

Meaningful participation in academic life: Support centers for students with disabilities in higher education

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Background

- In Israel NII* initiated a national project named “Revolution in Higher Education” – A one stop center for all students with disabilities

Aimed at:

- Promoting accessibility to higher education for students with disabilities and changing the culture of colleges and universities to be socially and academically inclusive
- Securing employment opportunities that commensurate with the students’ abilities and interests





Research Goal

To evaluate the effectivity of the Revolution in Higher Education project from the point of view of the **students** and also of all stakeholders such as other students, faculty and administrative staff

To design a model of successful practices for the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education in Israel as well as in other countries

Students



1. Students with disability receiving services from the center for student support in higher educational institutions
N = 300

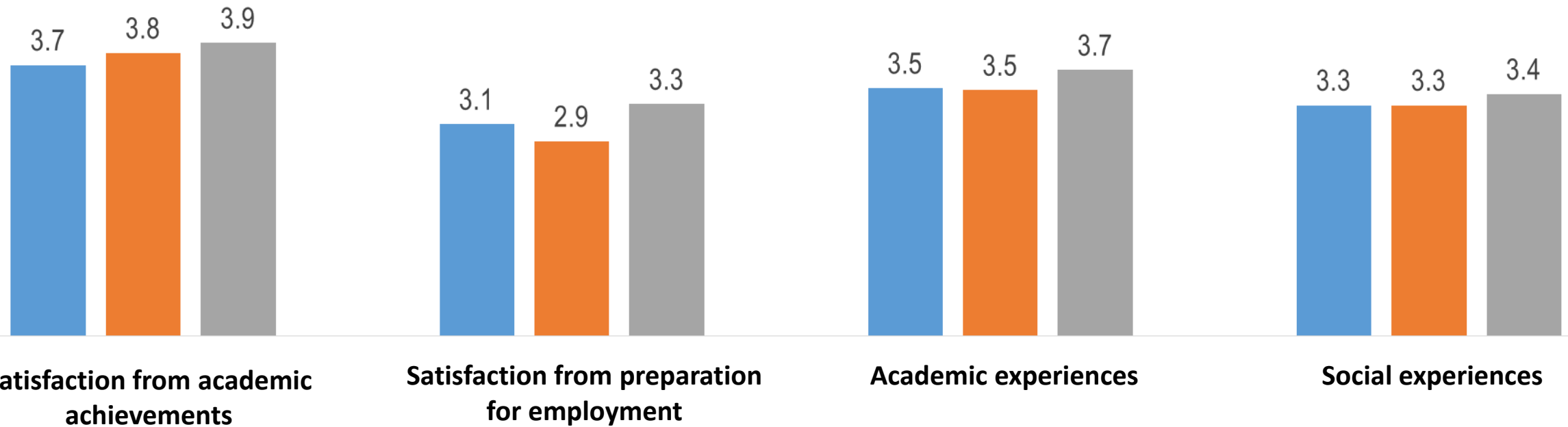
2. Students with disability not receiving services from the center for student support in higher educational institutions
N = 92

3. Students without disability **N=325**

Differences between groups

- There are no differences between groups (students without disabilities, with disabilities, who receive services from the accessibility centers) on all background characteristics
- Students with disabilities tend to less complete courses in which they are registered
- Students with disabilities are less committed to stay in the institution in which they study
- Students with disabilities feel less involved and committed to their studies
- Students with disabilities that receive services from the accessibility centers invest more time in their studies

Assessment of outcomes and achievements



■ Students with disability receiving services ■ Students with disability not receiving services ■ Students without disability

Student with disability are **less satisfied from their achievements** in the areas of: academic achievements, preparation for employment, academic experiences and social experiences

Areas in which students with disability receiving services are very and extremely satisfied

Academic accommodations	Accommodations in exams	Other accommodations
Remedial classes / tutoring from a student	Time extensions for exams	Searching for information on the library website
Reading	Adapted exams	Online registration for courses
Personal instruction in the use of technology	Reading room/ personal study room	Online registration for studies
	Time extensions for submission of assignments	Personal assistance

Areas in which students with disability receiving services are very and extremely satisfied

Workshops	Communication and information	Self-advocacy
Learning skills and strategies	Assistance in contacting members of the academic or administrative staff	Assistance in claiming my rights from the educational institution
Time management	Information on rights and services	Identifying my learning needs
	Guidance and assistance from people in the department	Communicating my needs and the accommodations required to my teachers and department

Conclusions

- Students with disabilities are the same as students without disabilities
- The centers are crucial in transforming academic requirements accessible for students with disabilities and in mediating between the students and the system
- Many students need more services than provided by the centers
- Social inclusion is not addressed by the centers (the centers don't provide, students with disabilities are too busy, other students?)
- The centers focus on students everyday academic requirements and don't provide vocational guidance (don't prepare students for the future or for the labor market)



Thank you
Questions and Comments

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