Mapping of VET educational policies and practices for social inclusion and social cohesion in the Western Balkans, Turkey and Israel

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ISRAEL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research focuses on three Vocational Education Training (VET) schools of the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labour (MOITL). Each school represents a diverse example of Israel's ethnic and religious communities. We interviewed eight national policy makers and 17 local educators and other experts affiliated with VET schools. We also collected a quantitative survey from 30 teachers and 395 students in our case study schools. Our mixed methods analysis looked at differences between the schools and the different levels of analysis (students, educators, and policy makers). The results highlight that Israel approaches VET with an unstated policy of social exclusion. VET students are primarily dropouts and students with learning disabilities, who come from lower socio-economic backgrounds with low capacity for general academic studies. Although the schools are unable to provide students with sufficient resources, they are successful at turning students around from educational failure. More policies are suggested at the national level to promote coordination between MOITL and the Ministry of Education (MoE), in addition to reforming the Apprenticeship Law and obligatory collaboration with industries.

The practice of a dual-system that incorporates assistantships is very beneficial for VET students. New policies should be implemented to ensure students receive assistantships. The dual-system provides opportunities for students who lack a tradition of educational success and the social capital to develop their own skills. The government needs to make it easier for vocational students to receive a range of services, including textbooks, better qualified teachers, counsellors, classroom equipment, career services and job placement. VET students often have economic difficulties and are not able to pursue work in their specialization. VET is seen as a means to improve the economic status of lower socio-economic communities. However, unless such communities are given resources, they will not fulfil their potential.

Findings show the added value of providing weaker students with VET and school-sponsored paid assistantships. The encounter of students with the labour market provides real working experience and an opportunity to interact with role models. This socialization process is extremely valuable for turning dropouts into productive students. Perhaps one of the most telling signs that the system works is that the students rated questions on happiness at school and liking the courses positively.

Interviews with national policy makers identified four main themes for VET improvement: 1) Coordination between government organizations, 2) Course and Program Development, 3) Social inclusion of the Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) community, and 4) Social inclusion of the Arab community. By means of interviews with educators and questionnaires with students and teachers, our PAR plan mapped out four VET issues: 1) Selection and Tracking, 2) Dropouts, 3) Patterns of Education, and 4) Transitions from Education to Work. Results from the student questionnaire were examined according to the following five types of opinions: A) Choice, B) Experience, C) Motivation, D) School Evaluation, and E) Expectations. We use a three phase process to analyse the results by looking first at the educator level data, second at the student level data, and third make a comparison of the national, educator and student levels. As such the research compared the data both horizontally (between schools) and vertically (at different levels of status).

VET students in Israel are often socially included within their cultures and communities. The issue of social inclusion for diverse Israeli communities is a pluralistic concept that implies that a VET student can be included in the labour force and mainstream society by remaining within the boundaries of his

or her own culture. All of the schools indicate they receive many students who have learning disabilities and behavioural issues, and this requires providing special services such as smaller classes and personal counselling. The schools also highlighted that family problems were often the cause of students' problems. All of the schools indicated that students feel stigmatized for being relegated to a VET school. The lack of qualified VET teachers was emphasized numerous times from all angles. Furthermore, due to both a lack of resource exchange with MoE, in addition to national and local bureaucracy, the schools develop independent methods to procure teaching resources. The economic environment has been hostile for VET students and graduates, and schools have a great burden of finding apprenticeships and career services. All schools seek greater social status for vocational degrees. Each of the schools discussed the importance of building a network with local and national industries, NGOs, and local government. Educators indicated that national policy makers should ensure more funding to expand VET and provide extra services.

The analysis of students indicated that older students, males, and poorer respondents were more critical of the VET system, as were Arab students. The Haredi community was the least critical, which may have to do with desirability bias and a culture of solidarity between students and educators. Overall, we discovered that the practical component of VET schools was not lost on students. We did not find significant differences in how much they feel they learn from their courses, whether what they learn will help in a future job, or any of the variables related to practical experience. Most of the students have a favourable opinion about VET and their schools being practical. We discovered that the perception of teachers and students who are more welcoming and friendly creates happier students. The students in all schools are motivated to do well.

Arab and Haredi students feel more discriminated against in the labour market, Haredi students because of their religion and Arab students because of their nationality. While relative perceptions of discrimination by these groups, especially Arabs, were higher, overall the students indicated low perceptions of discrimination. The Arab students and teachers strongly expressed a feeling of exclusion from the labour market. Students also gave low ratings for their school buildings and teachers' subject knowledge. These results were not statistically different by school. Furthermore, students have similar expectations for help in finding a job from services (the school, a career centre, and an employment agency) and from people (family, friends, and teachers). While students in all schools have similar expectations from people, the results for services differ by school.

We propose a number of policy measures for schools, NGOs, and government policy makers. We highlight the need to bring in high-level professionals as visiting teachers, and the importance of national and local actors to ensure training and compliance. We also discuss potential policies to create sponsored assistantships for all students. Some schools indicated that they do volunteer training tasks, and this appears to be an effective way to keep students occupied in lieu of an assistantship. Ties between the school and the local municipality should be strengthened, allowing more apprenticeship jobs in civic institutions. NGO cooperation should focus on professional development for VET teachers and vocational experts, and labour rights, labour market preparation workshops, and career services for students and graduates. Schools should focus on increasing their involvement with the community, both employers and parents. At the government level new schools should be built within industrial parks where students would work. The status of VET diplomas should be improved by creating standards within industries for accepting and sufficiently paying VET graduates.

תקציר מנהלים

מחקר זה מתמקד בשלושה בתי ספר תיכון מקצועיים (VET) של משרד התעשייה, המסחר והתעסוקה (MOITL). כל בית ספר מייצג דוגמא ממגוון הקהילות האתניות והדתיות אשר בישראל. ראיינו לצורך זה שמונה מעצבי מדיניות מהרמה הארצית ושבעה-עשר אנשי חינוך מקומיים ומומחים אחרים המקורבים לבתי ספר מקצועיים. כמו כן, אספנו נתונים כמותיים מ-30 מורים ו-395 תלמידים משלושת מקרי הבוחן. הניתוח מבוסס על שיטות מחקריות משולבות ובחן את ההבדלים בין בתי הספר השונים ואת ההבדלים בין רמות הניתוח השונות (תלמידים, אנשי חינוך ומעצבי מדיניות). התוצאות מצביעות על כך שיחסה של ישראל כלפי החינוך המקצועי מהול במדיניות בלתי מוצהרת של הדרה חברתית. תלמידי החינוך המקצועי הם בעיקר נושרים ותלמידים בעלי לקויות למידה, המגיעים מרקע סוציו-אקונומי נמוך ויכולת נמוכה ללימודים עיוניים כלליים. למרות חוסר יכולתם של בתי הספר לספק לתלמידים משאבים מספקים, הם מצליחים להרחיק את התלמידים מכישלון לימודי. מדיניות נוספת מוצגת לרמה הארצית בכדי לעודד תיאום בין משרד התמ"ת ומשרד החינוך (MoE), בנוסף לריענון חוק החניכות ושיתוף פעולה מחייב עם התעשייה.

הדגם של חינוך דואלי (dual-system) המשלב חניכות נושא בקרבו יתרונות רבים לתלמידי החינוך המקצועי. יש ליישם מדיניות חדשה על מנת להבטיח שתלמידי החינוך המקצועי אכן זוכים לחניכות. החינוך הדואלי מעניק הזדמנויות לתלמידים החסרים רקע של הצלחה לימודית והון חברתי על מנת לפתח את כישרונותיהם. על הממשלה לפעול בכדי להקל על תלמידי החינוך המקצועי בקבלת מגוון שירותים כגון ספרי לימוד, מורים בעלי ההכשרה המתאימות, יועצים, ציוד לכיתות, שירותי ייעוץ קריירה והשמה לעבודה. לעיתים תכופות תלמידי החינוך המקצועי חווים קשיים כלכליים ואינם מסוגלים למצוא עבודה בתחום התמחותם. חינוך מקצועי נתפס כאמצעי לשיפור הסטאטוס הכלכלי של קהילות בעלות רקע סוציו-אקונומי נמוך. אולם, באם קהילות אלו לא יקבלו את המשאבים המתאימים, הן לא ימשו את הפוטנציאל הטמון בהן.

הממצאים מעידים על הערך המוסף הקיים בהענקת חינוך מקצועי וחניכות בתשלום במסגרת בית ספרית לתלמידים חלשים. המפגש של התלמידים עם שוק העבודה מספק ניסיון עבודה חיוני והזדמנות לבוא במגע עם בוגרים משמעותיים המהווים מודל חיובי לחיקוי עבור התלמידים. תהליך חיברות זה הינו בעל ערך רב בהפיכת תלמידים נושרים (ובוגרים) פרודוקטיביים. אחת האינדיקציות החזקות לכך שהמערכת עובדת בהצלחה היא שהתלמידים דירגו בצורה חיובית את השאלות בשאלון הנוגעות לאושר בבית הספר ואהבת הקורסים.

ראיונות עם מעצבי מדיניות ארציים זיהו ארבע תמות מרכזיות לשיפור החינוך המקצועי: 1) תיאום בין גופי הממשלה, 2) פיתוח קורסים ותוכניות לימוד, 3) צמצום ההדרה החברתית של הקהילה החרדית, 4) צמצום ההדרה החברתית של הקהילה הערבית. באמצעות השימוש בראיונות עם אנשי חינוך ושאלונים לתלמידים ומורים, תכנית מחקר הפעולה (participatory action research plan) שאנו מציעים ממפה ארבע סוגיות בחינוך המקצועי: 1) בחירה והסללה, 2) נשירה, 3) דפוסי חינוך, 4) מעבר מלימודים לעבודה. התוצאות משאלוני התלמידים נבחנו לאור חמשת סוגי הדעות הבאים: א) בחירה, ב) ניסיון, ג) מוטיבציה, ד) הערכת בית הספר, ה) ציפיות. השתמשנו בתהליך תלת-שלבי בכדי לנתח את התוצאות, ראשית באמצעות בחינת המידע שהתקבל ברמת אנשי החינוך, שנית בחינת המידע שהתקבל ברמת התלמידים, ושלישית באמצעות עריכת השוואה בין הרמה הארצית, אנשי החינוך והתלמידים. לפיכך המחקר משווה את המידע הן בצורה מאוזנת (בין בתי הספר) והן בצורה אנכית (הרמות השונות).

פעמים רבות תלמידי החינוך המקצועי בישראל משולבים חברתית בתוך התרבות והקהילה שלהם. הסוגיה של הדרה חברתית עבור קהילות רבות בישראל הינה בעלת אופי פלורליסטי המרמז לכך שתלמיד החינוך המקצועי יכול להיכלל בשוק העבודה הזורם המרכזי של החברה, וזאת באמצעות הישארות בתוך גבולות הקבוצה החברתית המקורית שלו. כול בתי הספר העידו שהם קולטים תלמידים רבים בעלי ליקויי למידה ובעיות התנהגות, מה שמחייב הענקת שירותים מיוחדים כגון כיתות קטנות יותר וייעוץ אישי. בתי הספר הדגישו כי בעיות משפחתיות היוו במקרים רבים מקור לקשיי התלמידים. כל בתי הספר ציינו שהתלמידים חשים סטיגמה שלילית בעקבות העברתם לבתי ספר מקצועיים. המחסור במורים בעלי ההכשרות המתאימות לחינוך מקצועי הודגש מספר פעמים על ידי גורמים מכל הרמות השונות. מעבר לכך, כתוצאה הן מהיעדר החלפת משאבים עם משרד החינוך, והן מביורוקרטיה ברמה הארצית והמקומית, בתי הספר מפתחים בצורה עצמאית שיטות למען השגת משאבי הוראה. הסביבה הכלכלית יוצרת קשיים עבור תלמידי ובוגרי החינוך המקצועי, ועל בתי הספר מונח עול גדול

במציאת מקומות להכשרה וייעוץ תעסוקתי. כל בתי הספר שואפים להגברת הסטאטוס החברתי של החינוך המקצועי וההסמכות שהוא מעניק. כל אחד מבתי הספר דן בחשיבות של בניית רשת משותפת עם תעשיות מקומיות וארציות, ארגוני מגזר שלישי והשלטון המקומי. אנשי החינוך ציינו שקובעי מדיניות ארציים צריכים להבטיח תקצוב נוסף בכדי להרחיב את החינוך המקצועי ולאפשר מתן שירותים נוספים.

ניתוח המידע שהתקבל מהתלמידים מצביע על כך שתלמידים מבוגרים, זכרים, ועניים היו ביקורתיים יותר כלפי מערכת החינוך המקצועי, כפי שהיו אף התלמידים הערבים. הקהילה החרדית הייתה הפחות ביקורתית מכולן, אולי כתוצאה מהטיה על בסיס רצייה ותרבות של סולידריות בין תלמידים למחנכים. באופן כללי, מצאנו כי הרכיב הפרקטי בבתי הספר המקצועיים לא נעלם מעיני התלמידים. לא מצאנו הבדלים ניכרים בתחומים הבאים: עד כמה הם מרגישים שלמדו מהשיעורים, האם מה שלמדו יסייע בעבודתם בעתיד, ובכל אחד מהמשתנים הקשורים להתנסות מעשית. רוב התלמידים אוחזים בדעות חיוביות בנוגע לחינוך מקצועי והפרקטיות שטמונה בתי הספר שלהם. גילינו שכאשר מורים ותלמידים נתפסים כמזמינים וידידותיים, רמת האושר של התלמידים עולה. התלמידים בכל בתי הספר אחוזי מוטיבציה להצלחה.

סטודנטים ערבים וחרדים מרגישים מופלים יותר בשוק העבודה, חרדים בגלל אמונתם הדתית ותלמידים ערבים בגלל הלאומיות שלהם. בעוד שתחושות ההפליה על ידי קבוצות אלו, והערבים בראשם, היו גבוהות לסך המשיבים, באופן כללי התלמידים העידו על תחושה נמוכה של הפליה. התלמידים והמורים הערבים ביטאו באופן בולט תחושה של הדרה משוק העבודה. תלמידים אף העניין הערכה נמוכה כלפי מבני בתי הספר והידע המקצועי של המורים. תוצאות אלו לא היו שונות סטטיסטית בין בתי הספר. בנוסף, לתלמידים יש ציפיות דומות בנוגע לקבלת עזרה במציאת עבודה ממעניקי השירותים השונים (בית הספר, מרכז תעסוקה ולשכת תעסוקה) ומאנשים שסביבם (משפחה, חברים ומורים). בעוד שתלמידים מכל בתי הספר אוחזים בציפיות דומות מהאנשים הסובבים אותם, הציפיות כלפי מעניקי השירותים משתנות על פי בית ספר.

אנו מציעים מספר הצעות מדיניות לבתי ספר, ארגוני מגזר שלישי ומעצבי מדיניות ארציים. אנו מדגישים את הצורך להביא אנשי מקצוע מדרג גבוה כמורים מבקרים, ואת החשיבות של שחקנים ארציים ומקומיים להבטחת ההכשרה ושיתוף פעולה מיטבי בין הגורמים הרלוונטיים. כמו כן אנו דנים בהצעות פוטנציאליות ליצירת אפשרויות חניכות לכלל תלמידי החינוך המקצועי. חלק מבתי הספר הציגו את קיומן של משימות הכשרה התנדבותיות, ונראה כי פרקטיקה זו משמשת כלי יעיל להעסקת התלמידים במקום החניכות. קשרים בין בית הספר והרשות המקומית צריכים להתחזק, ובכך לאפשר יותר מקומות חניכות במוסדות אזרחיים. שיתוף פעולה עם ארגוני מגזר שלישי צריך להתמקד בפיתוח מקצועי עבור מורים ומומחים לחינוך המקצועי, וכן בסדנאות הכנה לשוק העבודה וזכויות עבודה, ושירותי קריירה לתלמידים ובוגרים. בתי הספר צריכים להתמקד בהגברת מעורבותם בקהילה, מעסיקים והורים כאחד. ברמת הממשלה, בתי ספר חדשים צריכים להיבנות בתחומם של פארקי תעשייה, כך שתלמידים יוכלו לעבוד לצד לימודיהם. יש לשפר את סטאטוס התעודות שהחינוך המקצועי מספק, וזאת באמצעות יצירת סטנדרט בתוך התעשייה לקבלת והענקת תשלום הולם לבוגרי החינוך המקצועי.

INTRODUCTION

The following study was conducted at three schools run by the Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Labour (English acronym- MOITL, Hebrew acronym- TAMAT). Four per cent of Israeli secondary students attend MOITL schools. The majority of those schools combine learning with an assistantship program that allows students to work at a company that provides labour-related skills. MOITL students are usually dropouts from schools of the Ministry of Education (English acronym-MoE). They often arrive at the MOITL system with learning disabilities, and economic and social capital deficiencies. This study was motivated by a sociological interest in rectifying the primordial bias of VET in order to create social mobility and inclusion for marginalized subgroups. The study provides policy makers with an objective birds-eye view of how students, teachers, and administrators perceive deficiencies in the system and offers some simple solutions to implement.

On the national level, the key emphasis should be on improving vocational education services and aligning it with the needs of the marketplace. It should also centre on the government's moral responsibility to rectify deprivation and social exclusion encountered by various minorities. While MOITL students come from very diverse ethnic and religious minorities, they often share a similar experience of having special needs that brought them there. As such, the MOITL system represents a paradox. On the one hand, it offers social inclusion by providing a last-ditch opportunity for youth who have failed or dropped out elsewhere. But because these schools have low prestige and provide little chances for upward mobility, it perpetuates students' social exclusion.

Understanding vocational education in Israel requires a background into the history of Israel's infrastructures. Israel is composed of diverse groups of marginal minorities. Social cleavages are both ethnic and religious. They are also based on gender and geography. Cleavages exist both within and between religious groups and numerous subcultures intersect the traditional sociological defining lines. Regarding the Jews, Israel is ethnically divided primarily into two groups, known as Ashkenazim (Jews of European origins) and Mizrahim (Jews of Middle Eastern origins). Divisions between these two groups have manifested themselves as a trend toward vocational education for Mizrahim, who settled in economically weaker peripheral regions (development towns), and a trend toward general education for the generally more affluent Ashkenazi population. VET education for Mizrahim was in fact a successful means of creating social mobility. Between 1972 and 1983 Mizrahim were the only population to earn higher wages as a result of VET schooling (Neuman and Ziderman 2003). In recent years educational parity between Ashkenazim and Mizrahim has declined (Ayalon and Shavit 2004, Haberfeld 2009, Smooha 2002). Despite these inequalities, the difference in the proportion of Mizrahim and Ashkenazim in technological or vocational vs. general educational programs remains statistically insignificant (both groups totalled 34% in technical or vocational tracks in 2010, Goldstein 2012a).

Besides the traditional Mizrahi-Ashkenazi divide, Israel has witnessed several recent waves of immigration. Two of these waves are worth noting: that from Ethiopia and that from the Former Soviet Union (FSU). Regarding the former, there are currently 116,100 people of Ethiopian descent living in Israel, 77,400 of whom were born in Ethiopia (Ethiopian National Project Website). Most of these immigrants received little or no schooling in Ethiopia and are illiterate in their native language (Stavans et al. 2009). Their socio-economic status is at the bottom of Israeli Jewish ethnicities.

Regarding the latter, between 1990 and 2001 805,200 immigrants arrived from the FSU, and more continued to arrive until the present. While these immigrants were often highly educated, they struggled to adapt to the new language and culture (Golan-Cook and Olshtain 2011).

Beyond the ethnic divide, divisions in Jewish Israeli society exist based on religiosity. The Ministry of Education is divided into four types of schools: Governmental, Governmental-Religious, Arab, and Haredi (ultra-orthodox). Regarding the latter, Haredi students attend special rabbinical training schools that provide almost entirely religious education and do not follow many of the standard core courses found in government schools. These schools are divided by gender, known as a Yeshiva for boys and Ulpana for girls. The relationship of such schools with MoE is very loose, and most of MoE's statistics do not include information from those schools. In this sense, the Haredi schools are socially excluded from mainstream society. Government-religious schools, on the other hand, offer a diverse range of standard courses with an added emphasis on religious education. These schools do follow standard MoE core courses that lead to matriculation. However, such schools offer far less technological courses (5% of government-religious students were in vocational or technological tracks in 2010, Goldstein 2012a). Finally, the majority of Israeli students attend governmental (secular) schools. Since the early 1990s, the percentage of students in governmental and governmental-religious schools has been declining, while the percentage of students in Haredi schools has increased (MoE Matriculation Data Set 2010). Although differences in educational attainment were not observed between governmental and governmental-religious schools, Haredi schools are often criticized for not providing the training that would enable their students to join the workforce.

Even more extreme than differences in attainment between subgroups of Jews are differences between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Overall, Arab students start out with far less resources to succeed in school (Hemmings 2010). They live on average in far poorer communities. Their parents have much lower levels of education. As a result, they have fewer expectations and aspirations (Yair et al. 2003). Arab students most often attend separate Arabic language schools and account for only 27% of all public school students (Svirsky and Mor-Sommerfeld 2012). Within the Arab population subgroups exist with pars in educational and economic attainment. For example, an analysis of data on matriculation eligibility from the Ministry of Education for 2010 showed that among the diverse Arab subgroups, Bedouins were the lowest achieving population, followed by other Arabs, and Druze. Arab Christians, especially males, have the highest attainment, and Muslim females had higher attainment than males.

This research aimed to gather the opinions of administrators, educators, and students and to juxtapose those opinions with literature and national indicators about Israel in order to map out policies that will improve VET. We examined the opinions of a National Advisory Board, composed of administrators from MOITL and affiliated educational chains (AMAL and ORT), external NGOs, and the MoE. Both MoE and MOITL were invited to take part in the research, but only MOITL agreed. As a result, our methodology was to explore solely VET education and not TVET (technological vocational education training). Following the focus group meeting of the national advisory board, three schools were chosen for the case study. Our goal was to select schools whose administrations would be cooperative with the research and would have a large enough student body to be representative of diverse communities of Israeli society. We examined prior academic literature and policy papers and extracted national level indicators from MoE, MOITL, the Central Bureau of Statistics, and other reliable sources. Local advisory boards were created to examine each MOITL school, and Participatory Action Research was conducted with adults and youth affiliated with the MOITL system.

1. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND THE POLICY PROCESS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

1.1 Situation analysis: Methodology for National Level Research

The primary national advisory board consisted of three high-ranking representatives from MOITL. An initial meeting with this board was held on the 24th of October 2012 in which we discussed the main objectives of the research, schools that would participate, the need to conduct interviews with policy makers at the national level and with key figures within each local community who have professional ties with MOITL. Given regulations, we decided to forego interviews with students and to distribute anonymous questionnaires to them. Unfortunately, due to the military conflict in December, this ended up as our lone focus research group at the national level. Additional meetings were planned but cancelled. However, we were able to expand the national advisory research through one-on-one interviews. A section of this report features information gained primarily from a series of eight interviews with national level representatives, including six representatives of MOITL. We also interviewed two representatives of NGOs affiliated with vocational education: the administrator of vocational training for "The Working and Studying Youth" and the manager of the NGO "Other Course". Finally, we were able to interview one representative of MoE from the management office of science and technology. Interviewees remain anonymous throughout the report. All comments come from the interviewed representatives of four institutions: one at the national level and three at the local level. *All quotations are in italics* without reference to speaker. In the second section, we examine school affiliation and advance this methodology further with the opinions of local education staff.

1.1.1 The current situation concerning the education system

While Israel is made up of both Arab and Jewish citizens, its educational system remains almost completely divided between these two nationalities as well as by other ethnic divisions. At the secondary level in 2012, 1,417 schools were Jewish, 247 were Arab, 43 were Bedouin, and 27 were Druze. High school students in Israel may be tracked into several schooling types: general, vocational, technological, agricultural, and other types of education. General education system students are often further tracked at high school age depending on their abilities. As such, students will enrol in credit study programs for each subject (between 3-lowest and 5-highest), which determine the level of their studies. Some MoE schools offer special programs, such as the Mabar Program, for students with remedial needs. Another 257 schools in 2012 were categorized as special education schools. Likewise, Jewish schools are often split by religiosity. 860 schools in 2012 were governmental, 302 were government-religious, and 572 were Haredi (ultra-orthodox). As a matter of policy discussed further in this section, there is a growing ethos against creating social exclusion in schools based on students' track of studies. As such, MoE schools are not intended to separate students unless they have distinct languages of instruction or special learning or religious needs. Despite this policy, a number of schools fail to integrate students from different tracks. In 2010, of the 839 schools with 12th grade students not categorized as special education or Haredi, 265 had general students only, 143 had technological or vocational students only, and 432 had both (MoE Matriculation Data Set 2010).

The Israeli public education system is governed by two ministries. For the 2012-2013 school year MoE oversaw approximately 1,664 schools, and MOITL approximately 70 schools. An analysis of the MoE data for 2010 indicated that 4,031 classes were technological, 7,595 were general, and 43 were multi-track. All MOITL schools include vocational track students only. These students also complete

general studies, but often with less credit hours than the minimum 3 credits taught in MoE schools.

The MoE system is highly centralized and requires students to complete a high school matriculation examination known as the Bagrut (matriculation), which enables them to then pursue most forms of post-secondary education. The mandatory high school subjects for governmental and governmental-religious schools are Bible, Maths, English, Literature, History, Hebrew, and Citizenship. MoE students will earn generally high levels of credits, while students in VET often partake in fewer credits and do not seek matriculation. In order to pursue university study, a student must obtain a Bagrut in all the required courses. As a result, VET often does not allow for even the possibility of students seeking a post-secondary education and focuses instead on human resources development or preparing students for the transition directly into the labour market. The over-reliance on Bagrut education has been a growing source of contention for many teachers, who feel that standardized curricula do not support the needs of teachers or students. Attempts to advance the status of technological schools are often equated with increasing the percentage of students who are eligible for matriculation degrees. However, these efforts undermine the role of VET as a specialized field of education.

1.1.2 History of secondary school education and VET

The first Jewish vocational schools were operated by the organization ORT (an acronym in Russian for Obshestvo Remeslenofo zemledelcheskofo Truda, meaning The Society for Trades and Agricultural Labour). ORT began its first schools in Russia in 1880. ORT also started some of the first vocational schools in Israel in 1949. Initially 19 such schools were established in Israel. In 1948-1949 20% of students received VET (CBS 2012). VET continued to expand under the auspices of ORT and the general educational system, primarily in response to large numbers of high school dropouts (Sharon 1987). VET's growth also arose from a desire to provide social inclusion for the Mizrahim and other immigrants. VET allowed immigrants, who lacked the ability to compete in academic tracks, to develop skills that would enhance social mobility. It also provided the market with a skilled labour force. While the system sought to provide immigrants with the opportunity to learn vocational skills, it also, inadvertently or not, led to social exclusion.

In 1953 responsibility for vocational schools was transferred to MOITL. The original reason was financial (Vergon and Natan 2008). The Apprenticeship Law and the Youth Labour Law of 1953 permitted secondary students in MOITL to participate in assistantships in the labour force (Ashkanazi and Ballas 2010). MoE schools prohibited assistantships for their students. The system was again altered in 1961, when MoE received control over the majority of VET schools, while MOITL was only allowed to supervise a small number of schools. The concept of multi-track schools, a single school for both VET and general education, was imported from the UK in the 1960's. The concept of segregating VET students into their own school was seen as divisive. The policy pushed for social integration, at least among Jews, but VET-only schools encouraged social exclusion. Concerns also arose about tracking students into specific types of education at a young age and limiting their future opportunities. By creating an upper secondary education system with VET at the 10th grade, the Reform Law of 1969 effectively raised the age when students could start vocational school.

In the 1970s VET's name within MoE was changed to TVET. The primary aim of TVET appeared to be the incorporation of courses of study for advanced students into the technical curriculum, thereby reducing the stigma associated with vocational education. TVET was originally composed of four tracks. These tracks were later cancelled in the 1990s and 2000s. TVET enrolment peaked in the

1979-1980 school year when 53% of all high school students were signed up there. TVET then dramatically declined. In 2009-2010 enrolment decreased to 32%, its lowest point since 1959-1960. One reason for this decline may have been financial, as the budget for TVET was cut by 23% between 2003 and 2007. Another reason appears to be the inability of the state to remove the stigma historically associated with VET. The tracking of students into normative high school programs continues to be biased by demographic characteristics, rather than being entirely being meritocratic, as males and students with lower socio-economic status (and hence certain ethnic groups) are relegated to VET and other lower ranking school tracks (Resh 1998).

1.2 Vocational Education of MOITL

While MoE is seeking to improve the status of TVET, MOITL is left with the more daunting task of providing VET for MoE school dropouts. The term 'dropout' is used to describe school-aged youth who have left MoE schools. Estimates made by the authors on MoE, CBS and MOITL data from 2010 (which differ slightly) indicate approximately 7% of Israeli students will drop out of MoE schools, approximately 60% of those students will be reintegrated into MOITL schools. In 2010 approximately 30,000 school age youth (approximately 40% of dropouts) were not enrolled in a school (28,176 according to MoE). According to the Free Compulsory Education Law of 1979, all youth until the age of 18 must attend school. But in practice a large number of underage students choose not to attend school. MOITL school inclusion efforts have focused on reintegrating dropouts from other schools

MOITL offers two stages of VET: pre and post-army service. Both stages offer programs of study in a specific industry, such as mechanics, carpentry, and electrical engineering. Programs are also available for students with physical and mental handicaps. Other programs specialize in educating immigrants with or without prior high school education. MOITL also offers home schooling options for unemployed and for those seeking to advance their education.

A number of external public and private institutions have formed advisory councils to improve the state of VET in Israel, such as the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) and the Manufacturers' Association of Israel (MAI). These councils were concerned about the lack of skilled young people who could fulfil needed positions in engineering and other relevant fields (Natanzon and Levi 2010). MOITL has sought to improve its apprenticeship program by collaborating with local businesses. Traditionally vocational schools throughout the world receive support from sponsors, "private factories and industries trying to minimize training costs and increase profits" (Benavot 1983: 64). Apprentice programs helped students "making money" while attaining school certificates. MOITL schools are divided into three different types of schools:

1. Industrial schools that combine studies with practical training, such as in the IDF or a company.
2. Apprenticeship schools that focus on engaging students with part-time work outside of school
3. Work groups and courses for school aged dropouts. (Eisenberg 2006)

1.2.1 The institutional framework for vocational education

The Israeli government has expanded almost continuously, resulting in an overly bureaucratic state. The first Israeli government (1st Knesset) had 12 ministers. This number grew to 19 ministers in 1977 (9th Knesset), 26 ministers in 1984 (11th Knesset), and a record 36 ministers in 2009 (18th Knesset).

Miscommunication between the ministers and their affiliated staff has been criticized. MOITL, similar to other government ministries, has a hierarchy of administrators. The vocational schools are under the supervision of the Department of Youth Training, which is under the supervision of (in order from bottom to top) the Section of Vocational Training, the Division of Manpower Development, the Division of Employment and Human Capital, the Vice Chairman and Employment Commissioner, the Chairman, and the elected Government Minister. As a result of the political process, the minister and high-level staff of each government ministry change every few years. The focus and policies of the institution are affected by the party affiliation of the minister.

1.2.2 Situation in the country concerning the labour market

The labour market in Israel has experienced nearly continuous growth since the country's foundation. Numerous government policies promote the development of Israel's high-tech sector, and investment in scientific research and development has traditionally been very strong (OECD 2010). Likewise, the labour market has been very innovative at creating training and employment opportunities for the large number of immigrants arriving from a variety of countries. However, Israel also has high levels of non-employed individuals (21.2% for individuals aged 25 to 54 in 2011, according to the CBS). This number includes people who are out of work for longer than a year or doing housekeeping duties, students, those living off pensions, etc. Arab and Haredi communities have larger unemployment rates, which is due primarily to cultural differences in each community. Arab females often become stay-at-home moms, only 21% of Arab women work (IDI 2011). Haredi males often dedicate themselves to lifelong religious study, and only about 40% are employed (Bank of Israel 2011).

Follow-up research on VET alumni shows they have lower cognitive skills and earn less (Zusman and Tzor 2010). However, this same research shows VET may reduce early school leaving and VET students have similar employment rates, which is a major accomplishment. Vocational training is a means to improve the economic situation of lower socio-economic communities. Attempts have been made at the policy level to provide subsidies for businesses that provide apprenticeships and work opportunities for vocational students, but *contacts with businesses should be strengthened.... factories should partner with schools in developing the apprenticeship track in the form of a formal commitment with incentives*. Policies should mandate that factories incorporate structured training into their regimen *within a decade*. MOITL is in contact with various industries and can shape educational programs around industry needs. It is partnering with industries and the Manufacturers Association to open schools geared towards specific industries, such as those affiliated with the IAI (Israel Military Industries).

Specific populations such as Haredim and recent immigrants are especially susceptible to dependency on government funding (Hemmings 2010). MOITL has established programs for adults, such as the Mehalev Program (from Welfare to Work), and seeks to develop programs to support school-age children, hence reducing the burden of welfare assistance. However, social forces may undermine MOITL's policy initiatives with such marginalized populations. The Haredi community's reluctance to join the labour force has been viewed as a reaction to processes of modernity, such as emancipation, enlightenment, nationalism and laicisation of society (Katz 1963, inside Sapigal 2011). The orthodox conscience is based on traditionalism, continuity and stability, and views paid work strictly as a means of obtaining earthly necessities to survive. Religious study is an ideal in Judaism and forms the basis for the Jewish educational approach for boys. In practice this means an on-going process of religious studies from young until old age. The openness of the general Israeli society to

Western culture reinforced trends of radicalization within the Orthodox (Sapigal 2011), leading the Haredi community to become increasingly tied to conservative traditions. Also, there is a new interpretation of work itself. In the course of history the majority of Jews worked with only a small minority exempt to devote themselves to religious studies. The post-Holocaust era strengthened this estrangement from work along with the ideal of religious studies. As a result of reinterpreting the texts, religious Jews' lowered their expectations of what constituted a livelihood and idealized the concept of poverty. This, together with culture clashes with the general secular society dominating the work force, led to the Orthodox population's growing estrangement from the world of work (Stadler 2001 & 2003, inside Hakak 2004). With this in mind, it is possible to understand the uniqueness of a Haredi VET school. It goes against the mainstream Orthodox ideal of religious studies and disdain toward the world of work. The vast majority of the Haredi VET students are there because they have learning disabilities that make religious studies near impossible for them. Their families' low socio-economic status may also account for their enrolment in this type of school. Haredi VET schools are a refuge for dropout teens from the ultra-orthodox sector.

On the other end of the social exclusion continuum, there exist numerous Arab populations, such as Bedouins, Muslim citizens, Muslim non-citizens, Druze, Christians, and Arab women in general. The Arab workers are highly segregated both in terms of their fields of occupation and the locations where they live and find work. As a result, Israel functions with at least two labour markets, one Arab and one Jewish, and with the additional segregation that takes place within each of these markets. Arabs often try to find jobs in the Jewish dominated market, which has far more resources. However, they encounter discrimination both in terms of the jobs that they are accepted for and the wages that they receive (Margalioth 2004: pp. 846-7). The disparate employment scenario between Arab and non-Arab populations is apparent nation-wide, as Arabs work predominantly in trades with low social prestige. "The average monthly income of an Arab worker is 5,400 NIS (about 1450 USD), compared to 7,900 NIS (about 2125 USD) for a Jewish worker, and the average hourly wage of an Arab worker is 31.5 NIS, compared to 45.2 NIS for a Jewish worker" (Habib et al. 2010: 28). Arab populations also have lower employment rates than most Jewish ones. This effect has been traced to differences in human capital, geographical location, and cultural trends. For example, the Arab population often lacks native Hebrew language proficiency. The restrictions on women limit their ability to take on roles that extend beyond the home, which further reduces the earning power of communities. As a result of recent trends, traditional vocational trades have been replaced with high-tech ones requiring a higher level of training. As a result of the intifada uprisings over the past two decades, many employers stopped giving work preference to Arabs. Migrant workers from the occupied territories (Judea, Samaria and Gaza) were shut out of the labour force almost entirely. Instead, a diverse labour force of temporary visa workers imported primarily from East Asia now competes with less educated Arab workers for manual labour jobs (Habib et al. 2010: pp. 3). The discrimination against Arabs takes on numerous forms, some more subtle than others. As a result of their exclusion in the labour market, education is not always seen as a realistic means for improving one's status.

1.3 The policy process and the policy debate

In interviews with national figures we identified four main themes of government policy processes in relation to VET: A) Coordination between government organizations; B) Course and Program Development; C) Inclusion of the Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) community in vocational education; D) Inclusion of the Arab community in vocational education. We have broken down these issues into specific policy discussion points.

A) <u>**Coordination between government organizations**</u>

We identified 3 main forms of coordination: 1) with the Knesset (parliament) as a whole, 2) between MOITL and MoE, and 3) with other state institutions: the IDF (the military), universities, etc.

While coordination within MOITL and between MOITL and external organizations was highly praised, coordination between government organizations was seen as an area that could use improvement. Policies for the administration of MoE and MOITL are coordinated almost entirely separately. Despite extensive research, a number of complications have impeded the progress of these committees with barriers from schools and teacher unions (Eisenberg 2006). A number of committees have been set up that seek to improve math and science education, such as The Priess Committee and The Harari Commission. In regards to the latter specifically, the committee succeeded very little in implementing policy changes (Karmi 2004). *In the case of a joint project, we meet and work together but don't always collaborate to achieve the desired results. The state does not always have an overall vision of what it wants to accomplish. Government departments are riddled with too much bureaucracy. Additionally, there is a constant turnover of ministers every few years.* Respondents also pointed to the lack of a comprehensive agenda for vocational schools: *What was the overall plan, including the budget, vision, appropriate legislation?* The country is perceived as lacking a long-term vision *about where (it) needs to be or is going to be in another 10 years*. The official went on to describe the lack of collaboration at the government level that would create such a vision: *Israel does not have a round table, meaning that it lacks a real forum encompassing the state, industry and workers, because each actor has a different vision of what Israel will look like in 10 years. Each one imagines a different solution and there is no uniformity or cooperation (between the sectors).* Another official highlighted the ideal of an egalitarian society, where vocational professions would be endowed with equal stature and income: *The foundation starts with believing that society can be equal and from this we can (proceed) to work together.* Another official expressed similar sentiments: *(The country) needs to develop a combination of programs that change the world of work itself, such that the working classes will make a decent living and therefore will attest that there are equal rights in society.*

Rather than pinning the blame on schools, respondents' comments mostly pointed upwards at the Knesset and other agencies of the government, whom they feel have not instituted the framework that would make companies provide assistantships to vocational students. It is very difficult to get students assistantship opportunities in factories, and MOITL officials want the government to follow the European model which promotes social partnerships between the schools and industries. The Meister Program in Germany was cited as an ideal example of the integration of vocational education and businesses. The same complaints levelled against the government as a whole were also directed at MoE. *The vision and strategy is that both offices will be working together and share a common perception about the Israeli market as a whole, something which doesn't exist today.* The two organizations are often perceived to be competing rather than cooperating with one another, even though representatives from both organizations recognize that cooperation would be extremely beneficial to the students. According to one MOITL official, due to budget policies, few students are referred from MoE to MOITL schools. Because schools are funded based on enrolment numbers, schools risk funding losses if they direct their students elsewhere. In essence, the schools are *holding the children hostage*. This identical quote was also made in the State Comptroller's report (Yearly report 61B 2010). The report describes the lack of cooperation between the two offices as severely dysfunctional. It advises the government to reconsider its decision in 1989 to move the youth training

department from MOITL to MoE. Outside contracted school systems, such as Amal and ORT, often play the go-between between MoE and MOITL, as they operate schools within both frameworks.

Another government agency with a vested interest in VET is the IDF. Since military enlistment immediately after secondary school is mandatory for most citizens, males and females, with the exclusion of Arabs and the ultra-orthodox, preparation for the army is a major theme within school. A strong argument can be made that *individuals who participate in IDF professional training that uses the vocation they learned in school will experience both social and professional advantages* (when moving into the workforce). At the same time, the IDF has a high demand for VET graduates in the army since it benefits from their vocational skills (Tsadok 2009). MOITL works in collaboration with the IDF to encourage VET students to go into technical programs in the army. *Someone who works in his vocation in the army can integrate better into the job market.* The final semi-government agency that could potentially play a role in VET involvement is universities. National policy makers spoke of the need to coordinate vocational training efforts with the 7 national universities in Israel. This can be done in two ways, either by incorporating vocational topics into teacher training programs or by offering vocational training students the opportunity to become teachers. At the moment VET administrators are upset with this progress.

B) Course and Program Development
Interviewees agreed that VET leaves room for improvement. Six methods of development were identified: 1) curriculum development, 2) creating higher-ranking VET programs, 3) increasing financing for VET programs, 4) developing more concrete assistantship programs, 5) creating alternatives to matriculation and occupational prestige for VET, and 6) reforming VET consistent with the needs of modern youth and the labour market.

1) Curriculum Development: Curricula development is completed in cooperation with members of the Department of Pedagogy who are considered experts on content. It is achieved by monitoring the conduct of institutions and students led by the MOITL research department and by working with the Department of Examinations. Inspection is conducted on all aspects of regulation and includes experts on VET content in the field of pedagogical and professional training. The inspection unit handles schools across the entire nation. It develops courses according to the needs of the market. For example, *computers and car mechanics are two new courses that were developed in recent years due to demand (based on labour needs).* The unit receives statistics from the industry union, CBS, and the IDF and analyses market needs. Members sit with the principal of each school to develop a list of courses appropriate for each school. They determine which courses are in high demand (car mechanics, management, etc.) and try to avoid offering courses in low demand. As one interviewee said: *The government should look into the vocations that are demanded in Israel. Today there is no data set or something similar that they can use in order to set up courses of study to teach.* Instead, decisions are made based on personal feeling, according to a local examination of different needs.

2) Creating higher-ranking VET programs: Literature indicates that VET students Higher-ranking VET programs are definitely lacking in MOITL. Vocational frameworks have been designed for the weakest students. Respondents highlighted that the workshops can be upgraded and adapted to higher levels. *What stops the progress of VET for high-ranking students? Inter-office politics and the culture of low expectations for vocational education- there are almost no parents who want their child to go to a vocational school, only if there is no other choice.* In the arena of high tech education that is conducted within the TVET programs of MoE, this problem of attracting students and family support does not exist, as there is a growing value and high-level prestige associated with the high tech

market. But VET schools do not provide the level of training that would lead to a career in informational technology, computer programming, and other high tech fields.

3) Increasing financing for VET Programs: VET students often have special needs, which are related to their status as dropouts, and need more financial resources, as they require smaller classes, psychological counselling and social services. Finally, since vocational fields often rely on special laboratories, additional money is needed to provide schools with necessary equipment for training.

4) Developing more concrete assistantship programs: Assistantship programs were highlighted as an important part of the VET system. Business entrepreneurship programs target youth engaged in apprenticeships provide them with the necessary education and direct their experience in the working world. The interaction of students with a mentor in the workplaces creates a scenario of *students who want to be like him (*their mentor*). If I want to be like him, I have to do these (*the following*) things.* Another issue that arose during discussion of the assistantship programs was ways to prevent the exploitation of interns and profiteering. Because of poor employment conditions, students in certain apprenticeship programs may not be receiving the job skills they need. Exploitation was especially feared in dealing with the integration of Haredi students: *MOITL potentially can connect the Haredi to the working world, but which working world will it connect them to? Would it just expose them to exploitation or possibly a world of low-end work opportunities?*

5) Creating alternatives to matriculation and value for VET: Many officials pointed out the importance of VET students gaining general knowledge, not just vocational knowledge. However, these officials highlighted that learning, not matriculation, is the main goal. They generally criticized the academic orientation of MoE, suggesting that it sidelines many students. This attitude was expressed repeatedly: *Less than 50% finish with matriculation, so realistically it is not suitable for everyone.* Other comments included: *Not every student needs to get involved in academia,* and *society cannot be based on this goal of receiving a high school diploma. It does not guarantee success... What is the point of having a factory worker who has a high school diploma?* MOITL respondents further critiqued the matriculation system: *Despite this, almost every student prepares themselves for academia... and this creates frustration.* On the other hand, they are extremely proud of the graduation certificates that they offer. *About 65% are eligible for (graduation) certificates - a higher number than the eligible graduates in the Ministry of Education.* However, these certificates do not confer a high status for these students in terms of their pursuing continued studies or entering the workforce, since the market does not place them at the same level as matriculated students.

6) Reforming VET consistent with the needs of modern youth and the labour market: While VET does show signs of success, it also has its share of frustration: *Many grandiose programs are developed but end up failing.* One reason cited for this is a course's lack of relevance to the market*: It is important that studies are applicable to market needs.* In line with this, MOITL should remove certain vocations that are "archaic" and no longer applicable. Another reason for some schools' lack of progress is the large concentration of students who require extra support for learning as well as for moral, psychological, economic, motivational, behavioural, and various other needs. *Schools (with weak systems of support) lead to students expressing frustration and animosity towards society.* MOITL schools are able to provide extra support and attention for these students, providing them with a course of study that caters to their needs. However, the fact that MOITL schools lack a mix of students at different levels of education may create a *hanging out in the schoolyard effect*, whereby low-ranking students reduce each other's expectations. By contrast, MoE schools have an ethos of encompassing students at different levels of learning.

C) Inclusion of Haredi (Ultra-Orthodox) community in vocational education

Four of the eight interviewees mentioned the issue of inclusion for the Haredi community. Those who did speak about the Haredi community were often directly involved in programs for this community. VET for Haredim is very new: *Five years ago (appr. 2008) a group of Rabbis approached (them) regarding a group of Haredi youth who drop out of... Yeshivas. Very few take part in vocational education.* There are about 10-20 schools with Haredi students (combined in MOITL and MoE) with a total of about 1000 pupils. Their vision was: *Torah and Work...combing religious studies together with core subjects and vocational or technological training.* However, VET for the Haredi community carries a lot of stigma: (They) *bring shame on their families. Removing those students from their communities and placing them into boarding schools is perceived as a plausible solution by their families.* All four Haredi VET schools operated by MOITL also include a boarding school. The only exception is one mixed school – a General School that has a few classes for Haredi students. We highlight three policy considerations: 1) Working alongside faith-based education, 2) Creating Integration in the Labour Market, and 3) Creating schools.

1) Working alongside faith-based education: The Haredi world does not easily acquiesce to permit VET. The community is extremely suspicious of the secular world. The Yeshiva (for boys) and Ulpana (for girls) play a very strong function in the community, and they are very reluctant to give up on students. They receive funding similar to other state schools, but have much greater liberty to function independently so as to permit faith-based education. However, not all of the Haredi students can succeed in the Yeshivas. (It is) *important to give (them) a profession, as faith teachings are not suitable for all of them.* If they do leave the Yeshiva though, then they are entering a world where they will lack competitive skills other students their age have acquired, as they lack a background in the core subjects that most other students have studied. (Haredi VET must) *take into account their need for religious studies and also supplementing core subjects* (mainly Math and English) *due to their low level upon entrance into the MOITL system.* The course of instruction though still must adhere to levels of faith-based education that it will be acceptable for community support. Rabbis play the central figure in faith-based education, and serve an important role in the community. It is very difficult getting their cooperation, which VET schools very much need. Often they merely aspire that the rabbis will stay quiet about VET and not demonize it. (The students) *face social hardship... because of their difficulties with... religious studies.*

2) Integrating into the Labour Market: One of the main issues in Israel is the inclusion of Haredi communities into the labour market, as highlighted by the Mehalev welfare-to-work program (Hemmings 2010). *Exclusion of Haredim from the labour market is a modern phenomenon in Israel that did not exist in the Diaspora.* There is a growing sense that it is necessary for the Haredi community in part to integrate, so as to provide for itself. However, the government is trying to integrate a community that fears integration. One form of integration, recruitment to the IDF, the community does not support, and the issue is extremely controversial. Other forms of integration, such as working in factories alongside seculars, may impose conditions that are not suitable for the student's moral code. Being (self) excluded from the army appears to lead to social exclusion later. As a result of many exclusionary practices, it is very difficult for them to be accepted for work: (*It is*) *difficult to find apprenticeships for the Haredi students and as a result...(we are) training in house (school training facilities).* NGOs often help with VET by referring students and providing assistance for matriculation exams and other services.

3) Creating schools: All VET schools have difficulties finding competent professionals who are trained as teachers. This was conveyed as the biggest difficulty for Haredi schools: *In order to work in a Haredi school (one) needs to be Haredi... and it is very difficult to find Haredi teachers who are trained to teach science and technology.* Furthermore, the school is often referred students with special needs, and it needs to develop programs that are suitable: *Many of the Haredi students in MOITL suffer from learning difficulties.* They try to provide psychological and other social services, but sometimes funding isn't enough.

D) <u>Inclusion of the Arab community in vocational education</u>

Five of the eight interviewees mentioned the Arab population. VET is taught in Hebrew or Arabic in different schools, hence maintaining certain religious-ethnic homogeneities. There was a great deal of talk about the Bedouin population, who usually have a lower status. Likewise, there was mention of the Druze, who are a distinct population, most of which having closer affinity to Israeli institutions. The Christian population was rarely mentioned, although it is the majority population of the school that participated in our research. Finally, mention of the Arab population was usually equated with the Sunni Muslim majority. Some discussion was made about the issue of integrating schools with Jews and Arabs, but it does not appear that VET is seriously considered as a means of integration, as the populations at hand already represent a community with special needs.

VET is viewed as a means to reducing discrimination. Respondents discussed VET as a means to promoting *an egalitarian society*: *There needs to be a combination of programs that aim to change the world of work itself, such that the working classes will make a decent living, and therefore will testify that there are equal rights in society.* Interviewees called for a more egalitarian society that would include raises for vocational professions would benefit the Arab populations who have higher occupation rates in vocational fields. VET serves as a tool for social inclusion by integrating the Arab community into the labour force, they suggested. While VET schools are relatively segregated, as all Israeli schools are due to the language of study, the VET administrators who spoke of the Arab community's integration in the labour force welcomed them: *Anyone who wants to learn is invited, we don't denigrate any minority or sector, everyone is invited to learn. There isn't a sectarian perspective, anyone who wants to be included will be received with blessings, and this is according to the needs of the employers. Every population that is interested* (we) *will be happy to include, and this is in the condition that the population is ready to integrate according to the needs of the businesses.* However, it is recognized that the standards have to be adapted to suit each minority, and MOITL officials indicated that their ministry provided a superior ability to design a larger variety of programs for such a purpose.

Many of the same problems that the Haredi community has, also apply to the Arab community. They have a similar problem of finding teachers, which appears to be universal among all sectors. Likewise, they have difficulty in the labour market, as they often feel excluded or exclude themselves by living in Arab communities. The largest contrast between the two communities is participation rates. The participation of the Arab sector accounts for about 40% of MOITL students, while this population only accounts for about 20% of the population. One reason for this overrepresentation appears to be a higher valuation of VET in Arab society**:** *Unlike the majority of society who sees the VET training in a negative perspective, the Arab sector sees VET training very positively and the demand is high. For teenagers, ironically in the Arab sector, vocational awareness is much higher than in other sectors.*

One major reason is family support, which does not usually exist in Haredi and other Jewish families: *This indicates that among this sector there is a realization that first a child needs a profession.*

2. VET PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL COHESION AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

2.1 Methodology of the Local Level Research

The local level research was divided into three phases: teacher questionnaires, educator questionnaires, and student questionnaires. We present the results of our analysis on each of these parts of the research separately. We then combine the results, examining both the differences between schools at the student and educator level, and comparing the different levels of analysis (as students, local educators, and national policy makers). We refer to each of the schools as the Arab school, the Haredi school, and the General school.

Teacher Questionnaires

The teacher surveys were distributed on several occasions during school visits. We encountered difficulties in receiving a large sample of teachers from all of the schools, which had to do both with the small size of the staff and that many teachers were able to fill out the survey on their free time, rather than during a single sitting. In total 30 teachers from all three schools completed a teacher survey: three from the Haredi school, seven from the Arab school, and 20 from the General school. As a result of the low sample size, it was decided not to analyse the differences in means between schools. Instead the teacher survey is analysed according to the standard deviation of responses and global mean. We wanted to look at which questions the teachers across all the schools were in agreement about, and about which questions the teachers differed.

Educator Interviews

More revealing than the teacher questionnaires were the interviews that we conducted with school educators. In total we conducted 17 interviews at the local level between November 2012 and February 2013. We conducted those interviews with teachers and other staff at various levels, such as secretaries and principals. At the General School, we interviewed the principal, two employment coordinators, the 11th grade coordinator, the Coordinator of Cooperation with Industry, and conducted two focus groups. At the Arab school we interviewed the principal, two psychological advisors, a secretary, an Educational Advisor, and a community worker. At the Haredi school we interviewed the principal, three classroom educators, the Administrator of Haredi Education, and the Public relations administrator. Rather than repeating the location of the respondent, we have underlined quotations as follows: a single line represents the General school, a double line represents the Arab school, and a strong underline represents the Haredi school. All interviews were conducted in Hebrew and translated into English.

Student Questionnaires:

The student questionnaires were distributed between December 2012 and January 2013. These questionnaires were translated into Hebrew and Arabic. Our research team travelled to each school and distributed the survey to the classes when possible. On certain occasions the school staff

distributed the surveys to classes that weren't available, and we collected them at a later date. Many of the students required help filling out the survey, either due to lack of motivation or actual learning disabilities. Missing data was an issue with several questions in which respondents appear to have not answered questions that were not relevant. This issue was especially apparent in questions about plans for the future and paid work. Certain students did not participate, because they didn't feel like it, others completed partial surveys. Despite these difficulties, our research team and the school staff went to great lengths to encourage full participation. We explained to the students about who we are and why we are conducting the research. We sat with each student who was having problems and helped him or her fill out the survey.

<For further information see Appendix Section 1: Statistical Analysis Details>

2.1.2 Participatory Action Research in a Microcosmic System
Our research team sought to make this research as dynamic as possible. We tried to establish a network of ideas, in which one idea lead to the next. Due to the fact that each case study represents a very different community, we tried to be open to its uniqueness. We also left our qualitative research flexible to conform to the unique culture that we were encountering. We had to adapt the research questions to suit each community. At times, we served as an outlet for grievances by staff, such as their disapproval with an extra hour of working hours. At other times, we were aware of clear political motivations, for example when discussing collaboration with MoE.

2.2 Situation analysis (in the case study areas)
Many institutions and organisations interact with MOITL schools at a local level. Over 20 were mentioned in the interviews. Our list included numerous employers who provide assistantships to the students, private and corporate, service-oriented and factory-oriented. Local and national government are closely tied to the school, as the principals maintain close ties with city hall, police, and various national administrative offices, such as the Ministry of Welfare and MOITL. Unions were also discussed often, such as The Histadrut (The Labour union), The Trade Union, The Industry Union, and The Manufacturer's Association. There also exist certain partnerships of vocational schools with trade unions. Some schools are integrated with factories, and MOITL officials we spoke to hope to see more projects that expand such social partners. Several NGOs were discussed on numerous occasions, The Working and Studying Youth and the Macro Institute were highlighted. The Working and Studying Youth organizes evening classes and brings counsellors to the vocational schools. The Macro Institute holds conferences with vocational education experts to promote policies. The IDF was only mentioned in Jewish schools, which falls in line with enlistment requirements. The Haredi collaboration with the IDF is limited.

2.2.1 Description of the Three Schools
1) Ort Adivi (hereinafter the General School) is situated in Ashkelon, which is a medium size city with a population of a little over 100,000. It has a mixture of immigrants from different backgrounds, and nearly a quarter of the population immigrated from the FSU. Many of the students are second-generation migrants. Inclusion of immigrants in Israeli society is a major challenge and goal for the educational system, and we sought to learn about social mobility for recent immigrants. 9% of the students in our sample were born abroad, while approximately 41% have one or both parents who were born abroad with about 20% coming from the FSU. The school was established in 1962. Currently there are about 70 teachers and 540 students enrolled in 10th to 12th grades. The school is

defined as an industrial school and the subjects currently available are**:** Autotronics, machinery, electronics, hair-design, accounting, cooking, and office administration. 11th and 12th grades have two or three days of work and attend school the rest of the week. Many of the students come with socio-economic difficulties and had dropped out from their previous schools (about 70%), causing a scenario that our students are lacking self-confidence. Many have a history of welfare, single-family parents (40% of our students are with a single parent), and criminal problems.

2) The Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim (hereinafter the Haredi School) is a unique Jewish religious institution, combining vocational training with religion studies, located in the village of Kfar Zetim. It offers a variety of vocational choices – electronics, carpentry and computers and networks. It is also a boarding school with a dormitory where students live. The students are involved in the on-going maintenance of the school – they assist with construction of the buildings, with gardening and livestock, which really gets them (the students) closer to the institution. This school presents a unique example where VET meets religious education. The ways that the Yeshiva of Kfar Zetim manages to resolve the supposed conflict between fulfilling needs of the labour market and religious doctrine made it a desirable case study on how these two worlds mutually coexist. The students come from a community that is also an immigrant society and has a mix of different groups: Ashkenazi, Sephardic, Misnagdim, Chassidic, etc. Their communities situated around the country, but the majority is coming from the cities. The students arrived to the school as they were not suitable for Haredi education and the nature of religious studies… out of a desire to help disadvantaged youth. The school is small with approximately 90 students and is new as well. It was established in 2000 but only in 2010 was inserted under MOITL supervision. While secondary schools are free of charge in Israel, boarding cost is usually not covered by the state. Some of the students who are under government responsibility (youth welfare) are exempt, but the rest have tuition of 1350 shekels a month (appr. 350 dollars) for the boarding costs, but the actual collection is in accordance with parents' ability. A student will not be rejected from school because of a tuition issue. The current daily vocational school is funded by the ministry. (We) have no funding for construction - buildings (are done) ourselves. The funding sources (are from) tuition, welfare funding for a small part of the students, MOITL helps partially for the school's budget - i.e. various costs that are not related to school itself, and donations. In order to be balanced and without construction costs (we) raise donations at an amount of about half a million shekels.

3) AMAL Nazareth (hereinafter the Arab School) is located in a town traditionally with a majority Christian population, a tendency that had changed after 1948 and now is consisted of about 2/3 Muslim and 1/3 Christian. The city was the centre for religious tension between Christian and Muslim before the year 2000 (known as "mosque of dispute"), and also for the October 2000 events. The student body is mixed between Arabs of Christian and Muslim descent. The school was founded in 1968. In the auspices of the Apprenticeship Act, it was used to create vocational trainers. Initially the school took students that would work throughout the week and attend school one day a week. At this time it was under the management of the organization the Working and Studying Youth. In 1976 the school was put under the administration of the Amal network, and it ceased to be a school for trainers. There are about 45 teachers and around 450 students divided between 9th to 12th grades. 9th and 10th graders attend classes' every day, while older students attend three days of study and three days of work. 11th grade students learn in the first half of the week and work the other half, 12th grade students are learning in the second half of the week and working in the first half. The school receives students from Nazareth and the villages surrounding it. The subjects currently available are**:** Maintaining PCs, Cooking, Auto mechanics, Autotronics, and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning. By definition the

school is for both sexes, but in practice the last two years they do not have girls. Another school in the region that caters to girls has been providing competition: <u>There is some interest (from girls) but parents do not allow them</u> *(to attend).*

2.2.2 Skills development system (Results of the teacher survey)

Due to the small number of teacher questionnaires, our method was to look at the standard deviation and the global mean, rather than to compare results by school. It should also be considered that the General School represents two-thirds of the sample, while the Haredi School represents only one-tenth. However, our research oversampled from the Haredi and Arab minorities, and hence the results of the teacher survey do more closely represent the actual distribution of the population in society. Most of the results are based on 5-point scales. A number of bivariate (yes or no) questions were also asked. Since most of the questions fell into one of these two types of scales, we analysed the questions based on their scale.

In regards to the yes or no questions, we found that there was unanimous agreement on certain questions. There was absolutely no variance in the following variables (all of the teachers said yes): equal opportunities in admission for female students, school provides work experience for students from poor families and provides work experience for students from other ethnic minorities. Furthermore, the teachers were in near unanimous agreement (with the exception of one teacher saying no) on the following variables: equal opportunities in admission for students from poor families, equal opportunities in admission for students from other ethnic minorities, school provides work experience for students with special needs, equal opportunities in admission for students from other ethnic minorities, and school provides career guidance opportunities to students. Interestingly all of the questions that teachers agreed upon were questions that they said "Yes" to. However, this is not surprising, considering that all such questions were phrased with a positive response bias, and teachers throughout the survey were less critical than they were positive about the school's performance.

In regards to those questions that the teachers disagreed upon, we found a number of negative opinions that many teachers have about their schools. The teacher disagreement can be analysed both as the number who said No and the variance of responses, but the two measures only serve to show how many respondents did not answer the question. For example, more than any other question the teachers do not believe that their schools attract students from ethnic minorities (SD=.50, Yes=38%). The reason that the standard deviation is not lower is simply that many teachers left this question blank. This is not surprising, considering that each of the schools represents a somewhat segregated community to begin with. However, it is concerning when we look at the context of schools, which should be doing more to include marginal ethnic groups in their communities, such as Ethiopians in the case of the General School, Mizrahim in the case of the Haredi School, and Druze in the case of the Arab School. Furthermore, the interpretation of this ethnic minority question could also be interpreted in regards to Jews and Arabs, an integration that is almost completely absent. We also found similar disagreements on how well the schools attract students: from less privileged social backgrounds (SD=.51, Yes=44%), students with disabilities (SD=.51, Yes=46%), boys more than girls (SD=.51, Yes=46%), and students from poor families (SD=.51, Yes=52%). Regarding gender, we found that the Arab and Haredi schools were the only ones to answer No. In regards to the remainder of the questions no clear differences were found by school. It seems that teachers have mixed opinions about what constitutes as a disability, being poor, or being privileged.

<See Table 1: Yes/No Educator Questions with Little or No Variance>

< See Table 2: Yes/No Educator Questions with High Variance>

Regarding the Likert scale questions we expected that those questions that teachers agree about will have a high mean and those that they disagree about will have a low mean. In general, as a mathematical trend this hypothesis held in regards to the variables with lowest variance. The teachers across schools agreed and their assessments were high for the school maintaining vocational enrolments, the respect of students for the school, the rating of consultation with parents, the school providing a welcoming environment for all students, and the school recognizing and valuing students' achievements. Once again, we notice that teachers tended to agree on the positive aspects of the school. Positive agreement was also relatively high for the adequacy of equipment, adequacy of buildings, dealing with learning difficulties by making teacher time available, and linking the vocational curriculum to local labour market needs. However, the one variable that defeated this rule of positive agreement was job placement for students from ethnic minorities and other social groups (SD=.83, Mean=.84). As previously seen, there is also disagreement on how well the school attracts students from other ethnic groups, but there was not disagreement about whether the school provides equal opportunities for such students. It appears that integration is somewhat lacking in the schools, despite claims by various levels of officials that there is no ethnic bias. The teachers furthermore notice that while the school in theory will cater to minorities, they lack the infrastructure that will provide extra support.

In regards to the questions with high variance, we found that the majority of such questions showed the tendency of regression towards the mean. Bullying is a problem that many respondents claimed doesn't exist. It was even written as an open response to the question <u>there is no bullying, good solid discipline</u>.[1] However, we are sceptical from our visits to the schools, in which shouting and pushing were witnessed, that bullying never takes place. The disagreement between the teachers about the extent of bullying is perhaps indicative of two methods for dealing with it: ignore it or confront it. As the Haredi school teacher's comments indicate, that school may be doing a better job of confronting bullying. Another worrisome finding regards job placement for disabled students. While there was a somewhat high level of missing data and slight disagreement, the teachers overall believe that this placement does not exist. On the other hand, they do have a higher assessment that the school offers disabled students additional teaching support, although the global average for this variable is only slightly above the middle point. The teachers disagreed most on support for students with learning difficulties, promoting social inclusion through school days open to the community, and promoting social inclusion through support for disadvantaged students. While results for each of these questions were positive overall, some of the teachers did not agree. The problem behaviours of the students (discipline, absenteeism, and motivation) were also disagreed upon.

<See Table 3: 5-Point Likert Scale Questions with Low Variance>

<See Table 4: 5-Point Likert Scale Questions with High Variance>

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[1] As mentioned above, the bold underline refers to a quotation from a Haredi educator. This statement comes from the questionnaire and not the interviews. Please see the appendix for a further discussion of the local interviews.

2.3 PAR research process and research findings

We discuss our PAR research findings in two separate sections based on method. First we discuss the results of the interviews with local informants, then the results of the student questionnaires.

2.3.1 Interviews with local level informants

Four themes were analysed from the 17 local level interviews that were in accordance with the research tasks: Selection and Tracking; B. Dropouts; C. Patterns of Education; D. Transition to Work.

A. **Selection and tracking**

Within the subject of selection and tracking we identified 3 main issues that were brought up by the local advisory boards: (1) Placement into specific vocational fields; (2) Knowing the students' background and helping them with problems; (3) Providing special services.

B. **Drop-outs**

Dropouts are a tricky subject when discussing MOITL schools. Indeed the term VET dropouts is a tautological oxymoron, since all of VET students attend MOITL schools, and all MOITL students are classified as dropouts, since they dropped out of MoE. As a result, the discussion of dropouts dealt with reactive and proactive definitions of the word. In regards to the reactive definitions, the school is integrating dropouts, motivating them, and helping them get back on track with their studies. In regards to the proactive definitions, the school is dealing with those who are trying to dropout and being delinquent.

C. **Patterns of education, apprenticeship systems and social inclusion**

We identified two main concepts for the patterns of education for social inclusion: (1) Helping students with assistantships; (2) Providing learning resources (teachers, tools, and courses).

D. **Transition from education to work**

Graduating from a VET school does not guarantee a job as it would in many European countries where the student can continue working in the company that he received an assistantship. On the other hand most Israeli students must go to the army, and this delays their ability to transition directly from the school to the labour market. Furthermore, the schools lack a strong reputation in the market, such that many companies would prefer a student with a matriculation certificate, even if that student lacks experience in the labour market. We identified two main themes of transitions to the work place: enabling transitions and providing opportunities.

< See Appendix section 2.1 Discussion of Interviews with local level informants for a detailed discussion of the local level findings>

2.3.2 Discussion of Quantitative Results from the Student Questionnaires

The student survey provided us with many insights about group differences in perceptions of VET. As discussed in the methodology, we only display results that were statistically significant at $p<.05$, but we also discuss other results that were not significant when relevant to the topic. All dependent variables were based on 5-point Likert scales, unless otherwise noted, which were treated as continuous variables. Cross tabulations were analysed through the Pearson Correlation of T-Tests and

F-Ratios. This discussion covers 5 major themes: A) Choice, B) Experience, C) Motivation, D) School Evaluation, and E) Expectations.

A) Choice

There are two elements of choice that were explored: choosing to attend VET education in general and choosing to attend the specific school that they currently attend. According to our interviews, VET students do not have many other choices when electing to attend VET or their specific school. However, we were surprised to find that significant differences in these choices do exist. These findings should be considered within the context of students' situation. They have chosen VET and their specific school for numerous reasons: they were not enjoying their previous school, they could not compete at their previous school, they want to re-enter the educational system after dropping out, and others. In this sense choice is a reflexive process by which the students interpret the reasons that they ended up in VET and their current school and not necessarily proactive decisions to pursue their current course of study. We explored various reasons for choosing VET, and discovered that reasons such as obtaining a prestigious profession (4.36), earn more money in future (4.52), and increasing chances to get a job (4.39) were all very high, but as a result showed no group differences.

The reason that we assume students will attend VET is to learn a useful trade and hence skills to support their career. Our hypothesis was that students who come from communities that favour vocational occupations would be more likely to choose VET. In other words, we expected that the Arab School would feel it is more important to choose VET for career development, while Haredi students would feel it is less. However, our findings indicated the opposite. The Haredi students gave the highest ratings for VET to learn skills to support their career (4.53), while the Arab students gave the lowest ratings (3.71). The General School as well gave career support lower importance (3.96). One reason for these differences may be that the Arab population is frustrated with its opportunities for success, and the General population feels that it would be supporting its career more if it studied in the regular education system. We further hypothesized that these group differences would be based on the socio-economic status of the student, i.e. that students who have unemployed parents would realize the importance of VET for providing career skills. The difference in importance for this variable though was not significantly related on any combination of whether either, both, or neither parent or is employed. We also considered that the educational experience of the parents might influence these differences. While university studies of either parent were not significant, if one's mother attended some form of higher education (either university or other form of higher education, which accounted for 36% of respondents), then the student gave greater important to VET for career skills.

We next looked at whether one's family's expectations were driving the student's decisions for VET. Likewise, we expected that students from the Arab school would give higher importance to this reason, as it was highlighted in our interviews that Arab families were more supportive than Jewish ones. This hypothesis proved correct. Arab students gave higher importance to family expectations (3.80) than Haredi students (3.02) and General students (2.61). This finding was also very significant (p<.01). The fact that Haredi students gave higher importance to family expectations than General students may have to do with the special consideration given to these specific students for whom Yeshiva study was no longer an option, and the opportunity for them to remain in some sort of Haredi community environment rather than ending up on the street. The General students on the other hand appear to have chosen the school because it was the best decision for them personally, but their family would have preferred that they chose another course of study. This lower importance of family

expectations in both Jewish schools appears to be due to the low status associated in Jewish culture with vocational education and the high status that it has in Arab culture, which conforms with their educators' comments.

We also considered whether socio-economic status had an effect on family influence. We found that students whose father is unemployed placed less importance on family expectations (2.61), while students whose mother is unemployed placed more importance (3.58). If both parents work then family expectations were lower (2.75), while if neither parent work family expectations were higher (3.30). This reversal of family expectations is extremely interesting, and it may indicate that families where the father is unemployed have higher expectations of the student to attend a better school. It may also indicate that in families where the father is unemployed there are less expectations for the student to attend school at all, and expectations for them to drop out and work. It is important to note that 3% of the students claimed to not live with their families, 16% of those who do marked that they live with their mother and 3% with their father. We controlled for these students and examined the results further, and the results remained extremely significant. Students whose father is unemployed placed less importance on family expectations (3.16), while students whose mother is unemployed placed more importance (3.65). If both parents work family expectations were lower (2.86), while if neither parent work family expectations were higher (3.35). Furthermore, there was concern over the use of a control for living with parents, especially since the Haredi students were all living in the boarding school but were not more likely to say that they don't live with their parents.

<See Table 5: Reason for choice of vocational school in preference to other type of school>

We next looked at students' reasons for choosing their school. This analysis was largely exploratory. We didn't make any presumptions related to the school about why the students chose it, but we did assume that students from higher socio-economic status would be less likely to choose the school for positive reasons. Reasons, such as the distance of the school (2.82) were relatively low in importance, while future employment opportunities (4.17) and opportunities for future study (3.85) were more important. Since so many students believed that the school would help their future employment, it was expected that there would be no significant group differences. The results though did show that there are differences based on the reputation of the school that have to do with the school and socio-economic status. The Haredi students gave the most importance to the reputation of the school (3.44) and liking the courses (4.26). The Arab students gave a similar ranking to the Haredi ones on the reputation of the school (3.25), but they gave the least important to liking the courses (3.56). The students in the General School were least likely to choose the school due to its reputation (2.71), and had slightly better than average results for liking the courses (3.89). As mentioned in regards to the reasons for choosing VET, the Arab students appear to choose the school because their families want them to, but it is not necessarily a course of study they especially enjoy. The Haredi students on the other hand appear to show a desirability bias, which is indicated in numerous other variables in the survey that indicate praise for the school. This appears to be related to cultural traits of this community that favour support for institutions. Regarding our sole hypothesis for this topic, we attempted to examine the results according to socio-economic status and did not discover any significant results, except in regards to whether the father has studied in university. Only 22% of the students indicated that their father has a university education. These students gave the lowest ranking of any group about whether they chose the school due to its reputation (2.45). It appears that if one's father is educated then he will have higher expectations about the level of education that his child should obtain and is less likely to condone VET and the current school his child is enrolled.

<See Table 6: Reason for choice of this vocational school>

B. Experience

Experience is based on four components: practical, psychological, training, and extra-curricular. Regarding the practical component we looked at both their sense of achievement (how much they felt they learned from courses and whether what they learn will help them find a job) as well as how hours per week they work in an outside company. We did not find any significant differences in how much they feel they learn from their courses by school or any other variable (3.78). The lack of any explanatory variables was strange, considering that there was a decent range of responses (Standard deviation = 1.05). However, only 10% of respondents said that they didn't learn anything at all or little, and differences in the remainder on their enthusiasm may have to do with personal differences that are not apparent from the sociological cross tabulations. Finally, students' practical experience is based on whether what they learn will help in a future job. Based on the interviews we expected to find dramatic differences in the three schools, but these differences were not significant. Students tend to have a favourable opinion about the utility of their studies (4.02).

Regarding the psychological component, we examined whether students enjoyed school, whether teachers made them feel welcome, and whether teachers and students were friendly. We did not find significant differences in whether the teachers made them feel welcome (77% said yes). However, we did find that the students were least friendly in the Arab school (3.42), compared to the General and Haredi schools (3.95 and 3.98, respectively), and the teachers were the most friendly in the Haredi school (4.51), compared to the General and Arab schools (3.56 and 3.50, respectively). The variable for happiness was based on a 10-point scale and had a more normal distribution (mean=6.60 and std. dev.=2.92). 35% of students are less happy with school (i.e. marked 5 or less). The students in the Haredi school are the happiest (7.83), while the students in the Arab school are the least (6.05). Perhaps family expectations to attend contradict students' aspirations, which influences happiness. Hence, in the Haredi school the parents are less supportive but the students did what was right for them, while in the Arab school the parents were more supportive but it was not the choice that made them happy. Again we suspect that the Haredi students are also happier as a result of cultural differences to have more favourable opinions towards their school.

Regarding the training component, we found unexpected results about how many hours the students work in outside companies. This was an open question, and the range of hours was from 0 to 40. What surprised us most was both that 42% of 10th grade students said that they are working in outside companies, in contrast to 78% of those in the 11th and 12th grades. While it wasn't surprising that the older students are working more, it was surprising that the 10th grade students work at all. According to The Apprenticeship Act, these students are not supposed to work in outside companies. As a result, it appears that these students are discussing work that they do in the private sector that is not sanctioned by MOITL. It should also be noted that the Haredi students are not included in these results, as their school is isolated and has no outside companies available for assistantships. As expected, male students work more than females (7.82 hours and 5.19 hours, respectively). 16% of our sample is female, and besides the General School, which is 35% female, there is only 1 female respondent from the Arab school in our sample. Older students, males, and the Haredi School participate more in paid work. This was extremely strange, considering that they don't have any factories or employers available. However, in the interviews they mentioned that the students that work in carpentry sometimes receive commissions for work that they are paid for and send off.

Finally, we found extremely significant differences in extra-curricular activities as based on school and numerous demographic variables. Younger students, males, and the Haredi School participated more in sports. The fact that the Haredi School had higher levels of sport participation at first was surprising, considering orthodox culture is not usually sports affiliated, however, looking at the environment of the school, which is in a rural isolated location, it makes sense that they have more time and location to do sports. The outdoor access also might explain why the Arab school as well had higher sports participation than the General School, even though we would normally expect a less religious Jewish school would have more sports. The Haredi School does more voluntary work. This was strange, because in their isolated environment there seem to be few places for them to do voluntary work. However, in orthodox culture it is a mitzvah (good deed) to do voluntary work. We might again be seeing desirability bias, there may be a difference in definition about what qualifies as voluntary work, or they may be discussing volunteer opportunities inside the school campus or when they go home. More research should be conducted to examine the volunteer activities of each community and how these volunteer activities can be incorporated with their vocational training.

<See Table 7: Experience in school>

C. Motivation

We looked at motivation both in terms of students' drive to do well in school in addition to prejudices they perceive that may restrain their expectations. Regarding their drive, we wanted to know whether they do well for the sake of themselves personally, for their family, or for their future job prospects. There was very little variance in the averages for all three variables (4.37, 4.40, and 4.48, respectively). Students claim to do well for all of these reasons. Likewise, as a result of the very high importance most students place on doing well, there were no significant differences between the schools. It is surprising that among a population of students who struggled in school that so many would express the importance of doing well. This may be indicative of the large number of students who are thought to have learning disabilities. It is not a case of not wanting to do well for others but rather a frustration that they are not able to do well when they wish they could do better. It may also be a matter of desirability bias among all VET students, as it is probably hard to admit when confronted with a question that one does not care about doing well.

While school differences were insignificant, we did find significant differences based on gender and course of study in terms of how well the students do for themselves personally. Females have a significantly higher personal motivation (4.65). Likewise, we found that students enrolled in the electrician course had lower motivations for doing well for themselves personally (4.12). Perhaps this profession is not something that interested them, but which they engaged in for the sake of their family and the pragmatic goal of finding a job. Indeed considering that many of the students come from families with lower socio-economic status, we would expect that more would feel that they are pursuing a vocation for pragmatic goals of securing a future job and not due to personal interest.

<See Table 8: School motivation>

Regarding prejudices, we wanted to know if students feel that they are discriminated against for any reason, and if this may be what is reducing their expectations to achieve. We looked at whether they felt gender, ethnicity, a disability, religion, qualifications, or school attended might be leading them to feel unwelcome in the labour force. We then looked at group differences, and whether there was any correlation between feelings of discrimination and low motivations. We found that students overall

gave very low ratings to whether they will be discriminated against. However, they were more likely to feel that they will be discriminated against due to their qualifications (2.52) and school attended (2.34). Likewise, we found very few differences related to demographics. Females (1.39) and students who have both parents working (1.66) were significantly less likely to believe that they are discriminated by religion. However, these were basically the only significant correlations, and they appear to be related with the fact that almost all of the females and most of the students with both parents working are at the General School. On the other hand, we found very significant differences by school for all forms of discrimination except disability. Arab students were more likely to feel discriminated against in every possible way. Haredi students were least likely to feel discriminated against, except in regards to their religion.

D. School ratings

School ratings were based on three components of the school: quality, social environment, and facilities. Regarding the quality of the school, we looked at the ratings for teaching methods and teacher subject knowledge. Regarding the social environment we looked at the friendliness of other students and teachers, and regarding the facilities we looked at the quality of school buildings and classroom equipment. There were not significant differences in the teachers' subject knowledge and school buildings. Students did not rate either of these variables extremely high (3.25 and 3.79, respectively, note that the higher rating in improvements needed for buildings means that they believe that improvements are needed), and it is surprising that we did not find any significant differences based on either school or demographic indicators. Since finding qualified teachers was highlighted as a significant problem by national and local advisory boards, it seems that this problem is common to all schools. However, the act that the Haredi school did not express disappointment with the quality of the buildings is especially surprising when in fact their school is lacking buildings. The Arab local advisory board also indicated that building expansion was a problem that limited their school. On the other hand the General School has a very well established school, and we did not expect this school to provide a lower rating. In fact the General School stated that more improvements were needed in school buildings than the other two schools (3.32 compared to 3.18 for the other two schools), but this difference was not significant at all.

In regards to the variables for which we did find significant results we saw that students in the Haredi school gave the highest rating for teaching methods (3.84) and the General School gave the lowest (3.26). Furthermore, we found that the younger students (those 16 or under) gave higher rankings. When we analysed the results based on 10th grade or younger (4% of the students were in the 9th grade) versus 11th and 12th grade, the results were still significant but less so (3.56 and 3.25, p = 0.02). This finding may have to do with the fact that many older dropouts were incorporated into the 10th grade, and they appear to be more critical of the teaching methods than their younger classmates. Next, we found very significant results in the friendliness of other students by school. Arab students have lower opinions about the friendliness of other students (3.42 versus 3.98 in the Haredi school and 3.95 in the General School). While we were not expecting differences in the environment of the school, it appears that the Arab school is more geared towards practical goals and not social ones. Finally, as already discussed in relation to the buildings, the difference in facility ratings surprised us the most. The students in the Haredi school were least likely to believe that improvements in equipment were needed (2.81 versus 3.50 in the General School and 3.55 in the Arab school). This is ironic considering that the Haredi school is currently building a great deal and lacking many resources, while the general and Arab school are more established. Our explanation is that according

to the orthodox code the solidarity and association with the school should be higher, while in the other schools there are more critical attitudes. We also found significant differences again for the electrician students who see less need for improvements in classroom equipment.

<See Table 9: School Ratings>

E) Expectations

We looked both at what the students expect to achieve, and who they expect to help them in order to reach those expectations. Students' achievement expectations were based both on work expectations and study or other expectations. The questionnaire asked students to indicate if they plan to look for paid work when they finish school, and if not what they intended to do. However, of the 88% who said that they do plan to search for a job, 36% of them also indicated that they have other plans after graduation. Only 1% of the sample said that they do not plan to look for a job, nor do they have any other plans. 47% indicated that they have other plans, and this response would surely have been higher had the question been asked differently. Indeed the students were correct by ignoring the directions, as even if a student does plan to study or look after family, he or she will also probably have to work. This fact is especially true among the population that we are examining, which is assumed to have a lower socio-economic status than other youth.

Since the rate of looking for work was so high, we did not find significant differences by group. We did find significant differences though in students who plan to pursue further education, look after family, and go into a family business. Regarding education plans, we did not find significant differences based on whether the student plans to attend university or college separately, but we did find significant differences based on whether the student plans to go to university or college. Students in the Haredi school have much lower expectations to go for further education (33% answered yes, compared to 57% for the General School and 61% for the Arab school). Interestingly, we found that 69% of those who only have a mother that works and 68% of those whom neither parent works plan to attend further education, while 56% of those whose father works and 52% of those with both parents working plan to attend. This finding is the reverse of what we expected, and it may have to do with parental expectations for the child to work instead of going to college.

As far as plans to look after the family, all females who answered the question indicated that this is their plan. In fact 95% of females said they plan to look for a job, compared to 87% of males, and 59% of females also answered the question that they plan to look after their family. In contrast 42% of males answered whether they plan to look after their family, and 85% indicated yes. This shows that among the populations that we studied taking care of one's family is an important value. We expected the Arab school to have the highest value for looking after family, but surprisingly the General School was higher (95% compared to 83%). The Haredi school had the lowest value for this question (67%), but only 3 respondents answered the question. Finally, we found significant differences in their plans to work in the family business. None of the Haredi students indicated they plan to work in the family business, but again there were only the same 3 respondents as previously who answered this question. The Arab school as expected had the highest score (56%), which is indicative of Arab culture in Israel where families often own businesses and provide work for family members.

The last finding that we feel the need to present, although it was not part of the standardized research assignment, are plans to enlist in the military. We separated this question from plans to work, and hence it was not influenced by missing data, as the prior results on other plans were. This question

was not provided to the Arab school, nor did we find any significant group differences. What surprised us were the extremely high rates of those who plan to enlist in the Haredi school. 88% in both the orthodox (strange) and the General School (exactly the same amount) plan to go to the army. 83% of respondents answered the question, 93% of whom were in the Haredi school. As discussed in the first section of this report, army enlistment is a major part of Israeli society, and normally Haredi students do not enlist. Army service makes considering other plans for the future extremely problematic, as respondents must often wait for 2-3 years in order to make other plans.

<See Table 10: Plans for the future>

Besides examining the specific plans of students, we also wanted to know more about whom they expect to help them in order to reach those expectations. We did not find any significant differences in terms of help from family (3.86), friends (3.23), or teachers (2.85). It is telling though that the students expect the most from their family and the least from their teachers. On the other hand, we did find significant differences in the expectations of help from the school (3.09), the career centre in the school (2.93), and a public employment agency (3.07). While there were not large differences between the amount of help students expect to get from each agency (results were almost exactly at the middle score for each of the three), there were very significant results for each type of agency based on the school, one's gender and parents' employment. The Arab school had lower expectations of help from the school (2.65 versus 3.49 for the Haredi school and 3.28 for the General School), help from the career centre in the school (2.59 versus 3.25 for the Haredi school and 3.12 for the General School) and help from a public employment agency (2.66 versus 2.96 for the Haredi school and 3.41 for the General School). This appears to be indicative of lower expectations to be able to find work among the Arab population, a question that was not specifically asked in the questionnaire, but which was highlighted by the local advisory board. There was a question of which career centre might exist for the Haredi students, and they may be referring to one of the NGOs that work with the school. On the other hand, we notice that the General students have the highest realization of using a public employment agency, which also may be related to their situation in an urban environment that enables such an option. We also found very significant differences in perceptions of the use of a public employment agency as based on gender, with females having higher perceptions of receiving help (3.64 to 2.94). Likewise, we noticed that those who have both parents working expect much more to get help from a public employment agency. This may be related to the realistic interpretation of non-salaried positions that are increasingly being made available. They are not the preferred form of work, but they are much easier to get. This is also probably related to the fact that 59% of the General School students' have both parents working versus 11% of the Arab students and 45% of Haredi students.

<See Table 11: Transition from school to work>

2.4 Comparative analysis of vocational education, social inclusion practices and social cohesion

Despite cultural differences that render these three populations very excluded from one another in modern society, VET students in Israel are being socially included within respective cultures and communities. We examined three VET schools, which represent three distinct cultural groups. Beyond the question of how do educational factors influence social cohesion, we also try to answer the question of how do cultural factors influence social exclusion. National sentiment and ethnolinguistic cultural forces isolate the Arab School. The Haredi School was founded on a basis of

exclusion. The General School, on the other hand, exhibits patterns of social inclusion that would bring students back into mainstream society. However, when considering this example, it becomes clear that the issue of social inclusion for all three communities is a pluralistic concept that implies one can only be included by remaining within the boundaries of primordial culture. Briefly we reflect upon the three schools' similarities and differences in regards to the policy issues that were summarized above. We use a three phase process by looking first at the educator level data, second at the student level data, and third make a comparison of the national, educator and student levels.

<For a more detailed discussion of the school comparison at different levels, see Appendix Section 2.4.1 Comparison at the educator level, Section 2.4.2 Comparison at the student level, and Section 2.4.3 Comparison between national, student, and educator perspectives>

3. ACTION PROPOSALS FOR SCHOOLS

While we can sympathize with the educators' opinions that the VET schools should not be an experimental ground for ethnic/religious integration, the schools should be doing more to include marginal ethnic groups in their communities. At the same time the schools should be careful to not create a scenario in which certain minority communities are relegated to VET, simply because they lack the language training or financial resources to enable them to pursue general academic studies. The General school briefly discussed the issue of FSU students who attended the school primarily because they had language difficulties, but such a language bias appears to have dissipated as this community has established a longer tenure in the country. On the other hand, Arab and Ethiopian students are often placed in VET due to their marginal status in society. As a result, we find that VET education plays a role in preventing these communities from progressing to high-prestige occupations.

The Arab school should attempt to provide a more welcoming environment and to provide more career services. We do not have indicators from other Arab schools though, in order to say whether the students would feel less welcome or would receive better career services in another Arab school.

The Haredi school appears to do a great job of providing a welcoming environment, but this school requires more resources for developing vocational skills and more mechanisms to enable its students to obtain work experience and to make a transition to the labour market. Furthermore, we lack a comparison with other Haredi schools (Yeshivas). Inevitably the school is limited by its location and religious requirements, but it should look more into ways of occupying its students and graduates in businesses, perhaps by arranging extended leave intensive assistantship programs at Haredi controlled businesses where students could train in a company. Otherwise, the school may seek the help of the government, NGOs, and Haredi entrepreneurs to create more in-house trades and be able to improve the marketability of its current enterprises.

The Arab and General schools may also be able to develop similar in-house assistantships. In doing so though, the schools must ensure that the goals of the programs are to provide training for the students and not to engage in profiteering to compensate schools costs. The sponsoring of quality assistantships for students is a difficult task, and resources will inevitably be insufficient. Some

schools indicated that they do volunteer training tasks, and this appears to be a great way to keep students occupied in lieu of an assistantship.

The students do need to earn money, in order to keep them motivated and to help those who have economic difficulties and come from families that might encourage the student to drop out and take a higher paying position with more hours. There is a problem of finding jobs for all of the students, both as assistantships and for VET graduates. By strengthening ties with the local municipality, the school should be able to open up apprenticeship jobs in civic institutions. We (therefore) encourage the schools to actively promote networking with local businesses and government. For example, the General school created an advertisement that it published around the city, which thanked employers of its students. The schools might also attempt to recruit more vocational experts from local businesses who can provide workshops for students. We noticed that such practices take place in the courses of hair design and culinary arts. By incorporating vocational experts from companies, the schools will reduce the burden caused by the lack of vocational teachers available. Professional development activities to train vocational experts in business may be coordinated at the local level, although we also identify this need at the national level. In regards to all of the points mentioned above, we encourage the schools to widen their network of NGOs that work with the school and to strengthen ties with NGOs they already collaborate with. Such cooperation should focus on professional development for VET teachers and vocational experts, and labour rights, labour market preparation workshops, and career services for students and graduates.

All of the schools have a large number of at-risk and special needs students who are not getting all of the individual attention that they need. The schools should make efforts to bring in volunteers who can work with the students, so long as sufficient resources are not made available for additional counsellors and other educators. The use of volunteer activities by the General school with senior citizens in the library for reading and hair cutting is a good example of a creative way that schools can both develop training exercises and provide the students with individualized instruction. We often heard from educators that they lack good communication with parents and networking with local businesses. However, we also found a mediocre rating and great variance on how the teachers rated their schools on the promotion of social inclusion through special "school days" open to the community. More events by the school that would be open to the community would surely increase the involvement of parents and amount of employers that would become interested in working with the school.

Finally, we would like to end our action proposal for schools with a consideration of how the VET schools, for better and worse, represent Israeli culture and to remind schools of the benefits and deficiencies that are embedded. The schools use culture as a tool to deal with problems, but they also creates problems by relying on culture and the traditions of behaviour that it dictates. To be more specific, we encourage the schools to improve the professionalism of class instruction. An aspect of Israeli culture that was identified by our co-author in his book "The Israeli Compass" (Yair 2012) is an ethos of teachers (and all authority figures) to create a human relationship with students (or soldiers, employees, etc.) rather than a professional relationship that demands subservience. Teachers in VET schools, and all Israeli schools, face a very difficult task of creating discipline in a culture where individual values are extremely high. Israel is an informal country with very few rules of etiquette conditioned by hierarchy. As a result, students in class will speak out of turn in a loud voice without raising their hands; call the teacher by his or her first name or a nickname; show up late to class; and engage in various delinquent behaviours in plain sight of the school administration. On the

other hand, the teacher is often motivated to develop a personal relationship with the students, which in turn will facilitate the collaboration of students who will see the teacher as a person and not as a monotone authority figure. While this informal culture is ingrained in society and benefits discipline and the flow of lessons, it also corrupts the amount of serious learning that goes on in class. The teacher chooses to have a good relationship with the students rather than diminishing the students' respect for them as a person by forcing students to complete assignments and be efficient in class. The teacher provides the student with a relaxed informal environment to study with limited disciplinary action and course requirements, and the student behaves better and provides the teacher with better assessments when a group of researchers conduct surveys. As observed from the quantitative analysis of the student surveys, students who think that a teacher is friendly or welcoming, has good teaching methods, and is knowledgeable have better impressions of the school, they do more homework, chose the school for favourable reasons, and have higher expectations from their teacher to help them when finding a job. In fact just about every performance variable in the student survey was positively significantly correlated with the students' impressions of the teacher.

Having identified that teachers do have a very positive influence on their students, and that almost every variable in our study turned out to have a significant correlation with teacher qualities, we were bothered by one finding. Students with better grades and those who have expectations to go to college or university did not give teachers a higher rating. One would expect that since many seemingly unrelated variables would have a significant correlation with teacher ratings such as getting to a school by bicycle, then we would also find that the more serious students (i.e. those who get good grades and want to attend post-secondary school) would give their teachers higher ratings. However, our finding was that there is an insignificant relationship between high achievements and aspirations and teacher evaluations. We repeat and highlight this finding, so that the schools will consider it: Normatively better students do not give teachers higher ratings for friendliness, knowledge, methods, or welcoming them. On the other hand, almost everything else about the school has a strong correlation with the teachers' rating. Are the teachers giving more attention to the weaker students in class? Are the students with higher marks and aspirations upset about their placement in a VET school, when they feel that they are capable of more? Or, do these students provide us with a more objective perception of what is going on in class? Are teachers providing a more comfortable environment in the class so that students will make life (teaching) easier on the teacher? This phenomenon may be indicative more of Israeli culture, and indeed it was observed originally at the university level where professors make less demands on their students to be more popular. However, we notice this finding also influences secondary school. Students who succeed more and have higher aspirations do not have the same amount of respect for their teacher, perhaps because they realize that the class is not run in an efficient manner that will enable them to fulfil their goals. Here, we have the dilemma of teachers who must cater to an often delinquent audience while maintaining a professional environment. On the one hand, if the teacher tries to create too serious an environment, he or she may alienate all the students. On the other hand, if the teacher provides less serious teaching, fewer assignments and more relaxed discipline, then the classroom may become a great deal less efficient. This phenomenon was observed in our school visits during this research, and also in other research we have conducted at Israeli schools. We do not wish to imply that it is undesirable for teachers to have a casual (person-to-person) relationship with students. In fact, for the specific population, it is an important reason why these students are able to continue. However, schools should be aware of the trade-off that takes place between teacher favourability and course instruction.

<See Table 12: Significance tests of teacher ratings based on academic and other independent variables>

4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

As mentioned in the methodology, many respondents came to the interviews with an agenda. They were aware that we were writing a policy paper, and hence they tried to convey subliminally or directly certain policies that they felt essential. When writing this section we went to great lengths to try not to simply repeat the policies that the respondents offered but also to analyse our data and make calculated assessments. After analysing prior literature, national indicators, and our participatory action research, we came to the conclusion that there is most likely not a single policy decision that we could derive that has not been already presented before. The policies that we present are suggestions that should be analysed separately and in tandem.

In formulating our policy considerations we examined the comparisons that were synonymous across the levels of research, both horizontally (by school) and vertically (by status of the respondents). Policy recommendations for the local community are included in the action plan for schools already discussed in section 3. Policy recommendations for the national community (policy makers, the Apprenticeship Law, government-affiliated institutions, NGOs and donors) are made in the present section. Our findings indicated that VET has amazing value for weaker students, but there are many bureaucratic abnormalities that restrict the improvement of VET and social inclusion of VET students.

4.1 Policy recommendations for policy makers

At the time of writing this report, profound changes are taking place in government regulations. As a result of the coalition agreement decision # 4088 for the present 19th Knesset, the actual name and responsibilities of MOITL are being altered, such that early childhood education is being returned to MoE. There is a feeling of change in the air, and we encourage policy makers to also consider ways of incorporating VET within MoE. The fragmentation of MOITL and MoE does not benefit VET. Combining the evidence from the field with prior literature, we found financial problems stemming from the closed budget of MOITL and from the lack of additional funding to cater to high-risk and other vulnerable students with special needs and the procurement of school buildings and vocational training equipment. The State Comptroller's report in 2010 highlighted that in 1989 the government decided to integrate MOITL schools into MoE. We also perceive a need to integrate the Department of Youth Training of MOITL with MoE. We found that communication between the ministries remains poor, and the result has been a competitive atmosphere where the ministries do not support one another.

The result of the lack of cooperation between the departments hurts the VET students, who appear to become a pawn in a political battle between the ministries. Many of these students require extra psychological, social, and economic services. As a result of the on-going feud between the ministries, the students have more difficulties receiving these services. Students who come with disabilities lose benefits when they transfer into the MOITL system. The government needs to reconsider how it allocates funding to schools. MoE is currently awarded funding by student enrolment, while MOITL is awarded a specific budget for all of its students. The current scenario stimulates overcrowding in MOITL schools, reduces the number of students who can enter VET at the beginning of the year, and

limits the schools' abilities to intake dropouts throughout the year. Future funding for all schools in MOITL and MoE should be assessed retroactively based on both the number of students who dropped out and the number of dropouts accepted during the course of the year. The goal of these measures must be to both reduce the number of dropouts and bring dropouts back into school. Since many of the VET students are from low socio-economic backgrounds or have special needs, this policy would allow VET schools to expand their services to the students who most need them.

The incorporation of high-level VET students was commented on by numerous educators both at the national and local level. We recommend a pilot test study at one school in which both lower-ranking VET students and higher-ranking students who wish to study VET would be incorporated into the same school. The lower-ranking students would study low tech, and the higher-ranking students would study high-tech, but all students would take on assistantships in the attached company. Such a test school will surely encounter certain difficulties in terms of the social encounters of the students, but it may also provide a positive experience for the students to interact, the so-called "school yard effect". It would also serve to improve the reputation of the school. The traditional VET students may gain a less stigmatized impression of themselves because of the school that they study at. Teachers may gain greater work enjoyment, being able to interact at various skill levels. Furthermore, it would allow a greater variety of courses to be incorporated into the school, and it would allow the students to pursue upward mobility in their course selection, if they so choose and are capable. A further example of ways that more students can be included in VET is to incorporate the "study plant model" (Lotan 2013), whereby schools are developed alongside factories. This model is discussed further in policies for government-affiliated institutions. However, without the support of government ministries to open such schools, support from other organizations are limited.

New policies for MoE are necessary that will allow VET in its schools, such that TVET and VET will remain separate in concept but not divided by school. The current situation creates social segregation of VET students, and consolidation will create social cohesion. However, any attempt to integrate VET into MoE must not disintegrate the Department of Youth Training of MOITL, which has developed a very successful VET program for weaker students. An interim measure should promote closer cooperation, perhaps beginning with an exchange of representatives between the two departments for periods of time. Closer ties between MoE and MOITL will strengthen the legislation to require employers to take on students for assistantships and ensure educational reforms that seek to benefit all Israeli students, including VET students.

4.2 Policy recommendations for the Apprenticeship Law

At the level of the Knesset, we believe that the Apprenticeship Law should be modified to allow more VET students who are currently classified as TVET, and to increase cooperation with employers. This step will begin with greater cooperation between the ministries, which should create structural and financing flexibility. Government policy should also look at ways of promoting greater wealth for vocational professions that would facilitate a more egalitarian society. The government could create an obligatory program by which companies are required to provide assistantships relative to the resources of their business. With an obligatory program that expanded to all industries MOITL could ensure that all vocational students receive paid training positions and that those vocations remain in line with the needs of the labour market. MOITL is also in charge of employment services for the general public, and we question whether more can be done within this ministry to provide additional services for finding sponsored jobs for VET students.

The government could provide subsidies for businesses that provide apprenticeships and work opportunities for vocational graduates. Factories should partner with schools in developing the apprenticeship track consisting of a formal commitment with incentives. Obligatory assistantship policy measures would also shift the burden for finding assistantships away from schools and instead would force businesses with the task of finding assistants by being proactive in their relationship with local VET schools. Integration of the Youth Services of MOITL with MoE should not be done at the expense of the ability of VET students to use MOITL services and networks with industries. If separation of VET and TVET is to be maintained, then (we recommend that) more schools would be built within industrial parks (the study plant model) where the students would also work (in order to ensure social inclusion through assistantships) (Lotan 2013). The current collaboration with the gas industry and the Manufacturers Association is beneficial, but there needs to be greater collaboration with all industries and not just the few that are willing. Collaboration with the wider labour market would serve to expand the courses that are encompassed currently in VET. MOITL and MoE though should ensure that the students training will be focused on modern courses that will enable the students to innovate the labour market and not only to serve the interests of the company.

4.3 Policy recommendations for Government affiliated institutions

There should be closer cooperation between VET schools and the IDF, universities, and other adult training institutions. The IDF could expand the number of positions that are slated for students with a VET diploma. There is already a great deal of communication between the IDF and the schools, but as regards the situation of the Haredi community, such programs are often in very initial stages, and they require attention and resources to ensure that they succeed. Regarding the university, the analysis of interviews with the national advisory board on coordination between government organizations indicated that they misunderstand the task of universities. We suggest the development of nationally sponsored vocation-specific training centres instructed by university professors and vocational experts. These programs could be opened within the universities, in order to promote social inclusion, and they should be open to students who have VET diplomas but are lacking Bagrut qualifications, in addition to university students of education who wish to expand their horizon of course training. As such, these centres should aim to incorporate vocational topics into established teacher training programs and a teacher-training program for vocational graduates. At the moment VET administrators are upset with this progress. Companies should be encouraged to provide scholarships and part-time professional development opportunities for vocational workers in such university programs.

Many of the VET students have economic difficulties that cause them to pursue work in fields other than those in which they studied, because they needed extra training and were too pressed for money to enable them to follow through with their vocation. Vocational training has been seen as a means to improve the economic situation of lower socio-economic communities. However, unless such communities are given the resources to become well-trained experts in their vocation, they will continuously be relegated to low paying positions with few opportunities to improve their vocational skills and salary. Students who were not able to succeed in traditional education environments have high rates of success in private colleges that function as second-chance academic preparatory programs (Ayalon et al. 1992). As highlighted in our interviews with school officials, VET students require further training to be able to work in the vocation that they studied. The government therefore needs to make it easier for vocational students to pursue affordable training in colleges.

Labour unions, such as the Histadrut and the Manufacturers Association, were often cited for their relationship with MOITL in developing VET programs. *We recommend that further panels are*

developed between the government and these unions to develop a bridge that spans the gap between the government and employers. These panels should discuss and progress the development of curricula, which could be divided into at least three tasks: textbooks, qualifications, and assistantship training. Regarding the first point, many schools complained about the textbooks, which are either non-existent in their course, or out-dated. While a textbook in Hebrew or Arabic on a scarcely offered course, such as motorcycle mechanics, may not be regarded as a profitable venture for private industries, it is important that students who take such courses receive a quality textbook that will facilitate their learning. The government should ensure that panels of professionals and funds are made available for the publication of these textbooks, and that the schools receive them at a subsidized price.

Regarding qualifications, we found that many schools were dismayed with the lack of value that is attached to vocational diplomas. Collaboration between the government and employers should be developed to provide greater status to VET graduates by developing clearer standards. The main aspect of such standards that is often discussed is testing. However, we also question whether vocations that are designed for students who excel in kinesthetic and tactual learning can be tested with traditional exams. A motorcycle mechanic surely requires testing that involves checking hand dexterity and not just memorization skills.

4.4 Policy recommendations for NGOs and donors

A dramatic number of NGOs were cited by national advisory board members, while only a few such organizations were mentioned by schools. It appears that each school develops a relationship with a few specific NGOs. This method of agency development is very effective as the school and the NGO develop a repertoire, enabling collaboration and project development. It appears that many NGOs are often involved exclusively with specific schools, or that their projects focus on a specific issue. We encourage the NGOs to attempt to broaden their network with schools located in the peripheral areas and with minority populations. Many NGOs have a Jewish agenda, and we question whether NGO involvement in the Arab schools is sufficient. Furthermore, many NGOs have a secular agenda, and hence they are excluded from collaboration with the Haredi sector.

NGOs often focus on a single policy issue, for example the Authority for War on Drugs and Alcohol that promotes prevention programs and the Appleseeds Academy that promotes technological development. We question whether NGOs can develop multi-issue projects and promote greater collaboration between themselves. One of the main findings from the research was that many VET students are not capable of continuing to work in the vocation that they studied. The main reason that is cited is that the students require additional training beyond the 12th grade, and many of the students do not have the money or the patience to pursue future studies. Numerous scholarships for VET students are available, such as the Friendship Fund, the Rashi Foundation, the Gross Foundation, the Kemach Foundation, and others. We suggest that such NGOs should collaborate with businesses to sponsor continued studies for VET students in technical training colleges. Such programs could incorporate a work-study component that provides VET students with subsidized part-time labour that enables them to also pursue advanced studies. Since we interviewed only two NGO representatives in our research, the policy recommendations entailed should be considered brainstorming suggestions based on what we infer from our research and not as a critique of the great work that NGOs do.

CONCLUSIONS

We found that MOITL schools are doing an incredible job at reforming some of the worst students. VET students are usually dropouts and/or students with learning disabilities, and hence they come with a history of failure and aversion to school. Our survey indicated that students' assessments of happiness and liking school were above average. Considering some of the "hard stories" that we heard from these students concerning their prior experience, this fact alone is a testament to the outstanding work of the schools.

Still, Israel must improve VET to levels consistent with other OECD countries. Incorporating more students in TVET courses will not sufficiently meet the demands of the labour market or students who are not inclined for such courses and require an assistantship in order to focus their learning. Furthermore, Israel must improve the social inclusion of VET students. This involves both increasing the status of VET diplomas and the integration of VET students with a wider range of companies and schools. The so-called 'study plant' model should be further established, by which schools are integrated with businesses. Such schools will increase the efficiency of VET training by providing all students with assistantships and closer association with working professionals, who can serve as both mentors and educational advisors for curriculum development. More scholarships should be provided that enable VET students to have work-study opportunities beyond the 12th grade.

There is added value of combining weak students with industry. This experience provides many students who experience economic difficulties with a way to make money and stay in school. The students realize that their studies improve their chances in the labour market, creating a motivation to continue school. Furthermore, the socialization that takes place as a result of participation in the labour force helps students with delinquent behaviours who arrive with a history of academic failure. The contact with a personal tutor in a real work environment provides students with role models. While at times the assistantship may not work, overall it appears that the experience is extremely valuable in turning dropouts into serious students. The Israeli economy has a profound need for such vocational education graduates, in addition to technological education graduates, and their educational development and social inclusion should therefore have a much higher priority in future planning of the education and training system.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Statistical analysis details

As noted the teacher survey contains a limited number of responses that made statistical analyses difficult. While the representation of teachers is not representative within each school, the sample does more closely represent the actual population. We also did not add weights to correct for the sampling bias, because doing so in the case of the Haredi School would have created a situation in which each of their 3 respondents would have the strength of 6.67 respondents from the General School. More shall be said about the teacher surveys in section 2.2. The student surveys on the other hand, for which a sufficient sample was obtained, enabled more complex analyses. Regarding regressions, throughout the analysis we display only the significant correlations. These significance tests are Pearson correlation coefficients of a Chi-Square Test. In this report we display only the results that have a probability of less than .05, which was our determination of significance. The coefficients that we have decided to show are the ones that were most significant. Insignificant results can be inferred by the reader as being close to the mean. Occasional discussion is made of the insignificant variables where relevant. For those who would like to view all of the actual cross-tabulations, a copy of the results is included in the appendix.

Before going into the results, we would like to comment on a few quantitative issues that were noticed during the course of the analysis and which should be considered while reading through the document. The number of students in the Haredi school (n=56) was lower than the General School (n=175) and the Arab school (n=162). We also noticed that parents' education was rarely significant. This has to do with several difficulties with this variable, starting with the fact that many students decided to fill out more than one answer, confusion over their parents' education, and perhaps misinformation. We used the highest level of education listed i.e. whether the parents studied in university. When looking at mother's and father's education separately or whether both parents attended university we found almost no correlations. However, we did find slightly more significant results when we looked at whether either parent has attended university. It should be noted that in a previous nationally representative survey of high school students (Goldstein 2009) it was also noticed that students exaggerated their parents' education. The average number of PhDs was almost twice the national average according to census data.

We also altered a few other variables that we deemed to be more interpretive of variance between students. This was primarily a coding issue, which required a certain amount of interpretation. For example, since there were various types of course tracks, it was difficult to get significant results from a single one. Only electricians and autotronics had slightly high representations (19% and 18% respectively), hence we decided that a new variable for types of courses was more suitable. The courses were organized into three types (manual, commercial, and office). We also noticed that sets of variables showed little variance among respondents; for a lot of sections respondents marked the same level in response to all questions. Indeed this is often a problem in surveys where there are similar questions with a similar scale in a group, especially with school age respondents.

Appendix 2: Discussion of interviews with local level informants

1. KEY THEMES

Four themes were analyzed from the 17 local level interviews that were in accordance with the research tasks:

    A. Selection and Tracking
    B. Dropouts
    C. Patterns of Education
    D. Transition from Education to Work

A. Selection and Tracking

Within the subject of selection and tracking we identified three main issues that were brought up by the local advisory boards:

    i.   Placement into specific vocational fields

    ii.   Knowing the students' background and helping them with problems

    iii. Providing special services

i. Placing into specific vocational fields

Schools most often place students into a course based on their grades on an entrance exam. However, they also consider students' personal preferences. We make sure that their entrance exam shows that they have decent math skills to work in this field. On the other hand we don't turn students away because they didn't pass. We sometimes can do a return exam, re-exams. The entrance exams serve as a guidance for the school, but there do not appear to be barriers for letting a student attempt a certain field, if that is what he or she really wants to do. There is an entrance examination and an interview with students before entering school. In the interview we ask what classes he prefers, then according to his grades and exam, we are trying to decide (which course to place him). There are a few cases that the school convinces students that they should not choose a (vocational field) course because they won't succeed and they offer another course. Sometimes there are students who insist and then they allow them to experience the first two weeks. More tracking and selection can serve to raise the school image and its goal of attracting strong students. I think there is a need for better compliance tests before placement (tracking) into vocational courses. It's okay not to accept every student - so as to create a situation in which students will be better suited for the (vocational) courses and for the school. As elsewhere there is the matter of supply and demand when it comes to the different courses available for students, where many times the new courses are the one with a higher demand. There is a connection between the courses that are in higher demand and the courses that are more difficult to get.

In order to track students it is necessary for the school to have some handle on the students' abilities, which requires an understanding not just of the student's aptitude or motivation, but also prior knowledge. Regarding achievements - some of them are very much lacking academically, some have difficulty reading and writing. They are not necessarily with learning disabilities, but they simply failed academically. In most cases (these problems) are accompanied by other (problems) of very low socio - economic status and behavioral problems. The schools also mentioned specific problems at creating a selection and tracking process that would raise the bar on achievement. For the Arab sector this problem is complicated by its social exclusion from state institutions. It is very difficult to tell students to come to vocational education, because it is less prestigious, it is less enabling. In contrast to this there are (the appealing) industrial schools. There is a problem that the Jewish sector has industrial schools, with the army, etc. All of these options are not open to the Arab sector.

The student profile and the placement methods for specific courses are very similar for the General School and the Arab school. In regards to the Haredi school, selection was not as much of an issue. As the school is still very small there are only 3 vocations to choose from. 9th grade students experience all three and at the beginning of 10th grade they chose the one they want, together with the staff advice base on their abilities. (We) do not have the ability to offer too many courses. (We are) trying to meet the needs of boys. In the first year (freshman) have a choice, learn all the trends and then see what works for everyone, which means students can experiment and choose. 10th grade students start in depth study of the chosen course.

ii. Knowing the students' background and helping them with problems

When a student enters the school there is a counselling meeting in which the school tries to gain a broader understanding of the student. They will often consider family background, socio-economic status, and learning difficulties. This helps the school to understand the special case of every student, and receive better cooperation. When they realize that the vocations that we are trying to give them will help them with these problems, they usually will open up with us about the direction that they won't to go. In regards to the Haredi school, being a boarding school and considering the needy background of the students, there is a close supervision on the students' progress and behavior. An educator is very involved in everything that students do, he receives a report on their progress and also their behavior and professional training departments, and when necessary he is invited to personal conversations. (This involves) trying to understand where the difficulties are, if you can help and also work to instil discipline if necessary. The schools coordinate with the Welfare Office at the local municipality when there are problems. In a holistic perspective, best results are achieved when the school and the welfare authority maintain good working relations. The Welfare office knows us. And they come to us without worries, because they know who to talk to about the student. If they escape from the house, don't arrive to work, they come to us...they trust us and they know that we can find solutions for problems, or they can find solutions for us. We have good relationship with the welfare. Incorporating students with criminal problems is one of the hardest problems to overcome. The good name of the school help the students as the school fight to help them when in need. When the child comes to the court and he (judge) hears that the child goes to this school it works. The legal document that shows his progress at our school, moves us forward (benefit of the students). The schools though do their best to sort out problems with the parents, which isn't always easy. Parents are often one of the problems that we deal with - either their parents are not available to come (to appointments with the school) or they do not even know what their children are learning. A very small percentage of the parents come and are interested. The school initiates the contact with the parents,

not the other way around, and the response is very low. There are parents who do not want contact with the school.

iii. Providing Special Services

Many of the students need extra help, either of a psychological background or because of learning disabilities. This is not surprising when considering the majority of them are dropouts from other schools. The schools try to help with treatment, provide flexibility regarding the exams and small classes, but they still face difficulties. If the child needs special psychological treatment, whatever, we try to get those services for the child. While the school is always there to give us much extra attention to the student as possible, the administrators do not feel that this is the only task of the school. The purpose of the place is not only to help those with learning difficulties, but to make the alternative norm religious education. The knowledge that students learn translates into engagement for the future. They will be able to work and be more attractive for employers, and (we) explain this to students. Students understood the concept and despite the difficulties persisted and learned despite the difficulties of finishing their training.

Furthermore, schools have financial difficulties providing necessary extra care that these students need. This school is not funded as a school for students with learning disabilities, but the students here need a lot of help. These problems are not just with writing and reading, but they are also with understanding. We also have regular Israeli children, who can barely read. When we are trying to teach 20 plus students and many of them have learning disabilities, and trying to deal with all these problems, that we really need two teachers.   As the Arab school indicated, their teachers receive additional tasks beyond instruction.   The teachers, instead of teaching, struggle with two problems: They need to maintain discipline and to teach, and the students are also problematic and from a very low background. Sometimes the task that the school completes in handling children with a lot of problems is overwhelming. The students come from a very difficult population, there are problems in their homes, problems of large families, the economic situation is difficult, there are very difficult parents, parents who do not know how to educate their children. Sometimes fathers work so much they cannot see the children, the mothers need to handle their children by themselves. There is also a connection to the previous school. There are also problems of learning disabilities, the lack of fit in the regular schools – which do not fit the regular (school) systems.

B. Dropouts

Dropouts are a tricky subject when discussing MOITL schools. Indeed the term VET dropouts is a tautological oxymoron, since all of VET students attend MOITL schools, and all MOITL students are classified as dropouts, since they dropped out of MoE. As a result, the discussion of dropouts dealt with reactive and proactive definitions of the word. In regards to the reactive definitions, the school is integrating dropouts, motivating them, and helping them get back on track with their studies. In regards to the proactive definitions, the school is dealing with those who are trying to dropout and being delinquent.

i. Reactive Definitions

The school is forced to deal with students who are leaving MoE or Yeshivas. The simple fact that the MOITL school is there mainly for drop-outs causes a lot of social stigma. They have friends in these other schools they came from. They are there. I am here. What does this say about me? The students have been on a downward path for much of their school years, and it is difficult to get them on track. For core subjects (students) always have a problem because they come with 10 years of failures. Some also come illiterate. The Haredi school deals with a lot of youth who choose between the street and their school. In many cases, there was a sense that parents simply "throw" the students to school. The Haredi students suffer from immense social pressure for dropping out of religious studies, and it is believed that the community needs to open up to allowing students to pursue alternatives if they must rather than dropping out completely from society. It is very important for parents to listen to the needs and unique character of their children, to allow more freedom, whether it is military service, learning different (subjects from) traditional orthodox teachings. The understanding is not for everyone, and they allow a different option for those who do not like to sit and learn at the Yeshiva. (He) thinks those who can sit and learn all day then should be involved in the Torah. However about 80% of the Haredi public is not suitable for this, and should be open to them other options to work. He sees a sense of change in the Haredi community - says that most of his family personally, a Haredi family, is out working. In Haredi society when parents hear that their child wants to study VET, they worry about what will the neighbors think. This created a lot of misunderstandings between parents and children, and children spend more and more time on the street and are cut off from their parents. The main case of drop-outs are because of learning difficulties and/or ADHD, combined with problems at home. Regarding this latter issue, they youth who fail in the Yeshiva face growing estrangement from their parents, as their children fail to follow the ideal of religious studying. In some cases, this translates into dropping out, and it may deteriorate (into youth who) roam the streets and similar situations. Some have problems at home, divorced parents, parents who lack good parenting skills, and more. Many times children arrive in a very serious condition. They need someone to listen to them as opposed telling them what to do. This society is very closed and there is always a sense of "what will the neighbors think." This created a lot of misunderstandings between parents and children, and children spend more and more time on the street and are cut off from their parents.

A great deal of critique was made against the system of making VET a list ditched educational effort only. *The fact that vocational learning is intended for (only) dropouts is problematic. The children would not understand, they did not succeed before, so how can you teach them vocational programs that require a high level of mathematics. The vocational learning paradox is that there are professional demands for a high level of schooling but most students come with many difficulties. Because we are taking students who have no other choice, we are accepting the weak ones, and there is no possibility to improve the state of the economy. The conceptual track is that vocational education can strengthen the industry and then the whole economy. This is the failure.* Teaching students with such a high level of problems and the rigidity of the school system with obligatory classes and timetables is often what brought them into the MOITL system, and educators expressed fear that VET was not rectifying this problem. And then we are forcing all of this material on a student who already has problems with requirements. They have to keep up with these hours. If you got rid of just one hour, it would solve so many problems that we have.

ii. Proactive Definitions

Each of the schools dismissed dropouts from the VET school as a major problem. However, the problem was brought up in all three. It seems that the drop-out rates from MOITL schools are relatively low, which is not surprising considering it's already the last resolve for most of the students. It seems that those who dropout are those who find it extremely difficult to cope. The school itself is trying to be as involved as possible with any personal difficulties in order to assist the students and try to make it easier for them. They dropped out because it was difficult, because they got lost in a big class. There aren't a lot, but we try to fight for every child. While the Arab school indicated that it has less of a problem with receiving dropouts who come to the school from surrounding areas, it does have a problem with the students it receives locally. We are committed to taking students from Nazareth, and the current situation is that most students arrive without a choice, they are school dropouts of the Ministry of Education (state schools) or schools direct them to us to find a better solution. Financial difficulties at home also account for many of the dropouts in the Arab schools. Almost everyone who drops out does so in order to work to help support the family. That is to say sometimes good students drop out, but they do it because of financial difficulties. A very large percentage of the youth are defined as coming from poor families, and they have a desire to bring income home. (The student) understands (his) needs, he identifies, knows that it is important to stay and to study, but sometimes it's a real problem, he needs to eat, he needs to help at home. In the case of the Haredi school dropouts are considered to be rare due to the high levels of staff support and the sense of having nowhere else to go. The few students that do drop-outs are divided into two: upward mobility and the ones completely fall out of the system. Some students moved to regular Yeshivas following the new sense of confidence they received. The few who drop out are those who didn't succeed in dealing with the boundaries the school imposes.

A lot of times preventing dropout requires an understanding of a student's family situation, as these are often complicated kids with complications in the family. There was a student who came here and she wants to drop out. I open the ID card, and I see that all of her siblings have a different family name. 40% of our students are with a single parent. From the moment that I saw that I changed my mentality to make sure that this student would stay here. Besides just leaving the VET school, the school is also trying to prevent students from leaving VET assistantships and their field of study. Some students find is difficult to find the inner-discipline required for work life and keep on leaving their assistantship jobs. Waking up, coping with difficulties that arise in the workplace etc. The school itself tries to solve any issues and find an alternative assistantship if needed. Besides just leaving the VET school, the school is also trying to prevent students from leaving VET assistantships and their field of study. Some students find it difficult to maintain self-discipline required for vocational labour and will leave their assistantship jobs. The school itself tries to solve any issues and find an alternative assistantship if needed. If there are problems, we are here to help. It is our job to make sure that they are ready. Many students come and say that they aren't ready. There are students who are extremely afraid from the work. They always accuse the other. They never accuse themselves, (they think) it is never their fault. You have to convince them or the business to continue the cooperation.

The General School was the most candid about discussing dropouts, which they attributed at times to students delinquency. There are many reasons, from psychological, not getting used to it. There are students who take drugs, and have no motivations. These kids don't have a vision of the future. I tell them another 3 years, otherwise how are you going to improve, but they don't see that far ahead. It is like an eternity. It doesn't always work. Another problem the General School identified are those students who dropout intermittently or try to reintegrate in the middle of the year. This occurs because some students have difficulties, but for funding and curricular cohesion, they need to adhere

to a fixed study course that includes all the subjects needed for the diploma and real-life work. This makes it very difficult to integrate students in the middle of the year or to deal with students that comes and go. There are children who every few months are in and out. That they just stop coming. They wanted to do it, but then they discover that it is difficult for them and they stop coming. There are problems that the MOITL doesn't help the principal. There are students who drop out, but the MOITL doesn't allow the principal to include more students. The inclusion of students in the middle of the year, it is very difficult. One way the General School indicated that it deals with dropouts is to help students receive emotional support. MOITL did give us some extra psychologists, which can really help with dropouts. A lot of students have problems psychologically, and this can really help. Besides students dropping out because of family reasons, the *Arab* school also identified that students drop out less when they are tracked in a more serious course of study. By putting them on track for matriculation, the school feels that it raises the students' expectations. I see improvement in the percentage of students who access the final exam at the end of the 12th grade. It also affects dropout rates and achievement, (this) percentage of eligibility. In other words, just keeping the students eligible for matriculation opportunities appears to keep them enrolled in school. While some respondents from the Arab school indicated an urge to increase enrolment of higher level students, there was also the recognition that the school stands behind its current students and struggles to fight dropouts. There are debates with MOITL to bring in students with high achievement levels, but at the school we think that it is necessary to provide services for the current students – the dropouts, because if we do not take care of them then who will care for them.

C. Patterns of education, apprenticeship systems and social inclusion

We identified two main concepts for the patterns of education for social inclusion:

    i.   Helping students with assistantships

    ii.   Providing learning resources (teachers, tools, and courses)

i. Helping students with assistantships

Each of the schools has unique ways of finding assistantships for its students and helping them integrate their vocational studies with their work experience. The General School has a community worker who is in charge of finding the internship places for the students. The school knows the students' needs a lot of preparation when it comes to entrance into the work environment and tries to support in the forms of fixing a C.V, going with the student to the workplace for the first day, doing workshops about the transmission to work together with NGO's and school graduates. No student ever goes the first day alone. If a student needs that we will stay longer in the work, then we will stay. There are a number of models on the values of work and money. They give the students a workshop. It works very well with the students. They never were in a job interview, and they didn't know what to do. We invite all of the students, with the cooperation of the Working and Studying Youth. We take a lot of our former graduates and we bring them. The Haredi school does creates all of its training in-house, using its own workshops to create jobs for the students. The location of the Haredi school in a remote rural area makes it impossible to create assistantships at outside companies. Furthermore, there is a difficulty finding employers who will provide assistantships for the ultra-orthodox community, and there is also a difficulty of getting the ultra-orthodox community to accept assistantships with

employers who are not ultra-orthodox. It is not so clear if the parents will welcome the idea that their children will go out to work in a secular environment while they are under school authority. It is much more difficult for them as Haredim to go to the factory and ask to be integrated because the factory does not provide a suitable working environment for them as ultra-Orthodox. A private Haredi person can choose for himself whether he is willing to go to work in a workplace that is not religious, but us as a Yeshiva cannot create such a combination if it does not meet requirements which maintain orthodoxy. In other words (we) are thinking of creating a combination of student work, but it has not happened in practice.

The Arab school on the other hand must deal with economic difficulties and high unemployment rates in the Arab sector, which has grave effects on the ability of the school to locate assistantships. There is a problem of finding jobs for apprentices when there is 70% unemployment. The school has community workers who are very active and make the most out of the tools on hand, but there are less jobs making it hard to find placements for all the students. There is a reservoir of potential employers … workshops and forums of employers (have been) established in the school, such as the Studying and Working Youth. There are meetings with representatives of the educational system… These tools work, but to a limited level – since if you (a company) don't have (jobs), you cannot give (jobs). When business owners do not have the ability to hire, they will not hire. Economic difficulties affect the children, the parents and the workplace. There is a problem of finding employment because of the overall unemployment rate in the Arab sector. There are many students and few employment opportunities. Furthermore, the Arab school mentioned the difficulty of getting assistantships that must be official when the labour market is filled with employers who work in black (under the table). This makes it harder to find local businesses willing to take on students as an internship. The Arab business sector tends to evade taxes, and it affects their desire to hire employees. By law one must not employ a child without a coupon (permission). (The state) is not ready to send children to jobs that do not work legally – they see this as slavery. There is a problem in the labour market, small businesses find it difficult to absorb youth and pay with pay slips. So the relationship is more with larger companies, authorized garages.

Despite the differences in the macro-level forces affecting each of the schools' assistantship programs, there are also common issues that each of the schools face. For example, the quality of the assistantship needs to be considered. Does the job provide the student with an education that will progress his or her career? It needs to also be good training, not just to waste your time with cleaning jobs and the like, but that they will specialize. Next, the school has to make sure that it is sending a competent student into this company, such that they will not hurt the reputation of VET students and ruin the opportunities for collaboration in the future. When the student arrives at the factory they have an advisor. Before they get to the work, they get training. For the entire year they have a trainer, no matter where they work. They aren't capable of working without this trainer. He has the ability to work alone, but at the age of 10th grade they aren't ready. An important aspect of the assistantship is the socialization aspect and mentoring by an adult. There is no factory that would put a 16 year old alone in front of a machine. There is the machine and there is the trainer who instructs. In addition to mentoring, the school community worker keeps a close record of the students' progress at the workplace. We make phone calls with the employer, make sure that he (the student) is coming on time. I keep a list of who we need to find a job (for). It is important that we show both sides that we are keeping track of them. The student sees that we are watching how they are working.

Inevitably it is impossible to find assistantships for all of the students, and the school must develop alternatives, such as developing programs in the school or volunteer activities. <u>There is a mentoring project that is done every year, this way they find a framework to do activities. It has its own budget. The goal is to provide a framework for students that did not manage to find employment.</u> Sometimes there are not enough assistantships available for all of the students and then the school tries to be creative by creating programs to enable the students to get the training they need in-house. <u>We are examining whether there is an ability to expand the vocation of commercial carpentry.</u> The school uses this vocation to provide assistantships to students. In order for these alternative training programs to work the school must develop more effective programs for assistantships that will deal with the community. <u>I send the hair design students to the senior citizens home. They cut their hair, they give them manicures, etc. They talk with them. Once a month we go there. We go to a program of Ort with Holocaust survivors. We try to bring the Holocaust survivors back to school. Since they were thrown out of schools by (Nazis), we are bringing them back.</u>

Alternative assistantship programs aim to increase contact with other people from out of school, and in so doing positively affect their socialization into mainstream society. <u>The issue of volunteer work is very big. Getting students to come to read with (handicapped students and senior citizens) in the library. I work with handicapped people, who are very intelligent but have difficulties walking or other physical problems.</u> The schools aim to get the students to volunteer in these activities, which serve as a means to both provide vocational training and to develop moral responsibility. However, there are problems with getting young people who are already less privileged to become outgoing volunteers. <u>There is no connection with the community, volunteering comes after the fulfilment of basic needs, when there is the ability to give. They are missing a lot of steps to be able to get to the point where they can think about improving the community and society. It is also a very self-centered age. The school has initiated projects of community involvement, but in my opinion it is not voluntary, because it a school initiative, not due to the students, and there are many objections among students.</u> Furthermore, it is difficult getting the students to engage in assistantships when they are trying to invest in school. VET students who have aspirations to invest in their studies or to complete matriculation may feel too pressed to also take on an assistantship. <u>In the 11th and 12th grades they work three - four days a week. There is a problem. Every year we add hours of studying, on the other hand the ministry says the model is a model of the student who works and studies. But it has become difficult to do both - because of the load.</u> The students may not feel that the assistantship is worth it for them, and therefore they may choose an unsponsored employment. <u>The employers pay them the minimum, and they limit the number of hours they can work.</u> The difficulty of having the students pursue outside labour is that they may end up working more hours, the jobs may not provide them with a career path, and as a result, they may end up leaving school.

ii. Providing learning resources (teachers, tools, and courses)

VET, as opposed to traditional academic courses, requires a number of resources that may be difficult to procure. We have already mentioned the problem of teacher procurement, which was cited by respondents at the national level and all three schools. <u>Our problem is getting teachers for vocational skills. What do I do? We have a teacher who wants to retire, I have to tell him that he has to come back, what can we do without you. I expect that unless we have a revolution, and if MOITL doesn't take this into their hands, then we will be in a very difficult situation where there are no teachers. There is no institution that trains teachers to be vocational teachers. There aren't people. This is an existential difficulty.</u> Schools mentioned this need to train new teachers as well as to take vocational

professionals and to give them teacher training, such that they can come into the school to teach and are better able to provide for the students in the workplace. The level of the workshops in my opinion is not suitable to market conditions, not because they do not have the tools (they are equipped with appropriate equipment), but because the teachers are already adults. We need to train new teachers, who are suited to (teach for) the existing conditions of the labour market and the technologies required. In order to deal with this lack of teachers the school must often be creative to bring individuals from the community to work with the students. For example, at the General School, not only are the students volunteering with the elderly and physically handicapped, but they are also being instructed by them. They don't have mental handicaps and they volunteer to help our students.

In addition to teachers there is also a need for equipment that the school can use to build in-school laboratories for the students. Some of the courses require more expensive equipment, and the school must consider how to acquire this equipment with its limited budget. I would like to get a new machine of CNC, and the machines are very expensive. If I would buy this it would be too much. |So we look for second hand goods, and we bought one for 50000 shekels, and it isn't simple. There is a huge gap between what we see here and what we have in reality. Schools often feel that they are not given the funding that they need to expand their schools to both provide more laboratories and include more students. They often see a problem relating to the division of resources by administration that prevents them from acquiring more resources. The mayor said that if (the school) was under the management of the Ministry of Education we would already be receiving more funding and would be able to expand the school. That is to say that this is a major problem - we do not have enough space. In essence we don't feel that there isn't support from MOITL because we are an Arab school.

While equipment is very important for vocational students, they also need textbooks. Often textbooks in Hebrew and Arabic are simply not available in a given field. At other times the textbooks they don't have access to these materials. There isn't anything that is ready. We have to prepare them. We have to print them. We also prepare for other schools these workbooks, materials. We give the students the books at the minimal cost. If they can't afford these books, because there are students who are pressed, we give them to them. As a result of the problems procuring classroom materials, many VET educators find that they have the additional responsibility of preparing special books for the school. They often mentioned how they would summarize the books used in other schools, adapting them for the level of the current students. At the regular Arab high school they study from five books. We collected the necessary materials for our students and made it a special book, in order to save the financial cost of buying books. We do it in Arabic, Hebrew and mathematics. We also simplified the material for weaker students. We give them the materials at a level that they can understand. It is the same text, but an abstract (shortened), so they can learn the same material (even though) they have different levels of understanding.

Related to this need to provide teachers and materials is the need to adapt courses to the market's and students' demands. Sometimes there aren't teachers, equipment, space, or textbooks available, but at other times the problem is merely related to the administrations' abilities to interpret the demands and reform the system. There is a problem of adjusting the courses with the demand of the market and also with the level of readiness to enter the work force. The vocational schools were formed both as a way to provide skills to young people so that they could easily enter the labour market, but it was also developed because many students were not interested in the subjects being taught in the General School system. (We were) looking for ways to engage the children. Once kids get bored it is much more difficult to teach them, to deal with them. In addition it allows (us) to increase the sense of

competence for children, most of whom have experienced many failures in the past. (We) show children that they can cultivate self-confidence. The schools are always trying to find innovative ways to engage students who previously weren't engaged in school. This means that the school cannot always focus on the demands of the market. They have to focus on personal development rather than transition into the labour market. The main goal of the school now is to restore the children, rebuild them personally. If possible to assist and provide training so that it (the experience) is positive. Since many troubled youth end up in the MOITL system, we found that all of the schools highlighted the importance of moral education, teaching the students important values that they should have in life, such as responsibility and caring for others. We try to give the students a lot of values, we invest a great deal, that he will learn, that he will progress… meetings between Arabs and Jews, etc. It's a good social framework, strengthening the child, trying to teach the value of profession, reinforcing instruction, one on one.

While the national advisory board was especially concerned with adjusting the schools to the labour market, the schools highlighted that they do not solely look at the needs of the market but rather stick to certain ideals that dictate the curriculum. The essence of this point is a philosophical concept that not only the market should dictate VET policy, but rather VET policy should also dictate the market. As a result, we found that schools have the idea that they are reforming the system, rectifying injustices in the marketplace by training a new generation in skills with a supply-side economics methodology. This aspect was especially apparent in the Arab school. In my opinion – we teach the subjects regardless of what is happening outside ... We have vocational courses and costs. Every time you open something new, (you) try to see if there is a demand, and continue .I want this to change, but I do not think we have enough resources, enough capacity. I am frustrated about the major economic problems of the world, and here in Israel and in the Arab sector. As opposed to the responses about Arab inclusion being a positive experience from the national advisory board, all of whom were Jewish, we heard different reactions from the school. In their opinion there is a problem with national expectations that Arabs should be directed towards vocational education, as this implies that they are not suited for high level jobs. Vocational education for the Arab sector in general needs to be treated at the root. We have always maintained that the Arab sector does not want to learn a vocation. In contrast to the Arab scenario, we found that the Haredi school experiences the opposite phenomenon, an expectation that the children will not be involved in vocational education, and hence there is a need to create a stronger basis in vocational education, such that the entire society will open up more to vocational labour. Children will grow up, and it is very difficult for a boy who grows up in Haredi society to go to work if he never learned. So the study of vocations are important, even if (the student) will work in something different, it will take him to first base, knowing he can learn. Students finish with a sense of accomplishment and success, with a real diploma and are better prepared for the future. The most important resource that all of the schools sought to provide was optimism, as each of the schools are dealing with a population that is able to do better but lacking an experience of success that makes them realize it is possible to succeed.

D. Transition from education to work

Graduating from a VET school does not guarantee a job as it would in many European countries where the student can continue working in the company that he received an assistantship. On the other hand most Israeli students must go to the army, and this delays their ability to transition directly from the school to the labour market. Furthermore, the schools lack a strong reputation in the market, such that many companies would prefer a student with a matriculation certificate, even if that student lacks

experience in the labour market. We identified two main themes of transitions to the work place: enabling transitions and providing opportunities.

i. Enabling transitions

The assistantship programs that these schools offer are perhaps the most direct form of creating a transition to work, because they bring the students into a professional environment where they can learn responsibilities of employment. One of the main goals of the internship is to show the importance of work. Taking students from a lower socio-economic background and exposing them to work life seems to improve their later integration into the labour market. A lot of them come from poor families, and they see the work as something that can help them. The student makes a thousand shekels, he can work with older people who train him. This is a huge advantage of working in industry. There is no student in any other school (who can say this.) Realizing that in the end of the day the market will look more favourably on a student with a matriculation certificate, the schools also attempt to create matriculation opportunities for the students. This was especially apparent in the discussions with the Arab school where a small but still significant number of students are pursuing matriculation. The teachers try to identify students with potential and open this track for him. It is seen as a means for upward mobility and is relevant only to small numbers of students. The studies for the Bagrut are perceived as giving motivation for good students. They do not go out with only an occupation, but rather they can complete the Bagrut and they can be like students from regular schools. They are proud of this and love the fact that they do the Bagrut, and it gives them motivation to succeed. It allows upward mobility to those who study partial Bagrut. If they succeed and find motivation, it allows them to prepare for full matriculation. It is important to note that those who progress (like this) are a minority. On the other hand, the General School was extremely proud of its vocational diplomas. They pointed to the mismatch that takes place between the expectations of MoE for students to complete matriculation exams, and the low numbers who succeed. On the other hand, the school praised the vocational diplomas that are administered by MOITL and the system of providing a finishing certificate even for those students who do not succeed in the exam. They questioned how MoE students may finish school without a document. Even if we don't give them a vocational degree, but not to give them a finishing certificate… The vocational diploma itself is seen as important and worth a great deal of money in the private market, but yet at the same time worthless without real-world experience. You get a degree like this, but in order for it to be worth anything, you need experience… these degrees are worth a great deal of money. These courses would be (worth a great deal of money) in the private market. The schools try to get the students to identify how valuable their education is and will be, hence getting them to take their studies more seriously than students in the mainstream educational tracks, who truly do not learn career skills in school.

As far as the Haredi sector is concerned, enabling a transition to the labour market requires a change in the mentality of the students and community that will support such transitions. There is a slow change in ultra-orthodox society towards the promotion of entrance to the world of work. The school itself tries to make the link with this world, and to develop an image of a model orthodox citizen who works: a person will rise in the morning, pray as an Orthodox does and then go to work. While the local and national boards indicated that some changes in Haredi society are taking place, they were also cautious of implying that any real changes are going to happen in our lifetimes. The society is built on the concept of exclusion. (I) also think the Haredi society is more extreme in terms of its self-preservation. Therefore, you cannot for example set up a framework for training ultra-Orthodox or place of employment that is situated in the middle of Tel Aviv. The ultra-Orthodox will see it and rush

back again into the Haredi world. In order to make any changes or exceptions it is necessary to get the support of rabbis, who at the same time are dedicated towards resisting changes to preserve the values and customs of the community. The relationship is complex: Officially rabbis say no to develop any alternative frameworks and especially frameworks that promote integration in society at large - each framework that isn't a Yeshiva is seen as getting closer to secularism. On the other hand there is no orthodox framework that opens without an informal approval of the rabbis, who must provide recommendations. (As a result) there is action, but it is done under the table.

The army is perhaps just as important as school in enabling future transitions. The army was not indicated to be associated with the Arab school. Other than the Druze population, enlistment by Arabs into the army is rare. At most Jewish schools the army representatives visit the school to encourage recruitment. At vocational schools they also advertise and direct students to vocational service instead of combat service. In the General School about 80% go to the army, a high number considering the socioeconomic background of most students that tends to generally reduce recruitment rates. The army is actively engaged in conversations with the school about the development of courses and enlistment of its students. There are people (from the IDF) who call and say that we have two autotronics classes, and they have a large need for people in this field in the army. A kid in an academic program doesn't have this knowledge, and he must study for 6 months to be ready. Our kid has 2 years of experience already and this is a major advantage. The student will get encouragement to serve this role (in the army). So the army functions to enable social inclusion for these students, providing them with a way to expand their VET experience with practical work in the army, which will transition to either continued army service or a smoother transition to the labour market. Besides just enabling a transition to the workforce by creating VET programs, many in society see the army as enabling the integration of the Haredi community. Army service is officially required for many jobs and unofficially required for many more. However, the issue of military service is taboo for the ultra-Orthodox. Their main concern is its effect on their children and the social contact between sexes. The school is caught between an official policy to not openly direct students into the army and the realization that many students may have to, as they are dropouts from a Yeshiva. Realistically (we) worry about the welfare of each student individually, so (we) are trying to listen and help all students. There is a requirement of enlistment for those who don't study in a Yeshiva. And yes, the percentage of those who do enlist is high. But, officially (we) do not direct students (to the army). This is a very complicated issue. How do we help each student at a personal level? (We) do work next to the army in order to try to enable the students to get involved in the vocations that they study, and in ways that will be acceptable as Haredim.   One compromise scenario that the school looks into is trying to create special situations in which the Haredi students can participate in the army and employment positions that will preserve an environment that is keeping with their traditions. This method, which was referenced both by the Arab and Haredi school, can be summarized as 'inclusion by exclusion'. In regards to the Haredi school, they have been making progress for developing contacts that will enable their students a religious environment if they do choose to enter the army or workforce. (I am) also is in contact with the army in order that they can be ready for military service professions while maintaining ultra-Orthodox character during their service. (We) hold meetings on the subject and the process is still underway. One improvement that the school sees are new military units that will cater to only Haredi soldiers. This year was the first time that we had a large group in the Nahal Haredi (a military group). As part of the military track they will have a yearlong task, and the school staff wants to be in contact with them and assist in directing and finding them a job. The school recognizes that if the student does fulfill army service this will ease his ability to transfer afterwards into the labour market where he will be better received and have necessary experience to advance. I think it will be

very good, will give graduates job experience, thus when they will be released from the army they will fit even better in the labour market. Most youth who learn with us do not fit the definition of (religion students), and therefore they will have to study in the military. The army needs craftsmen, electricians, builders and more. (I) want to have a combination that will allow Orthodox service conditions, the school will send youth for this, so they can advance their professional internship within the army, and (as a result) the job market will be better. Having talked about support for Army service, the respondents almost unanimously qualified their statements with the fact that the Haredi community, the army, the families, and the rabbis do not support enlistment to the army, and therefore the official school policy is not to support enlistment. (We) are also open and think that the army contributes. There is a problem for parents about military service, which is received negatively. They cannot openly declare support for military service because no Haredi parent will agree to send his son to (us).

ii. Providing Opportunities

The vocational school has to do more than just prepare students for work. It also has to create real opportunities for graduates to move forward into the work world. Israeli communities are relatively small. As a result, the students are limited in the number of jobs that they can find when finishing. The General School proudly discussed how they not only prepare students for entry to work-life, but they also directly assist the students by connecting them with others from the community. The people who are giving our students work, are the same people who were our students in the past. All schools are developing a community with a system of networking that enables the school to provide real jobs for its students. Professional craftsmen will always find employment. Everyone is industrious, they know what work is, they were well educated, they got creative education, for employment. They will have employment opportunities within the Haredi community. The fact that the school can use contacts to enable real jobs for the students is an amazing benefit, as the school increases its reputation as a place that can really make a difference. The General School is located in a larger city than the other two, and they talked a great deal about the companies and factories that employ their current students and former graduates. They are very proud about these close contacts that they have made, but they also pointed a finger at specific institutions that we won't mention for not providing assistantships or jobs for their students. Both the Arab school and Haredi school expressed disappointment at not being able to do more for their students. However, we found that the Haredi school often critiques its own society, while the Arab school extends the blame to the Jewish society that oppresses it. Regarding the Haredi society, we heard a great deal of frustration about the lack of community support to help the students. There is a problem for the students to find a job when they graduate because of the general attitude in the Orthodox society to work. It hurts that the Haredi society lacks an employment channel (outlet for finding work). Such a channel was destroyed following the destruction of Orthodox communities in the Holocaust, the world of Torah was almost made extinct, and in response they (the Haredim) devoted all of their energies to rebuilding the Torah world, and now we have created a trend - everyone is going in the direction of general academic studies - Torah study. There may be an ideological debate about it, but in practice this is not feasible. The Haredi school though also placed blame on the mainstream secular society for not enabling social inclusion that will allow them to maintain their Haredi identity. When considering the integration into the labour market one must bear in mind the need to preserve a suitable work environment for the ultra-orthodox. It's a problem of creating a progressive work environment that is appropriate for the Haredi community – (I) think this is a national issue. All populations want to feel comfortable, and ultra-Orthodox society is no different in that sense.

The Arab school representatives went on a bit of a tantrum about their lack of being able to do more for their students. The economic difficulties of the Arab sector play a great role in this case. The school puts a lot of input into building social frameworks, trying to help the students on a personal level and by this easier the transition into the labour market, but because of the quality of the training supplied and the hard economic situation they estimate that about 70% of the graduates do not work in the profession they studied. This scenario of teaching students a vocation that they can't use is met with hard feelings of being an excluded minority in Israeli society and the market. From where does the trouble start - being an oppressed minority, with high unemployment, despair among the population. It's not that anyone is promising students hope for the future, there is a sense of helplessness, hopelessness within the system (the state). We know that a German boy who studies knows that he will go to work in a large company. Here an Arab student will have nowhere to go (to progress), to which great company will he be accepted? They feel that the reason that contrary to the Jewish sector, where there is a large supply of vocational jobs, in the Arab sector such jobs are not available and they are excluded from the Jewish market. A normal (school) system does nothing for the (Arab) students, so then they come here ... This is a major problem of the Arab sector, there are not a large amount of vocational job opportunities – in factories, etc. The situation is not simple, it affects the (students') motivation, the prestige of the vocational curriculum, and this is a major source of failure. Respondents pointed out changes in the concepts of family that have occurred in Arab society. The students can no longer get jobs by family contacts and the school is expected to do more. Today society has changed - solidarity disappeared, the extended family is less important, there is more of an emphasis on the nuclear family. All this affects the economic pressure, the willingness to help in finding jobs… However, the Arab school did provide a more positive concept of the continuation of students in the labour market after their experience in the assistantship. By getting the student into the working world through the assistantship, the school is able to create a scenario in which the student has an opportunity to keep that job. In the 11th grade the child leaves for the labour market, this is the first direct encounter between the student and the labour market. There in the first market, he comes out as a student employee. He wakes up early, wears a uniform, enters the adult world - where his behavior should be appropriate for the job because they do not compromise like they do in school. This encounter with the world of work is the most difficult for students. There they receive the first indicator of whether the student will succeed or not. If we think that the student will not succeed, then we begin to invest more efforts to help them, calls and more. Some students remain in their workplace after the end of the school year. The school was also very candid about discussing the benefits and problems that are associated with each vocation. Providing assistantship opportunities becomes very tied to the job opportunities that the community can provide for the student upon graduation. Garages are convenient because they are located in Nazareth. Air Conditioning is based on seasonal employment, which is also difficult because the work is carried out throughout the country. In the barber course there was a concern with the number of graduates who would open barber shops of their own, and therefore there was less cooperation.

Many spoke of the socio-economic status of parents affecting the types of employment that the student can pursue. In the Arab school they indicated that many of the families are persistent that the child needs to start working immediately, before finishing school, which as mentioned previously, is why most dropouts occur. The school also spoke of the fact that many students are so pressed to earn money that they are not able to pursue a vocation where they may start out earning less, even if the end result will be to earn more. This awareness develops in two forms - some realize if they understand the profession, they can "save" their family, and some think that this work will not change anything, so they are going to work in the profession that will bring them money immediately, and not

<u>necessarily one related to the profession they are studying.</u> The General and Haredi schools also spoke a great deal about problems with the students' families' economic conditions and the current state of the economy in general that make the transition from school even more difficult for their students. Many noticed that there is a bit of a contradiction in the Israeli state, whereby school diplomas are more highly valued for vocational fields than the vocational diplomas that MOITL provides. One policy recommendation that all schools seem to support is that there should be greater status given to the MOITL vocational diplomas. The army and companies should be encouraged to hire students who have such diplomas. Furthermore, there need to be more paths created for state sponsored assistantships. Many companies are not willing to invest in students who will leave the job for the army. Hence, the state needs to think of ways that will enable VET graduates to continue with their assistantship positions. These and other recommendations will be expanded in the final section.

2. COMPARISON AT THE EDUCATOR LEVEL

We discovered a similar process of selection and tracking of students in the General and Arab schools, whereby exams and interviews determine the students' decision to enter a course. Students are placed into specific vocational fields based on whether they are believed to be capable of pursuing the course, the amount of space available, and the students' motivations. Both schools emphasized that motivation was the ultimate overruling factor. The Haredi school on the other hand lacks an extensive amount of courses, and the students are able to try all of them. The Haredi students also start the vocational training at a younger age, which allows them time to decide in which course to specialize. All of the schools emphasize that it was extremely important to know the students' backgrounds, because most of them have a problem of some sort in their lives that affect their ability to succeed in school. Finally, all of the schools recognized that they receive many students who have learning disabilities and behavioral issues, and this requires providing special services, such as smaller courses and personal counselling.

We found very similar discussions about dropouts from all three schools. The analysis highlighted that a reactive definition of dropouts shows that MOITL schools are dropout centers. The school is collecting the dropouts and trying to turn them into competent students. All of the schools indicated that their students feel stigma for being relegated to a VET school. All of the schools indicated that there were many hard stories of students who ended up on the street, and highlighted that family problems were often the cause of the students' deterioration. Regarding the proactive definition, all schools generally dismissed a serious problem with students dropping out. After doing so, the respondents usually provided a candid discussion on the reasons some students drop out (going to work, family problems, psychological problems, going back to their old school, delinquency, etc.). The Haredi school spoke least about dropouts, but they highlighted that a very few cannot handle the rules imposed, while most dropouts move back to the Yeshiva for positive reasons of achievement. All of the schools commented that they do not suffer from a larger amount of dropouts, because they are the end-of-the-line, the students' last chance. The schools also all mentioned that they offer a superior facility than MoE schools and Yeshivas for dealing with problematic students, which is also why these students do not drop out.

The two main patterns of education which promote social inclusion that we identified were helping students with assistantships and providing learning resources. The dual system of schooling with assistantships is a distinguishing feature of VET as opposed to TVET in Israel. The school is very involved in making sure that the student can find an assistantship. All of the schools expressed frustration with the government's regulations and assistance in helping the students to get sponsored

trainee positions. The Haredi community, primarily for geographical reasons but also do to its religious policy of secular exclusion, runs its own in-house programs. The Arab and General schools actively market their students to the community. While at times the schools criticized the community for not doing more to help the students, they also highly praised the community for doing many wonderful things for the school, and often qualified any criticism with a discussion of historical and macro forces of culture, the economy, and dysfunctional politics. As a result of these primarily national forces, the procurement of learning resources has become difficult for all of the schools. The lack of qualified teachers was emphasized numerous times from all angles. Furthermore, due to both a lack of resource exchange with MoE, in addition to national and local bureaucracy, the schools develop independent methods to procure learning resources.

The economic environment has been hostile for VET students and graduates, but the schools identified many opportunities to improve the situation. The educators discussed both the potential fields of employment that were available in the labour market, and those fields that students are having difficulty getting jobs in. The reasons they gave for difficulties ranged from abstract discussions of social forces that create reproduction of social capital to concrete examples of scenarios in which a student tried to get a job in a specific company. Certain industries were discussed as being less accessible for the VET students, such as the barber shops for the Arab school, secular factories for the Haredi school, and universities for the General school. We distinguished the school's role into two concepts: enabling transitions and providing opportunities. The Arab and General schools discussed how their students were motivated to take VET seriously because it provided them with a small income, and they understood its future value. The Haredi school emphasized the close relationship that forms, because of its isolation as a rural boarding school.

Each of the schools has a slightly different outlook on how to enable VET students with the necessary tools for the labour market. The General school promote vocational degrees as being a valuable resource for future employment. All schools though would like to see greater status given to vocational degrees. The General school also highlighted the importance of communication with the IDF for developing courses and providing future opportunities for its students. The Haredi school cautiously discussed collaboration and tacit support for the IDF as a transition, but the school emphasized its support restrictions. The Arab school discussed the importance of studying for the Bagrut (matriculation), while recognizing that it is only suitable for a small percentage of its students. The schools also have different ways of providing job opportunities. Each of the schools discussed the importance of building a network with local and national industries. The Haredi school would like to see the development of a Haredi vocational labour market and to expand its community so as to enable jobs for Haredi VET students. The General school would like to expand its social partners. It emphasized how it works with former graduates to build a community. The Arab school was very critical of the community, both its own and the larger Jewish community that excludes it. All of the schools discussed the importance of NGOs that provide services geared towards helping VET students and career development for adults in vocational fields. Almost all of the educators indicated that there needs to be more leadership by national policy makers towards enabling state sponsored assistantships and career programs for VET students.

3. COMPARISON AT THE STUDENT LEVEL

When looking overall at the educator level we found many common opinions. However, variance at the student level was quite high. Our analysis was composed of five major themes: A) Choice, B)

Experience, C) Motivation, D) School Evaluation, and E) Expectations. Briefly we will recall these themes and compare the schools according to each.

Across all schools surveyed the choice of the VET school is not usually a choice for the students. Rather, the students are primarily dropouts from other schools, who had no other choice than attend the VET school or not attend school at all. As a result, the students may have interpreted this question on choice as the reason that they feel it is important to study VET. We discovered that students overall in all schools believe very much that it will increase their chances to find a more prestigious job that will provide them more money. However, we found that the Haredi school believes it attends VET more to learn skills to support one's career and the Arab school does so more due to family expectations. The students' reasons for specifically choosing that VET school may also have been a difficult question for the students to interpret, as most students after having been relegated to VET will choose the school that is closest to home. As a result, the students most likely considered why they like or don't like their current school. The Haredi school though was an exception to this rule, as students came from distant locations. Furthermore, the Arab school highlighted how it also has a number of students from surrounding villages that travel out of their way to get to school. We found that that the General school was likely to say that it *chose* the school due to its reputation, while the Haredi school *chose* the school because it liked the courses.

We isolated four components of experience (practical, psychological, training, and extra-curricular) by which to distinguish the schools. The practical component was found to be insignificantly different by school. This was one of the only factors in our analysis that turned out to be insignificant by school. We did not find any significant differences in how much they feel they learn from their courses, whether what they learn will help in a future job, or any of the variables related to practical experience. Most of the students in all schools have a favourable opinion about VET and their schools being practical. In regards to the psychological component, while all of the students are happier than not, the Haredi school is the most happy. The reasons for a more positive psychological experience in this school appear to be the result of the strong community feelings that exist in a boarding school. It is important to consider that the school is not the only apparatus for influencing students' psychological experience, but rather their relative circumstances at home and elsewhere may be dramatically influencing how happy they are at the present school. The training experience component did not have many significant differences by school, because the Haredi school does not have work in outside companies. The General school had less students in paid work, but this also appears to be related to a larger amount of younger students working in the Arab and Haredi schools. Finally, the extracurricular component showed that the Haredi School participated more in sports and voluntary work. We attributed these differences both in terms of the rural boarding school aspect of the Haredi school, and this community's definitions and importance of volunteering.

The motivations of the three schools were not significantly different in terms of their drive to succeed. The students in all schools are motivated to do well for their family's sake, their own, and their future job prospects. The students though differed by school in their perceptions of being discriminated against, as Arab students were more likely to feel discriminated against in every possible way. While Arab students do feel more discriminated against, it should be noted that overall the students in each school gave an average below the middle score for all forms of discrimination. Haredi students were least likely to feel discriminated against in everything but their religion, although Arab students still felt much more discriminated against for this. The only variable form of discrimination that had no

significant difference was disability-biased, which appears to be related to the lacking relevance of the question for most students.

The ratings that students gave their schools for quality, social environment, and facilities were significantly different with a few exceptions being the teachers' subject knowledge and school buildings. We were surprised to not find significant differences due to the fact that the students did not rate these variables rather high. Students in the Haredi school gave the highest ratings for quality, as expressed by teaching methods. Students in the Arab school gave the lowest rating for social environment, as expressed by student and teacher friendliness. Students in the Haredi school found less need for improvements in classroom equipment, which we believe may say more about the culture of the community being less critical than the objective facilities offered.

Expectations were analyzed for both what the student expects to achieve and who they expect to help them in their job search. The first question was problematic, as it provided an either/or option for working and other plans. It appears many students who plan to work also plan to attend future education, take care of their family, and/or perhaps work for a family business. The Haredi school has lower expectations to go for further education and to look after family. We also investigated expectations for army enlistment in the Jewish schools and discovered that the Haredi school had an identical high rate of 88% planning to enlist. As far as who the students expect to help them, we found that students in all schools have similar expectations from people (family, friends, and teachers) but different expectations from services (the school, a career center, and an employment agency). The students though expressed a similar overall level of expectations from both people and services. The students in the Arab school specifically expressed lower expectations for help from services. We noted that this finding may be related to the Arab populations' greater economic distress, exclusion from the labour market, and distrust of state institutions.

4. COMPARISON BETWEEN NATIONAL, STUDENT, AND EDUCATOR PERSPECTIVES

After examining the perspectives of VET actors from all levels, we found that educators' perspectives showed less variance than those of students. Both the national advisory board interviews, the teacher survey, and the local advisory board interviews yielded similar responses about its policies and impressions of social inclusion. Across the boards, there was an opinion that VET requires greater resources and respect. Blame was attributed rather evenly, although we did observe that less blame was placed specifically on MOITL or the VET schools, and more of the blame was placed on students' backgrounds, businesses, MoE, the Knesset, the economy, and social forces that are often beyond their control. The national advisory board perceived a valour for VET in Arab society, but at the school level we did not perceive the same level of valour, as the school highlighted many of the same problems of lacking prestige for VET that the Jewish schools discussed. The national advisory board and the Arab school though agreed on the need for high-level vocational training programs to integrate a wider variety of students, a point which the Haredi and General schools discussed less as a policy measure. MOITL officials and school principals expressed cautious optimism for integrating higher level students. Their worries were predicated on political implications that might cede VET schools to MoE and pragmatic recognition that the government and society was unlikely to enable them to receive higher level students.

The schools' administrations overall appear to side step the issue of integrating ethnic groups. The Jewish schools claim that such integration is already present, and the idea of using VET schools to promote more active integration was generally shunned. Most educators commented how these

schools are already populated by students with special needs, and it would be exceedingly unstable with any greater cross-cultural contact experiments. It was stated that these students already have many problems, and perhaps this is not the proper arena for integration activities. The schools claim they are open to diverse students, but as the teacher survey indicated, the schools are usually not seeking to attract ethnic minorities. In the schools' defence, while there was disagreement on how well the school attracts students from other ethnic groups, there was not disagreement about whether the school provides equal opportunities for such students.

The results of the student surveys provided us with a unique perspective to learn more about relevant policies that might be inferred and not apparent to the national and local advisory boards. While the majority of findings were complimentary between levels, we also inferred certain ideas for important policy developments for social inclusion that national and local advisory boards did not suggest. The national advisory board expressed openness to the Arab population's inclusion in VET, but the Arab school expressed a feeling its students are excluded from the labour market. This feeling of exclusion was also expressed by the Arab students, who had higher feelings of all forms of discrimination. Their feelings of discrimination were not exceptionally high, but the Arab students also had low expectations of how welcoming their school was and how much help they could expect. Haredi inclusion was discussed by national and local advisory boards cautiously. However, we found that an astounding number of Haredi students plan to enlist in the army, and that they are much less interested in pursuing future studies. Finally, we noticed that the General students had more of an expectation of places (the school, career services, and employment agencies) for finding them work. The expanded expectations from people in the Haredi and Arab communities highlight how these two communities have developed internal mechanisms due to a lack of expectations from and trust in state institutions. The national and local advisory boards also indicated that more does need to be done to expand institutions' capabilities of finding employment for VET students, although they were less specific to the development of institutions specific to minorities. Many other discoveries were made in which age, gender, and social class significantly predicted students' opinions. These three schools may exist in relatively great exclusion from one another, but students from all schools represent a deviant youth subgroup that has common interests and problems.

Appendix 3: Survey results

Table 1: Yes/No Educator Questions with Little or No Variance

	%Yes	SD
There are equal opportunities in admission for female students	100%	0.00
The school provides work experience for students from poor families	100%	0.00
The school provides work experience for students from other ethnic minorities	100%	0.00
There are equal opportunities in admission for students from poor families	97%	0.19
The school provides work experience for students with special needs	97%	0.19
There are equal opportunities in admission for students from other ethnic minorities	96%	0.19
Does the school provide career guidance opportunities to students?	96%	0.19

Table 2: Yes/No Educator Questions with High Variance

	Mean	SD
The school seeks to attract students showing an interest in a particular profession	75%	0.44
The school has no preferences	72%	0.46
Do you use computers to aid teaching in your classroom?	62%	0.50
The school seeks to attract students from ethnic minorities	38%	0.50
The school seeks to attract students from a less privileged social background	44%	0.51
The school seeks to attract students with disabilities	46%	0.51
The school seeks to attract boys more than girls	46%	0.51
The school seeks to attract students from poor families	52%	0.51

Table 3: 5-Point Likert Scale Questions with Low Variance

	Mean	SD
How well school maintains vocational enrolments	4.30	0.67
Respect of students for the school	4.31	0.71
Rating of consultation with parents	4.00	0.76
The school provides a welcoming environment for all students	4.31	0.76
The school recognizes and values students' achievements	4.14	0.79
Adequacy of equipment	3.93	0.80
Job placement for students from ethnic minorities and other social groups	2.54	0.83
Adequacy of buildings	3.69	0.85
The school deals with learning difficulties by making teacher time available	3.72	0.88
How well school links the vocational curriculum to local labour market needs	4.17	0.89

Table 4: 5-Point Likert Scale Questions with High Variance

	Mean	SD
Problem behaviour - Bullying	2.75	1.00
Job placement for disabled students	2.08	1.02
The school offers disabled students additional teaching support	3.42	1.03
Problem behaviour - Student discipline	3.38	1.05
Problem behaviour - Student absenteeism	3.41	1.05
The school promotes social inclusion by providing extracurricular activities	3.86	1.06
The school promotes social inclusion through support for disabled students	3.93	1.09
Problem behaviour - Student motivation	3.45	1.09
The school promotes social inclusion through support for disadvantaged students	4.14	1.09
The school deals with learning difficulties through additional teaching support	3.69	1.14
The school promotes social inclusion through special "school days" open to the community	3.43	1.29

Table 5: Reason for choice of vocational school in preference to other type of school

	To learn skills to support my career	Family expectations
Father unemployed		2.61
Mother unemployed		3.58
Haredi School	4.53	3.02
General School	3.96	2.61
Arab School	3.71	3.80
TOTAL	**3.94**	**3.16**

Table 6: Reason for choice of this vocational school

	Reputation of school	Liked courses
Father has university education	2.45	
Haredi School	3.44	4.26
General School	2.71	3.89
Arab School	3.25	3.56
Total	**3.04**	**3.82**

Table 7: Experience in school

	How happy do you feel in school?	Hours per week in outside company	Paid work	Voluntary work	Sports
16 or under			0.40	0.33	0.69
Over 16			0.54	0.22	0.49
Male		7.82	0.47	0.32	0.69
Female		5.19	0.29	0.20	0.35
Haredi School	7.83		0.67	0.41	0.76
General School	6.66		0.45	0.20	0.56
Arab School	6.05		0.34	0.36	0.66
TOTAL	**6.60**	**7.15**	**0.40**	**0.33**	**0.63**

Table 8: School motivation

Importance of doing well in school...		Discrimination by...					
	for you personally	Gender	Ethnicity	Disability	Religion	Qualifications	School
Male	4.31						
Female	4.65						
Electricians	4.12						
Haredi School		1.13	1.35		1.82	1.84	1.55
General School		1.38	1.69		1.54	2.48	2.35
Arab School		1.97	2.33		2.57	2.95	2.72
TOTAL	**4.37**	**1.58**	**1.84**	**1.43**	**1.94**	**2.52**	**2.34**

Table 9: School Ratings

	How do you rate your school:			Improvements needed in:
	Teaching methods	**Friendliness of other students**	**Friendliness of teachers**	**Classroom equipment**
Electricians				2.90
16 or under	3.56			
Over 16	3.17			
Haredi School	3.84	3.98	4.51	2.81
General School	3.26	3.95	3.56	3.50
Arab School	3.47	3.42	3.50	3.55
TOTAL	**3.43**	**3.76**	**3.70**	**3.41**

Table 10: Plans for the future

	Go to further education	Look after family	Go to family business
Male		0.85	
Female		1	
Father unemployed	0.69		0.31
Haredi School	0.33	0.67	0
General School	0.57	0.95	0.42
Arab School	0.61	0.83	0.56
TOTAL	**0.59**	**0.89**	**0.48**

Table 11: Transition from school to work

	School	Career centre in school	Public employment agency
Male		2.84	2.94
Female		3.34	3.64
Both parents works			3.52
Mother unemployed	2.91		2.87
Haredi School	3.49	3.25	2.96
General School	3.28	3.12	3.41
Arab School	2.65	2.59	2.66
Total	**3.09**	**2.93**	**3.07**

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