

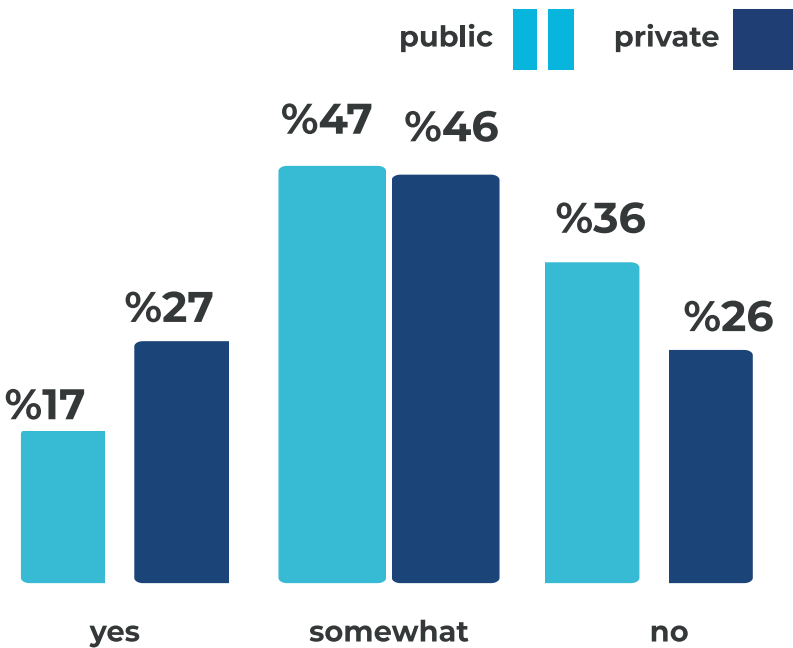
The Impact of Lebanon's Compounded Crises on Grade 12 Students' Readiness for Official Examinations in 2024

Amid the ongoing economic and social crisis in Lebanon, which continues to cast a shadow over the education sector alongside the Israeli aggression on southern Lebanon, Baalbek, and Bekaa, the question of whether Lebanese students are ready to take this year's (2024) official exams is raised again. According to a recent field study we conducted on the loss of learning among tenth-grade students in public schools, a significant educational loss was revealed in mathematics, Arabic, and English subjects, primarily due to the loss of approximately 700 school days over the past six academic years due to the successive crises Lebanon has faced.

As part of the education observatory that was launched by the Centre for Lebanese Studies in 2020 to study the impact of the economic crisis on the education sector, we conducted an online survey in May 2024 to examine the readiness of high school (grade 12) students for this year's official exams after experiencing various types of crises and disruptions from educational interruptions to the accumulation of learning difficulties and educational losses to the ongoing Israeli aggression on southern Lebanon and Baalbek.

The survey included a sample of 406 high school students (48% in private schools and 52% in public schools), distributed across the eight Lebanese governorates.

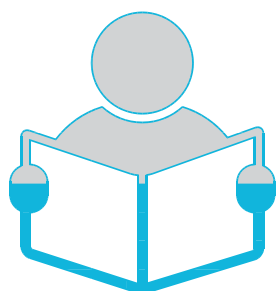
Readiness for the official exam



Percentage of students who are ready to take the official exam

This year's survey results showed that only 27% of students in private schools feel prepared to take the official high school examination, while 17% of students in public schools expressed their readiness for it. The lack of readiness among students is primarily due to the accumulation of loss of learning, as indicated by 73% of the students participating in the study.

The quality of education and its impact on academic performance

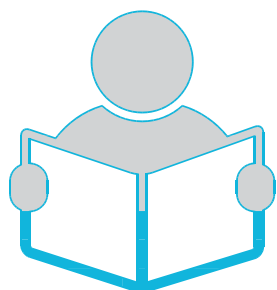


39%
of public
school students



52%
of private
school students

Consider the quality of education as good



35%
of public
school students



45%
of private
school students

Reported good academic performance

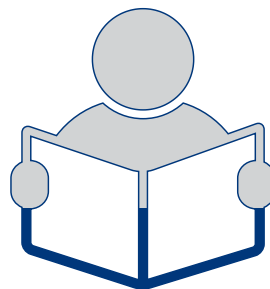
The lack of readiness among students may also be due to other factors, such as the continuous deterioration in the quality of education in both private and public schools, which in turn negatively affects student performance. For example, 39% of high school students in public schools stated that the quality of education in their schools was good this year, compared to 40% last year. Similarly, in private schools, 52% of high school students reported that the quality of education in their school was good this year, compared to 68% last year. This indicates that the quality of education in private schools is deteriorating at a faster rate compared to public schools.

The decline in the quality of education and the ongoing gap between private and public schools was also evident in the percentages of students who reported good academic performance. For example, 45% of high school students in private schools stated that their academic performance was good compared to only 35% in public schools.

only **19%**
of grade 12 students
reported that the skills and
knowledge acquired over
the past 3 years allow them
to continue their
educational journey



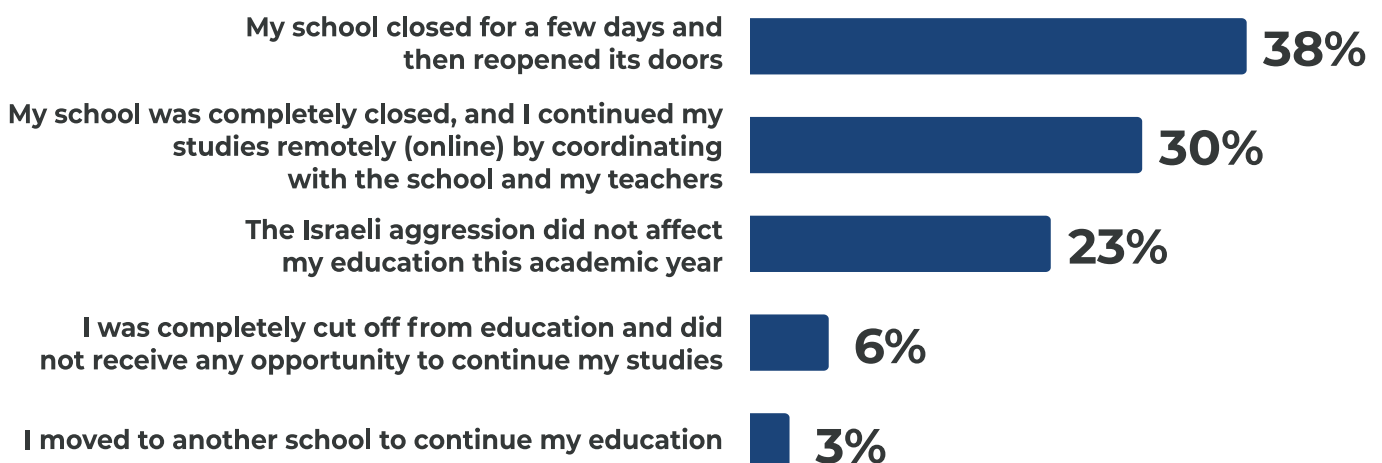
11%
in public
sector



26%
in private
sector

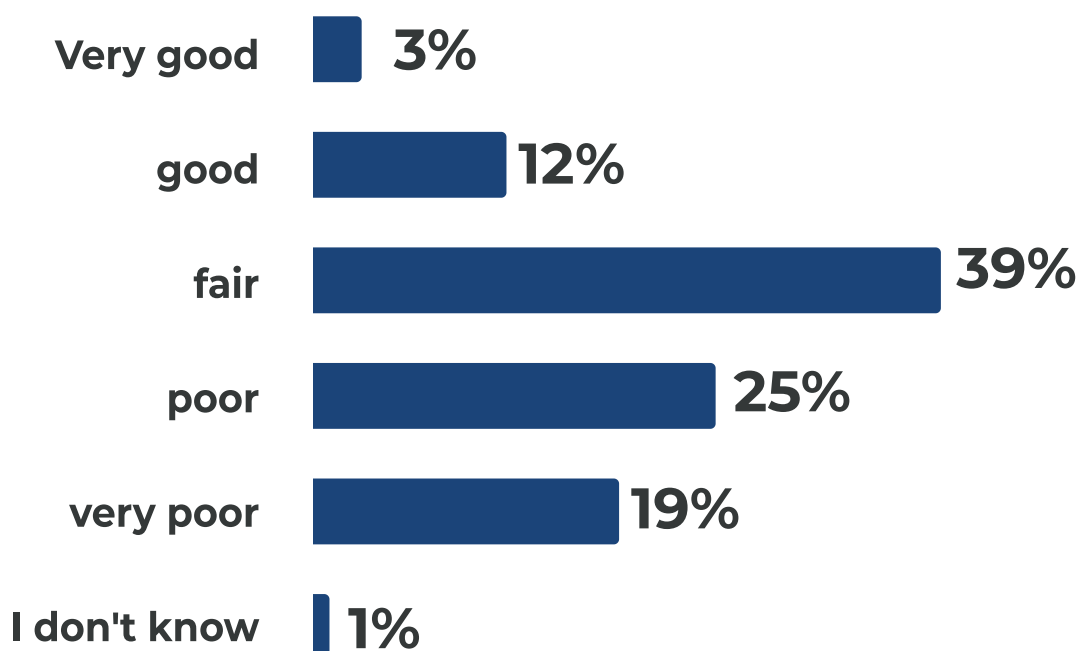
In addition, the percentage of grade 12 students who believe that the knowledge and skills they have acquired over the past three years enable them to continue their educational journey has dropped from 21% last year to 19% this year, indicating a decline in the effectiveness of the current education system in preparing students for future educational stages.

The impact of the Israeli aggression on students in the South and Baalbek



As for the students in the south and Baalbek, they faced unprecedented challenges this year due to the ongoing Israeli aggression. The Israeli aggression led to the displacement of 36% of grade 12 students and interrupted the learning process for 60% of students, either partially or completely. For instance, 38% of students mentioned that their schools were temporarily closed before resuming classes, while 30% of students reported that their schools were completely closed, and they resorted to online learning. On the other hand, 6% of students had no access to any form of schooling and were left without any opportunity to continue their learning.

Students' Psychological Well-being



Moreover, the study revealed that the compounded crises have significantly affected students' psychological well-being, with 44% of grade 12 students reporting that their psychological well-being is poor. Therefore, it is crucial to provide students with psychological and social support in addition to addressing their educational needs.

This study highlights the urgent need to address the problem of loss of learning faced by grade 12 students, particularly in light of the escalating crises impacting Lebanon. The impact of the ongoing economic and social crises, including the Israeli aggression on southern Lebanon and Baalbek, has hindered the educational process, resulting in accumulated learning losses and a deterioration in students' academic achievement over the past academic years.

Early and effective intervention is necessary not only for students who are about to take the official exams but also for students at other educational stages. Therefore, a comprehensive national plan should be put in place that includes supplementary and effective educational programs to help address learning losses. It also requires training teachers in both public and private schools on updated and innovative teaching techniques that are appropriate for current challenges and crucial to enhancing the quality of education.

The results of the studies that we conducted over the past years continue to show a deterioration in the quality of education and, with it, the academic performance of students, necessitating urgent action to develop and implement a plan that ensures access to high-quality education for all social classes. In addition, it is crucial that the authorities overseeing the official exams consider the challenging circumstances faced by the students, especially in the south and Baalbek, to ensure that the students are assessed in a manner that truly reflects their capabilities and what they have learned under these exceptional conditions.