

Migration and multiculturalism: the Israeli experience and perspectives for international cooperation

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Global social changes

- The population mobility increases. => Every government has to convince its own people not to emigrate to other countries and attract people from other countries who have a potential to contribute.
 - Two hundred years ago, Joseph de Maistre (1753-1821) said “Every nation has the government it deserves.”
 - Today, we may say that every government has the population it deserves.
- Good relationships between diaspora and the “motherland” become pivotal for survival of both.
 - 3 million Brazilians are living abroad. Last year, they sent close to \$3 billion in remittances to Brazil.
 - Half a million Israelis live abroad + about 5 million Jews; about 100,000 Jews live in Brazil.
- The level of ethnic heterogeneity increases. => Dominant groups lose their position & the role of minority groups increases in all domains, including economics, politics, culture, and education.
- This new situation opens new opportunities for development, but also increases a sense of instability. => We witness a tidal wave of populism, extremism, and terrorism all over the world.

New challenges for universities in this brave new world (1)

- Competition among universities increases and becomes global. =>
- Universities have to attract new student populations, including ethnic minorities and immigrants.
- These new students have an agenda that is somewhat different from the traditional student population. We know little about it, because we have not studied them enough.
- We may assume that the new students are more pragmatically oriented on one hand (their economic situation is worse and, therefore, their need to survive and advance is stronger), and they want to learn more about their own group's history, culture, and social problems, on the other hand.

New challenges for universities (2)

- The new student population faces specific challenges:
 - Their language mastery is often not enough for academic studies and research.
 - They often do not know and have a difficulty to follow behavior norms that are obvious for the dominant student population: how to interact with the faculty, how to prepare and behave through exams, how to stand for their rights, etc.
 - They have to establish relationships with the dominant student group(s), which is not always simple (e.g., Arab and Jewish students in Israel).
- Faculty faces specific challenges working with the new student population:
 - There are few faculty members belonging to ethnic minority and immigrant groups.
 - The faculty members belonging to the dominant group do not know history, beliefs, and cultural practices of the new student population.
 - Even our jokes come from the dominant society group and often do not fit ethnic minority and immigrant cultures.

Some examples from our studies

- Returning immigrants: Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union who left Israel and returned to Russia:
 - Their main emigration motivation is materialistic: better salaries and business opportunities.
 - Their Israeli and Jewish identities are stronger than Russian identity.
- Jews living in Russia:
 - Their main emigration motivation is also materialistic.
 - Their Israeli and Jewish identities are also stronger than their Russian identity.
- Israeli dominant group (Jews):
 - Appraisal of different immigrant groups (asylum seekers, diaspora immigrants from the Former Soviet Union, Ethiopia, and western countries).
 - Contacts with different immigrant groups: The role of group appraisal, personal value preferences, and opportunities for contacts.
- A group of researchers, including our faculty member, now begins a study among Arab students on their adjustment to the Israeli education system.

The Israeli expertise that may be relevant for Brazil

- Research expertise and research instruments. We have a lot of experience conducting studies among potential emigrants in their country of origin, immigrants in Israel, and the Israeli local population.
- Teaching about migration and multiculturalism. In TAU and in some other universities in Israel we have courses on this issues, including courses for international students. Many our researchers are experienced in teaching courses on immigration in universities abroad.
- In TAU, we have an international program on immigration and integration.
- In our other international programs, e.g., a program on coping with stress and trauma, we have courses on immigration and multiculturalism.
- On the other hand, we would love to learn about Brazilian multicultural experience and about integration of different ethnic and immigrant groups in Brazilian universities.

We need to develop international cooperation not only in hi-tech and business, but also in social sciences.

Thank you!



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