Chapter 13
Some Keys for Success in Higher Education: A Case Approach

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this chapter is to examine what the key issues that have contributed to situate several Israeli universities in high positions in the world ranking of universities are. Tertiary education is characterized in Israel by a dual education system, both from an internal (university-colleges) and from an educational perspective, with the arrival of foreign students. The keys to explain the success of universities in Israel are: (1) the coexistence of a dual system; (2) the intensive use of technology and informal-formal learning; (3) the early-childhood education; (4) the implementation of a very strict selection process; (5) the creation of a system based on efficient public expenditure on education; (6) the increasing role of women in education; and (7) the constant improvement of teachers. After having analyzed the Arab-Israeli and the ultra-Orthodox problems, the authors conclude with an outlook for the future.

INTRODUCTION

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region is facing new challenges in the global economy where education has a key role to play. Technical and financial flows must continuously foster education, if MENA countries want to contribute to scientific and social advancement in tertiary education. In this sense, and despite its unique characteristics, the Israeli experience in boosting tertiary education can enlighten new paths, mainly in terms of management and strategy, for other countries belonging to the MENA region to help them to achieve this goal.

In the most successful educational systems existing in the world, political and social leaders have persuaded their citizens to prevent illiteracy. In this educational process, tertiary education has a key role to play, as it creates sustainable competitive advantages for the country. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to unite efforts from faculty, both in the graduate and postgraduate

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levels, administration and services staff, families and students, foreign and domestic. The greater the degree of internationalization of schools, the greater the benefit gained from exchanges and educational experiences abroad. In this sense, Israeli citizens believe that only some subset of the Israeli and foreign students can or need to achieve excellent standard (OECD, 2010, p. 4). This internationalization process began in 1968 when the Israeli government launched several structural reforms of the Israeli educational system. Reforms based on fostering social sciences and democratization of education that contributed to diminish the inequality of opportunity problem, and the ethnic and religious gap in tertiary education in Israel (Resnik, 2007).

The objective of this chapter is to examine what are the key issues that have led to the university system to be successful in Israel. Key aspects mainly related to Culture, Innovation, Business incubators and accelerators, Entrepreneurship, and International relations (CIBEI Model) that have contributed to situate several Israeli universities in high positions in the world ranking of universities. Along with a descriptive situation of the Israeli educational system, we propose a theoretical CIBEI Model synthesizing the main factors affecting tertiary education. Although vocational colleges are not being analyzed, results, in general terms, obtained in universities can be extrapolated to Israeli vocational colleges, so a complete vision about higher education in Israel can be achieved.

TERTIARY EDUCATION IN ISRAEL: ORGANIZATION AND CHARACTERISTICS

Education systems vary considerably around the globe, including the duration of courses and seminars, the different ages at which students begin and end each phase of schooling, and what students study. As these variations complicate the compilation of internationally comparable statistics on education, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) created an International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), revised in 1997 and 2011, which provides a basis for comparing different education systems. In this work, in order to study the Israeli Tertiary education system, we will focus on ISCED 5, subcategories 5A and 5B included, and ISCED 6, both defined in Table 1.

Tertiary education in Israel is divided into three levels: [1] University-level education (ISCED 5A-Tertiary type-A) defined by "Long-stream" theory-based programs aimed at preparing students for further research or to give access to highly skilled professions, such as medicine or architecture. Entry preceded by 13 years of education, students typically required to have completed upper secondary or post-secondary non-tertiary education. Duration equivalent to at least 3 years of full-time study, but 4 is more usual; [2] Vocationally oriented tertiary education (ISCED 5B-Tertiary type-B) defined by "Short-stream" practically-oriented programs focused on the skills needed for students to directly enter specific occupations. Entry preceded by 13 years of education; students may require mastery of specific subjects studied at levels 3B or 4A. Duration equivalent to at least 2 years of full-time study, but 3 is more usual; and [3] Advanced research programs (ISCED 6), as the second stage of tertiary education. Programs are

Table 1. The research budget in Israeli universities

Scientific publications, weighted by impact factor	34%
Grants from competitive research funds	34%
Grants from other research funds	15%
Doctoral students	15%
Recipients of Master's Degree – with thesis	2%
Total	100%

Source: Trajtenberg (2012)