Evaluation of the Seminar
Programming for Teachers from Abroad

European Department, International School for Holocaust Studies, Yad Vashem

Ravit Efrati, Amalia Shahaf, Dr. Pnina Golan-Cook, Yael Carmeli, Libby Kastner

June 2020
Objectives of the Study

1. Assess whether the participants and graduates were satisfied, whether their expectations and needs were met, and solicit suggestions for improvement
2. Determine the short-term contributions and impact that the programming had on participants (2019), and in the long term on graduates (2014-2018)

Sample

English-, German-, Polish- and Russian-speakers

$N = 585$
Graduates from seminars that took place from 2014-2018 (hereinafter: “the graduates”)

$N = 332$
Participants from seminars that took place in 2019 (hereinafter: “the participants”)

Findings | Background Characteristics

Participants’ Profile

N = 332

Gender

22% Men  78% Women

Countries of Origin

Eastern Europe and the Balkans: 51%
Western Europe: 49%

First Time Visiting...

Israel: 80%
Yad Vashem: 85%

Gender Distribution

22% Men  78% Women

Countries of Origin

Eastern Europe and the Balkans: 51%
Western Europe: 49%

First Time Visiting...

Israel: 80%
Yad Vashem: 85%
Findings | Background Characteristics

Participants’ Profile

Profession

- Teacher: 75%
- Museum or Memorial Staff: 4%
- University Professor/Lecturer: 4%
- Supervisor/Principal: 5%
- Other: 5%

Level of Education

- Teaching Diploma: 43%
- BA: 11%
- MA: 49%
- PhD: 9%
Findings | Teaching the Holocaust

Frameworks in Which the Participants Teach the Holocaust

Approximately 75% of participants teach the Holocaust

\[ N = 255 \]

- School: 80%
- Memorial Days / Current Events: 54%
- Workshops: 35%
- Other: 20%
- University course (one semester / year-long): 8%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
Findings | Teaching the Holocaust

Educational Material that the Participants Use

N = 255

- Movies: 85%
- Internet sites: 70%
- Primary historical sources: 67%
- Textbooks: 63%
- Other reading materials: 49%
- Pedagogical kits: 43%
- Applications for teaching the Holocaust: 17%
- Other: 16%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
Findings | Teaching the Holocaust

Main Difficulties the Graduates Face

- The number of hours allocated is too few: 72%
- Low motivation of the pupils: 21%
- Other: 20%
- A lack of suitable teaching materials: 19%
- Lack of support from the school system (school principal, colleagues, etc.): 16%
- Parents’ opposition to teaching about the Holocaust: 5%
- Resistance of the pupils: 3%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
Findings | Teaching the Holocaust
Sources of Help/Support/Guidance for Graduates

- Local support organizations: 69%
- Colleagues/other seminar participants: 39%
- Experts in the field: 32%
- The educational institution where they teach: 23%
- Educational literature/online sources: 5%
- Other: 2%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%

*Examples of local support organizations include Holocaust education centers and local Jewish centers (synagogues, JCCs)*
Findings | Standpoints about the Holocaust

Participants’ Standpoints

Percentage who Answered “Agree” or “Strongly Agree”  \( N \sim 325 \)

- It is important (essential?) to teach about the Holocaust in every country: 96%
- The Holocaust is a unique phenomenon which cannot be compared to other events in history: 87%
- It is important to understand the Holocaust as a chapter in the course of Jewish history and not as an isolated event: 83%
- A Holocaust could happen again, anywhere, at any time and to different groups: 77%
- It is not advisable to teach the Holocaust to young pupils (in elementary school): 27%
Findings | Motivation for Attending Seminars

Participants’ Motives

*N = 331*

- To deepen my knowledge of and insights about the Holocaust: 91%
- To expand my knowledge of methods and educational concepts in the teaching of the Holocaust: 85%
- To learn about Israel: 70%
- To visit historical sites in Israel: 54%
- To expand my knowledge about the Holocaust in connection to my country: 52%
- To meet colleagues in the field and to discuss shared topics together: 49%
- To have a meaningful emotional experience: 31%
- To confront my family/national history: 25%
- Other: 10%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
"Although I’d been to Israel before, I was curious to learn more in depth about the local culture and history. It’s interesting from the viewpoint of one who focuses on the Holocaust."

"I was interested in the 'Yad Vashem' approach to teaching. In Germany we start talking about the Holocaust with older pupils, I'd like to know how to talk about the Holocaust with young children, an educational viewpoint on this subject."

"I had never learned about the Holocaust in an academic and systematic way." "I expected to learn more about the Holocaust, especially from Yad Vashem's viewpoint. You can read books and watch movies, but it's important to see for yourself in order to understand."
Participants’ Satisfaction with the Activities

Percentage who Answered “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with:

- Yad Vashem campus tour: 98%
- Meeting with Israelis: 97%
- Tour of the museum: 97%
- Lectures: 97%
- Informal conversations with lecturers from Yad Vashem: 96%
- Workshops: 96%
- Informal conversations with group members: 95%
- Meeting with survivors: 95%
- Group discussions: 94%
- Tours around Israel: 94%
- Time given to processing information and experiences: 73%
- Free time: 67%

N ~ 310
Participants’ Satisfaction with Guidance and Accommodations

Percentage who Answered “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with:

- The presenters and lecturers from Yad Vashem: 99%
- The group’s facilitator: 97%
- The learning environment: 99%
- Transportation: 96%
- Hotel accommodations: 91%
- Standard of food at Yad Vashem: 83%
Findings | Seminar Evaluation

Participants’ Assessment

Percentage who (Strongly) Agree with these Statements / N ~ 327

- The seminar was interesting: 99%
- The seminar was too long: 14%
- The seminar was emotionally overloaded: 16%
- The seminar was overloaded with information: 30%
- The seminar suited the character of the group: 91%
- The seminar met my expectations: 96%
- The seminar provided relevant materials for teaching about the Holocaust: 96%
- The lecturers in the seminar displayed a vast knowledge of the field: 96%
- The lecturers in the seminar related seriously and sensitively to the group’s questions and comments: 97%
- The seminar was interesting: 99%

98% would recommend the seminars to a colleague
Findings | Yad Vashem Material
Material that Graduates are Most Likely to Have Used

\[ N = 539 \]

- The printed material: 88%
- Survivors' testimonies on DVD: 65%
- The on-line material from Yad Vashem’s website: 63%
- The Ready2Print exhibitions: 18%

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
Online Material that Graduates are Most Likely to Have Used

- Yad Vashem’s digital Photo Collection: 78%
- Educational videos: 69%
- Lesson plans: 42%
- Yad Vashem’s database of the victims’ names: 41%
- Ceremonies: 5%

$N = 466$
Findings | Yad Vashem Material

Participants’ Needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information about new learning materials</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about Yad Vashem’s on-line courses</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about Yad Vashem’s activities (conferences, seminars for adults...)</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To receive Yad Vashem’s digital newsletter</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To become part of the Yad Vashem network in Europe</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To be involved in Yad Vashem’s social media</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: some of the respondents checked more than one answer, so the total percentage exceeds 100%
Findings | What the Seminar Contributed

Academic Contribution from the Participants’ Perspective

Percentage who (Strongly) Agree that the Seminar Contributed to Their Knowledge of:

- Yad Vashem and its different sites: 99%
- Pre-War Jewish Life: 96%
- Life in the ghetto: 94%
- Jews and Judaism: 93%
- Israeli society: 93%
- Holocaust and genocide: 93%
- Racism and antisemitism: 92%
- The evolution of the "Final Solution": 91%
- Rescuers (Righteous among the Nations): 90%
- Perpetrators: 87%
- Nazi ideology: 86%
- Distortion of the Holocaust and current antisemitism: 85%
- Life in the camps: 85%
- Survivors’ return to life: 84%
- Resistance: 84%
- Collective memory of different nations: 76%

N ~ 327
## Findings | What the Seminar Contributed

### Pedagogical Contribution from the Participants’ Perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage who (Strongly) Agree that the Seminar Contributed as Follows</th>
<th>N ~ 328</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the educational concept of Yad Vashem</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the moral dilemmas faced by the victims of the Holocaust</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the significance of the Holocaust to the Jewish people</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the approach of teaching about the Holocaust through personal stories</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting to the human story behind the large numbers</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the sequential approach to teaching about the Holocaust: Jewish life before, during and after the Second World War</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing learning materials developed by Yad Vashem</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing tools for implementing the educational concept of Yad Vashem in my educational context</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding the age-appropriate approach to teaching about the Holocaust</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to the range of on-line learning materials on the Yad Vashem website</td>
<td>102%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings | What the Seminar Contributed
Pedagogical Contribution from the Participants’ Perspective (cont.)

Percentage who (Strongly) Agree that the Seminar Contributed as Follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing an opportunity to discuss pedagogical issues relevant to my pupils with colleagues</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to an interdisciplinary approach to the teaching of the Holocaust</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forming ties for the future with colleagues in the field</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the ability to adapt existing materials to the needs of my pupils</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing the ability to prepare new learning materials from different sources (internet, media, books etc.)</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing tools for teaching about the Holocaust to multi-ethnic/multi-cultural groups</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Findings | Impact of the Seminar
Pedagogical Impact from the Graduates’ Perspective

Percentage who Answered “Since I Participated in the Seminar...”  
N ~ 540

- I have transmitted Yad Vashem’s educational concept to other educators (colleagues, friends etc.) 92%
- I have used the learning materials developed by Yad Vashem 87%
- I have adopted the method of highlighting personal stories when teaching the subject 84%
- I have visited the site of Yad Vashem in order to get information, ideas, pictures etc 81%
- I have focused on Jewish life before, during and after the Holocaust, when teaching the subject 78%
- I have adopted Yad Vashem’s age-appropriate approach to teaching the subject 76%
Findings | Impact of the Seminar
Pedagogical Impact from the Graduates’ Perspective (cont.)

Percentage who Answered “Since I Participated in the Seminar...”  
N ~ 540

- I have helped other educators to prepare a learning unit on the Holocaust: 61%
- I have prepared a learning unit on the Holocaust based on Yad Vashem’s educational philosophy: 61%
- I have initiated a course or workshop about the Holocaust: 57%
- I have organized a ceremony based on what I learned in the seminar: 54%
- I have been involved in planning a general curriculum on the Holocaust: 40%
- I have contacted Yad Vashem in order to get some help in preparing a course/workshop/ceremony: 16%
Findings | Impact of the Seminar

Other Impacts from the Graduates’ Perspective

88% of the graduates are in touch with colleagues from their seminar.

Percentage who Answered “I Do This More than Before the Seminar”  \( N \sim 560 \)

- I take an interest in news relating to Israel: 74%
- I read articles about the Holocaust: 68%
- I react to expressions of racism and antisemitism: 65%
- I talk about the Holocaust with family and friends: 64%
- I look for information about the Holocaust on the internet: 59%
- I talk about the situation in Israel with friends and family: 56%
- I watch television programs and films about the Holocaust: 54%
- I read books about the Holocaust: 53%
- I visit museums or exhibitions about the Holocaust: 45%
- I participate in activities that promote human rights: 38%
- I take part in forums dealing with the Holocaust: 32%
Findings | Impact of the Seminar
Quotes from Interviews with Graduates

Contact with Colleagues from the Seminar

“We’ve kept in touch with the other teachers from the group through Skype, and we discuss our classrooms with each other. This is an excellent resource we’ve had after the course. We talk quite often and even had the chance to meet up with each other.”

Understanding Life in Israel

“I got to learn about Israel and its culture. In Europe, people have a tendency to make Israel sort of exotic. On the news you only hear about the wars and other things that aren’t positive. In that sense, it changed my outlook on Israel for the better.”
Conclusion

- There is a **high level of satisfaction** with most aspects of the seminars. Most of the participants would **recommend** them to their colleagues.

- The participants felt that the seminar benefited them **academically and pedagogically**.

- The graduates reported that they had **adopted Yad Vashem’s educational philosophy** and **teach the Holocaust** according to the **pedagogical principles** that they studied in the seminar.

- The graduates reported that they **frequently use diverse educational material** (especially printed material, pictures and recordings).

- The graduates have **volunteered to help their colleagues with the experience and knowledge** that they gained in the seminar, particularly by developing Holocaust education units.

- The graduates have reported a **stronger connection with Israel** and **growing interest in the Holocaust**.

- The graduates have reported maintaining **professional ties** with other graduates.
Conclusion (cont.)

However, this follow-up study found that:

- The seminars offer **insufficient time** to process information, discuss, and reflect
- The **schedules are packed** and offer little free time
- There is greater need for **more experiential learning** (for example: more practical workshops, more time for independent study)
- There is greater need for **more precisely tailored seminar content** for special populations
- Respondents from different countries showed **unmistakable differences** (between Western and Eastern Europe and the Balkans) regarding how satisfied they were with the seminar, how they assessed it, and how it contributed to and impacted them
We Recommend:

- Expanding the number of seminar activities that require active participation.
- Spreading out the timetable and scheduling breaks to rest and process the experience.
- Employing differential guidance for certain populations and tailoring the content of the seminar to their needs.
- Scheduling tours of schools and meetings with Israeli teachers as part of familiarizing the participants in the seminar with Israeli society and the need to develop joint educational activities.
- Developing a virtual learning community for the purpose of developing connections that fellow graduates have created.
- Clarifying the content and information that the graduates would like to receive, and the channels in which they prefer to receive it.
- Tailoring Yad Vashem’s material further to the language, age and culture of students of the participants and graduates as needed.