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The Potential Demand for Haredi High School Yeshiva Studies

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The development of Haredi high school yeshivas as a normative educational track for high-school aged students in Haredi society, in parallel to the existing track of *Yeshivot Ketanot*, is essential in order to enhance access to higher education and increase employment opportunities for young Haredim.

During the past fifteen years there have been significant developments in Haredi society, leading to ever-increasing participation on the part of Haredi men in the employment market and higher education in Israel. These developments point to a steadily growing potential demand by parents who seek to send their son to institutions that offer a comprehensive core studies curriculum. The Center for the Study of Haredi

Society, based at the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted a study that used a sample survey to assess the potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshiva studies. This study addresses the interest that has emerged in recent years in light of the establishment of new Haredi high school Yeshivas. The study analyzes the increased demand, which exceeds the current supply of existing high school Yeshiva programs, and identifies a need for additional Yeshivas. The survey presented here, conducted by the Askaria polling company for the Jerusalem Institute, constitutes the main basis of the study, which was published in its entirety in Hebrew and is [available online](#) on the website of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research.

The Potential Demand for Haredi High School Yeshiva Studies – A Sample Statistical Survey

The Survey and the Sample

The statistical survey was conducted by Askaria, a polling company under the leadership of David Dror and Dr. Gad On.

The population group surveyed was the Haredi society across all its various streams and diverse communities: Lita'im (Misnagdim), Hasidim, and Sephardim, men and women aged 24-76, who reside in Israel's major Haredi population centers: Jerusalem, Bnei Brak, Ashdod, Modi'in Illit, Beit Shemesh, Beitar Illit, Tel Aviv – Yafo, Petah Tikva, Netanya, Elad, Holon, Haifa, Be'er Sheva, Rehovot, Bat Yam, Rishon LeZion, Ashkelon, Kiryat Gat, Netivot, Ofakim, Rekhasim, Tiberias, Hadera, Ramat Gan, Zfat, and Ramle.

The survey approached respondents through traditional means (mail, fax) as well as innovative means (email, social media networks, and instant messaging via WhatsApp). The selection of these varied means of information gathering was aimed at reaching respondents with diverse types of communication tools, such as Haredi respondents with no access to email or even fax. We

delivered the questionnaires, which were formulated in cooperation with the client, and adapted them for different approaches to men and women (see Appendix B).

Because the survey's subject matter is extremely sensitive among some circles in the Haredi sector, the sample was increased from 300 to 450 at the outset. The surveyors encountered a number of difficulties with respondents who fiercely objected to the subject matter and expressed outrage over the unacceptability of this issue in the eyes of *Gedolei Israel* (the great Haredi Rabbinical thinkers) and the leading Rabbis of our time. As an illustration, the following is a direct quote from an email message sent by a woman who was part of the sample:

Remove me from your list!! I am not interested in answering these heretical questionnaires!! Stop causing pure and righteous Yeshiva students to abandon Torah study. You are leading the masses to sin!! How does that not terrify you??! There is a

judgment and there is a judge.... Stop going against all of *Gedolei Israel*!!!

Accordingly, it was necessary to approach respondents repeatedly, ensure their anonymity, and provide detailed explanations about the nature of the survey. Eventually, despite these difficulties, the surveyors were able to construct a representative sample of the population group under study.

The sample numbered 451 men and women, of whom 320 responded to the questionnaire. A very small percentage, only 29%, did not respond – indicating a high-quality sampling process. The sample comprised 55.3% men and 44.7% women. Among the respondents, 35% were from the Lita'i stream, 40.1% from the Hasidic stream, and 24.4% from the Sephardic stream. Of the sample, only 6.3% had a son whom they were sending or had sent to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. The Goodness of Fit was assessed using a statistical χ^2 test, yielding a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, and the findings indicate that the sample is representative of the Haredi population (see Appendix B).

The 320 respondents comprised 177 men and 143 women, distributed across Haredi streams as follows: 128 Hasidim, 114 Lita'im, and 78 Sephardim. Of the Lita'im, 11 identified themselves as part of the "Jerusalem Faction." Among the Hasidim, some of the respondents identified themselves as belonging to a specific Hasidic dynasty: Gur – 24; Vizhnitz – 6; Lubavitch (Chabad) – 6; and Belz – 4.

Table 2.1 presents the distribution of respondents by locality, starkly indicating that the major population centers are Bnei Brak and Jerusalem. The table also points to the relative weight of Haredi cities and Beit Shemesh. Haifa and Ashdod are both mixed cities with a significant proportion of Haredim. Also worth noting is the widespread distribution of the Haredi population across a large number of localities in the center and peripheries of Israel, which were represented in the sample statistical survey as well.

Table 2.1: Respondents by Locality of Residence

Locality	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Bnei Brak	86	26.9
Jerusalem	73	22.8
Petah Tikva	26	8.1
Modi'in Illit	21	6.6
Beitar Illit	21	6.6
Beit Shemesh	15	4.7
Elad	15	4.7
Haifa	10	3.1
Ashdod	6	3.1
Giv'at Ze'ev	5	1.9
Rehovot	4	1.6
Kiryat Gat	3	1.2
Netanya	3	0.9
Ashkelon	3	0.9
Kiryat Ye'arim	2	0.6
Hadera	2	0.6
Zfat	2	0.6
Kfar Chabad	2	0.6
Netivot	2	0.6
Tel Aviv – Yafo	1	0.3
Be'er Sheva	1	0.3
Katzrin	1	0.3
Hatzor HaGlilit	1	0.3
Elazar	1	0.3
Afula	1	0.3
Tifrah	1	0.3
Yeruham	1	0.3
Tiberias	1	0.3
Ofakim	1	0.3
Mevo Horon	1	0.3
Talmon	1	0.3
Total	320	100.0

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

The main survey questions that emerged from the questionnaire were as follows:

- ▶ **Who is willing to send their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva?** The second question regarding the factors that might lead someone to send their son to a high school Yeshiva included the following possible answer: “I have no problem sending my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva.” This response identified the respondent as contributing to the potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshiva studies;

- ▶ **Who opposes sending their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva?** The first question regarding the factors that might lead a Haredi person to send their son to a high school Yeshiva included the following possible answer: “Under no circumstances would I send my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva.” This response identified the respondent as being opposed to such studies, and therefore he or she does not contribute to the potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshiva studies. In the analysis of our findings, those who responded in this manner were classified as “opposed.”

Respondents were presented with two main questions:

- ▶ **Which factors might lead to a decision to send a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva?** Each respondent was presented with a list of possible answers and could select more than one answer;
- ▶ **Which factors might lead to a decision not to send a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva?** Each respondent was presented with a list of possible answers and could select more than one answer.

In addition, this section examined some of the factors that correlate willingness or opposition to sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva with a specific Haredi stream, as well as other social variables. The forthcoming third publication in this series will present correlations with other social variables, as well as the correlation between attitudes towards sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva, on the one hand, and the proximity of Haredi youth enrolled in a Haredi high school Yeshiva (for example, a member of the extended family, a neighbor’s son, or a friend of the son), on the other hand.

Willingness and Opposition

The data from the sample survey reveal one basic statistical finding regarding assessment of the potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshivas, and other Haredi secondary educational institutions for boys, which combine general studies with religious studies. Of the respondents, 17% selected the answer “I have no problem sending my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva” – thus indicating some degree of willingness. Even assuming that some of this willingness will not be actualized, there is still a basis for concluding that the number of students

enrolled in these institutions will increase in the next few years and that their proportion will be greater than the percentage of students enrolled in such institutions during the 2017-2018 school year, which currently stands at 6.5% of all boys enrolled in a *Yeshiva Ketana* (a Yeshiva for youth of high school age). This figure allows entrepreneurs who are thinking about establishing a Haredi high school Yeshiva or similar educational institution to assume that, given the appropriate conditions, there might be a demand for such an institution.

Table 2.2: Willingness and Opposition to Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva, by Percentage

	Total	Haredi stream		
		Sephardim	Hasidim	Lita'im
Willing – “I have no problem sending my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva”	17	26	15	13
Opposed – “Under no circumstances would I send my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva”	41	19	49	48
Considering the issue or uncertain – respondents who identify factors in favor and factors against	42	55	36	39

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

Compared with the 17% who voiced willingness, the proportion of those who expressed opposition was quite high. A total of 41% of respondents selected the answer “Under no circumstances would I send my son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva” (Table 2.2). That is, two fifths of the respondents identify with the core Haredi position, which under no circumstances accepts the combination of general and religious studies and remains completely loyal to the normative hegemonic model of a *Yeshiva Ketana* where Haredi boys focus exclusively on religious studies.

It emerges from the sample survey that, among the three principal Haredi streams, the greatest potential lies with the Sephardic stream. Among Sephardic Haredi respondents, 26% were willing to send their son to such a Haredi high school Yeshiva, whereas the figure among respondents from the Hasidic stream was 15%, and among Lita’i respondents the figure was 13% – that is, half the proportion of the Sephardic Haredim who were willing to send their son to such a Yeshiva. This large discrepancy reflects the cultural composition of some of the Haredi high school Yeshivas that have a significant proportion of students from Sephardic families, and which account for most of the newer Yeshivas. The older Yeshivas depend primarily on the Lita’i stream. Likewise, Hasidim tend not to participate in the alternative track to

the *Yeshiva Ketana*. Consequently, the image of Haredi high school Yeshivas that emerged over the years within the Haredi as well as the general population was primarily focused on the Lita’i community. The sample survey, as such, altered the picture with respect to potential demand. Its findings reflect the greater willingness of Sephardic Haredi students enrolled in the new high school Yeshivas, and especially the Haredi secondary educational institutions that combine technologically oriented general studies with religious studies, and which have a significant proportion of Sephardic Haredi students. Their presence stems from the willingness of the Sephardic Haredi community to consider a Haredi educational track that incorporates general studies as well.

The question that emerges is: What accounts for the relatively high willingness of the Sephardic Haredi community to send their sons to a Haredi high school Yeshiva that includes general studies and prepares students for Israeli high school matriculation exams? It would appear that the variance stems from the cultural differences between Sephardic Haredim and the Ashkenazi Haredi streams. One difference is the extent of severity with which they view relations between the internal Haredi world and the general external world. The Lita’im and Hasidim have a history of ever-increasing severity in this regard

in recent generations, as reflected in proactive Rabbinic opposition and the societal pressure of the surrounding community. The Sephardic Haredi stream, which is part of the Sephardic Jewish tradition, is far more open to the general external world. A second difference is the normative commitment to all-encompassing religious studies.

This commitment is stronger in the Lita'i stream, which, during the latter half of the twentieth century, created and cultivated the all-inclusive concept of *Hevrat Halomdim* (society of scholars). The study program at a *Yeshiva Ketana* is intended to prepare young Haredim to be full and worthy members of *Hevrat Halomdim*.

Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva

The sample survey presented interviewees with two sequential questions regarding their reasons in favor of or against sending their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. A list of factors was presented to interviewees, and they were free to select more than one factor in responding to each of the questions. The responses therefore do not produce a cumulative total of 100%. For each factor, the table indicates the proportion of respondents who selected this answer. The discussion in this regard is divided along the lines of factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva and factors against doing so.

The factors can be classified into two categories:

1. Factors that relate to difficulties a son faces in studies at a *Yeshiva Ketana*, which necessitate a different educational solution – one that a

Haredi high school Yeshiva might provide. These factors serve as a solution “in hindsight” rather than “in advance.” The various factors are listed in Table 2.3.

2. Factors that relate to the parents’ or son’s pre-existing preference for attending a Haredi high school Yeshiva rather than a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*. These are factors that exist “in advance” and reflect an ideological predisposition towards this educational solution. The various factors are listed in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3 divides the factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva into two categories: factors that relate to difficulties with studies at a *Yeshiva Ketana* (“in hindsight” factors) and factors that relate to parents’ and sons’ preferences (“in advance” factors). In terms of the potential demand for

Haredi high school Yeshiva studies, the “in hindsight” factors represent the push by candidates from a *Yeshiva Ketana* towards Haredi high school Yeshivas,

while the “in advance” factors represent the pull of the Haredi high school Yeshivas.

Table 2.3: Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva

Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva	Number	Percentage
Factors related to difficulties with studies at a <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i> (“in hindsight”)		
If the son is not suited to a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	102	33.1
If the son is not willing to study at a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	41	13.3
If a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i> suitable for the son has not been found	34	11.0
Factors related to parents’ and sons’ preferences (“in advance”)		
If the son prefers to study at a Haredi high school Yeshiva	43	13.9
To prepare the son to earn an honorable livelihood	60	19.5
The principle of “Torah with Derech Eretz” (combining Orthodoxy with modern life, in accordance with the philosophy of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch)	62	20.1
Total number of respondents who answered the question	308	100.0*
Respondents who did not answer the question	12	
Total number of survey respondents	320	

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

* Each respondent was free to indicate more than one factor, and therefore the percentages do not result in a cumulative total of 100.

Factors Related to Difficulties with Studies at a *Yeshiva Ketana*

It emerges from Table 2.3 that the most frequently cited factor in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva is "If the son is not suited to a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*." This factor was cited by a third (33.1%) of the respondents who answered this question. The frequent citing of this factor indicates the prevalence of "in hindsight" reasons for sending a son to a Haredi high school. It also reflects the distress on the part of some parents that results from a situation in which their son is enrolled or is intended to enroll at a *Yeshiva Ketana*, where the entire curriculum is focused on Talmudic and other religious studies. The salience of this factor further indicates that the non-suitability of Haredi boys to studies at a regular *Yeshiva Ketana* could be the main contributing factor to potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshivas. The second most frequently cited factor in this category is "If the son is not willing to study at a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*" (13.31%).

The two above-mentioned factors reflect the problems stemming from the fact that the Haredi community has only one normative studies track for students of high school age, namely, the *Yeshiva Ketana* curriculum. Some Haredi youth have difficulty keeping up with the *Yeshiva Ketana* curriculum, which is

based on a full day of exclusively religious studies, primarily Talmud, even if they are gifted students. This difficulty is the basis for students dropping out of a *Yeshiva Ketana*. Haredi high school Yeshivas offer an alternative Haredi secondary educational track suited to these youths, as indicated by the respondents who cited the two factors related to difficulties with studies at a *Yeshiva Ketana*.

The third item in the category of factors related to difficulties with studies at a *Yeshiva Ketana* is "If a regular *Yeshiva Ketana* suitable for the son has not been found." Of the respondents who answered this question, 11.0% cited this factor as a reason for sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva (Table 2.3), but the factor does not lend itself to a simple, unequivocal explanation. There might be many underlying reasons. Many *Yeshivot Ketanot* (plural of *Yeshiva Ketana*) have a system for classifying applicants, and each Yeshiva has its own classification standards. Some of these standards are based on academic excellence, some on the maintenance of a Haredi lifestyle in the candidate's family, and some on the Haredi group or stream to which the candidate belongs. It is fairly well known, for example, that it is difficult for Sephardic Haredi youths to gain admission to Lita'i *Yeshivot Ketanot*, which often have a "quota" for Sephardic students.

Factors Related to Parents' and Sons' Preferences

This category comprises three factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. The factor based on a son's preference (11.0%) includes two possibilities (Table 2.3): first, that the son is not comfortable with a full day of Talmudic studies; second, that the son is interested in general studies as provided by a Haredi high school Yeshiva, and he plans to take the Israeli matriculation exams and pursue further vocational or academic studies. In either case, the data indicate that among the youths as well, there are some who by the age of 14 have developed a preference for the Haredi high school curriculum over that of the *Yeshiva Ketana*.

The second factor relating to preference indicates in simple words that it is appropriate for a Haredi youth to study Torah and at the same time prepare himself to earn an honorable livelihood. This factor was cited by 19.5% of the respondents who answered the question regarding factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva (Table 2.3). This is a utilitarian "in advance" reason, reflecting a change that has taken place in recent years among some members of the Haredi community, who seek to add the man to the family's circle of breadwinners by including him in the labor force instead of or in addition to his wife. Here we see a clear retreat

from the prevailing conception of *Hevrat Halomdim*, according to which men study Torah and the responsibility for financially supporting the family falls primarily to the women. This is an altogether different conception, albeit phrased in utilitarian rather than ideological terms.

The third factor relating to preference, based on the principle of "Torah with Derech Eretz," stems from ideological considerations and relies on the writing of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, who held that general studies should be combined with religious studies. The Haredi high school Yeshiva curriculum is unequivocally perceived as an option derived from this factor and a choice taken "in advance."

It should be emphasized that citing these factors for sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva does not necessarily indicate the parents' consent to do so. To draw such a conclusion requires a decisive answer, which will be discussed later. For now we may conclude that about **a third of the respondents** cited a son's suitability to regular *Yeshiva Ketana* studies as an "in hindsight" reason for sending their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva, and that **a fifth the respondents** cited two "in advance" reasons: the first was "Torah with Derech Eretz" and the second was "To prepare the son to earn an honorable livelihood." These response rates indicate a positive approach among some of the sample's

respondents regarding the potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshiva studies. One should view this one-fifth of respondents as in effect representing an “upper limit” when assessing the potential ideological demand for Haredi high school Yeshivas. The actualization of such a demand depends on many factors, including the supply of such institutions as well as parents’ approach to societal pressure not to send their son to such an institution.

Respondents were asked whether they are sending or have in the past sent a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva and, if so, what were their reasons. A total of 21 respondents answered in the affirmative, accounting for 6.5% of all respondents in the sample survey. This figure is very close to the ratio of students enrolled in the various Haredi high school Yeshivas during 2017-2018, as compared with the number of students enrolled in *Yeshivot Ketanot* during the same year. Parents who are sending or have sent a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva were given a list of possible factors, presented as reasons in principle for their decision. Most (11 respondents) cited the principle of “Torah with Derech Eretz” and four indicated “To prepare the son to earn an honorable livelihood” – both of which are “in advance” factors. The other responses cited the following factors: “The son was not willing to study at a *Yeshiva Ketana*” (2); “The son preferred

to study at a Haredi high school Yeshiva” (2); “The son was not willing to study at a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*” (1). One of the respondents added a factor of his own: “Instead of his becoming secular,” which attests to the role of the Haredi high school Yeshiva as an institution that ensures Haredi youths remain part of Haredi society.

Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva, by Haredi Stream

Table 2.4 presents the distribution of factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva, classified in accordance with the Haredi stream of the respondents. A review of this distribution indicates significant variance on the part of the Sephardic Haredi stream in relation to “in hindsight” factors, that is, as a solution to other problems rather than an end in itself. Half the Sephardic Haredi respondents (49.3%) cited the factor “If the son is not suited to a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*,” while the Hasidim were loyal to the normative model of a *Yeshiva Ketana* even if their son was not suited to it. Only approximately a fourth of the Hasidic respondents (23.1%) cited this “in hindsight” factor (Table 2.4). The Lita’i respondents ranked between the Sephardim and the Hasidim, with the proportion of those who cited the factor of a son’s non-suitability to a regular *Yeshiva*

Ketana at slightly more than one-third (34.3%).

The Sephardic Haredi respondents were consistent in this regard with respect to the two “in hindsight” factors. About a fourth (23.9%) cited the factor “If the son is not willing to study at a regular *Yeshiva Ketana*,” while the proportion of Hasidic respondents who cited this factor was only 6.6%. Here too, the Hasidim remained loyal to the normative model of the *Yeshiva Ketana*, and once again more so than the Lita’im, 14.8% of whom cited this factor in favor of sending their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva (Table 2.4). The Sephardim also cited the factor “If a regular *Yeshiva Ketana* suitable for the son has not been found” more often than the other streams.

The Sephardic Haredi respondents also stood out in terms of citing the “in advance” factor “To prepare the son to earn an honorable livelihood,” with 30.1% noting this factor, whereas only 18.2%

of the Hasidim and 13.9% of the Lita’im cited it. The same distribution across the Haredi streams was evident with respect to the decidedly “in advance” factor of “The principle of Torah with Derech Eretz” (Table 2.4).

The Sephardic Haredi stream emerges from the survey as being the most potentially willing, among the four main Haredi streams, to send their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. To a large extent this reflects the cultural composition of some of the Haredi high school Yeshivas, which have a significant proportion of students from Lita’i families. The older Yeshivas depend primarily on the Lita’i stream, and likewise the Hasidim rarely opt for the alternative track to the *Yeshiva Ketana*. Accordingly, the image of the Haredi high school Yeshivas that emerged over the years among the Haredi community and general population centered on the Lita’i community. The sample survey, as such, altered the picture with respect to potential demand.

Table 2.4: Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva, by Haredi Stream (in percentages)

Factors in Favor of Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva	Total*	Haredi stream		
		Sephardic Haredim	Hasidim	Lita'im
Factors related to difficulties with studies at a <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i> ("in hindsight")				
If the son is not suited to a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	33.1	49.3	23.1	34.3
If the son is not willing to study at a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	13.3	23.9	6.6	14.8
If a regular <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i> suitable for the son has not been found	11.0	17.8	9.1	9.2
Factors related to parents' and sons' preferences ("in advance")				
If the son prefers to study at a Haredi high school Yeshiva	13.9	15.1	14.9	13.0
To prepare the son to earn an honorable livelihood	19.5	3.1	18.2	13.9
The principle of "Torah with Derech Eretz" (combining Orthodoxy with modern life, in accordance with the philosophy of Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch)	20.1	28.8	19.8	13.9
Total number of respondents who answered the question about Haredi stream and question about factors	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

* The total number of factors cited is greater than the total number of respondents because the questionnaire allowed respondents to cite more than factor. Therefore the cumulative sum of percentages is greater than 100.

The data in Table 2.4, which addresses the different approaches of Haredi streams to factors that favor sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva, prominently highlight the relative openness of Sephardic Haredim to the option of sending their son to a Haredi educational institution where religious and secular studies are taught under one roof. This openness has its roots in Eastern (Sephardic) Jewish tradition, predating its charged encounter with Ashkenazi Judaism (Lupo, 2004).

In analyzing the data related to differences among Haredi streams vis-à-vis the factors in favor of sending a son to a Haredi high

school Yeshiva, this study also examined two Haredi sub-streams that are regarded as extremist in terms of Haredi strictness: the “Jerusalem Faction” that forms part of the Lita’i stream; and Gur Hasidism, which is part of the Hasidic stream. As expected, all those respondents who noted that they belong to the Jerusalem Faction did not cite even one favorable factor. Among the 13 Gur Hasidim, there were 2-4 who cited “in hindsight” factors. The numbers are statistically small but, nevertheless, permit the conclusion that one should not expect a potential demand for Haredi high school Yeshiva studies among the stricter groups in the margins of the Haredi community.

Factors against Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva

The questionnaire also requested respondents to address factors against sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. The results, presented in Table 2.5 below, are divided into four categories: factors related to outlook; factors related to cultural threat; societal factors; and factors related to family. The factors in the first three categories are characteristic of the Haredi community’s opposition to the existence of Haredi high school Yeshivas, and they have a bearing on potential demand. The family-related factors reflect the fact that a decisive majority of these educational institutions are located far from home and operate as boarding schools.

Factors Related to Outlook

This category contained just one factor: “The only appropriate training for developing as a Ben Torah (a very observant Torah scholar) is that of the *Yeshiva Ketana*.” Of the respondents, 54.5% cited the above factor, the highest figure ascribed to any of the factors against sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva (Table 2.5). This factor reflects the prevailing norm among many members of the Haredi community, and it serves as the basis for Rabbinic opposition as well as the social pressure within the Haredi community against sending boys to Haredi high school

Yeshivas. It establishes the regular *Yeshiva Ketana* as an “in advance” educational track – that is, the dominant normative track of a large portion of the Haredi community, who comprise its core constituency. More than half the respondents regard the regular *Yeshiva Ketana* as one of the important

foundations for the development of a Haredi man, particularly one who is destined to be a Ben Torah. This is the main source of the strong opposition to studies at a Haredi high school Yeshiva that is not exclusively devoted to religious studies but, rather, integrates them with general studies.

Table 2.5: Factors against Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva

Factors against sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva	Number	Percentage
Factors related to outlook		
The only appropriate training for developing as a Ben Torah is that of the <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	168	54.5
Factors related to cultural threat		
Haredi high school Yeshiva studies might steer the youth away from the Haredi way of life	139	45.1
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously maintain a Haredi lifestyle	111	36.0
Societal factors		
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously ensure that the youths admitted come from good Haredi homes	100	32.5
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not maintain communal uniformity	13	4.2
Factors related to inconvenience for the family		
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not have a system for external studies outside the framework of a boarding school	16	1.2
Total number of respondents who answered the question	308	100.0*
Respondents who did not answer the question	12	
Total number of survey respondents	320	

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

* Each respondent was free to indicate more than one factor, and therefore the percentages do not result in a cumulative total of 100.

Factors Related to Cultural Threat

These factors reveal cultural concerns relating to Haredi high school Yeshivas, beyond the outlook that holds that they do not accord with the normative track of the Haredi population. One of the factors related to cultural threat is the view that these institutions might steer youths away from a Haredi way of life. That argument is frequently reflected in the religious commentary of Rabbinic leaders, who go so far as to mention “annihilation” in religious rulings published in printed media or Pashkevils (posters that have been placed on public walls in Haredi neighborhoods). Thus, one of the factors related to cultural threat that was presented to respondents was framed as follows: “Haredi high school Yeshiva studies might steer the youth away from the Haredi way of life.” A total of 45.1 % cited this factor as a reason for not sending their son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva (Table 2.5). This issue is a salient topic of discussion in the Haredi community, with prominent examples often cited. In other words, besides the fact that Haredi high school Yeshivas do not make it possible for a student to become a Ben Torah, they might even steer him away from the Haredi way of life. An additional factor presented in this category was that “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously maintain a Haredi lifestyle,” which was cited by 36.0 % of respondents (Table 2.5). It appears that such a view is

prevalent among large portions of the Haredi community, and that it stems from word-of-mouth communication as well as opinions voiced in social media, and particularly from Pashkevils and rulings by leaders of the community. It is possible that this image developed because of the image associated with Haredi high school Yeshivas that serve students who have dropped out of school as well as marginalized Haredi youth, and the image has attached even to high-quality high school Yeshivas that meticulously maintain a strict Haredi lifestyle. This image also correlates with the societal factor according to which “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously ensure that the youths admitted come from good Haredi homes,” which was cited by 32.5% of the respondents who answered this question (Table 2.5).

The first two categories of factors that weigh against sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva – outlook and cultural threat – contribute to the cultural and ideological opposition to this educational institution. On the one hand, there is a salient view that the character of Haredi youth should be properly modeled after the Haredi man, while on the other hand, it is necessary to protect Haredi youth from the cultural dangers lurking in Haredi high school Yeshivas. The survey data indicate that **between one-third and one-half of respondents** cited factors from these two ideological and cultural

categories, which constitute the basis for opposition to sending a son to a Haredi high school Yeshiva. It should be noted, however, that a significant proportion of respondents did not unequivocally reject the Haredi high school Yeshiva educational track.

Societal Factors

As noted, large portions of the Haredi community regard Haredi high school Yeshivas as educational institutions that attract youths who do not meet the community's scholarly and behavioral criteria. Moreover, there is a prevalent view that the youths enrolled in these institutions come from marginalized groups that do not belong to the mainstream of Haredi society. This view limits the potential demand for such institutions even among those who might not dismiss such institutions on the basis of outlook.

One of the societal factors presented to respondents was phrased as follows: "Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously ensure that the youths admitted come from good Haredi homes." This factor was cited by 32.5% of respondents (Table 2.5) – a rather high figure, which attests to another problem faced by the Haredi high school Yeshiva studies track, beyond the Haredi community's opposition based on outlook. It is possible that a significant portion of

Haredi households that do not oppose this track on the basis of outlook are, nonetheless, reluctant to send their sons to such an institution because of the poor social image ascribed to its students within Haredi society. This stems from the fact that the track itself comprises various types of institutions – some of which are intended for Haredi school dropouts or the sons of Ba'alei Teshuva (formerly secular Jews who have turned to Orthodoxy) who find the *Yeshiva Ketana* studies too difficult, and some of which are intended for religious and secular youths who are being religiously "strengthened" (mitkhazkim) or "brought into the fold" (keruv). Others are institutions with a high level of religious studies as well as general studies, where the general studies prepare students for Israeli high school matriculation exams. The respondents' answers indicate that there is a clear distinction in terms of image between the two types of Haredi high school Yeshivas.

Another issue related to societal factors is the communal composition of educational institutions. In the Haredi community there exists a phenomenon of communal exclusion, whereby some of the educational institutions exclude children from Sephardic communities. It emerges from the sample survey, however, that respondents did not attribute much weight to this issue. Only 4.2% of respondents noted the factor

that “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not maintain communal uniformity,” which is a slightly understated way of representing the phenomenon of communal exclusion (Table 2.5). Evidently, even in the context of a private, anonymous sample survey, respondents do not raise issues that are unacceptable in public discourse.

Family-Related Factors

The only family-related factor that the sample survey presented to respondents was that Haredi high school Yeshivas do not have an arrangement for external studies, which would allow youths to reside at their parents’ home rather than a boarding school. An examination of Haredi high school Yeshivas found indications of a shift away from the prevailing model of these institutions, which is based on the framework of a boarding school.

Factors against Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva, by Haredi Stream

The classification, by Haredi stream, of opposition-related factors also allowed respondents to indicate more than one answer. The factors were divided into the following categories: factors related to outlook, factors related to cultural threat, societal factors, and family-related factors. Table 2.6 presents the distribution of respondents in accordance with these factors.

The following table reveals that among respondents from the Sephardic Haredi stream, there were notably low response rates for most of the factors, attesting to a lower degree of resistance towards Haredi high school Yeshivas than among the two Ashkenazi Haredi streams. Only 43.7% of Sephardic Haredi respondents cited the outlook-related factor that “The only appropriate training for developing as a Ben Torah is that of the *Yeshiva Ketana*,” compared with 51.6% among Hasidic respondents and 57.5% among Lita’i respondents. This factor reflects the outlook towards high school Yeshiva studies, and as with other factors, respondents from the Sephardic Haredi stream were less strict in this regard than respondents from the other two streams.

The same holds with respect to the cultural factor, according to which “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously maintain a Haredi lifestyle.” Only 23.2% of Sephardic Haredi respondents cited this cultural-threat factor, compared with 43.6% of Hasidim and 34.3% of Lita’im (Table 2.6). However, response rates were comparable across all three streams as regards the factor “Haredi high school Yeshiva studies might steer the youth away from the Haredi way of life,” which stood at slightly more than 40% (Table 2.6). Overall, one may generalize by concluding that the approach of respondents from the Sephardic Haredi stream towards Haredi high school

Yeshivas was less harsh than that of the other two Haredi streams.

Table 2.6 Factors against Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva, by Haredi Stream (in percentages)

Factors against Sending a Son to a Haredi High School Yeshiva	Total*	Haredi stream		
		Sephardic Haredim	Hasidim	Lita'im
Factors related to outlook				
The only appropriate training for developing as a Ben Torah is that of the <i>Yeshiva Ketana</i>	52.6	43.7	51.6	57.5
Factors related to cultural threat				
Haredi high school Yeshiva studies might steer the youth away from the Haredi way of life	43.4	42.3	42.8	45.1
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously maintain a Haredi lifestyle	34.7	23.2	43.6	34.5
Factors related to societal threat				
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously ensure that the youths admitted come from good Haredi homes	31.2	29.5	35.7	12.4
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not maintain communal uniformity	4.1	1.3	7.9	1.7
Family-related factors				
Haredi high school Yeshivas do not have a system for external studies outside the framework of a boarding school	5.0	9.0	4.7	2.6
Total number of respondents who answered the question*	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

* The total number of factors cited by respondents who answered the question about factors is greater than the total number of respondents who answered the question because the questionnaire allowed respondents to cite more than factor. Therefore the cumulative sum of distribution percentages is greater than 100%.

Among respondents from the Hasidic stream, a notably high proportion cited the two societal factors. The first of these is “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not meticulously ensure that the youths admitted come from good Haredi homes,” and the second is “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not maintain communal uniformity.” Indeed, this sensitivity was also evident, particularly in its societal aspects, in Hasidic educational institutions with respect to students who did not belong to the Hasidic stream, and in particular to the same stream of Hasidism on which the specific educational institution is based.

The respondents from all three Haredi streams indicated a very low rate of response to the opposition-based factor “Haredi high school Yeshivas do not maintain communal uniformity,” although a higher response rate is evident among respondents from the Sephardic Haredi stream. As noted, this issue deserves further and more detailed study, given its importance for the establishment of a network of high school Yeshivas in the future.

Tuition rates

The issue of Haredi high school Yeshiva tuition rates was another issue examined in the statistical sample survey. Respondents to the sample survey were asked about the maximum monthly tuition they were willing to pay and were presented with a series of possible answers, among which they could choose one. The term “tuition” was used to indicate all the fees parents would have to pay, including boarding fees. To the researchers’ surprise, 22.2% did not address the survey’s question about maximum monthly tuition. This was the highest non-response rate for any of the survey’s questions. The researchers’ proposed explanation is that this reflects

resistance to the sum of NIS 500, which was presented in the survey as the lowest possible tuition rate that respondents would be willing to pay.

In other words, it is possible that many of those who did not answer the question about tuition would have been prepared to indicate a sum lower than NIS 500, but the survey did not offer this option. Thus, those who did not answer the question about the maximum tuition they were willing to pay were combined with those who were willing to pay NIS 1,000 or less, resulting in a total of 88.5% (Table 2.7).

Conceivably, respondents selected tuition levels that accord with the tuition fees

typical of *Yeshivot Ketanot*. This would indicate an interest in having tuition rates for Haredi high school Yeshivas that are comparable to those of *Yeshivot Ketanot*, and thus not to impose an additional

financial burden on parents who send their sons to a Haredi high school Yeshiva if that burden significantly exceeds the tuition they would pay were they to send him to a *Yeshiva Ketana*.

Table 2.7: Maximum Monthly Tuition Rates

Maximum tuition rate	Number	Percentage
No response	71	22.2
NIS 500	104	32.5
NIS 1,000	108	33.8
NIS 1,500	20	6.2
NIS 2,000	7	2.2
More than NIS 2,000	10	3.1
Total number of respondents	320	100.0

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

It should be noted that only 11.5% of the respondents indicated a maximum tuition rate of more than NIS 1,000 per month. This finding has implications regarding the extent of financial aid that will be necessary for parents interested in sending their sons to a Haredi high school Yeshiva, given that Yeshivas of this type require a significantly high tuition to cover operating expenses, as was customary in the long-standing Yeshivas. Indeed, the lower tuition rates of many new institutions might have contributed to their increased enrollment in recent years.

Table 2.8 presents the data regarding the maximum tuition rate that respondents are willing to pay, classified according to the three Haredi streams. The Sephardic Haredi respondents were not significantly represented among those who refrained from answering the question about maximum tuition. There is no clear explanation for this, given that their financial situation is no more secure than that of the Hasidim and Lita'im. Perhaps this is a manifestation of cultural differences stemming from a lesser degree of historical dependence

on public resources, or from a lack of concern about revealing financial means by disclosing information about the maximum tuition one is willing to pay. Whatever the explanation, the very low proportion of Sephardic Haredim who avoided this question makes it difficult to draw comparisons across the three streams, especially in relation to the lower categories of tuition rates. Therefore we had to assume that for each of the streams a lack of response to the question about maximum tuition rates in effect indicated a selected tuition rate of less than NIS 500. Nonetheless, for the sake of a comparison across Haredi streams, we combined the categories

of NIS 1,000 or less with the category of those who did not respond to the question for each Haredi stream, taking as a premise that the lack of a response indicated a low maximum tuition rate. This combined classification of low levels of maximum monthly tuition rates appears in a separate row in Table 2.8. It indicates that the Hasidim had the highest representation (95.3%) among those in this combined category of maximum tuition rates. They were followed by the Sephardic Haredim, with a rate of 88.4%, while the Lita'im indicated a maximum tuition rate of 82.8% in a combined classification of the lower tuition rates (Table 2.8).

Table 2.8: Maximum Possible Monthly Tuition Rate, by Haredi Stream (in Percentages)

Maximum tuition rate	Haredi stream		
	Sephardic Haredim	Hasidim	Lita'im
No response	3.8	27.8	28.3
NIS 500	43.6	36.6	21.2
NIS 1,000	41.0	30.9	32.7
Combination of the above	88.4	95.3	82.2
NIS 1,500	6.4	1.6	11.5
NIS 2,000	2.6	0.0	3.5
More than NIS 2,000	2.6	3.2	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Sample statistical survey of the Jerusalem Institute for Policy Research, conducted by the polling company Askaria, summer 2017

The main conclusion that emerges from the data in Tables 2.7 and 2.8 is that the vast majority of respondents across all three streams are concentrated in the categories representing a maximum monthly tuition rate of NIS 1,000 or less. This finding corresponds with developments related to the new Haredi high school Yeshivas, which lowered their tuition rates in order to open their doors to middle- and lower-income students.

These new institutions made the Haredi secondary education track available to the sons of Haredi parents from a wide socio-economic spectrum, thus also paving the way for Sephardic and Hasidic Haredim. We can therefore expect to see an increasing proportion of these two streams in the Haredi high school Yeshiva system, which in the past was primarily the preserve of Lita'im from the middle and upper classes.