on the standard of living, poverty and inequality – in the wake of the Coronavirus

Miri Endeweld,¹ Oren Heller¹ and Lahav Karady¹

This study presents findings from a multi-stage and dual simulation (based on two separate databases) of the employment and economic situation among families in Israel, after the severe recession following the Coronavirus epidemic crisis outbreak. The study allows real-time examination of the rising unemployment impact on main social indicators – standard of living, poverty and inequality indices – and the impact of the relief policy through unemployment benefits and grants given to the self-employed, the elderly, and more – to mitigate the rise in these indices.

According to the simulation results, the standard of living declines by approximately 5% with the crisis outbreak and is curbed to 3% with the addition of the various supports. The two simulations show different rates of indices levels at the starting point, albeit poverty rates reduce by one-third to one-half after the supports in both simulations. In addition, there is a sharp relief in poverty depth and severity after the one-time universal grant payments (500 NIS for each child, elderly and disabled). The rise in the Gini inequality index of disposable income is also reduced by half after receiving the supports – compared to the situation when the crisis broke out and prior to these supports.

The findings also indicate which population groups are mostly affected by the economic crisis: the entire working population, in which the most affected are the self-employed and households with more than one employee, single-parent families and younger families. These groups paid heavier prices compared to other populations.

¹ National Insurance Institute, Israel

Some thoughts on the current crisis of the Israeli health care system

*Abraham Doron*¹

This paper deals with two major issues concerning the current crisis in the Israeli health care system: (1) the political orientation of the Israeli Health Maintenance Organization (Kupot Cholim) providing the services, and (2) the change in the relationships between the existing system and the political structure.

In the past, Kupot Cholim were mainly consumers' organizations, mainly within the labor union system, aimed to provide health care to their members. In the new system, after the enactment of the national health insurance act, the Kupot Cholim are no longer governed by their members, but rather by a new managerial and bureaucratic groups. The issue is that we cannot be sure that these new managerial groups will continue supporting the health care needs of their population.

The second issue is the process of de-politization of the health care system. This means cutting off access to health care from the belonging to some sort of a political organization. Under the guise of de-politization, the field of health services mostly stopped being a part of the political debate within Israeli politics. In a proper political system, health care policy needs to be one of the key issues on the public agenda.

Hence, it seems that there is no way of escaping the need to re-politicize the health care system, and thus to prevent further crisis in its functioning.

1 Paul Berwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University in Jerusalem

Informal use of information and communication technologies by social workers

*Mona Khoury-Kassabri¹, Edith Blit-Cohen¹, Rachel Shenhav-Goldberg¹
and Faye Mishna²*

With the integration of technologies, including e-mail, messages, social networks and more as a major tool in human communication, a gap exists between the social workers' acquired knowledge of communication with their clients and the realities in the field, where the use of these technologies is widespread. Moreover, the use of these technologies is informal, and therefore knowledge about them is still limited. The purpose of this study is to gather information on the ways in which social workers interact with their clients informally using information and communication technologies. The study included 389 social workers who filled out an online questionnaire sent to them from the Social Workers Union by email or through social networks.

The findings indicate that three out of every four participants (74%) contact their clients via e-mail, messaging and/or social networking between regular face-to-face meetings, which is not part of formal treatment conducted on Internet communications systems. More than half of the participants stated that there is no policy on using this type of communication with clients at their place of work. Also, more than a quarter of those who interact with clients in this way stated that online communication was not documented in the client portfolio at all. There were hardly any differences between social workers in the use of information and communication technologies with clients according to personal and professional characteristics.

The findings of the study emphasize the need for more research and ethical consideration of the issue of using online communication with clients in

1 The Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem
2 Faculty of Social Work, Toronto University

training social workers and in setting policies that will accompany the practice of the profession.

The intelligence of caregiving: a new framework for understanding the emotional components of quality care

Yafit Cohen¹

The purpose of this article is to define and analyze the emotional ingredients of quality care by dissecting the firsthand experience of caregivers who provide home care to elderly people under the Long-Term Care Law.

Thematic analysis was carried out on in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted with 20 Israeli caregivers, who provide home care for the elderly.

Caregiver's emotions towards patients were mostly positive and included love, care, compassion and familial feelings. Emotions towards the caregiving occupation were ambivalent: a sense of exploitation and shame alongside a sense of satisfaction. The article outlines strategies for dealing with ambivalent feelings.

This article offers a new theoretical concept termed "caregiving intelligence". Caregiving intelligence is composed of two different types of intelligence: emotional and social – both essential for quality caregiving. These findings emphasize the importance of considering emotions within organizational frameworks.

1 School of Social Work and Social Welfare, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem