An Overview of Adult Education in Israel

Rachel Tokatli

Preface

Israel is a country of contrasts. It is a historic land with ancient traditions as well as a developing technology. Most of its residents are Jewish immigrants, new and veteran, who have arrived in Israel over the years from countries all over the world, and their offspring. About 20% of the population is Arab (Muslim and Christian), Druze and Bedouin, whose native language is Arabic. About 2.2% of residents are uneducated and 8.3% have a ninth grade education. The highest percent of the uneducated and the under-educated is within the elderly population, particularly elderly women, and the Arab population.

The educational need of the various sectors within the elderly population is related to ethnicity, native country, time of immigration to Israel, level of education and skills, the occupational status, as well as one's personal history and health.

The State of Israel is facing many major challenges related to adult education, with the most significant of them being: diminishing the educational, financial and social gaps. The main goals of the adult education system in Israel are: imparting the mastery of the Hebrew language to the immigrants, to ease their linguistic, social and professional assimilation; promoting literacy, elementary education and high school education among needy populations; vocational training for workers and the unemployed, mainly among undereducated immigrants, in an attempt...
to promote their empowerment and improve their children's scholastic achievements; and encouraging lifelong education in a variety of issues and subjects at all levels of education.

Israel conducts and encourages international cooperation on the issue of adult education, through the Israeli Committee on behalf of UNESCO and the Adult Education Association. Israeli delegations are participating in bilateral European and international conferences; moreover, as member of the European Association for the Education of Adults, its representatives participate in conferences, workshops, work groups, seminars and group meetings. Adult educators from other countries reciprocate by participating in educational tours of Israel.

**State Authorities and Public Organization**

For many years, the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education has been a main factor in the initiating, funding and operating of adult education programs in Israel, leading a coordinated effort of various authorities to implement a complex and diverse national system of adult studies. The system is dedicated to both realizing the right of individuals to lifelong learning and development, and promoting curricula according to the national priorities, while balancing the needs of the individuals with those of society. The Division of Adult Education outlines policy guidelines, with the main priorities including: imparting the Hebrew language and professional terms in the language to the immigrants; literacy, elementary and high-school education; preparation for vocational training; parenthood and family; active citizenship; and all the fields of non-formal education. The Division cooperates with ministries and other institutions in the development and implementation of curricula aimed at special sectors, focusing mainly on: imparting the use of the Hebrew language to immigrants in cooperation with the Ministry of Immigration.
Absorption and the Jewish Agency; courses for the unemployed in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs; vocational training in cooperation with the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor; professional training for farmers in cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture; prisoner education programs in cooperation with the Israeli Prison Service; courses for the elderly population in cooperation with the National Insurance Institute and the Office for Senior Citizens; literacy and education courses in cooperation with the Ministry of Security. Local authorities as well as various organizations such as: women's organizations, workers' unions, public and private employers, the Project for Neighborhood Restorations - cooperate in a complex organizational system, which integrates centralized and decentralized elements and takes into account the various sectors.

*The Association for the Education of Adults* is an organization which brings together both organizations and individuals that are involved in the theoretical and practical aspects of adult education in Israel. The association represents this field within Israeli society; initiates and organizes work groups, lectures, workshops and conferences; publishes manuscripts and booklets containing theoretical material, instruction chapters for educators, and field research; creates updated data bases about adult education on its online website; and participates in the implementation of educational projects for immigrants from Ethiopia, the Caucasus and Bukhara. Furthermore, the association also promotes international contacts with organizations, institutions and individuals, and represents Israel at international forums. Its members participate in international conferences and study groups.
**Policy, Legislation and Agreements**

Those who determine the public policy in Israel are basically aware of the significance of adult education and the right of individuals to learn, but very few laws have been enacted by the Israeli Knesset regarding this field. In 1994 an act was passed, ensuring subsidized studies for discharged soldiers in approved institutions which deliver high-school education level and academic preparatory programs. In 2000, a bill was passed, approving funding for the education of the physically disabled and the mentally challenged. Moreover, the state budget is required to allocate budgets for the impartment of the language to new immigrants, and for vocational training and retraining for adults. Agreements signed by professional unions also promise paid study leave for workers.

**Funding and Financial Incentives**

The preferred programs are mainly funded by the government ministries that deal with the issue. The local authorities participate in the funding of activities taking place within their jurisdiction; and non-government organizations such as the Jewish Agency, Joint Israel, the community centers, women's organizations, workers' unions, the Gerontology society, and public and private employers - all participate in covering the expenses of adult studies that are relevant to their fields of interest. Additional funding also comes from such sources as the Van Leer Foundation, the Avi Chai Foundation, and Mifal Ha'Payis. Self participation in the funding is the highest for those attending the higher education establishments; it is much smaller for those attending high school education classes and practically insignificant for those participating in programs meant for immigrants, for the undereducated, and for those attending the high-school education level program and the vocational training courses. Literacy and health education are provided for free. Financial incentives
for those attending the education programs and the academic preparatory programs are distributed according to set criteria. Discharged soldiers receive study scholarships; immigrant students are exempt from paying tuition and receive refunds for travel expenses; the unemployed, who attend elementary education classes, high-school classes and vocational training courses, receive unemployment fees. The women's organizations offer scholarships for young women who participate in Gender Studies at the higher education establishment. The auxiliary education (Hishtalmut) bonuses that are given according to set criteria, serve as an important incentive for adult education in the public sector.

**Operation**

The various programs are operated by the authorities and organizations that determine the policy, either directly or through the educational institutions. The responsibility is divided between all the authorities involved. Usually, the government ministries are the ones involved in financial decisions, in funding, in developing curricula, and in the supervision aspect. The local authorities provide the physical infrastructure, and participate in locating educators and preparing the actual programs.

Studies take place at schools, community centers, clubs, vocational training facilities, immigration absorption centers, municipal education centers, higher education establishments, TEHILA centers (Unique Education Program for the Adult Learner), Parents and Community centers, senior citizens' clubs, colleges, Open University facilities, university External Studies' departments, women's clubs, and museums. Such a variety requires constant coordination regulated by steering committees on both local and national levels.
Programs

The ULPAN (language learning classes for immigrants) is historically considered as being the utmost priority in terms of adult education in Israel. The Ulpan institutions (Ulpanim) are operated in conjunction by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education, the Ministry of Immigration Absorption, the local authority, the Jewish Agency, Joint Israel, colleges, community centers, and the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces). These institutions impart to the immigrants a mastery of the Hebrew language, as well as other skills that promote their integration into the Israeli society and job market. A wide range of Ulpan classes is operated all across the country. During the 1990's and early 21st century they were populated by immigrants who had arrived in the massive wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union. 8,700 classes were operated between 2001 and 2006, containing 160,550 students. The dramatic decrease in the extent of immigration over time has affected the Ulpan's activity. Yet, about 33,000 immigrants still attended the 2000 active classes that were operated within 160 Ulpanim in 2007, with 35 of them located in the Kibbutzim.

The Ulpan studies are conducted in two levels: basic and advanced. The Basic Ulpan is conducted throughout five months. Beginner Ulpan classes are also held in urban residences; in the Kibbutzim ("Bait Rishon" – meaning: First Home); in the Kibbutz Ulpan, meant specifically for young people combining work with studies; and at the Ulpan for students, which combine the impartment of the language with pre-academic studies. In the advanced classes, contents change according to necessity: professional Hebrew for the vocational groups; job hunting workshops; and language improvement. Graduates receive diplomas only under condition that they have attended at least 80% of the lessons, fulfilled their assignments, and have successfully passed both the written and verbal exams. The advanced classes take place in the evenings and...
the students pay tuition. At the Ulpan for Ethiopian immigrants, which is conducted over ten months, the classes are instructed by two teachers: one of Ethiopian ethnicity, who teaches basic terms in basic fields of knowledge and colloquial "everyday" Hebrew, to help the students cope with the shock of cultural transition; the other, a veteran Israeli, who teaches the Hebrew language.

**TEHILA - The Unique Education Program for the Adult Learner**, provides solutions for people, mainly women, who did not have the chance to study in their childhood. The TEHILA centers are operated all over the country and in every sector of the population. The students are sorted in 4-5 levels of prior knowledge, and the curriculum is set according to this division, starting from the instruction of reading, writing and basic math; up to studies that specialize in the various disciplines. Furthermore, the curriculum also integrates such studies as: Family and Community, self-empowerment, entrepreneurial training, job preparation, and arts. These centers also lead a very active social and communal life. In the highlight of their activity (between 1980 and 1983) there were over 80 centers activated all across the country, containing tens of thousands of students. The number of students in this system has recently decreased; yet some of the centers continue to blossom due to their ability to adapt their courses and activities, to the developments and changing needs of the target population. In 2007; about 9,000 women attended 480 literacy and elementary education classes; 1,500 prisoners attended classes in the prison facilities; and 300 soldiers attended classes arranged by the IDF. All these years, the project was activated by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education, in cooperation with local authorities, women's organizations, workers' unions, community centers, workers' committees, employers, the IDF, and the IPS. On the 1996 Literacy Day, the panel of judges for the International Literacy Award has bestowed the Israeli TEHILA project with a mark of excellence on behalf of the
International Literacy Association. Recently, the responsibility for the project has been transferred from the Ministry of Education to the Office for Senior Citizens. The image of TEHILA as an establishment for elderly women has led to the initiation of alternative projects for literacy studies and elementary education for young adults.

**The Mila Tova** (*"Good Word"*) program combines literacy and Ulpan studies. It is aimed at immigrant mothers from Ethiopian ethnicity and is activated in regions where a high rate of residents belongs to this sector. The program combines the acquisition of reading and writing skills with teaching the Hebrew language and general studies at elementary and high-school levels. The project also promotes general knowledge of Israel and its institutions; parents' relationships with their children's school; self-empowerment; and coping with a vast cultural transition. The studies are spread over 3 to 4 years, and the contents are adapted to the learners. The teachers are helped by special briefings, which explain the traditions of Ethiopian Jews. A national steering committee oversees the operation. In 2007, 1,500 women attended these classes, in 25 towns and communities. The project was funded by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education, Joint Israel, PACT (Parents and Children Together), and the Neighborhood Restoration Project. The financial management is done by the Israeli Adult Education Association.

**The Neshama** (*"Soul"*) program is intended for the immigrants from the Caucasus and Bukhara, and is the equivalent of the Mila Tova program.

**The Avoda Be'Ivrit** (*"Work in Hebrew"*) program is aimed at preparing the undereducated immigrants for work, while teaching them the Hebrew language and providing them with elementary education. The study materials are adapted to the requirements of the work place, and studies are conducted after work hours and maintained by the institutions, that employ many immigrants. Steering committees oversee the activity.
The project is funded by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education, Joint Israel, and "Tevet".

**The Dellet Ptucha Le'taasuka ("Open Door for Employment")** project helps young immigrants from Ethiopia, the Caucasus and Bukhara gain an elementary education and an learning equivalent to that acquired in high-school. It also enables them to familiarize themselves with the job market, and to be successfully integrated into work places. It is operated in areas with a high rate of undereducated immigrants, many of whom cannot communicate in Hebrew; a high rate of unemployment; and where the local authority is capable of offering both an infrastructure appropriate for studies and job opportunities. This program is part of the National Insurance Institute's Tevet program, which is aimed at overcoming poverty in needy populations. The program includes lectures and workshops, as well as study materials that are available online. Studies are conducted in two formats: 280 hours in regular classes, which operate between 6 and 8 hours a week; or 700 hours in classes that operate 25 hours a week for five months. The program is implemented by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education; the Ministry of Immigration Absorption; the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor; the National Insurance Institute; local authorities; and Joint Israel. In 2001, Israel has won the King Sejong Literacy Award for its development of new perceptions and new study programs for the Ethiopian immigrants.

The **Sidre** Association is an association of women, aimed at promoting and empowering Bedouin women from unknown villages in the Negev. The association cooperates with the leadership of the villages and tries to find partners within the official establishments as well. It offers Bedouin women of all ages and their families diverse programs, combining literacy studies with elementary education in Hebrew and Arabic, as well as vocational training and work placement. With the help of the Education and Social Affairs ministries, and community centers all
over the Negev, the association operates the following programs:

A. **The Lakia-Negev Weaving Project** - The women who take part in this program produce weaving works such as rugs and pillow covers in their own homes. They then sell their works from their homes, thus gaining some kind of financial independence while maintaining the tradition of working at home. At the same time, they also participate in literacy and education classes, and learn to read and use the computer, design fittings, and combine colors and shapes.

B. **Family Life Education** - This is a program for girls with elementary education and high-school students, is conducted through lectures and workshops. It is operated in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, the Family Planning Association, and the Bedouin Women's forum of the Negev. The Association also operates a project for vocational training combining family life education.

C. **The Young Leadership** Project, which is backed up by the tribe leaders, encourages young Bedouin women to continue with their high-school studies and further to higher education, thus promoting their independence.

D. **A Scholarship Fund** encourages young women to become integrated in higher education.

E. **The Women's Empowerment** Program, trains group instructors in the fields of health, education and human rights.

"**Tichonit** (High school level classes), **Equivalent of Bac** and **Academic Preparatory Programs**

The "Tichonit" offers education, which is equivalent to partial or full time high-school education, including preparation for vocational courses
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and Bagrut diplomas. The extent of the program is 560 hours, equivalent to 10 years of schooling, additional 550 hours which are equivalent to 11 years of schooling, and another 700 hours for the equivalent of 12 years of school. The Division of Adult Education grants diplomas following the results of national exams. Discharged soldiers attend recognized higher education establishments and enjoy the benefit of scholarships. Special aid is given to immigrants from Ethiopia. In 2001, 584 establishments were recognized as operators a subsidized program for discharged soldiers. In 2007, 12,500 learners participated in 400 high-school level classes of the program, and 500 immigrants from Ethiopia received scholarships. Each year, 221 authorized educational institutions operate about 5,000 high-school level classes, serving 80,000 learners. These programs are recognized for the purpose of receiving a salary increment, according to special criteria. The Tichoniot are operated by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education; the local authorities; the Open University; colleges; the Ministry of Security; the IDF; and private schools. Preference is given to towns where unemployment rates are high, as well as to workers in the public sector and in factories.

The "Kedma" Project operates centers for the promotion of immigrants from Ethiopia.

Programs equivalent to elementary and high-school studies, required for vocational training and retraining, provide the unemployed and workers striving to promotion, an education that is equivalent to elementary and high-school studies at the level required for acceptance to vocational training courses. Participants also acquire skills connected to manufacturing, management and communication; as well as computer skills, technical skills, and the skills required to increase their chances of being integrated into the job market. In 2007, 3,000 students attended
150 such classes. These courses are conducted by the Division of Adult Education; the Ministry of Social Affairs; the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor; the Government Institute for Technological Training; the IPS; the Joint; the Jewish Agency; workers' unions; and public and private employers' associations. Studies take place at colleges, community centers, vocational training schools, and places of work. Higher education establishments adapt their vocational and technical programs according to the requirements of employers. In the programs included in the Wisconsin Project, participants also receive living expenses.

The Academic Preparatory Program prepares its learners to attend higher education institutions, and is operated by these establishments.

**Extramural Studies**

Extramural studies include seminars, courses, lectures, educational tours, conferences, hobbies, sports and creative workshops. The activities take place in the various institutes and centers. In 2007, 82,000 people attended 3,400 classes conducted in the 56 public colleges operated. 29 of the colleges operate immigrant centers; and there are special colleges which cater to the Arab, Druzi and Bedouin populations. The Division of Adult Education operated about 4,000 short seminars in 2007. The study subjects are diverse: different academic disciplines, religious studies, languages and culture, inter-group and inter-personal dialogue, parenthood, Family and Community studies, arts, high-tech, health, sports, environmental studies, hobbies and games. The participants are adults with some high-school education, from all sectors of the population. The participants pay tuition. 70% of them are over the age of 60 and 80% are women. These programs are operated by: the Division of Adult Education, local authorities, the Adult Education Association, External Education departments at universities and colleges, public
institutes, social organizations, private colleges, museums, musical institutions, consulates and private institutes. A total of 192,500 people attended the various activities of these programs in 2007.

**Guidance for Parents, Family Relationships, and Community Life**

In a multi-cultured immigrant society, adult immigrants are required to reshape their roles and family relationships. Parents in a state of "culture shock" are requested to cope with a foreign language, behavior and culture, and overcome difficulties in finding work in a new environment. Many of them are also forced to rebuild their parental authority and their status as responsible for the safety of their children, who often develop inadequate behaviors. At the Family and Community education centers, parents receive guidance from professional instructors regarding methods of improving their parental skills. The instructors help them understand unfamiliar cultural codes and new social definitions of their role in the family. Parents' centers are active all across the country. Steering committees operate in three regional areas including the Arab sector as well as four national centers. In 2007, 42,000 parents participated in 2,900 parenting classes.

The "**Gishur Al Pa'ar**" ("Bridging the Gap") program aims at improving the relationships between immigrant parents and their children's schools, through the cultural transition process and the absorption into a new community.

The "**Tachlit**" ("Purpose") program promotes the ability of parents and their offspring to participate in the community. It strengthens the bonds of partnership between teachers and other workers of the education system, parents and other members of the community, mainly over issues of education.
In the "Parents and Teachers' Pact for the Development of a Successful Educational Environment" the learners develop their ability to take responsibility for their children's educational success. Parents and teachers participate in a dialogue based on trust, support and empowerment. The program includes a wide variety of relevant issues and is operated by: the Adult Education Division's Department of Parents and Family; the Ministry of Social Affairs; the Ministry of Health; municipal centers; women's organizations; hospitals; community centers, schools, public colleges; clubs; colleges; family oriented centers. Until recently, the Department of Parents, Family and Community developed and promoted programs for the training of activists and professional instructors on both national and local level.

**Promotion of Women**

In the last few decades, there has been a substantial development in the activities for the promotion of education among women, with the aim of empowering them both on a personal and a social level. Women's organizations operate programs aimed at increasing equality in society, promoting women's leadership and encouraging them to seek new work opportunities. These organizations grant scholarships to encourage women to attend higher education establishments. There are also projects for women, operated in areas with a high rate of uneducated and undereducated women, most of whom are immigrants from Ethiopia, the Caucasus and Bukhara; as well as in the Arab speaking communities.

**Programs for Senior Citizens**

Senior citizens over the age of 65 constitute a growing percentage of the population in Israel. Nearly half of them are over 75 years old, and
about 57% are women. In the senior citizens' community, the level of education is at an anti-correlation with age: the older they are, the less educated they are. The situation is particularly severe in the Arab sector, since the Jewish senior citizens are more interested in studying than the non-Jewish. The demand for "leisure studies" is an important element in the senior citizens' lives. If physical and financial conditions allow it, old age is a great opportunity to study. Cognitive activity is a key factor in ageing well, since learning preserves one's mental and intellectual factors. Due to a decline in health that occurs with age, senior citizens must devote particular attention to maintaining their health and coping with physical and spiritual regression. In principal, the elderly are critical and engaged learners. Their life experience is a significant educational source. At times, elderly learners contribute from their personal knowledge to the learning process and even give lectures on their field of expertise or hobbies. The senior citizens' program is spread over many fields and organizational establishments: external studies, seminars and courses on various disciplines and arts; leisure activity at home and outdoors; current events; issues of Gerontology and health; laws concerning old age; sports; grandparenthood and inter-generational dialogue; memory improvement; writing memoirs; money management; computer literacy; higher education and empowerment studies; Hebrew for elderly immigrants; coping with loss; and volunteering. The programs are operated by educational establishments; colleges; community centers; senior citizens' clubs; Retirement residences and homes; the Ulpanim system; tourism and geography organizations; the "Brookdale" U3A (University of the Third Age). The main funders are: the Ministry of Education; the National Insurance Institute; the Office for Senior Citizens; local authorities; Joint-Israel; the ESHEL Association (Planning and Developing Services for the Elderly in Israel); and private organizations.
The "SHALEM" - Services for the Elderly Organization - was founded in 2003 in an attempt to build a wide net of volunteers from the senior citizens' community. The organization is operated by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education; the Volunteers' Directorate and the Community Centers' Society. The activities take place in the adult education institutions across the country, among the Hebrew and Arabic populations. The volunteers help various target populations, including the elderly and people with special needs. They are assisted by representatives of a variety of fields: absorption of immigrants, road safety, community policing, and environment protection, cultural activity, and family and community mediation and disaster prevention. The volunteers are trained for their jobs, and coordinators maintain constant contact with them offer consultation and assistance in problem solving.

The organization also operates the following special programs within the education system:

"Zahav Ba'gan" ("Gold in the Garden") - Senior citizens volunteer in kindergartens (courtesy of the "Yad Ha'nadiv" Foundation).

"Tikshoret Bein-Dorit" ("Inter-Generational Communication") - Promoting inter-generational connections in situations of joint learning, with the grandchildren imparting to their grandparents computer and internet skills, and the grandparents writing autobiographies with the help of their grandchildren. This activity takes place in high-schools and community education centers. Since this project was launched, about 5,000 grandparents have participated in it, as well as an equal number of grandchildren.
**Programs for Special Populations: Prisoners, and Former Alcoholics and Drug Consumers**

As part of these programs, conventional studies as well as special workshops are conducted. Conventional studies include: literacy, elementary and high-school education, courses by the Open University and vocational training. The special workshops include rehabilitation programs, group support and individual guidance, in the endeavor to integrate the learners into the normative society. These programs are operated by the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education; the Ministry of Social Affairs; the Ministry of Health; the IPS; local authorities and social welfare organizations.

**Health Education for the General Public, the Sick and the Disabled**

Good health greatly depends upon knowing what is good for us and what is harmful, that is: our health education. Such knowledge is particularly vital for the sick, and the physically and mentally disabled, who require immense learning efforts and environmental support. Each day, instruction in the field of health is provided by doctors, nurses, dieticians, experts, doctors and medical professionals from the field of alternative medicine. Rehabilitation programs are adapted to individual patients by experts and conducted by special therapists. Practical information about coping with diseases and disability is learned in classes, conferences, and in the formal and informal education establishments and centers. The media, the internet, and popular publications - all provide an abundance of information on issues of health. In 2000, a law was passed in Israel, according to which, people suffering from a mental disability rated at a 40% severity and over, are entitled to education equivalent to high-school level, preparation for the Bagrut exams, and
computer courses. Disabled immigrants are entitled to Hebrew studies. The mentally disabled are integrated into the education centers as part of their rehabilitation process. Their participation increases their self-confidence, promotes their integration into a socially and vocationally normative society, and strengthens the skills required for coping with social stigma and insecurity. Projects integrating the mentally disabled into educational programs are operated by the Ministry of Health's Mental Health Services in cooperation with the Ministry of Education's Division of Adult Education; a chain of "healthy cities"; the National Insurance Institute; medical associations; the Kupat Cholim (the Israeli National Health Organization) clinics; and public and private clinics. The study contents are: general knowledge and innovations in the field of health, supporting information, public health, alternative medicine and treatment of the disabled. In 2007, the Healthy Cities chain has initiated 3,047 groups and summer courses that were attended by 78,659 learners.

**Traditional Learning**

Lifelong traditional learning has been deeply rooted in the Jewish tradition for thousands of years. In Judaism, daily learning is considered a religious decree that thousands of men fulfill every day, either alone or in a Chavruta (religious study and discussion group). Nowadays, non-religious centers and special centers for women expand the scope of populations exploring religious studies to include women scholars as well as anyone who is interested. The program is comprised of the entire variety of philosophy and practice in classic medieval and modern Judaism, the Bible, rabbinical literature and current works. Studies are conducted at the Yeshivas for men, schools, non-formal institutions, non-religious centers and institutions, higher education establishments and colleges.
**Distant Education**

Learning from a distance allows the realization of the principals of Andragogy, which encourage learners to determine what they wish to learn and outline their own educational development. The possibility to learn from home has greatly increased accessibility to education. However, distant learning also has its disadvantages: it lacks direct, unmediated contact with the instructor; the learners are requested to have a high level of motivation, sense of responsibility and self-discipline. Naturally, some primary knowledge of computer use is also required. Furthermore, some adults, particularly the undereducated, have an aversion to technology. Those who are integrated, learn both specific and general disciplines in all fields, acquire technical skills, and even participate in disciplinary studies that lead to earning diplomas. The institutions and factors involved in distant education programs are: the Open University; the internet; the mass media; the high-tech colleges and some of the regular adult education institutions.

**"Hishtalmut" - Professional Auxiliary Education - and In-Service Training**

Professional auxiliary education seminars ("Hishtalmut") are conducted in many work places, in academic institutions and in private institutes. The study contents are related to the work and the profession, and include: information, upgrading methods, problem solving, and innovations. Those involved in operating it are: public and private employers, professional unions, and academic institutions.
"A Learning City"

The "Learning City" ("Ir Lomedet") project is an innovative project initiated by the Adult Education Association in order to centralize all the adult education activities in one organized and joint framework, which includes partnerships and connections that direct all the professional and monetary resources. This is done in order to provide updated solutions for the ever-changing needs of individuals and communities. It will allow lifelong learning in all fields that may provide solutions to the expressed needs, making use of the experience of the city's residents.

The city of Modi'in was chosen as the first model of this project.

Adult Educators

Adult educators for the adult population in Israel are usually either teachers certified by the formal system, or instructors trained in special auxiliary education seminars ("Hishtalmuiot") to work with adults. Certification from a teachers' college or a higher education establishment is a prerequisite for employment in projects operated by the public institutions. Adult-educators participate in ongoing in-service programs. The Ulpan teachers are entitled to tenure, in accordance with the terms of the Teacher’s union. Others, who are employed on the basis of a yearly contract, are entitled to the same terms of payment but not for tenure, since their employment depends on the number of registrations for the courses they teach and on current budgets. Lecturers and most instructors are employed according to official rates, depending on the services they provide.

Universities in Israel regard the education of adults as a vocation more than a profession. Furthermore, since they cannot promise employment for the graduates, the education departments in universities settle for conducting courses on the subject, but they do not establish departments
for the systematic training of educators for adults. Some academic institutions conduct a program for training instructors of parents' groups. Among the teachers' colleges, only the David Yellin College in Jerusalem holds a proficiency program in the field of adult education, granting a specific academic degree. To fill the need for an organized training of adult educators, a widespread system is operated, in which are delivered courses and in-service training in the various proficiencies of the adult education and culture. In this framework, teachers exchange information, experience, ideas and materials. Recognized courses and workshops grant their participants with Hishtalmut increments, according to criteria established by the Ministry of Education.

Methods of teaching and instructing change according to the type of the program, specific needs, nature of the learners, and preferences of the teachers and instructors. The most common methods are: conventional teaching; lectures with presentations; discussions; workshops; using computers long-distance learning; and teaching in small groups. A pleasant, optimistic and encouraging atmosphere is mandatory in all these projects.

**Publications in Adult Education**

The Division of Adult Education, the Adult Education Association, the Joint, other organizations that are interested in the field, and professionals prepare curricula, booklets and text books, briefings for teachers, publication and research articles in their fields of expertise. The Division of Adult Education publishes the almanac *Gadish* and the *Adult Education in Israel*, which is sent to all member states of UNESCO, to national libraries, to academies and to adult education associations worldwide. Furthermore, the Division also publishes specializing manuscripts: *Hed Ha'ulpan* and *Mishpacha Va'daat*. All these publications focus on
innovations in the theory and practice of adult education in Israel, and report on international activities in the field, and on the participation of Israeli educators in international forums.

The target readers of the weekly magazine *Sha'ar La'matchil* are new readers. It serves as efficient preparation for reading regular newspapers in Hebrew.

**Surveys, Research and Evaluation**

Constant evaluation of the various aspects of the activity in different stages of the work is conducted mainly through feedbacks from learners and teachers, as well as by questionnaires and non-formal conversations. Furthermore, surveys and research projects are conducted to examine issues such as: motivation; means of recruiting participants; the relevance of the studies to the learners' lives and aspirations; the suitability of the curriculum, the quality of teaching; the learners' satisfaction level and their willingness to join additional and continuous programs; the effect of the studies on the learners' occupational state, etc. Other factors are also examined, among them: the class climate; relationships between instructors and learners, the convenience of accessibility to the establishment; conveying clear and detailed information to target populations; tuition rates; the existence (or lack thereof) of aiding services (consultation services, library, cafeteria, nearby bathrooms, comfortable classrooms).

In recent years, research has been conducted in Israel, concerning the following issues: motivating factors for learning Hebrew among new immigrants; the effect of studies equivalent to high school level on the integration of graduates in the work market, on the learners' self-esteem, and on their motivation to continue with their studies; participation in studies at public colleges; the contribution of participation at TEHILA
to the continuation of studies, to the learners' self-esteem and their integration into social and communal activities; the contribution of the educational activity to the quality of life of the elderly and people with special needs; the effect of gender studies on personal growth and on the sense of social responsibility; the status of studying women in the Druze sector; and generally, on orientation to adult education.

Monitoring and surveys are also conducted in the various programs in order to conduct a summarizing assessment of achievements and forecasting assessment for future modifications, and the improvement of the programs, the methods and the outcomes.

Summary

Participating in any kind of educational framework is currently an inseparable part of adult life in Israel. Many Israelis flock to the educational establishment, especially to those that offer a variety of external studies. Nonetheless, there are still those who do not participate. It takes additional efforts to recruit learners from the weaker sectors of the population, whose attitudes towards learning are negative to begin with, and whose scholastic skills are limited. Adults refrain from joining programs that are too difficult or that do not meet their needs. Other reasons for their unwillingness to join are: financial hardships, inconvenient study conditions; difficult physical access to the various amenities, lack of knowledge about education options; tense relationships with other learners or with any of the service providers; lack of intellectual or artistic interest, and preference for social gatherings or internet interaction. In some sectors of the population, the reason for avoiding learning gatherings is rooted in social norms that belittle studying. People, who are culturally deprived, need guidance, encouragement and a non-threatening environment to join an educational
activity. A friendly and open social climate, which is a basic condition for any activity with older people, good relationships with other learners and the possibility to conduct a free dialogue with the teacher and the other staff members - all these strengthen learners' self-esteem and willingness to overcome difficulties. But above all, it requires the understanding that it is never too late to learn. In particularly conservative sectors, where women are not encouraged to study, activists in the field of education and culture for adults often encounter moral and social resistance. They strive to convince the public leaders, usually religious leaders, to allow their women to attend the programs, which do not harm their communal traditions.

The motivation to study is highest where there are expectations of upgrading one's occupational and economic status; of improving one's relationship with the family, the community, and the schools that the children attend; or even of filling up the leisure time with interesting and fulfilling contents.

In developed countries, there has been an increase during the last few decades in the understanding that a healthy society with a growing life expectancy must take care of the spiritual and physical development of its inhabitants. The subject of lifelong learning has received a huge boost in those countries. In Israel, those in charge of determining the policy are sympathetic of the needs of the population, but unfortunately the budgets at their disposal are not sufficient for the realization of their good intentions. One can only hope that the future holds better prospects of realizing the possibilities of drawing to learning circles a significant rate of sectors which are currently in the fringes of the educated and learning society.
References


Various publications in Hebrew.