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**YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK: SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND THE NEW  
ADULTHOOD**

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*Abstract*

This article displays an overview of study, reports and research that deals with the lives of young people at risk aged 18-30. The article displays their characteristics, their patterns of functioning and the difficulties they face in this post-modern period of time. The processes of the new matriculation include a delay in the emotional and social maturity and long maturation processes. Policy makers see young people as a "transparent" population which in many cases do not receive the services and the appropriate treatment for their needs. Social and economic approaches contribute to the ignorance about the unique needs of young people. No special resources are allocated to this population that could provide them economic and educational opportunity. These processes put young people at the margins of social exclusion and risk. The solution to this social problem should include the allocation of unique economic and social resources that adapted to the needs of young people. It is necessary to change the policy towards young people, implementation of social justice and provide different division of resources which will lead to the development of a "safety net". This net will include the provision of services in the areas of employment, training, housing and health that will enable young people to progress, and have social adjustment.

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## 1. Introduction

A link is making between the behavioural and cognitive changes among young people As part of the post-modern society to their difficulties in achieving social goals (Arnett, 2000; Tweng, 2006; Tweng & Campbell, 2009).

It is estimated that many young people experience a risk arising from the social and economic changes that taking place in this postmodern period. This are expressed in the lack of available resources, unemployment, class gap and exclusion from social activities (Giddens, 2009).

The goal of this article is to present knowledge about young people who are at risk during this Period of time. The article will analyse the reasons for this situation and examining the fabric relationship between the emergence of young adulthood, exclusion and poverty (Giddens, 2009; IARD, 2001). The article recommends policies and actions that can advance the situation of young people at risk.

## 2. Problem Statement

The definition of exclusion refers to the inability of young people to participate in social and cultural life. Young people experience more than other groups limited economic resources, poverty and lack in basic living conditions (Giddens, 2009; Tweng, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012). Over the years, writers have tried to explain the causes of poverty in general and among young people. Lewis (1969) introduced the concept of "poverty culture" that continues to exist over time even when the structural factors have changed. Poverty culture is characterized by a sense of marginality, helplessness, dependence, inferiority and inability to plan for the future. Some researchers noted that the phenomenon of poverty among young people is part of personal responsibility. Studies and articles indicate that poor young people do not change their situation due to physical illness, mental illness, lack of effort and apathy (Giddens, 2009). Lewis (1969) sees a variety of people traits that affect the "culture of poverty", helplessness, dependence and the difficulty to change the behavior. Murray (1984) present similar claims on this subject, he saw these poor among young people as a subgroup that responsible for their condition because of the dependency characteristics. Murray accuses the "welfare state" as causing the creation of sub-culture poverty. We can see to a large extent the connection between the arguments of Lewis and Murray and the claims today in this postmodern period of time, which views young people responsible for the difficult situation they are in. However, studies and articles from recent years do not support these perceptions. Most researchers see the exclusion and distress of young people as derived from social policy, class differences and the lack of sources of income (Ritzer, 2000; Giddens, 2009). This reflected in examples such as the presence of young people that are working and yet remain poor because of the shortage of high-paying jobs or their entitlement to benefits only for short period of time. Another definition related to the risk situation in which many young people experience is the social exclusion that described by sociologists as a new source of inequality (Giddens, 2009). It is includes the inability of young people to receive their rights in fields like the insurance Social welfare system, employment, educational services and in the community services. Researchers who examined the reasons for this condition of young people claim that there is no systemic policy of the governments and countries and in addition to a very low resource allocation, that designed to deal with this problem (Ritzer, 2000: OECD, 2010). Minorities and young immigrants may experience the greatest adverse impact of inequality. These populations are in

what is defined as "the intersection of marginal positions", they feel discrimination on the basis of gender, race, immigration and poverty. According to the OECD (2010) there has been a sharp rise in income inequality a decline in the number of non-professional jobs and wages for these jobs. As can be seen the pressures that characterize by the current postmodern era and the emergence of young adulthood has a different effect in a number of areas in the life of young people such as the mental state of young people, difficulty in making decisions, taking personal responsibility and difficulty in coping with the pressures in their lives (Brynner & Parsons, 2002; Erol & Orth, 2011; Baumeister, 1999).

A major feature of the risk situation among many young people in this postmodern period is the increasing use of drugs and alcohol. Studies indicate that the reasons for this frequent use of drugs and alcohol among young adults occurs in response to a sense of distress, a desire for self-healing, an attempt to be free from dependence on other people (Brook, Rifenbark, Boulton, Little, & McDonald, 2014; Glass, Flory, Martin, & Hankin, 2011). Although there are young people who note that the use of drugs is done in a social setting, the findings indicate otherwise (Brook et al., 2014). Frequent use of drugs indicates a difficulty experienced by young people and a desire to use drugs to cope with this difficulty (Capaldi, Kerr, Eddy, & Tiberio, 2016; WHO, 2016; NIDA, 2014). A number of factors contribute to the addiction of young people: metabolic disorder, heredity, cognitive difficulties, parental psychopathology, abnormal family relationships, situation in which other family members use drugs (Fagan, Van Horn, Hawkins, & Jaki, 2013; WHO, 2016) and in addition poverty and environment in which exists social indifference (Kronick, 2013; Johnston, Malley, Miech, Bachman, & Schulenberg, 2016). Addiction may lead young people to engage in violence, dysfunction and drunk driving. In general, it was found that young people ages 18-24 use alcohol and cannabis more broadly than any other populations (Johnson et al., 2016). The increased use of psychoactive substances by young people perceived as an expression of the inefficient coping with difficulties and is a sign of the distress of the young population during this period of time.

We can be summed up in light of what was presented that the difficulties of young people are wide and varied and is expressed in problems of functioning in everyday life, as lack of employment and difficulty in performing the tasks required performing at this age (Arnett, 2007; Tweng & Campbell, 2009; Boratav, 2005). It can be seen that the postmodern maturity fraught with challenges, difficulties, and impairs for young people development and progress (Arnett, 2000). Hence, political and practical intervention is needed to help young people to cope with the complexity they experience in their lives

### **3. Research Questions**

Why do young people find it difficult to integrate economically and socially into the post-modern society? What are the possible solutions at the macro and micro levels that can help young people to move forward and realize their personal potential?]

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The aim of the study is to present the discriminatory policies and the characteristics of the economy that do not allow equal opportunities in employment, learning, and education for young population. This situation contributes to social gaps and a situation in which many young people around

the world are at risk and in distress. This paper presents possible solutions to the issue that focus on the need to change the current economic and social policy towards young people by providing a social and occupational safety net

## **5. Research Methods**

The study includes an overview, analysis and drawing conclusions from reports, study and research about the situation of the young population around the world.]

## **6. Findings**

The influences of the postmodern society on young people expressed in emotional and behavioural changes and long maturation processes that affect their daily functioning (Arnett, 2000). Some of the assumption that referred to the impact of these processes assumed that the difficulties that experienced by young people are a natural development that suitable for this period of time (Arnett, 2000; Tweng, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012; Tweng & Campbell, 2009). Another argument sees the situation of young people as stemming from personal reasons and the characteristics of some young people (Lewis, 1969; Murray, 1984; Giddens, 2009).

This article seeks to point out that unlike the claim that personality and characteristics of young people are the cause of their difficulties in functioning (Ritzer, 2000; Giddens, 2009; OECD, 2010), other reasons, that related to unequal socio-economic system responsible for the difficulties of young people. Young people today experience more than other groups limited economic resources, poverty and lack in basic living conditions (Giddens, 2009; Tweng, Campbell, & Freeman, 2012). Many young people find it difficult to obtain rights in the social welfare system and experience social exclusion. Young people without adequate education find it difficult to integrate into the professional labour market (OECD, 2010) which currently requires technological knowledge and unique skills.

These processes can be demonstrated in Israel, the inequality, poverty and social gaps that exist in Israel primarily affect young people because of low income and low employment rates among young people. In addition, a small budget is allocated to the social sphere and low government involvement can be found in the labour market. For example the expenditure for social services in Israel is 32.4%, compared with 44.1% among the OECD countries (OECD, 2010; Zeira, Benbenisti, & Refaeli, 2012; CBS, 2007). Overall there is a growing trend of erosion of the "welfare state" policy in Israel and in the world, which particularly affects young populations (Ritzer, 2000; OECD, 2010; Zeira, Benbenisti, & Refaeli, 2012). As a rule, there is no systemic policy of governments in an attempt to deal with the growing distress among young people.

## **7. Conclusion**

Coping with social inequality, poverty and exclusion of young people should be a central goal of countries and governments. There are needed to find a socially viable and equitable social system that will allow marginalized and vulnerable young people at risk to reach equal opportunity and good possibility to function in the economic field (Giddens, 2009; IARD, 2001; Zeira, Benbenisti, & Refaeli,

2012). There is a need to deal with barriers that make it difficult for young people at risk to access to services in the economic and social spheres.

A major action is to determine a new formulation of policy that includes creation of a multi-year action plan which will address the various needs of young people at risk. The policy will be based on building cooperation with government agencies of social welfare, education and health. Additional actions required like, legislation to anchor the rights of young people at risk, conduct research and monitor information. In practice it is necessary to develop and carry out the following actions: providing appropriate treatment for young addicts, give support in the field of completing education, acquiring vocational and academic training in the technological fields (Mendes & Forbes, 2006). In addition it is required to develop soft skills and assisting in integration into quality employment (IARD, 2001; OECD, 2010; Zeira, Benbenisti, & Refaeli, 2012), give financial assistance in housing and free entitlement to health insurance.

Thus "safety net" policy may provide young people at risk an opportunity for personal and social rehabilitation, social integration and realize their potential.

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