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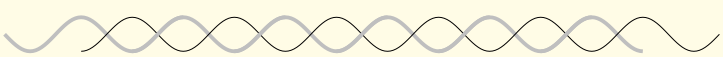

The Arab Spring and the Return Intention of Egyptians Living in Italy

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THE WIDESPREAD ENTHUSIASM triggered by the Arab Spring affected both first- and second-generation Egyptians in Italy and led to different forms of action and socio-political participation. However, to what extent will this new enthusiasm transform into a real consideration of returning to Egypt is a largely unexplored topic. Relying on the main migration theories, we address the following research questions: which traditional theoretical arguments apply to the intention to return of first- and second-generation Egyptians in Italy? Do the changes in Egypt after the Arab Spring strengthen their intention to return? Presented data comes from qualitative interviews conducted between 2011–2013 with Egyptians in Turin and Rome. The results show that transnational ties strengthened by the Arab Spring support the idea of returning, although a definitive return will probably not occur for the first or for the second generation, but rather they will adopt a transnational way of living.

Key Words: return intention; transnationalism; Italy; Egypt; Arab Spring

Migration flows from Egypt to Italy have registered a high growth rate over the last few years, ranking Italy as one of the major destinations of Egyptians in Europe, with 90,365 residents as of 1st January 2011. In Italy, there is a well-established community with a high percentage

of families and an increasing presence of second generation Egyptians (United Nations 2010; Caritas di Roma, Provincia di Roma e Camera di Commercio di Roma 2011).

Egypt, along with other North African countries, was involved in
[110] a revolutionary experience in 2011, known as the Arab Spring. More than two years after the outbreak of the Arab Spring, the political and economic situation in the country is still uncertain. In parallel, since 2008 the European countries have been facing a historic economic turmoil. In such a context of important changes in their origin country and of economic concern in their destination countries that may particularly affect migrants' situation, the following question arises: how do migrants handle the return or settlement decision? The empirical literature on the topic of return migration is flourishing but results are quite ambivalent without drawing any general pattern. In a recent article on Turks' return intentions, Şenyürekli and Menjívar (2012, 3) highlighted that 'in times of economic turmoil and socio-cultural crises in receiving countries, special attention should be placed on immigrants' desires and plans to return to their homelands.' We believe that the same applies for the sending countries as well, since they are facing major political, social, and economic crises or changes that may strongly affect migrants' intentions to return.

With the aim of shedding light on the multiple factors influencing the intention of migrants to return, this study will focus on the Egyptians living in two Italian cities: Turin and Rome. Among the factors influencing migrants' return intentions we consider not only the individual and social factors in which migrants' lives are embedded, but also contextual factors both in the receiving and sending countries.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Return migration has recently captured the attention of researchers and policy makers as an instrument to guarantee temporary migration and avoid the permanent settlement of migrants (Olesen 2002; Cassarino 2004; Barber, Black, and Tenaglia 2005; Castles 2006; Ruhs 2006).[1] The phenomenon is not new; it calls to mind the guest workers schemes of the 1970s and the temporary labour migration schemes of the Arab Gulf countries. However, top-down schemes do not often

succeed and individual decisions are usually much more complicated than policy designs.

Different theories have been conceptualized to explain migrants' position in relation to migration and thus return processes. The *neoclassical theory of migration* (Harris and Todaro 1970) has been conceptualized at both micro and macro level. At the micro level, migration is assumed to be an individual decision for income maximization. Through a cost-benefit calculation, potential migrants decide to move if they can get a positive return – most often money – from their emigration. In this model, a pre-condition for migration is the stock of human capital (e. g. education, work experience, training and language skills) as well as individual socio-demographic characteristics (e. g. age and health). In line with the classical assimilation theory of the Chicago School (Warner and Scrole 1945; Gordon 1964), the neoclassical theory of migration considers migrants' integration as a 'time dependent' phenomenon. The longer the duration of stay at the destination, the higher the chance of integration. 'So, within this perspective, return migration is mainly interpreted as a result of structural (educational and economic) integration failure. In different words, while "winners" settle, "losers" return' (de Haas and Fokkema 2011, 757).

By contrast, the *new economics of labor migration* (NELM) interprets migration as a co-insurance agreement between family members in order to spread the income risks and overcome the local market constraints at the origin (Stark and Bloom 1985). According to NELM, only the best-suited individuals among the family members are sent abroad in order to earn money, necessary to insure income and market risks in the sending countries (Stark 1991; Taylor 1999; Taylor, Rozelle, and Brauw 2003). According to this theory, return is considered as a successful outcome of a migrant's achievements in terms of financial and human capital accumulation, which is useful for investment in the home country. However, capital accumulation is a time-dependent phenomenon, strictly related to integration in the host countries. Therefore, return has to be considered as part of the migration process that will only occur once the migrant has achieved his/her migratory objectives.

The *historical structural approach* shifted the attention from the micro level process that shapes individual migration to the macro level process that is behind population movements. In particular, the world systems theory (Wallerstein 1974) describes migration in the context
[112] of the global economy: it pays particular attention to the relations between the 'core' (receiving countries) part of the world and the 'periphery' (sending countries). The penetration of the capitalist economic system from the core to the peripheral countries increases development gaps between countries rather than increasing development and containing migration flows. Therefore, the *structural approach to returns* considers social and structural factors, such as local power relations, traditions, and values in the home country as important factors in hindering or fostering return migration.

The contextual factors, i. e. the economic and social situation in the origin country, and the expectations of the returnees contribute to the creation of different 'returnee' profiles, as described by Cerase (1974) in his study on Italian returnees from the US. The author defines four different profiles of returnees: 'return of failure,' including those who failed to integrate in the receiving country – as assumed by the neoclassical theory of migration; 'return of conservatisms,' referring to those who returned and bought land with the money earned abroad (consistent with NELM) and who were not interested at all in changing the situation in the home country; 'return of retirement,' for those who returned once retired; and 'return of innovation,' concerning those who returned in order to change the situation (in economic, political or social terms) in the home country thanks to the new skills acquired abroad. Unfortunately, according to Cerase (1974), the 'innovators' are going to fail, because of the unstable socio-economic situation of the migrants' home country. Several studies (Moran-Taylor and Menjívar 2005; Boccagni 2011; Şenyürekli and Menjívar 2012) show the importance of the homeland's social, political and economic situation for the return experience of migrants.

A further step forward in the analysis of migrants' bond with their home countries was taken by a group of anthropologists (Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton 1992) who introduced the term *transnationalism* to define the migrants' process of linking countries

of origin and settlement. This perspective was further developed by Portes (1996; 1999) and colleagues (Portes, Guarnizzo, and Landolt 1999) and applied to second generations as well (Portes and Zhou 1999; Fokkema 2011; Fokkema, Lessard-Phillips, and Bachmeier 2012; Fokkema, Cela, and Ambrosetti 2013; Schneider, Fokkema, and Matias 2012). The new literature generated by this new perspective considers the return migration as a stage of the migration process (Guarnizo 1997; Pessar 1997); according to this school of thought, emotional and ethnic attachment to the country of origin never disappears. Cross-border movements become circular thanks to the facility to commute and communicate between origin and destination countries. Thus, integration and transnational ties may be complementary instead of substituting each other. As a consequence, even if well integrated in the host country, migrants who hold transnational multiple ties are more likely to return to their home country than other kinds of migrants.

According to the *social network theory,* return is sustained by cross-border networks. Returnees and potential returnees are part of the cross-border social and economic networks that 'are responsive to the economic, social, and political context in receiving and sending countries' (Cassarino 2004, 266). Likewise, from the transnational perspective, return may only be a stage in the migratory project and potential returnees maintain strong bonds with their home country. Within this context, remittances and investments in the origin country contribute to the realization of the return project: the skills and resources acquired abroad enhance the advantage of returning, though returnees remain social actors involved in cross-border networks. As for the transnational migrants, those embedded in cross-border social and economic networks are more likely to return to their home country than other kinds of migrants. According to Cassarino (2004), thanks to transnationalism and social network theories, 'return is no longer viewed as the end of the migration cycle but as a stage in the migration process' (p. 268). Contrary to structuralism that considers the situation in the origin country as a constraint on a successful return, in both the latter theories, the constant links that migrants maintain between home and host countries support their project of return.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

As the decision to migrate can often be explained by different factors, likewise, return intentions are likely to be affected by a combination of the above-mentioned factors. Moreover, empirical evidence
[114] from several ethnographic and quantitative studies (Moran-Taylor and Menjivar 2005; de Haas and Fokkema 2010; King and Christou 2010a; Boccagni 2011; Şenyürekli and Menjívar 2012) on the topic of return intentions shows that when describing migrants' experience and their intention to return, it is difficult to differentiate between the postulates of migration theories on return. It is clear that return intentions are strongly embedded in the personal experience of each migrant, his/her social network and transnational ties, as well as in the socio-economic situation in both the origin and the destination country.

As far as economic migration theories are concerned (neoclassical and NELM), those theories lead to opposite expectations – the likelihood of return is higher among the least and the most integrated migrants, respectively. Accordingly, our first research question is: (1) Which traditional theoretical arguments from the migration theories apply to the return intention of first- and second-generation Egyptian migrants in Italy? The structural approach as well as the transnational and social network theories trigger our second research question in relation to the role of the revolution of the Arab Spring 2011 on the transnational ties and, hence return intention: (2) Do the changes in Egypt due to the Arab Spring strengthen their intention to return?

DATA AND METHODS

This study uses data from the project 'Transmediterraneans; North African Communities in Piedmont, between Continuity and Change' that FIERI, together with Sapienza University – MEMOTEF Department, carried out from September 2011 to January 2013. Respectively, 32 and 23 qualitative face-to-face interviews were conducted with first- and second-generation[2] Egyptian migrants living in the cities of Turin and Rome. Interviews were conducted from September 2011 to July 2012 in Turin and from October 2012 to January 2013 in Rome. Participants were recruited through snowball sampling, utilizing key informants like immigrant associations and NGOs. The sampling was

stratified according to gender, birth place, and year of arrival in Italy. However, given the explorative nature of our study and its qualitative design, the sample is not representative of the Egyptian migrant population in Italy. Accordingly, the findings cannot be generalized beyond the study sample.

The interviews were carried out in the place of migrants' recruitment and occasionally in their private houses and workplaces. They were primarily conducted in Italian, sometimes English or Arabic was used as well in order to allow the respondents to better express themselves. A semi-structured approach (using an in-depth interview guide) was followed, which included several aspects of life and migration experience. In particular, participants were asked about the following topics: arrival to Italy, sense of community belonging and social participation, intergenerational relationships, transnational ties with Egypt (in political, economic, family, and symbolic terms) and new media use, opinions about the current situation in Egypt, future plans and return intentions. The interviews on average lasted approximately 60 minutes and were audio-taped, transcribed, and coded using the qualitative software *Atlas.ti* (www.atlasti.com). As interviewees were guaranteed confidentiality, fictitious names have been used throughout the article.

The average age of the sample is 34.6 years. Educational attainment is homogeneous and rather high: many of the interviewed migrants have completed secondary education or higher. As far as occupation is concerned, the first generation works mainly in the catering and cleaning sectors and in the retail trade, while the second generation is mainly represented by students. Finally, more than half of the sample has Italian citizenship.

Empirical findings of our analysis are presented in the following sections as follows: in accordance with the first research question, first of all, we examine to what extent the 'myth of return' applies to first- and second-generation Egyptians in Italy and which differences exist between generations. Secondly, we analyze the impact of two specific factors on the first and second generation's return intention: family obligations and economic considerations. Thirdly, we focus on the pendular migration, a form of mobility that is often replacing a

definite return. Lastly, in accordance with the second research question, we consider the impact of the Arab Spring on migrant's return intention.

[116]

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

Return between Desire, Possibility and Opportunity

Myth of Return

> When we go there we are fine, when we are here we are fine, there is not much difference. Our generation has always had the intention of returning, even if years have gone by and we are still here. Most of us live life like a transit, a stopover. They come here and always think of returning. We have to live here like we are here forever, then when we decide to go back to Egypt there will be no problems, but if you don't have this mentality you can't build anything here. [Kebir, 48, Turin, 1st generation]

The words of Kebir, an Egyptian man who arrived in Turin in 1990, sum up the sense of uncertainty that many first-generation Egyptians experience, suspended between their desire to settle in Italy and their strong attachment and intention to return to Egypt. This uncertainty affects their daily life, plans, and objectives over time, producing a continuous pendulum in migration plans that results in living 'neither here nor there.' Boccagni (2011, 471), in relation to migration from Ecuador to Italy, suggests considering the beneficial effects of the mythical form of return too, as 'It provides Ecuadorian migrants with a valuable construct with which to make sense of their life experience and endure it better.' Nevertheless, Ecuadorian migrants' willingness to return is limited to a wish, which is rather postponed and sometimes never realized. The underlying reasons are multiple and often linked to the difficult situation in the homeland and to the unaccomplished migratory project in Italy.

The Egyptian first-generation migrants tacitly construct return as a moral obligation and an expression of loyalty to their Egyptian identity, which is also connected to their desire to be buried in their homeland.

> You have to think that we also have a place at the cemetery, most of the people who die are brought to Egypt. [Kebir, 48, Turin, 1st generation]

[117]

Studies from Boston, Massachusetts, and Senegal (Levitt 2001; Levitt and Waters 2002; Leichtman 2005) have found that migrants' transnationalism is not a phenomenon confined to the first generation, but can extend to the second and subsequent generations. Moreover, a rapid and successful integration does not preclude the second generation from engaging in a range of transnational activities linking them back to their 'home' country (Itzigsohn and Giorguli-Saucedo 2005; Fokkema, Lessard-Phillips, and Bachmeier 2012). According to Queirolo Palmas (2010), the second generation can live 'transnational lives' (Smith 2005) and discover new identities and forms of belonging and also launch independent attempts to return. Levitt (2009), while agreeing that the children of migrants will not participate in their ancestral homes in the same ways and with the same regularity as their parents, also argues that 'we should not dismiss outright the strong potential effect of being raised in a transnational social field' (p. 1226).

Hence, it is not surprising that the interviewed second-generation Egyptians often cherish the wish to return as they feel strong emotional bonds with their ancestral country.

> I hope to graduate in time and then return to Egypt to [...] even if sincerely I know that there are no job opportunities! [Sara, 20, Rome, 2nd generation]

However, compared to their parents, they have more awareness about the difficulties they may face in their ethnic homeland.

> I also have to say that my father, when I used to go to Egypt, always showed the good part: we went there in summer, it was all fun, and I did everything I wanted. So I don't know how it would really be to live in Egypt, I don't know daily life in Egypt. To return to Egypt is just an idea. [Shuruq, 20, Turin, 2nd generation]

Family Obligations and Economic Considerations. Several factors, such as family concerns and obligations, economic insecurity, legal status, and career goals may shape the decision to return (Şenyürekli and Menjívar 2012). Regarding family matters, Şenyürekli and Menjívar highlight for
[118] the first-generation Turkish migrants in the US that 'on the one hand, they were attracted to Turkey because of worries that something would happen to their aging parents. On the other hand, they were attracted to the US because of their US-born children' (2012, 9). Likewise, de Haas and Fokkema (2010), in their article about return and pendulum migration among Moroccans, found that migrants who decided to return permanently are typically the ones who left their family behind. The outcomes of our interviews are in line with those studies.

> I want to return to Egypt because I have a difficult situation there: six sisters, and my aging parents. 7 women and my aged father, I can't let them sacrifice in Egypt alone and stay here. [Kebir, 26, Turin, 1st generation]

Compared to their offspring, however, first-generation migrants live in a double situation of concern as they have their children and grandchildren settled in Italy, while their aging parents are often living in Egypt; therefore, the presence of close family members in Italy may transform their desire into the myth of return.

> My parents are in touch with their families. They are much attached, indeed even more so recently. They always think about going back, but it gets difficult since they are here and have a family here. [Amro, 21, Turin, 2nd generation]

The second-generation intention to return seems to be economically driven, reflected in one's reconfiguration of study and work plans.[3]

> Despite having lived sixteen years out of nineteen in Italy, I feel more Egyptian! My dream is that my country, when I finish school, will get better economically and that I will be able to return to work and live in Egypt. [Menes, 18, Rome, 2nd generation]

Nevertheless, the second generation is also aware of the lifestyle they have in Italy and the different life they would have in Egypt. Hence, the strategy is to choose a professional path that allows them a successful return to Egypt with a certain status (such as being a doctor or engineer) or with a salary that can allow them to maintain the same Italian lifestyle. [119]

Indefinite Return: Pendular Life between 'Here' and 'There.' Another path that appears feasible and beneficial is pendulum migration (de Haas and Fokkema 2010). This strategy has already been adopted by many migrant communities (Sinatti 2010), because it allows people to undertake less permanent decisions and obtain the benefits of living between different countries.

Our study confirms this trend as well; pendulum migration is likely to become the main living arrangement for the first generation after retirement.

> I don't say that I would return to live there forever. I say that I would die there and be there maybe a year or two in Egypt but then return to Italy [...] In my opinion, it will be this way, so there won't be people who will stay here until death or there until death, they will be in the two countries because both are their countries. [Edjo, 52, Turin, 1st generation]

Pendulum migration is also a common idea among the second generation, which aspires to create transnational business and, therefore, does not lose the benefits of being 'here' and 'there.' Going back and forth is the strategy, either for the future or for the present; this allows them to have the best opportunities of both countries.

> But I would do something different if I had the economic and professional chance: I would like to work in both countries, Egypt and Italy. It would be the best choice, but it's difficult. So I think that the best choice would be to work in-between the two countries, while it would be more unfeasible to work in Egypt. [Jahi, 21, Turin, 2nd generation]

The Impact of the Arab Spring on Return Migration

With regard to the effects of the Arab Spring on the stay-return dilemma, our findings show that the revolts in Egypt have really represented a turning point in the relationships, interests, and participation
[120] in the country of origin for both the first and the second generation. The widespread enthusiasm about changes and future opportunities in Egypt has resulted in different forms of action and socio-political participation: in Italy, at the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011, many demonstrations were organized in support of the Egyptian revolts. In order to explain to the Italian society that the support given to demonstrations was a support for democracy regardless of religious belonging, debates were organized in different Italian cities by both the first and the second generations (Premazzi and Scali 2011).

First-generation migrants' commitment was not limited to emotional participation during the revolts. They also foresaw concrete opportunities for action in their home country and many of them also actually engaged in specific projects, as in the case of the dissemination of information and support in organizing the polling procedures for the presidential and parliamentary elections. This is hardly surprising, as migrants are often likely to feel a 'genuine sympathy' for their relatives who remain in conflict-ridden areas (Pirkkalainen and Abdile 2009). Migrants may also feel guilty at the thought of being safe, while their relatives are suffering (Byman, Chalk, and Hoffman 2001). Such feelings may motivate diaspora members of the first generation to engage in 'virtual conflicts' or even participate in or mobilize forces for the 'real conflict' (Demmers 2002), as happened to Babu:

> In January everything changed in Egypt. We have to be more linked with our country, because now Egypt needs us. Before we didn't have freedom and we weren't able to do much. Now we can do more, like helping the elections, following the polling procedures. [Babu, 47, Turin, 1st generation]

Among the second-generation Egyptians, the Egyptian revolution has triggered a rediscovery of their pride of being Egyptian and made them reconsider the migratory networks and ties with their ancestral

home. Analogous to Kibria's study (2002) on Chinese and Korean immigrant offspring, which shows that exposure to the economic dynamism of their parental home countries bolstered a sense of national pride (Kibria 2002), thus demonstrating the potential value of 'ethnic identity capital' (p. 201), the Arab Spring has led to a new consideration of their national affiliation. With regard to the second-generation respondents, born mostly in the 1990s, the past refusal of 'being Egyptian' was not a reaction directly related to the perceived trend of increasing Islamophobia since 9/11 as it was for the first generation who started to sacrifice their Egyptian identity for broader and supranational identities, such as being an Arab and a Muslim (Zohry 2010). Rather, for the second-generation Egyptians, it was the result of, on the one hand, the hostile attitude of Italian society that prompted them to describe themselves as fully integrated, and on the other hand, the perceived lack of interest of Egypt towards their parents, who had even been forced to leave the country without any attempt made by the Egyptian institutions to retain them. This situation has prompted the second generation to describe themselves as 'more Italian than Egyptian' and then, once again, to sacrifice their Egyptian identity to an alternative one.

> If you had asked me this question before the Arab Spring I would have answered that I was 90% Italian and 10% Egyptian, or better 99% and 1%, because Egypt has never done anything for me and for my parents, it has never given anything. [Narmer, 20 years, Turin, 2nd generation]

> After the revolution I would like to see the new Egypt. Perhaps you are prouder to be Egyptian than before, because around you people are prouder. You are more curious and prouder, yes. [Abir, 22, Turin, 2nd generation]

The combined dynamic of the rediscovery of their roots, the birth of a new Egyptian pride and being masters of their destiny able to overcome dictators and attempt to establish a real democracy, has transformed the parents' country of origin to a benchmark for a new future, at least on an emotional level, in which they can be actors:

> Initially I was not interested [in Egyptian politics] because in my opinion it was dead [...] But in the last two years, I started to get more interested, to really understand what was happening. Today I believe I am one of the most important activists here in Italy!
[122] [Rabia, 20, Rome, 2nd generation]

For some of the young second generation, the rediscovery of their Egyptian identity due to the Arab Spring makes them feel a moral obligation toward Egypt, pushing them to a new reconfiguration of their present and future life, study, and work plans. It becomes a sort of mission: 'do something for my country.'

> I want to return, because I really want to help! Then, from there, I can help other countries like Sudan, Eritrea, Somalia and Palestine. From there it's easier because we are closer! [Rabia, 20, Rome, 2nd generation]

The Arab Spring has resulted in a stronger orientation to Egypt, with the exception of one population group, which is the Christian Copt Egyptians, for whom the Arab Spring has triggered the opposite feelings. For Christian Copt Egyptians, the political change seems to block their present and future entrepreneurial initiatives in Egypt.

> I don't think about a definite return to Egypt, because the situation is getting worse. [...] Egypt is our country, it's our land, and we can't forget it all but we can't live like this. [Amina, 45, Turin, 1st generation]

The Egyptian Muslims, on the other hand, hope for a positive economic change in Egypt due to the removal of obstacles for economic growth, such as the long tradition of corruption during the Mubarak government and the lack of attention to the Egyptian diaspora abroad. As it has happened for the first-generation Moroccans (de Haas and Fokkema 2010), the experience of bankruptcy for many small and medium investors seems to have created a strong distrust with respect to the investment opportunities in the home country.

Among our interviewees there were, before the Arab Spring, attempts to return in order to create entrepreneurial projects. Some of them, a minority, have been successful, while others have failed, forcing the migrants to come back to Italy:

> I was born in Turin, then when I was 4 we came back to Egypt and we meant to remain there, but after four years, when I was 8, we came back [...] In the four years we stayed there my father was a civil engineer and founded a construction company, but we didn't make it and it closed down. [Dalia, 21, Turin, 2nd generation]

Although the strong enthusiasm for the changes occurred, according to the Egyptian participants, after the presidential elections, the institutional changes regarding investment projects have not improved up to the present time.

> The fundamental problem of Egypt for investments and so on [...] today is still instability, we need to have guarantees. [Babu, 47 years old, 1st generation]

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Which traditional theoretical arguments from the migration theories apply to the return intention of the first- and second-generation Egyptians in Italy? Do the changes in Egypt due to the Arab Spring strengthen their intention to return? We answered these research questions by examining, with a comparative approach and through qualitative data, the main factors underlying the intention to stay or return among the first- and second-generation Egyptians residing in two Italian cities: Turin and Rome.

As far as our first research question is concerned, different theories on the determinants of migration have tackled the topic of migrants' return and have been developed exclusively for the first-generation migrants. We have built on the review of the theoretical and empirical debate, analyzed by Cassarino (2004), who suggested several reasons behind the return decision, such as integration failure as assumed by the neoclassical theory and the opposite outcome by the NELM, con-

textual factors related to the socio-economic situation at the origin, as well as transnational and social network ties. According to our empirical evidence, the following types of motivations seem to dominate the return intention of the Egyptian migrants: myth of return, family
[124] concerns and obligations, economic possibilities, pendular life between 'here' and 'there,' and the (expected) effect of the Arab Spring.

The study shows, first of all, that the return intention remains something that will probably occur in the future for many Egyptians. This holds true especially for the first generation, for which the 'myth of return' is closely related to their identity and homeland attachments and loyalty. The difference between the first and second generation is the latter's greater awareness in relation to the real chance of returning back home, although some of them would like to return after obtaining their university degree. It is difficult to talk about return in case of the second generation: they were born and have grown up in Italy. Although Egypt for them represents their parents' homeland, their return is not strictly speaking a return, but rather a migration, which could represent an ontological sense of return to a point of origin, their ethnic homeland (King and Christou 2010a), and could be physical or emotional (Wessendorf 2007; Levitt 2009).

As a second finding of our analysis, the return intention is, to some extent, shaped by family concerns and obligations at both the origin and the destination. The presence of family members on both sides may either foster or hinder the desire to return. This holds true especially for the first-generation migrants who are more likely to have family members in Egypt and it seems to be even stronger for male migrants having aged parents and only sisters at home. By contrast, the presence of family members in Italy transforms the hope of returning to some extent into a dream.

For the second generation, the situation is quite different. They are more likely to have their family in Italy, so their desire to return is more closely related to their capital accumulation and education achievements, as well as economic possibilities, if any, in Egypt, although they seem to be aware that achievements in Italy are not always valued in Egypt. Moreover, while acknowledging the desire to go back 'home,' the second generation mentions the problematic aspects of liv-

ing in Egypt more than the positive ones. For sure, the decreasing wage differentials between Italy and Egypt will increase the feasibility of the choice of returning to Egypt. For the second-generation Egyptian migrants the 'return' is likely to be more feasible than their parents' return, as they often have higher possibilities of adapting to a changed society, thanks to their young age, high education levels, bilingualism, and especially their living back and forth as underlined by King and Christou (2010b) for the second-generation 'returnees' to Greece. [125]

Third, the open-endedness of the return plan transforms for many Egyptians into a pendular strategy of living back and forth, as shown for other migrants' communities (de Haas and Fokkema 2010). For those first-generation migrants whose physical condition will allow it, this becomes a popular strategy, especially to cope with retirement, a new phase of their lives, no longer having the responsibility of earning income and child care and with many opportunities for self-realization, creating new social roles, and leisure. This pendular lifestyle could imply a way of living transnationally, as they have already done throughout their life, but on a more regular and intensive basis after retirement. The second generation grows up in families and co-ethnic communities where life and social networks are shaped by a continuous exchange of ideas, people, norms, practices, and goods from the ancestral home and the country of settlement (Levitt 2001). And even if the ties with ancestral home do not show, they are latent. Such a transnational context of cross-border ties generates both obligations towards the family and community and opportunities of upward mobility, thanks to the mutual support within transnational communities. In relation to the latter, investing in the parents' homeland could be attractive and represents social and economic mobility, especially for the highly skilled second generation (Foner 2002), as is the case of our interviewees. Constraints, such as professional barriers in Italy and opportunities, generated by multiple cross-border bonds and recent socio-economic improvements in Egypt, could become the incentive to undertake such a strategy of transnational life. Living back and forth also becomes an opportunity for the first-generation Egyptians who want to invest both 'here' and 'there' as a result of successful integration in Italy and the emergence

of safe investment opportunities in Egypt. The transnational entrepreneurs, regardless of which generation, can become a new Egyptian class who really could take advantage of a positive socio-economic situation on both sides, transforming themselves into co-development agents,
[126] affecting Italy and Egypt, thanks to their skills, financial resources, and initiatives.

As far as the second research question is concerned, we found that the new enthusiasm arising from the Arab Spring has had the role of unifying generations in their sense of belonging and their belief about changes and future opportunities in Egypt, although this does not regard all Egyptians: the economic and social situation in the origin country has become worse for Christian Copt Egyptians, for whom the return has become even more unfeasible. The Egyptian revolution has triggered the hope of the renovation of the socio-economic situation among the first generation and the revival of identity, interest, and moral obligations toward Egypt among the second generation together with the reconsideration of their future life between 'here' and 'there.' Future research on return migration should therefore address in more depth the importance of political, economic, and cultural changes in both home and host countries. Moreover, our study clearly displayed that transnational ties at economic, political, social, and cultural levels support the idea of returning, although a definitive return will probably not occur, neither for the first nor for the second generation; however, these cross-border ties will encourage a transnational way of living, especially for those who can take advantage of their skills and social and financial resources. Thus, it is important for countries of origin to consider this kind of transnational mobility rather than a definitive return as a way to foster development at home through brain and resources circulation.

As we stressed earlier in this article, the qualitative design of our research does not allow the generalization of our findings beyond the study sample. In addition, our research findings represent the conditions at the time of the interviews; recent changes in the political and economic situation in Egypt may have had an impact on respondents' intention to travel or return to their country of origin. A follow-up study, preferably using a larger sample, is needed to quantify this impact.

NOTES

1 For an excellent overview of the theoretical debate on return migration we refer to Cassarino (2004).

2 Following Rumbaut's (2004) definition of the second-generation immigrants, 2.0 and 1.75 generations have been recruited.

3 This is certainly the case for our respondents as the majority was in their last year of high school in the academic years 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 respectively.

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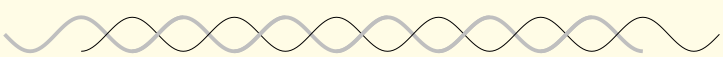

Gender Equality? Attitudes towards Equal Opportunity for Women in Higher Education among Israeli Muslim Males

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THE BASIC ASSUMPTION of the paper is that Israel is practically a bi-national State, where the Arab minority constitutes approximately 20% of the population. The Arab minority is now in an interim state – it is passing from a traditional, collective way of life to a modern, individualistic one. Israeli Arabs recognize the fact that education is the key to socio-economic status. Part of the social change is the growing dominance of women in secondary and higher education in the Arab sector. Women now constitute approximately two thirds of Arab students in the Israeli institutions of higher education. The article sets out to explore the impact of education and religiosity of Israeli Muslim males on their attitudes towards women's right to pursue higher education. The main finding of the research is the wide support for women's right to higher education. Religiosity and education of the interviewees have been found to impact their attitudes.

Key Words: gender equality; equal opportunity; higher education; Jews; Arabs

> Studying was a type of shock for me [...] to suddenly be learning philosophy, psychology, areas of which we had never heard
>
> Popper-Giveon and Weiner-Levy (2010, 135)

LITERATURE AND THEORY REVIEW

The Arabs of Israel: The General State of Affairs in the Fields of Education, Employment, and Income

Israel is a bi-national country by virtue of the composition of its population. It has a Jewish majority and an Arab minority. On the eve

of Independence Day 2012, the population of Israel numbered 7.881 million, including 5.931 million Jews (75.3% of the population) and some 1.623 million Arabs (20.6% of the population) (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012a). The Muslim population is the largest group of Is-
[134] raeli Arabs. In 2011, it numbered 1.354 million, from among some 1.611 million Arabs (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012c, tables 2.2, 2.7), i. e. approximately 84% of all Israeli Arabs. In this context, it is notable that there has been a socioeconomic disparity between Muslims and Christians throughout the Middle East for over a century. Christians have a higher coefficient of education, boast higher women's status, lower infant mortality, higher urbanization coefficient, and are more exposed to the West (Okun and Friedlander 2005, 164). This disparity exists in Israel as well (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012b); however, it is not the subject of this article.

The Israeli Arabs are a minority not only numerically but also sociologically. The stratification pyramid of the Israeli society was described as early as the early 1980s as a 'tripartite ethnic order' topped by Ashkenazi Jews, with Eastern Jews in the middle and Israeli Arabs at the bottom (Semyonov and Tyree 1981). The statistical data show that in all fields of education, employment, and income, there are large disparities between the Jewish majority and the Arab minority.

Thus for example, while the education median for both groups – Jews and Arabs – was identical and reached 12 years of schooling in 2011 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012c, table 8.73), the *distribution* of education was very different: 48.8% of Jews aged 15+ had had 13 or more years of schooling, while only 21.8% of Arabs in this age group had had similar schooling. In contrast, only 7.6% of Jews had had 8 years of schooling or less, versus 21.3% of Arabs.

The disparity between the two population groups is also evident in the proportion of high school students who successfully complete their matriculation exams, which are the entrance ticket to the Israeli schools of higher education. Of all Jewish high school students who took the matriculation exams in 2003, 70.2% passed. During the next eight years, some of those who had failed completed the exams, and by 2011 the proportion of those who had earned a matriculation certificate from among all 2003 high school graduates had reached 77.9% (Cen-

tral Bureau of Statistics 2012c, table 8.29). Among Arab high school students who took the matriculation exams in 2003, only 57.3% passed. During the next 8 years some of those who had failed completed the tests. But by 2011, the proportion of those who had earned a matriculation certificate from among all 2003 high school graduates was much lower than in the Jewish sector. It had grown to only 66.6%. [135]

When comparing the eligibility for matriculation certificates among the two population groups of 17 years olds, rather than among all those who took the exams, the differences between the two groups diminish. In the Jewish sector, 51.8% of all 17 year olds were eligible for a matriculation certificate, while in the Arab sector, 45.9% of all 17 year olds were eligible (Haviv 2008, 4). In any case, the data show that at least half of Arab teenagers manage to pass the matriculation exams. Another important point illuminating the differences concerning the state of affairs regarding high school education in the two population groups in Israel can round out the picture. Not all matriculation certificate recipients are eligible for admission to universities. In order to be admitted to schools of higher education, it is necessary to uphold the so-called 'threshold requirements.' These are composed of what is defined as the 'quality of the matriculation certificate,' manifested in students' marks, as well as the results of psychometric exams (Ayalon and Shavit 2004). Of all those who took the matriculation exams in 2002, 65.2% passed the universities' threshold requirements in 2010. However, the differences between the two sectors of the population were weighty: in the Jewish sector, 71.1% of all those eligible for a matriculation certificate fulfilled the threshold requirements of universities; in the Arab sector only 35.9% did so! (Central Bureau of Statistics 2011b, 4). In other words, most Arabs with matriculation certificates do not fulfill the universities' threshold requirements and cannot continue to earn a higher education.

In regard to employment, the data show that 84.2% of Jews in the main employment age group of 25–54 are part of the civil workforce. In contrast, a mere 55.6% of Arabs in this age group are part of the civil workforce (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012c, table 12.1) – almost 30% (!) less than Jews. Data on a wider age group – ages 22–64 – was processed in 2007 and showed that among the Jewish

TABLE 1 Wage per hour in NIS (New Israeli Shekel) by sector and education for 15–64 year old employed males, 2007

Category	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Arabs	25.7	26.8	28.2	33.3	55.4
Jews	35.5	38.6	39.7	47.2	73.4
Difference	27.6%	30.6%	29.0%	29.4%	24.5%

NOTES Column headings are as follows: (1) no high school education, (2) high school education without matriculation, (3) full matriculation certificate, (4) non-academic tertiary studies, (5) academic studies. Adapted from Jabarin (2010).

males the rate of employment was 75.7%, while among the Arab males it was 68.6%. It should be noted that ten years earlier, the employment rates in both sectors had been identical (Haviv 2008, 5). Moreover, 41.1% of Jews who were employed in 2011 belonged to one of the three most prestigious occupations – academic occupations, career and technical professions, and managers, while among Arabs this only held true for 23.2% (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012c, table 12.18). In contrast, while 7.1% of Jews employed were defined in 2011 as nonprofessional workers, 12.3% of Arabs employed were included in this category. When combining the three blue collar occupations at the bottom of the Central Bureau of Statistics classification of occupations, it is evident that in 2011 they comprised 20.2% of all Jewish employees, but 51.7% (!) of all Arab employees.

Finally, the data show that among the two population sectors – Jews and Arabs – there are large income disparities. For example, in 2007 salary differences between the two sectors for various levels of education ranged from 25% to 30% for males (Jabarin 2010, 15).

A study conducted at the Bank of Israel showed that in 1987–2005 there was a rising trend of wage differences per hour between the Jewish and the Arab sector when considering people with similar traits. While the difference was 12% in 1987, it had risen to over 25% by 2005 (Sussman and Friedman 2008).

In light of all the above, it is not surprising that the household income in these two sectors is extremely disparate. While the net monthly income of an average Israeli household was NIS 11,354 in 2009 (Central Bureau of Statistics 2011, table 5.28), in the Arab sector it was

TABLE 2

Measures of (net) income for households headed by an employee, by population group, for 2006–10

Adapted from Central Bureau of Statistics (2012d, 19).

Year	Total measure	Jews	Arabs
2006	100	106	59
2007	100	106	60
2008	100	106	59
2009	100	106	58
2010	100	106	59

TABLE 3

The relative weight of Arabs and Jews in the various deciles, 2009 (in %)

Adapted from Central Bureau of Statistics (2011, 297).

Decile	Arabs	Jews
First	44.6	55.4
Second	33.4	66.6
Third	18.3	81.7
Fourth	13.6	86.4
Fifth	8.8	91.2
Sixth	(5.5)	94.5
Seventh	(3.6)	96.4
Eighth	..	98.5
Ninth	..	98.3
Tenth	..	99.3

only NIS 7,778 (Gharrah 2012, 80). Household measures of income show a major consistent difference between the two sectors, the Jewish and the Arab, from 2006 to 2010 (table 2).

As a result of this radical difference, the distribution of the two population groups in the various deciles is not directly related to their relative weight in the population. The Arab sector has a much larger weight in the two bottom deciles than the weight of Israeli Arabs in the entire population. These are in fact the two deciles comprising the greatest proportion of the Arab households. In the three top deciles the Arabs are not statistically represented. Even in the seventh and sixth deciles their weight is negligible (table 3).

The Arabs in Israel and the Positioning of Women in Their Midst: The Socio-Cultural State of Affairs

As stated, Israel is in practice a bi-national country, where the Jewish sector has a higher level of affluence than the Arab sector. The latter

is defined as a community in transition from a traditional collective life style to a more modern and individualist life style (El Ghannam 2001; Braun-Lewensohn, Sagy, and Roth 2010). The credit for attaining this stage of transition is owed to two factors – global processes experi-
[138] enced by the entire Arab world and strong relationship with the Jewish population of Israel (Seginer and Mahajna 2003). As a rule, most Israeli Arabs live in their own towns concentrated in three geo-cultural areas – in the Galilee, in the 'small triangle,' and in the Negev (Al-Haj 1995). In 2006, only 9% lived in mixed cities such as Haifa, Acre, Upper Nazareth, etc. (Khamaisi 2009). This residential separation is a result of national and cultural factors (Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1994), as well as historical and political developments (Rosenfeld 1988). Arab towns are small; the largest number several tens of thousands. They are relatively distant from major urban centers and lack the necessary infrastructure for development. This was true in the 1990s (Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1992) and was also true in the first decade of the 21st century (Soen and Aizencang-Kane 2004, 22).

Although, as stated, the Israeli Arabs are in the midst of a transition from one life style to another, they are still defined as a traditional society. Obviously, similar to other countries in the Middle East, they are deeply influenced by the Islamic culture (Khattab 2002; Abu Baker 1998; Afshar 1997; Terhorst 1995; Taraki 1995).

The transition of the Arab society in Israel from one lifestyle to another is manifested in several spheres (Arar and Abu-Asba 2010). The change in the role of the *hamula* (the extended family) in society is most conspicuous. The power of the *hamula* is gradually diminishing and, at the same time, the autonomy of the nuclear family is increasingly liberated from the dictates of the *hamula* and acquiring the right to determine its own priorities (Daoud 2002; Daoud 2009, 6). At the same time, another transformation is occurring following the direct and indirect contact with the society of the Jewish majority. The latter is generating social ways of organization that are more egalitarian than those customary in traditional society (Kulik and Ryan 2005). Moreover, the Arab society is undergoing processes of modernization that encompass a larger sphere of employment (Drori 1996); reduced childbirth and consequently the diminishing of family size (Kulik and

Ryan 2005); the emergence of a more liberal and democratic set of values replacing the traditional set (Arar and Rigby 2009); growing appreciation of education as awarding social status and changing the image of the Arab society (Arar and Abu-Asbah 2007); and finally – accelerated processes of urbanization, accompanied by massive abandonment of agriculture and rapid development of trade, services, and small industry in the Arab sector (Al-Haj 1999; Lewin-Epstein and Semyonov 1992). [139]

As part of these transformations, a dynamic shift in women's status is evident as well. The Arab society is advancing towards embracing a more egalitarian ideology in matters of gender, although this equality is much more limited than among the Jewish sector (Ali and Gordoni 2009). The developments occurring in this sphere – although slow – are particularly interesting in light of the fact that traditional Arab society is by nature patriarchal and hierarchical. Gender is extremely significant and, according to the traditional conception, a woman is first and foremost a daughter, a wife, and a mother (Gerner-Adams 1979; Kulik and Ryan 2005; Fast-Schubert 2005). As Youssef (1972, 152) wrote:

> In the Middle East supervision of women is monopolized by the sharia system and isolation of women is legitimized by concepts of family honor and family appreciation. Thus, institutional mechanisms operate efficiently to isolate women from the various alternatives external to the marriage framework and they also prevent them from taking part in public activities involving contact with members of the other sex.

As emphasized recently by a researcher of the Muslim society, Muslim girls are taught from early childhood that their main role in life is to marry, have children, and be housewives (Wharton 2005).

Furthermore, Arab women are doubly marginalized in the Israeli society. One process of marginalization comes from the fact that Arab women in Israel – similar to Arab men – are part of the disadvantaged Palestinian minority. The second process originates from their gender – from the fact that Arab women are inferior and disadvantaged

within the Arab society by virtue of being women (Karkabi-Sabah 2009). Thus, Arab women may be said to be inferior both among the Jewish society and among the Arab society. In stricter terms, some have spoken of the double oppression experienced by Arab women in Israel
[140] – on one hand, the experience of what Danny Rabinowitz has termed a 'trapped minority' (Rabinowitz 2001), governed by the Jewish majority, as stated above; on the other hand, the oppression rising from the patriarchal structure of the Arab society, which involves issues of domestic violence, family honor, polygamy, etc. (Abu-Rabiah-Quider and Winner-Levy 2010, 9).

At the same time, as stated, there have been recent changes in the women's status. The age of marriage has risen (Al-Haj 1988), women are increasingly given the right to autonomously choose their spouses, they take part in the decision making processes in the family and in the public sphere (areas from which they had previously been excluded). In the last local authorities' elections, which took place in October 2013, there were 165 women candidates in 44 Arab local authorities. What is more, a survey taken just before the elections revealed that 82% of the Arabs in principle supported women's candidacy (Houri 2013; Hilou 2013). Women's entrance into the world of higher education has already given them an advantage over men, just as in the Jewish sector (Reches 1993; Shapira and Hertz-Lazarovitz 2004). Moreover, upper-middle class Arab women who live in mixed cities have the benefit of an alternative life sphere, which lets them voice objections, protest, and change, versus the traditional lifestyle (Herzog 2009).

In summary, consideration must be given to the complex circumstances of the Arab women – particularly the Muslim women: on the one hand, changes denoting modern life and well-being, such as reduced fertility and smaller families, increasing higher education, rising employment, and greater involvement in the public life; on the other hand, a lack of gender equality within the family and ongoing restriction of their activities in society (Manna 2008).

The transformations occurring among women in the Arab sector in Israel must be perceived in light of this fact. In this context, it is notable that a high point in regard to the education of the Arab women in Israel was the government historical decision to introduce coed (rather

than separate boys' and girls') schools in this sector. At the time, this decision did not result from philosophical, ideological, or pedagogic reasons, but rather from practical reasons and severe shortage of Arab teachers. In time it had a significant effect on the level of education of Arab women in Israel (Al-Haj 1995). [141]

As stated above, there is a significant difference between education in the Arab sector and in the Jewish sector, in favor of the Jewish sector. However, this state of affairs becomes more complex when the gender variable is included in the equation. In 2007, for example, the weight of Arabs with poor schooling (0–8 years) was very high in comparison to the weight of Jews with poor schooling. However, the weight of women with poor schooling in the Arab sector – 33.7% – was much higher than that of men with poor schooling – 25.7%. In contrast, although the rate of those with tertiary schooling in the Arab sector was much lower than in the Jewish sector, the weight of educated women in this sector was *not* less than that of educated men: among both it was 22.3% (Haviv 2008, 2). This datum reflects the massive entrance of the Arab women into the educational system. Already in 2007, Arab girls had a significantly lower rate of high school dropout (7.4%) than boys (12%) (p. 3).

A survey conducted in 2003, based on a representative sample, showed that an overwhelming majority of the Arab women in Israel supported higher education for women and their right to work. Interestingly, 88% of the Arab men were in favor as well (Daoud 2003, 195). A survey held by the Women against Violence organization showed that some 95% support the right of women to education, while 82% support their right to work (Daoud 2002, 91). Another study, also held in the first decade of the 21st century (Elias 2008), dealing with perceived gender views of the Arab teenagers in Israel, showed that girls have modern and liberal attitudes towards women's roles. At the same time, the study showed that schooling and religious affiliation or religiosity are mediating variables that influence attitudes towards this topic. The higher the schooling, the more egalitarian the attitudes; the lower the religiosity, the more egalitarian the attitudes. The more educated and the more secular were much more supportive of women's egalitarian roles.

TABLE 4 Distribution of undergraduate students at universities by religion in select years during 1990–2011

Category	1990	1996	2000	2004	2011
Total students	46,519	68,696	74,194	78,561	125,000
Jews (%)	93.3	93.0	91.0	87.0	86.4
Arabs and others (%)	6.7	7.0	9.0	9.8	13.6
Of these, Muslims (%)	3.7	3.8	5.4	6.3	6.8

NOTES Adapted from Fidelman (2009, 6) with supplementary data for 2010 from Central Bureau of Statistics (2011b, 4).

Nonetheless, it is notable that there were several restrictions of attitudes in favor of equality of women. Affluent families often objected to their daughters' working, even at a professional career. Only gradually has this approach changed.

The memoirs of one of the Arab teachers are very informative in this respect (Elias 2008, 91–2):

> In the 1950s and 1960s there were significant limitations on what women could do. I graduated from high school and many girls in my class became teachers. I wanted to be a teacher too, but my father objected. He objected to women working outside the home. At that time only women who needed money worked. Our financial circumstances were fine, so father asked me: 'Why do you need a job? Do you need money?' He also said: 'You can study and get an education.'

In the last generation, there has been a constant rise in the relative weight of the Arab students in schools of higher education. In 2011, the Arabs constituted 11.0% of all students at various types of schools of higher education (27,400 students). That year, they constituted 13.6% of all undergraduate students at universities (Central Bureau of Statistics 2012c, 4). The increase in the relative proportion of the Arab students at schools of higher education in the last generation is evident from table 4.

In the midst of this general increase, young Arab women are particularly conspicuous for their forward thrust into the system of higher

TABLE 5 Distribution of Arab students by gender, degree, and school, 2008

The school	Total	Male students	Female students
Total	25,045	36.4%	63.6%
Universities	11,441	40.8%	59.2%
Open University	2,572	43.8%	56.2%
Academic colleges	4,100	56.6%	43.4%
Academic teaching colleges	6,932	14.4%	85.6%
BA – total	22,046	35.1%	64.9%
Universities	8,935	39.0%	61.0%
Open University	2,474	43.6%	56.4%
Academic colleges	4,030	56.4%	43.6%
Academic teaching colleges	6,607	13.7%	86.3%
MA – total	2,651	43.4%	56.6%
Universities	2,158	44.7%	55.3%
Open University	98	50,0%	50,0%
Academic colleges	70	67.1%	32.9%
Academic teaching colleges	325	27.7%	72.3%
PhD – Universities	348	63.2%	36.8%

NOTES Adapted from Fidelman (2009, 8).

education. For example, data show that already in 2008, their predominance among the Arab students was much greater than that of young Jewish women among the Jewish students. The weight of these young women was 64.6% of all Arab students, while in the Jewish sector, women constituted 54.6% of all students. In other words, female Arab students constituted nearly two thirds (!) of all Arab students in 2008. This predominance is evident both in undergraduate and in graduate studies. Only in doctoral studies is the situation reversed (Fidelman 2009, 8).

THE RESEARCH: EXPLANATION OF METHODOLOGY

In light of all that has been said above regarding gender-based differentiation in the Arab sector in Israel and in light of the ongoing changes now witnessed, it was decided to hold an updated survey on the attitude of Muslim males toward women's right to pursue higher education. The survey was conducted in the last quarter of 2010.

The Research Population

The current research is based on a convenience sample. The respondents were recruited through the *facebook* network. The survey was advertised on the net and Muslims were invited to take part in it. Ap-
[144] proximately a hundred responses were received. Telephone interviews eliminated approximately thirty of the respondents, who were either not Muslims (some were Druze, some were Christians) or underage (namely, they were still high school students). Seventy questionnaires were sent via e-mail to Muslim men, 60 of whom e-mailed them back to the author. Pre-questioning ensured that roughly half of the respondents had higher education and roughly half had full or partial high school education. In the pre-questioning stage, the author of this article also tried to ensure more or less equal numerical weight to secular and religious respondents. The sample includes 24 declared secular respondents, 33 declared traditionalists or religious, and 3 unidentified ones.

The Research Hypotheses and Questions

Three hypotheses underlined the research:

H1 *In general, most respondents would support offering women an equal opportunity to acquire a higher education. The support stems from the recognition of the essential role of higher education in advancing the entire Arab sector, which is in a state of deprivation.*

H2 *However, support for offering women an equal opportunity will be higher among men with higher education than among those with high school education.*

H3 *Religiosity will also be an influential mediating variable in this context. Secular men will support equal opportunity for women more than religious men.*

Hence, the survey was meant to reveal whether there is a difference in attitude based on the respondents' education or religiosity.

Two ancillary questions were added:

1 Is there any link between the respondents' attitude towards gender equality and their attitude towards equal opportunity in higher education?

2 Is there any link between respondents' appreciation of women

and their attitude towards equal opportunity in higher education?

The Questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of 31 questions; additionally, seven questions formed an 'ID' of each respondent. It was divided into three subsections. The questions presented in the questionnaire were derived from the questionnaires previously used to explore the issues on which the current study was focusing (Revach 2001; Weinstein 1998; Cohen Schwartzman 2005; Haroe 1999; Frieman-Grayevsky 1976). Fourteen of the thirty one questions were taken from Sneijder's questionnaire (Sneijder 2002).

The first part, which includes eighteen questions, was intended to comprise an index of attitudes towards equality between the two sexes in general. Among the questions presented were simple statements, such as 'Women should take growing responsibility for leading the search for solutions to intellectual and social current issues;' or 'Women should have the same opportunity as men to specialize in various professions,' and also statements that required a revision of the scale when processing the data by computer, such as 'Women should recognize that it's silly to try and equal men in business and careers,' or 'Women should give up the imaginary ideal of intellectual equality with men.' The alpha Cronbach coefficient of the internal consistency of the questions that compose this measure is 0.863.

The second part, intended to comprise an index of women's appreciation, includes eighteen questions. These questions include statements such as, 'On average, women are just as intelligent as men,' or 'A woman can do most things just like men.' In this batch of questions, there is also one statement that requires reversal of the scale when processing the data by computer: 'Marriages are probably happier if the husband has had more schooling than his wife.' The alpha Cronbach coefficient of this part is 0.730.

The third part is intended to comprise the main index of the study, viz. attitudes towards equal opportunities for education. It includes twelve questions. Here some of the questions are simple statements, such as, 'Women and men should be treated the same when applying

for student loans' or 'Female students are more diligent than male students.' However, here too there are questions that required reversal of the scale when processing data by computer, such as, 'Women should not feel the same commitment as men to achieving an academic degree' [146] or 'Male students take their education more seriously than female students.' The alpha Cronbach coefficient of this part is 0.797.

FINDINGS

Examination of the hypotheses in light of statistical analysis of the results (with the use of SPSS software) revealed a list of interesting conclusions, which confirmed the researcher's hypotheses.

Women's Equal Right to Higher Education

At first, the findings examining the attitudes towards women's equal right to same education as men were examined. A scale of 1–5 points was used, with 1 designating absolute agreement with the statement and 5 designating absolute disagreement. Namely, the lower the overall mean the higher the support of equality.

The Link between the Respondents' Education and Their Attitude towards Equal Right to Higher Education. The first to be examined was the correlation between the respondents' schooling and their attitude towards equal rights to education.

The researcher's hypothesis was that the attitude of both groups of schooling (higher education on the one hand, and full high school or partial high school education on the other hand) would be positive; however, the attitude of those with higher education to equal rights would be more positive than that of those with high school education. Indeed, findings reveal that the mean score of those with higher education on this measure was lower (1.694) than that of those with high school education (1.955). In other words, the support of those with higher education is indeed slightly higher than that of those with high school education. However, in order to examine whether this difference is statistically significant a *t*-test for independent samples was held. The result of this test showed that despite the anticipated direction of the results they are not statistically significant: ($t(50.2) = -0.197$,

$p > 0.05$). No less interesting than the mean score of the measure is the distribution of scores, i. e. the weight of the respondents whose support of equal rights to education was particularly high and in contrast – the weight of the respondents whose support of equal rights to education was particularly low. [147]

An examination of the findings among the higher education respondents showed that none of them had a mean score of over 2.50 (where a good score is 1 and a bad score in this context is 5). One third of the respondents were in the range of a very low mean score 1–1.30 (i. e., very high support of equal rights to education). Another 36.8% of the higher education respondents were in the 1.4–1.90 range. Thus, about 70% of the higher education respondents may be said to highly support equal rights to education.

Among the respondents with a high school education, 23.3% of the respondents were in the very low mean score range of 1–1.30. Another third of the respondents with high school education were in the 1.44–1.90 range. Thus, 56.6% of the respondents with a high school education highly support equal rights to education. Nonetheless, it is notable that the mean score of 23.2% of all respondents with high school education was higher than 2.5. One of the respondents had a mean score of 3.20, which is the highest in the entire sample.

These data clarify the hypothesis proposed above: it does seem that the respondents' schooling is a variable that impacts their attitude towards equal rights of women to pursue higher education. The finding is probably not statistically significant mainly due to the size of the sample.

The Link between the Respondents' Religiosity and Their Attitude towards Equal Opportunity to Higher Education. At this stage, an attempt was made to examine the correlation between the respondents' religiosity and their attitude towards equal rights to higher education. Distribution of respondents by religiosity (examined by the respondents' self-statement) showed that twenty four defined themselves as secular, twenty six as traditional, and seven as religious.

The scores of the three groups were different: 1.664 for the secular; 1.936 for the traditional, and 2.157 for the religious. Yet, these differ-

ences are statistically insignificant. The statistical significance of these findings was examined with an *F*-test – unidirectional analysis of variance. This analysis showed no significant difference between the means of the three groups: ($F(2.54 = 2.59, p < 0.05)$. Despite the fact that
[148] the inclination of all mean scores is consistent and appears to show that the more religious were respondents the lower their support of equal right to education, this finding has no statistical reliability in the current sample. The mean score of the secular group was low, at 1.6644.

One third of secular respondents were in the very low mean score range of 1–1.30. Another 41.7% were in the 1.40–1.80 range. Thus, 75% of secular respondents were found to highly support equal right to education. Only two respondents had a mean score of over 2.5. No one had a mean score of more than 2.9. The mean score of the traditional group was higher than that of the secular group, at 1.9162.

26.9% of the traditional respondents were in the very low mean score range of 1–1.30 (less than among the secular). Another 26.9% were in the 1.50–1.90 range. Thus, 53.8% of the traditional respondents highly supported equal right to education, much less than among the secular respondents. Three traditional respondents had a mean score of over 2.50. One of the traditional respondents had a mean score of 3.20.

The mean score of the religious group was the highest, at 2.1571. Thus, this group's support of the equal right to education is the lowest of the three groups. In this group, no one had a mean score of less than 1.80. Then again, the highest mean score was 2.90. If so, the trend indicated by the analysis of the findings in this part of the questionnaire was also compatible with the researchers' hypothesis, although the findings were not statistically significant.

The Link between Attitudes of the Respondents to General Equality between the Sexes and Their Attitude to Women's Right to Higher Education

As stated, the research used a questionnaire that examined not only the respondents' attitudes towards women's right to higher education, but also their attitude towards equal rights for both sexes in general, as well as their appreciation of women.

In light of the findings summarized above, at this stage the research sought to examine another point – the link between the respondents' attitude to women's right to equal education and their attitudes towards general equality between the sexes. The assumption was that a positive correlation would be found between the two measures. In other words, those with a positive attitude towards general equality between the sexes would also demonstrate a positive attitude towards women's right to equal education. [149]

This was examined with a Pearson correlation, which showed that there is indeed a significantly strong correlation between the two measures: ($r = 0.872$, $p < 0.00$).

In order to examine to what degree the respondents' attitude to general equality between the sexes predicted their attitude to women's right to equal education, a simple regression analysis was conducted ($F(1.58) = 183.603$, $p < 0.00$). Again, the regression showed that the respondents' attitude towards general equality between the sexes explains 75.6% of the variance of attitudes towards women's right to equal education.

The Link between the Respondents' Appreciation of Women and Their Attitude to Women's Right to Higher Education

In line with what has already been stated, the research also sought to examine the link between the respondents' appreciation of women and their attitude to women's right to equal education. The assumption was, as in the previous case, that here too a strong correlation would be found between the two measures: respondents who have a high appreciation of women would also have a positive attitude towards their right to equal education. A Pearson correlation test indeed proved this to be true. A significantly strong positive correlation was found between the two measures: ($r = 0.829$, $p < 0.00$). Again, in order to examine to what degree the respondents' appreciation of women predicted their attitude towards women's right to higher education, a simple regression was used ($f(1.58) = 203.815$, $p < 0.00$). The regression showed that the respondents' appreciation of women explains 77.8% of the variance in their attitudes towards women's right to equal education.

The Relationship between the Respondents' Education and Religiosity and between Their Appreciation of Women and Attitudes towards Equality between the Sexes

Finally, following all these relationships examined by the research, the [150] question is whether the respondents' schooling and religiosity have a statistically significant effect on their appreciation of women and on their attitudes towards general equality between the sexes.

In order to examine the relationship between the respondents' schooling and their appreciation of women, a *t*-test for independent samples was used. This test showed a significant difference in the appreciation of women between the respondents with tertiary education and those with full high school education or less: ($r(58) = 2.005$, $p = 0.05$). The respondents with tertiary education had a higher appreciation of women. Their score was 2.09 (of 5) (SD = 0.59). The scores of the respondents with high school education were worse, at 2.37 (SD = 0.59). When examining the distribution of scorings in the two groups, it is evident that 56.7% of the respondents with tertiary education were in the 1.6–2.3 range. The prevalent score was 2 and it was attained by 20% of this group. Among the group of respondents with high school education, the prevalent score was 2.4. It was attained by 13.3% of this group.

The examination of the link between the respondents' religiosity and their appreciation of women was checked by means of an F test. Unidirectional analysis of variance indeed showed a statistically significant difference in the appreciation of women between the various groups of respondents by religiosity: ($F(2.54) = 3.205$, $p > 0.05$). The secular respondents' appreciation of women was found to be the highest – M = 2.07 (SD = 0.51). The traditional respondents' appreciation was medium – M = 2.34 (SD = 0.55). The religious respondents' appreciation was the lowest – M = 2.57 (SD = 0.31). The examination of the distribution of this measure showed no convergence at the endpoints. The scores of most respondents were found to be around the mean.

The examination of the link between the respondents' religiosity and their attitude to general equality between the sexes also showed statistical significance: ($F(2.54) = 4.929$, $p > 0.05$). It seems, as ex-

pected, that the secular respondents had more positive attitudes to equality between the sexes – M = 1.75 (SD = 0.35). The traditional respondents were in the middle with M = 2.11 (SD = 0.59), while the religious respondents achieved the lowest score – M = 2.25 (SD = 0.33). Here too, no convergence of scores was evident at the endpoints. Most were around the mean. [151]

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the special status of the Israeli Arabs as a minority in the Israeli society, and in light of the shifts occurring within them in the transition from a traditional collectivist society to a modern individualist society, this article attempted to examine the attitudes of Muslim men to the right of Muslim women to pursue higher education. The article sought to clarify whether there is a link between the schooling and religiosity of respondents and their attitudes to this issue. The study also sought to examine whether there is a link between the respondents' appreciation of women and their attitude to the issue of women's rights to higher education; and whether there is a link between their attitude to equality between the sexes and their attitude to the issue of women's rights to higher education.

The study discussed schooling differences between the Jewish and the Arab sectors, where the former are at a big advantage over the latter. At the same time, the article indicated rapid shifts that have occurred in this sphere in the last generation. It stressed the fact that despite these shifts there are still big differences between the two sectors – the Jewish and the Arab – both in high school education and in higher education. The article also showed that concurrent with the positive change in education in the Arab sector, a phenomenon familiar from the Jewish sector is evident here as well, where females have a significant advantage over males both in high school education and in higher education. The relative weight of female students who pass their matriculation exams is larger than that of male students, both in the Jewish majority and in the Arab minority. At schools of higher education, the advantage of females over Arab males is even higher than among the Jewish sector!

The weight of schooling as the key factor, which usually makes it

possible to predict one's place on the social pyramid, is clear today not only to professionals but also to laymen. This is true of both the Jewish and the Arab sector. However, it is much more complicated to encourage studies in the traditional Muslim society than in the Jew-
[152] ish society. The simple reason is that the Arab society in Israel is still mostly traditional and patriarchal, despite its rapid transformation. The place of women in this society is very different than in the western society, and even much more so as studying at schools of higher education in Israel removes Muslim women from the homogeneous ecological framework of their ethnic community and exposes them to close and intensive contact with the members of the majority. These are the circumstances that might hamper the Arab society's support of higher education for women.

Based on the findings of previous surveys conducted among the Arab society in Israel, surveys that indicated significant support of Muslims in Israel for offering higher education to their wives, the writer initiated another field study in late 2010. To begin with, he was aware that previous studies had already shown that Muslim women in Israel feel a high commitment to studying at schools of higher education (Mustafa 2007), if only for the simple reason that they perceive an academic degree as an excellent resource that raises their status in the community and promotes change (Gilat and Hertz-Lazarowitz 2009; Pessate-Schubert 2003). In addition, it was borne in mind that Muslim Israeli society realizes at present that educated women advance their entire family, and therefore educated women have an advantage in the marriage market (Shapira and Hertz-Lazarowitz 2004). Finally, it was also borne in mind that the Arab minority has a prevalent concept of higher education as contributing not only to the advancement of individuals, but also to that of the entire community (Masri-Harzallah, 2007).

The study, which posed the questions listed at the beginning of this summary, reached the following conclusions:

- Although statistically the findings are not significant, they consistently show that respondents who have tertiary education support women's rights to higher education more than respondents who have high school education.

- Both groups of respondents highly support women's right to higher education.
- Although statistically the findings are not significant, they consistently show that the respondents' religiosity affects their attitude towards women's right to higher education. The secular respondents show the most support, the religious respondents the least, and the traditional respondents are in the middle.
- The findings also indicate that those with a positive attitude towards equality between the sexes would support women's right to pursue higher education as well.
- This is also true of the respondents' appreciation of women and their support of women's right to pursue higher education. The more respondents appreciate women the more they support their right to pursue higher education.
- At the same time, the study found a significantly positive correlation between the respondents' education and their appreciation of women.
- This was also true of the significantly positive correlation between religiosity and appreciation of women: the secular respondents had the most appreciation for women, the religious respondents – the least, and the traditional respondents were in the middle.
- A significant statistical relationship was also found between the respondents' religiosity and their attitude towards general equality between the sexes. The secular respondents had the highest positive attitude, the religious respondents the lowest, and the traditional respondents were in the middle.

As a conclusion a word of warning is warranted: One should bear in mind two of the survey's limitations. First, it was based on a convenience sample. Second, it was based on a small sample. It would be very interesting to carry out another sample on a bigger scale, including urban as well as rural areas. An attempt should also be made to cover the Bedouin population of the Negev, among whom there is a growing demand for higher education among women.

Last but not least, one of the most obvious implications of the survey is the need for Arab higher education institutions in the regions

where this population is concentrated. Such institutions will facilitate a much larger participation of young women in the higher education system, since it won't be necessary for them to leave home and study far away in unfamiliar surroundings.

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Technological Language as a Common Language for the Euro-Mediterranean Population

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THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKS provide new forms of public spaces, virtual continents populated by people of different races, languages, and religions that communicate with a single language, in one unique mode and with one unique tool. In the era of extreme social participation, it is impossible not to consider the role of future policies of education. We cannot ignore the basic language in which the Euro-Mediterranean people recognize themselves, allowing them to interact on all sides of the Mediterranean basin. Technology provides a dialogue bridge, as well as mutual recognition and accreditation for the people who share the Mediterranean Sea and the world. The Internet is the true centre of the Union membership and provides a common good, which generates shared recognition and willingness to communicate; furthermore, it results in the renunciation of personal data protection, as well as the management of its powers to private entities. The aim of this paper is to envisage the effects of the electronic society on the Mediterranean Policies.

Key Words: e-democracy; technological language; information

INTRODUCTION

Research Vision

A profound analysis of the processes of political, economic, and social globalization must take into account some of the reflections regarding the dialogue between people, tradition, and culture in the wider Euro-Mediterranean perspective of globalization, enlargement of the EU to some states bordering the Mediterranean sea, and the presence of the people and citizens within the territory of the Union, who are origi-

nally immigrants, as well as the questions of identity that these changes caused on the two shores of the Mediterranean. Some important processes of integration and homogeneity have been undertaken for some time, but it is now certain that other autonomous processes of in-
[160] tegration are developed individually and independently of investment research due to the simple use of a common language and something as universal as information technology. The Internet and social networks provide new forms of public spaces, new virtual continents populated by people of different races, languages and religions that communicate with a single language, in one unique mode and with one unique tool. On both shores of the Mediterranean, the globalization brings with it profound changes in the intersection of ideas, initiatives, and flows; therefore, it is impossible to ignore the aid of technology in the fostering of the development and growth on equal terms. The speed of change in respect of the traditions is high; however, the recognition of diversity prior to the common technology identity is an important point of analysis to be exploited with the consideration of the common growth of the new generation of digital natives. The web is certainly a virtual public space, which is based on the intentions and democratic principles of access and participation, but it is not an overall democratic environment. It represents a social window where everyone plays a specific role, whether these are national institutions, governments, providers, people, or individual movements of thought and protest. The effect of this new digital State made in technology, which is full of tools such as blogs, chat and social networks is not simply sharing, it is a new philosophy of public life, a social platform of intense human interaction, a controlled accreditation scheme, a non-private sharing space, a system of immediate publication of any idea, right or wrong, to the detriment of human rights and confidentiality of communications. It is, at the same time, a system of accreditation and reciprocity, a way to be inside the new social life and media participation. The web is not yet considered as a new space of conquest, an offshoot of the analogical world that brings with it both the positivity and the negativity of the civil society, it is a mere transposition in the digital world. The Internet is a digital social space, without analogical squares, full of digital intersection points for sharing ideas, projects,

information; there is an important form of connection made by the digital social-squares, new digital spaces that make up the new reality of the civil society. All the information across the world is faster than before and people are participating in the information construction process with their role passing from a passive to an active one. The [161] web generates a new feeling of public belonging that comes from the technological knowledge and not from nationality. A recognition and mutual accreditation that crosses national boundaries and does not need additional symbols, such as the flag or national music, a form of atypical membership contextualized in a virtual reality citizenship. The virtual environment is open to the cooperative natural spirit and artificial collaboration through the manifestations of mutual solidarity and common interests expressed through self-complaint desires. The virtual world evolves in powerful social platforms of human interaction characterized by massive and intense participation giving rise to the birth of complex social relationships and the formation of virtual communities (Nuno Gomes de Andrade 2009).

Research Methods

The aim of this paper is to envisage the effects of the electronic society in social evolution, language, private life, and changes for citizens in their social approach and public life. The target of the research is carried out through the analysis of the state-of-the art technological and doctrinal level with the use of ordinary tools of research, and with special attention on the behavioral profiles in network and accreditation systems used in the approach to new technologies, with an emphasis on the utilization rates and the feedback network. The research takes account of the new theories of reference in the study of the behavior and effects of digital connectivity to every corner of the planet. This research was conducted through the analysis of the worldwide network latitudes, the common points of different populations, and how and when to use the network as a part of the next-generation and digital native generation (Palfrey and Gasser 2008). Particular attention and emphasis was given to the findings about the common approach of both the individual and the group to new technologies. The research focuses, in particular, on the possibility of aggregation provided by

the web and the computer technology, an instrument equipped with a single language and multiple possibilities. A new kind of language, which can also be understood in a metaphysical sense, a new English language for the people as a contact point, provided via the instru-
[162] mentation that does not care about diversity of religion, policy, or the real identity. This language is provided in an electronic system where the electronic citizen renounces his personal sovereignty, not in favor of a state but in favor of the private companies that provide guarantees and rights inferior to humanity giving a commercial value to every good and unfortunately also every personal data. The analysis makes use of the comparative studies about the reduction of the degrees of separation conducted by two universities.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The Net in the Transition from Neutral Non-Accredited System to a Public Area of International Interaction

The human electronic nature is an agglomerate based on the common electronic language and the anonymity of the web. The social network determines a new online public life where people are self-accredited citizens, members of the Technological State, where Government and norms are intangible assets. The new digital citizenship-membership involves non-ethnic, non-linguistic, and non-religious difference, a digital cross-recognition that allows no distinctions and diversity, a natural acceptance tied to an environment friendly opposed to the analogical company founded and grown on diversity, on the borders and barriers closing to everything that does not belong to us, while on the network, everything is shared. It is a silent system of sharing and acceptance much more powerful than any policy oriented in this direction. Digital citizenship is a self-acknowledged system with spontaneous participation without the recognition of the diversity of extreme latitudes, a state without a state that requires adjustment and control, but not also the unacceptable rigid rules. This change is not only generational, but also an epochal change that deserves a thorough and careful analysis of the evolution of this phenomenon whose effects are unstoppable. The web is a huge opportunity and an incredible resource that can be used as a tool of cultural uniformity enabling intercultural

dialogue and acceptance that starts with recognition of the uniqueness of languages. One of the forms that best represent the network as a virtual existence in rarefied comfortable and hyper-sustainable environment is precisely the social network, which can be described as a virtual homeland where citizenship is recognized despite the fact [163] that the state is far and the citizen, not bound by the state-individual agreement, must find his own sociality. An environment where the new generations are comfortable giving up the analogical reality and where the previous generations and adults are looking for their youth, escaping from reality with the use of technology (Morozov 2011; Kaewchur, Anussornnitisarn, and Pastuszak 2013). With the use of this new social dimension they find a way of creating a new identity. This new category is called a 'Digital Migrant,' who can build bridges to the digital native, who dives into the new environment, where information, communication and entertainment flow and are created in different ways (Garcia Fernàndez 2010), in the admixture of use, pleasure, and education that makes up a melting pot of language and technology, which is difficult to replace in any different way. The new era of common generational points has already started. In this context, the rarefied and multifunctional social network system plays an important role, which is characterized by aggregation and simplicity of the expressed relationships through sharing, a condition that multiplies this effect by exporting personal data and importing uncertainties and personal difficulties. Due to this social approach, the individuals reveal themselves in a social life where human relations and human rights do not evolve with the pace of the development of technology (Vaidhyanathan 2012) Social networking is a new policy, a new instrument, and a new part of public society based on the intercultural citizens who do not feel citizenship and national identity; however, they consider themselves a part of the social electronic society that dematerializes relations and virtues of the material world. It provides an escape from reality into the infinite spaces of supposed legality. On the web, every citizen exercises a renunciation of personal sovereignty, a renunciation of personal data, as well as the management of its power to private entities, who are not necessarily able to protect such data as personal property, but are well aware of their commercial value and the possible use of such

stolen data without the awareness of the users. The political and social system, which was built over the centuries, may be flexible to small and modest gradual changes; however, it collapsed with the evolution of technology. The analogical world has lost its certainties and concrete-
[164] ness in favor of the digital world, which has reduced the importance of time and ways of providing information, but not also the accuracy and safety of such information. The mechanisms of the new virtual civil society are more inclusive, and more capable of bridging the gap of the digital divide, through the curiosity of participating individuals and through the capacity of the new generations. There are no age limits on the web, only credited participation schemes that do not consider the age of the participant. The virtual environment is a well structured environment capable of generating a new language, which can exist only in a space where personal data is no longer important. Consequently, we are loaded and transferred indiscriminately without thinking about the present and future social consequences. The Internet must be an open-source technology where every individual can find information, a service offered by the society free-of-charge and without service rights, so that what is present in the network can be developed freely and can create new forms of technology available; a direct emanation of thought and consequent free movement of ideas that are strengthened by an open source system by freeing the market constraint shackles, thus collapsing the technology and making it open to all and not merely a privileged club. In this case, the technology would become a real social capital. These new types of meeting points are online social networks, technological networks capable of connecting people who are sharing information and keeping in touch twenty four hours a day with an incomparable word of mouth effect (Shih 2011; Vukasović 2013).

The social networking is not simply a way to share information and communication. The social network has a word of mouth effect. It is a real form of socialization, a new aspect of public life, which is technologically mediated; it is a new philosophy of public life in which millions of people recognize themselves as part of a community – social-friends with a common identity, a part of the social e-belonging with common interests, cooperation, mutuality, and reciprocity of purpose

and passion, a globalization identity. It is a new frontier of studying and it therefore deserves serious consideration. For the new generations, it is easier to chat and hide their real identity behind a technological wall, rather than show themselves in real life. This generation prefers to live in a software world where they can be everything they want. A new virtual identity is thus created and a mutual reciprocal accreditation raises the virtual State with technological virtual membership without national symbols, which presupposes freedom and is implemented through a 'click' or a 'like,' through new forms of payment with the use of implicit assignment unaware of personal data, through the new frontier of marketing and of the accumulation of data.

This population of members with 700 million participants around the world and almost 20 million of those from Italy (Falanga 2011), theoretically determines the third most populated country in the world, while taking into account the phenomenon of multiple registrations and multiple identities. The virtual environment definitely constitutes a huge metropolis with Italian membership, a kind of dual citizenship with no sign of belonging to a specific nationality. The statistical curiosity lead to a careful examination of the most populated social network cities with surprising results, since the values are inversely proportional to the real population. The real value of social networks for business strategy is not only determined by the number of registered users, but, more often than not, by the multiplicity of functions, and trade relations of such integrated platforms.

Social Network Effects and the Issue of Distance in a Relationship

The technological world crosses national borders and does not need additional symbols, such as the flag or national music, is a new form of atypical membership, which is contextualized in a virtual reality citizenship. The virtual environment is open to a cooperative natural spirit and artificial collaboration through the manifestation of mutual solidarity. Facebook is the third largest country of the world when it comes to the size of the population and the world's most famous accredited membership pass. In this country, every citizen exercises a renunciation of personal sovereignty in this context with the delegation of

power to the hands of both known and unknown companies without a personal citizen-state relation, as it was in the centuries where a State was the expression of citizen vote and the power of the State was the result of the peoples' expression of will. In this case a personal power
[166] is transferred to the third parties. In this scenario, the individuals do not represent the State and are not necessarily able to protect themselves. Such third parties, through cheap and often free offers manage or 'deal' with the acquired data, since they are aware of the commercial value of this abdication, as well as the marketability of stolen data without the knowledge of the users. The outsourcing of private data is a daily practice in the virtual world where the citizen-individual exhibits and thus provides the information for the outsourcing of their individuality and personality via the social network; a kind of spontaneous self-de-legitimization practiced with a great confidence and spontaneous legitimacy of the manager, without the awareness of the commercial intentions of others, which open the world of networking, searching for information, and research data at a price that citizens prefer to pay underhand in exchange for the services received. In this sense, the society on an analogical basis no longer exists having no cause for its existence. The search for a new social pact, reintroducing the individual as the central objective of the newly acquired law and rights, puts the society in a position of pending by new social developments referred to both the Mediterranean, as well as the whole world, where the digital society is immediately following the developments of the real society. This need is even more apparent in the countries of the Mediterranean basin, where the recent riots shook the slight certainties that have stood in place for centuries (Touraine 2008). Some sociological studies have developed the effects of social networks on personal relationships and, in particular, on the degrees of separation. Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks cancel all distances between unknown people; thus facilitating idioms, expressions, the commonality of interests, and the consequential detachment of the typical long-distance relationships. The studies of mathematics and statistics facilitate the understanding of the network mechanisms and virtual dialogue by making it a clear focusing action in the digital environment. The shared world is becoming smaller and consequently shortens the

six degrees of separation theory of the American sociologist Stanley Milgram in 1967 to just 3.2 as calculated by Y. Daraghmi and Shyan Ming Yuan in 2013, in a study of the National Chiao Tung University in Taiwan. The prodigy, associating the citizens dispersed in wide geographic areas of the world is generated by the social network, the so-called 'third state,' the digital one, increasingly interconnected demographic and ready to climb positions. The data has been prepared on the basis of 950 million interactions on Facebook (Berberi 2013). [167]

In the era of technologically mediated communication, where the center is the network, the chain of intermediaries is dramatically shortened. A Brazilian, Vietnamese, Alaskan, and Mali citizens are networked through a chain of acquaintances, but with only two digital intermediaries. A thorough study of the University of Milan performed in 2011, which was conducted by prof. Vigna, reduced the degrees of separation to less than four. The analysis was performed on the interactions of 720 million of users, moving away from the theorized 'small world' (Milgram 1967). The results of this research did not improve the level of actual knowledge; however, it is important to consider the ease and speed of digital interaction that, in any case, does not reduce the analogical distance, amplified by the increasingly complex real-life, which is far from the virtual oasis and its multiple identities. These results should be accompanied by some reflections regarding the issue of ethics and the respect of others, a condition that does not always develop with the speed of technology. Ethics, such as law, is always unsuccessful in relation to the IT. The advantages of the use of the network are countless. Furthermore, the use of the web and technology that is common to the whole Mediterranean basin can only be positive for all the people and civilizations bordering the basin. As it has been shown by the academic studies on the distance reduction, the web and social networks can play an important role in the mutual recognition and overcoming of the concept of diversity, whether it is religious, linguistic or racial, an *idem sentire* able to create a common feeling, a belonging to the network, which constitutes the world connecting both sides of the Mediterranean regardless of the oceans and latitudes. A non-constructive attitude regarding the closure to a single network could give rise to more networks, which will result in

a more individual and nationally oriented internet, separated from the rest of the web. The companies and the states that have the power and the control in the network must ensure that internal control policies generate distrust in the web. The advantages of the Internet would
[168] disappear in the face of closure policies of individual nation states.

CONCLUSION

We are currently waiting for a new governance of the network that would deal with the new wording of the contract between the individual and the state and would focus the attention on both, the digitized citizen and the state, which is more and more forced to delegate its power to the multinational companies that exercise control and surveillance and are able to progressively invest, but also sell the acquired data through the provision of essential services related to the access of the network. The full potential of the virtual environment needs to be exploited A unique language that comes from the direct experience of the people on the Internet is created, and schools, universities and also families are, more than ever, confronted with this unique digital language; therefore, their role must be to aid in the development and control with well-defined social roles, while waiting for a network global governance that will take advantage of the ability of the web to generate union, comparison, and mutual belonging, as well as protect the apparent delegation of power and sovereignty to the network practiced by the connected citizen. The general principle of gratuity of access encourages socialization and all forms of e-Democracy. The access to endless information and content with marginal costs that equal to zero promotes sharing and attracts more participation and online socializing through discussion and debate activities by individuals in the farthest corners of the globe. This idea of one world language technology promotes the participation and criticism by raising the standards of quality, as well as generating influence on the world events. To the children of the poorest countries, this connectivity promises future access to new educational tools, while the lack of tools and physicality will result in the opportunity to study and educate in remote places where there is no analogical instrumentation. Digital technologies will replace the deficiencies and shortcomings of the government in the

field of education. Virtual ecosystem will rely more and more on open source systems and the global competitiveness will benefit due to the equal conditions provided by the technology that is available to all citizens of the planet regardless of geographical differences (Schmidt and Cohen 2013). [169]

Even the people below the poverty line will benefit from the technological acceleration by directly accessing new technologies and thus bridging the gap that has kept them away from the rest of the world for years, consequently providing them a chair at the table of culture and participation with equal dignity and equal effectiveness. The web is a vector of human dignity, and may, by virtue of its characteristics, be viewed as a category of human rights. The analogical world will continue to be different, due to its difficulties and its imbalances, while the digital world may be destined for a basic fairness dreamed by generations and enlightened thinkers. The technology can be a true carrier of cultural and economic balance; however, in order to generate this virtuous cycle, we must recognize the vital role that it plays by making it one of the primary sources of social development Furthermore, all the resources saved by the web may be used for other development.

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Actualization of the PhD Students' Intercultural Research Competencies in a Global Society

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GLOBALIZATION IS CHANGING the qualitative characteristics of society, affecting both the life and mentality of people. In relevance to globalization, higher education is gaining new dimensions as well. Bologna and Lisbon documents guide and obligate each country to create integrated and harmonious international space of higher education in Europe. PhD studies are considered as integral in the higher education structure; therefore, internationalization is a significant imperative for PhD studies development. In the process of internationalization, the need for students' intercultural competencies is widely recognized. Firstly, we suppose that the impact of globalization on internationalization still remains underestimated. Globalization makes internationalization not only more intense, but also qualitatively different. Secondly, there is a lack of systemic analysis on the development of intercultural research competencies in PhD studies. We relate the need for intercultural research competencies to the following critical and rhetorical question: 'Are today's PhD students ready to solve tomorrow's global problems?'

Key Words: globalization; interculturalism; internationality; intercultural competence

INTRODUCTION

The preconditions for the focus of the research objective on intercultural research competencies of PhDstudents rise from important political documents. On 21 October 2010, the European University

Association (EUA) Council, which is made up of the representatives of the European rectors' conferences, approved the Salzburg II document with its recommendations for the reform of doctoral education. There are two main issues as follows: quality assurance and internationalization of PhD studies. The universities should attempt to stimulate PhD students to obtain international research experience and to attract students from abroad ('Implementing the Salzburg Principles' 2010). EUA includes the Council for Doctoral Education (CDE), which contains 210 members in 33 countries. CDE is a membership service focused on doctoral education. CDE provides the guidelines for countries and institutions on the development and implementation of international political declarations. In relevance with the aforementioned Salzburg II document, the Lithuanian strategy for PhD studies development is highly oriented toward internationalization of PhD studies with a focus on the following issues: to encourage the students' international mobility in order to gain experience in abroad advanced research institutions; also, higher qualification requirements related to international recognition for supervisors and Defence Board members.

Furthermore, other important documents emphasize the orientation toward internationalization in PhD studies. The Bologna and Lisbon documents are the guidelines in the creation of an integrated and harmonious international space of higher education in Europe, including PhD studies. However, the aforementioned documents pay more attention to the Bachelor and Master level studies, while the Salzburg II document points out that PhD studies are a unique process. '[...] doctoral candidates are behaving more and more like students. [...] the bigger the temptation for the doctoral candidates simply to follow the structure without developing the independence the doctorate aims for. [...] adopting detailed credit systems could change candidates' chief motivation away from research towards the 'hunt for credits.' [...] But it was clear that [...] *the core of the doctorate process: original research*' ('Implementing the Salzburg Principles' 2010). Therefore, we focus on the *Intercultural Research Competencies* instead of the general intercultural competencies.

The intercultural research competencies should be analyzed in the context of significant societal changes. The power of globalization provides unique and qualitatively new dimensions to international-

ization. Globalization exists at the local, national, and international levels and includes changes in economy (such as trade liberalization), technology (such as the internet), and in society (the capacity to work collectively across borders) (Stienstra 2003). Many researchers agree on the point that 'globalization refers to fundamental changes in the spatial and temporal contours of social existence' (see http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/globalization). Today's society faces global problems instead of international ones. Furthermore, social problems are constantly globalized (Boli, Elliot, and Bieri 2004). The challenge for researchers lies in the fact that there is not precise and widely agreed definition on the concept of the global problem. When exploring the global problems, it is not sufficient to merely collect and compare different countries' experiences; moreover, researchers are expected to recognize the unique phenomena that cross the borders of nations, states, and other entities. Are today's PhD students ready to solve tomorrow's global problems? Moreover, how could Intercultural Research Competencies serve for exploring and solving global problems?

D. Savicevic (2008) points out that modern education is influenced by the *global learning paradigm* that indicates the development perspectives – learning has to be a tool that helps the mankind to learn how to understand other cultures, other civilizations, perceive global systems, their problems and options for solutions. We are all permanently included in the intercultural space; thus, the intercultural competencies are more and more important to each of us. According to M. Milana (2012), globalization inter-relates all processes in such extent context; therefore, there is a reason to talk about authentic concepts such as *common world education culture* (Meyer, Ramirez, and Soysal 1992).

The aim of the article is to reveal the importance of the PhD students' intercultural research competencies in the perspective of the global society. The chosen method – systematic analysis of the scientific literature and overview of political documents.

ARE TODAY'S PHD STUDENTS READY TO SOLVE TOMORROW'S GLOBAL PROBLEMS?

Peterson, Wunder, and Mueller (1999) point out that *global problems* are qualitatively different from traditional social problems. 'It is possible

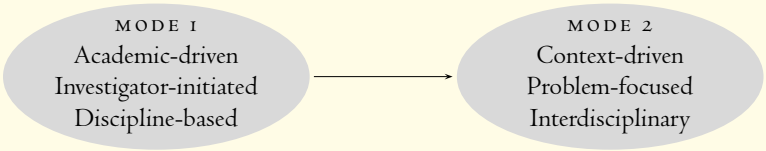

FIGURE 1 Illustrating paradigmatic changes (adapted from Paleari 2013)

to view global problems as social problems that are bigger than national problems. As such, global problems affect not only social systems, but also massive numbers of people' (Peterson, Wunder, and Mueller 1999, 9). Some social problems, alongside with global communication technologies, gain new power and pose higher threat in today's society. For instance, a very old social disease, such as pornography, is 'powered by the Internet' (Boli, Elliot, and Bieri 2004, 403). The poverty is recognized as a global issue even though it is geographically mostly concentrated in the sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia (Babones and Turner 2004, 102). The research challenge in this domain is that different countries cannot agree about the measurement of poverty level.

Global social problems are those which cannot be confined within the national boundaries and which need both national and international attention, if they are to be ameliorated. Babones and Turner (2004) note that issues, such as diseases or pollution do not respect the national boundaries. The research challenge is to help recognize a problem as a global issue for different countries, because 'what is conceived as a social problem in an affluent society would not be so considered in a less developed one' (Ritzer 2004, 4).

What does it mean to conduct a research in the global society? The need for original and problem oriented research is related with the paradigmatic epistemological changes, which orient from traditional research ('Mode 1') to knowledge production ('Mode 2') (Gibbons et al. 1994; Gray 2008).

Globalization is mostly associated with the economic, political, and financial power. Little attention is paid to the cultural dimension in the context of globalization. According to J. Tomlinson (2002), culture is one of the most important dimensions of globalization, as it

gives a possibility to see the phenomena from more diverse and subtle perspective than merely economic or market aspects; globalization creates a new globalized culture, which does not merely constitute the integrity of certain existing cultural elements, but also the appearance of new elements that are incorporated by the existing cultures. Peterson, Wunder, and Mueller (1999) propose to differentiate the objective globalization from the subjective globalization. The objective globalization is expressed as a growing integrity, a connection that influences values, ideas, expectations, and identity – humans' attitude. The subjective globalization embraces constant redefinition of identities and attitudes that comes from the peoples' dialogue and confrontation caused by globalization. In this perspective, culture has to be perceived as collected from various discourses that could be defined as constant communication, while the culture elements – values, attitudes – become not constant, but permanently discussed in relation to other cultures. For the exploration of the globalized communication as a cultural phenomenon, a highly interdisciplinary research is needed. Interdisciplinarity in PhD studies was the focus of the European University Association Council for Doctoral Education 6th Thematic Workshop in 17 January 2013, Turin (Italy).

THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Rapidly increasing worldwide processes of integration and globalization raise the demand for internationalization of science and studies; thus changing the parameters of higher education activity. International competitiveness of the European higher education space, international mobility, high level of employability of university and college graduates, and their successful integration in the international labor market are the main goals of the Bologna process (Lourtie 2001). The latter raises new international cooperation demands for higher education institutions: to increase teacher and student mobility, social and academic openness, to implement European dimensions in the study process and consequently internationalize studies more rapidly. The analysis of international dimensions of higher education in various international agreements and scientific literature displayed the fact that

the conception of study and science internationalization is gaining recognition, whereas the process of internationalization is becoming more mature. Thus, schools in higher education cannot delay the integration of the international phenomena dimensions into their activity
[176] and their quality *assessment* and *development.* Specific study internationalization processes, procedures, and programmes (student and teacher exchanges, *Joint degree* and *Double degree* study programmes, international research, language teaching, etc.) have become a usual part of the activities of today's higher education institutions.

Higher education internationalization in social sciences is not a new topic on the global scale. Yet, theoretical literature source analysis showed that this topic has been researched in Lithuania to a small extent, both theoretically and practically, which is contrary to the term of quality in higher education.

The concept of *internationalization* has been appearing increasingly more often in the discussions regarding international relations of higher education, as well as analyses of higher education international dimensions in various international agreements and theoretical literature resources of various countries. Internationalization process content and goals have changed considerably during the past 25 years when higher education internationalization phenomenon was strengthened all over the world (Knight 2004). Still, higher education internationalization is at its outset in a number of higher education institutions in different countries. Lithuania is no exception.

Internationalization concept has undergone several developmental stages during the last two decades. First, it was perceived as an institutional level activity. This concept is reflected in the definition presented by Arum and Water (1992), which states that internationalization is related to a 'variety of activities, programmes and services which is an international constituent of studies, international study exchanges and technical cooperation' (p. 202). Knight (1994) suggests viewing internationalization as a complex, consistent, and continuous phenomenon at an institutional level. Internationalization is considered to be 'a process of integrating international and intercultural dimensions into studies, research and functions of institutional services' (p. 7). Both definitions of internationalization are limited by

institutional level, as both emphasize the institutional activities and processes. Wende (1997) presents a broader concept of internationalization, which raises an assumption that internationalization is 'any systemic efforts aiming at making higher education to meet the requirements and challenges related to the globalisation demands and challenges of societies, economics and labour markets' (p. 18). In this definition, the international dimension is emphasized in relation to the external environment as opposed to the higher education institution itself. Therefore, the institutional level is later again referred to by offering a concept of internationalization where attention is focused on the change processes in studies and in a holistic approach to institutional management. Soderqvist (2002) defines higher education institution internationalization as 'a process of transition from national higher education institution to international higher education institution, where the involvement of international dimension into all aspects of institutional management is most important seeking to strengthen the quality of teaching and studying and to achieve the necessary competencies' (p. 29). This definition indicates the reasons of institution internationalization; therefore, it cannot be applied in all cases in the countries or institutions, which perceive internationalization in a broader sense, and not only as the improvement of the study quality or the development of competencies. Though Knight (2003) does not propose a universal definition of internationalization, she still claims that internationalization concept should be comparatively common if it is to be applied in a number of different countries, cultures, and educational systems. Therefore, internationalization is defined as 'integration of international, intercultural and global dimensions into higher education goals, functions and its provision process' (Knight 2003, 2). It is important, according to J. Knight, that this definition is appropriate for different levels, i. e. separate national, sectoral or institutional level. When comparing the former definition of the concept of internationalization presented by J. Knight (1994) (Internationalization of Higher Education is a process of integrating international and intercultural dimensions into studies, research, and functions of institutional services) with the latter, it is obvious that more indefinite concepts of 'goals, functions, and higher education provision' are proposed instead

of the concepts of 'studies, research, and services of institution,' specific to higher education. The author claims that a definition should, first of all, conform to the modern reality; additionally, such a definition is more suitable for comparative studies. All the discussed definitions
[178] do not contradict but supplement each other. An internationalization concept, presented by Wende (1997), is particularly important for every higher education institution in the present Bologna process stage, as it indicates one of the motives of institution internationalization – the capability to react to the changes in the environment, which can be called the capacity to be a competitive institution in the context of contemporary higher education development tendencies.

Another aim of higher education internationalization is its *quality.* Researcher studies (Wende 1997; Knight 1999; 2003; 2004) and international treaties (Sorbonne declaration, Bologna declaration, Prague Communiqué, Berlin Communiqué, and Bergen Communiqué, see http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no) indicate that higher education internationalization is related to the quality of higher education. All this is implied in the belief that international cooperation and student, as well as teacher and researcher, exchanges will become the norm of the majority and will create a possibility to learn from each other, compare, and generalize the best conceptions and practical expertise, perceive a multicultural medium, learn foreign languages, etc. It is believed that international cooperation and exchanges will have a considerable impact not only on the learner, but also on the quality of processes and outcomes of the institution and higher education system. Study internationalization is directly related to the student's activity and his Professional career. Thus, more and more attention should be devoted to the students' intercultural competencies as an aid to achieve quality in internationalization and successful integration in the global market.

INTERCULTURAL RESEARCH COMPETENCIES OF PHD STUDENTS

The proponents of constructivism define competency as the process of development (developmental approach). The model of intercultural competencies' development (Fennes and Hapgood 1997) indicates competencies as certain forms of relations with culture: *ethnocen-*

trism – natural situation of a person who has not been in a relation with other cultures and evaluates the world according to the standards of his own cultural group, ready to protect the standards from other groups, *awareness* – the phase allowing the perception of the fact that there are cultural differences, *understanding* – the phase of understanding [179] the roots of intercultural differences and their influence, *acceptance and respect* – this phase represents the beginning of understanding of cultural variety as a source of development and value, *appreciation and valuing* – finding valuable opportunities that are missed in own culture, *exchange* – appearance of new attitudes and skills that are unusual both for own and foreign culture, *intercultural competence* – a phase when an individual learns how to act effectively and not only protect own identity, but also accept peculiarities of other cultures.

In the intercultural competencies model, Byram (1997) defined the following dimensions:

- *Attitude* – this is curiosity and – at the same time – openness, readiness to stop distrust toward other cultures and the exaggerated confidence in own culture, readiness to communicate with people with other cultural experiences, a wish to interpret differently, etc.);
- *Knowledge* – different knowledge about social groups of own and other culture, created products, knowledge about common interrelation processes of individual and society, knowledge about historical and modern relations between own and other culture, knowledge about national explanation of geographic space, knowledge about the reasons and roots of misunderstandings;
- *Skills of interpretation and linking* – the ability to interpret events and documents of other culture, explain and link those with events of own culture; being able to recognize the manifestations of ethnocentrism and interpret its reasons; being able to recognize and explain domains of misunderstanding, etc.
- *Skills of discovery and interaction* – this is the ability to acquire new knowledge about culture and cultural practices, the ability to apply such knowledge, attitudes, and skills; the ability to recognize significant cultural links and clarify their connotations;

the ability to identify and apply the similarities and differences of verbal and nonverbal processes; the ability to find and apply for help of public and private institutions that could assist in connecting the representatives of other culture, etc.

[180] • *Cultural awareness (critical cultural awareness/political self-education)* – ability – based on several criteria – critically evaluate perspectives, practices, and products in own and other cultures and countries.

According to various authors (Williams 2005; 2009; Gudykunst, Ting-Toomey, and Wiseman 1991; Grunzweig and Rinehart 1998; Deardorf 2004), we may focus on the intercultural model that is based on the following three dimensions: cognitive (knowledge about cultural differences), emotional (motivation and wish to act within intercultural situations) and behavioral (skills and abilities related to intercultural situations).

Referring to the PhD students' intercultural competencies – we should recognize the necessity of cultivating and developing such competencies, especially when considering the quality of the internationalization of studies: each year there are more and more young people coming for studies from the South and West of Europe. The representatives of Turkey, Spain, and Portugal bring a colorful variety of different cultures that should be maintained in everyday work in auditoriums, research, and projects activities.

Planning the research within the field of intercultural competencies, we suggest, based on the concept of R. Laužackas (2005), that the structure of intercultural competencies is uneven and the formal competencies are the least expressed (figure 2).

As displayed in figure 2, the smallest part is allocated to the formalized competencies, while the dimensions mentioned above, such as attitude, skills for interpretation and linking, cultural awareness, etc. are hardly to be formalized by diplomas or certificates. The part defining 'recognized, but not formalized' part of competencies is supposed to be much larger. The largest part is designed for those parts of intercultural competencies, which are available for us, but are not recognized until faces with a certain problem. The absence of for-

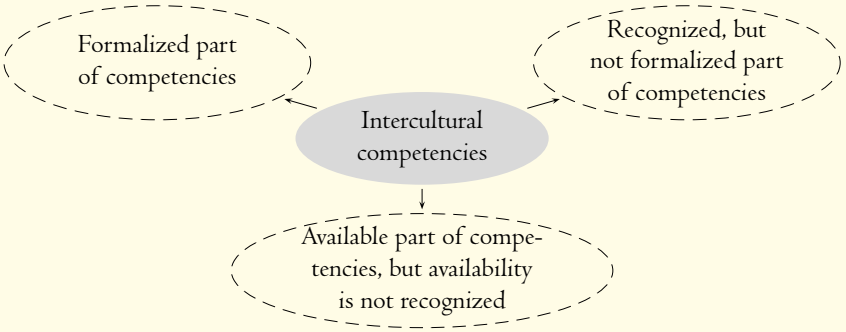

FIGURE 2 Structure of intercultural competencies

mal assessment and clear awareness that intercultural competencies are essential in PhD studies, leads us to an assumption that a set of intercultural competencies could be perceived as a *meta-competence,* with its integral components: motivation, planning, purposeful activity, and self-assessment that lead towards active individual improvement. Possessing such a meta-competence would be a strong precondition for students' participation in the intercultural environment: joint research, studies, teamwork.

DEVELOPMENT OF JOINT STUDIES' PROGRAMS IN KLAIPEDA UNIVERSITY

The quality of academic programs needs to be developed in all higher education institutions. According to the report of the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the institutions should be able to demonstrate their quality both at home as well as internationally. The technological changes and their consequences for the labor market pose new challenges for higher education institutions. In its pursuit of becoming a part of the international research and innovation field, the Klaipeda University acts in accordance with the international instruments – the documents of the Bologna Process, the Lisbon Strategy, and the documents of the European University Association. In 2000, the Lisbon Summit defined a general purpose for the European Research Area – to develop appropriate measures for the voluntary merging of national and general research programs into networks based on voluntary choice of objectives in order to make better

use of the benefits of the common resources allocated to science and research in the Member States. Klaipeda University is a member of the European University Association.

In 2011, KU has been granted permission by the Ministry of Ed-
[182] ucation and Science of Lithuania to implement doctoral studies in 10 scientific fields as follows: education, political science, management and administration, economics, philology, art, history, ethnology, transport engineering, ecology and environmental science (http://www.ku.lt/en/research/doctoral-phd-studies/). Internationalization of doctoral studies is highly noteworthy. Doctoral students of the Klaipeda University are provided with favorable conditions for their participation in scientific research projects on an international scale, as well as internships in foreign countries. The aim of all those activities is to provide training for young researchers in order for them to obtain the necessary skills and abilities for work in both interdisciplinary and international teams of researchers. The participation of KU in an international project of doctoral studies in the field of marine sciences (www.mareseu.org) and ORPHEUS organization (www.orpheus-med.org) is important for the development of international character in doctoral studies. Furthermore, international TEMPUS study project eMaris, aiming at development of international third level studies in marine sciences, has been implemented (www.emaris.net).

It should be noted that young researchers of the University study and successfully defend their dissertations at foreign universities. Presently, the most active contacts are developed with Turku, Lapland, and Tampere universities (Finland), and Olomouc (Czech Republic), where our young researchers from the faculties of Health sciences and Pedagogy are involved in doctoral studies in the fields of education, social care, and social work. Six dissertations were defended in 2010–2012, another five in the above-mentioned fields are planned to be prepared and defended by 2014. Furthermore, the relations with Estonian, Finnish, and Italian universities and their researchers as also important in relation to the assistance in training of high quality researchers in physical, ecological, and environmental sciences. More contacts and joint degrees in South and Central Europe would be

appreciated, since this would contribute to widening the spectrum of research problems and fostering high quality.

CONCLUSIONS

All strategic and implementation tools should be used in order to foster intercultural activities, as this is the only way to reach globalized research and knowledge transfer. It is much easier to achieve this purpose for large and highly ranked universities. The smaller and regional universities should employ great efforts in order to be accepted in the global streams of science. Thus, all the means should be considered: internationalization of studies and research, strengthening students' intercultural competencies, encouragement of cooperation within a certain field or within interdisciplinary subjects, etc. Globalization makes internationalization not only more intense but qualitatively different. [183]

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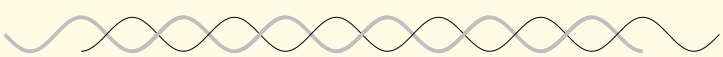

Rethinking Professional Study Programs and Continuing Education in the Euro-Mediterranean Region: Action Agenda and Recommendations

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THE NEW COMPETITIVE and changing dynamics made knowledge resources the most strategic assets to create and sustain competitive advantage in today's business landscape. Businesses and public organizations alike need knowledge workers to streamline their processes, differentiate their product and service offerings, and generate value for their stakeholders. The discrepancy between the demand for such distinctive profiles and the current supply of human resources is causing higher education institutions to rethink their learning practices and the process whereby knowledge resources are developed, applied, and renewed. This article analyzes these dynamics and sheds more light on the changes that are affecting the learning processes with regards to professional study programs and continuing education, particularly in the Euro-Mediterranean region. The article draws up an action agenda to make such programs more valuable emphasizing the role of innovative pedagogical approaches, the importance of instructional design, the adding-value of information technologies, and the required structural and human resource changes at the level of universities' organizational design. Building on the participants' input gathered during the EMUNI's 2013 HE&R Conference, the article suggests specific recommendations on how the Euro-Mediterranean universities can play a catalyst role in reshaping, leading, and implementing competitive and targeted professional study programs based on network-based structures and on mapping and leveraging different partners' distinctive capabilities and core competences.

Key Words: professional study programs; competence development; innovative learning approaches; instructional design; learning technologies

INTRODUCTION: LEARNING AS A PERFORMANCE DRIVER

In a complex business environment characterized by increasing globalization and technological discontinuities, knowledge has become a

fundamental asset and learning the core process to make effective decisions, lead change, generate innovations, and develop continuous competitive advantages. The virtuous cycle of knowledge production, innovation, and application has also contributed to shortering life-cycle of competences and skills in the workplace. In such an economic scenario, we are witnessing the emergence of a new professional profile, the knowledge worker who is viewed as a change agent able to leverage knowledge resources to foster innovation and boost productivity. Due to the growing innovation dynamics, knowledge becomes easily obsolete, and consequently the processes of upgrading existing knowledge bases and acquiring new knowledge are today considered as strategic competitive differentiators for knowledge workers and businesses alike.

A report published by Accenture (Brakeley and Meister 2005) demonstrates the relationship between learning processes and company performance as measured through productivity, revenue growth, and profit growth. From an individual perspective, knowledge workers are also investing in their learning and competence development through systematic training mechanisms including continuing education, professional studies, and summer schools, but also through informal development processes based on interactions in teams, on-the-job learning, and trial and error. In this context, career management and planning is becoming the main responsibility of knowledge workers, which also explains the increasing employment mobility in the workplace. Lifelong learning has also emerged as a concept and practice to illustrate this continuous knowledge generation, upgrading, and re-development through different and diverse learning processes stemming also from job experiences.

Besides the increasing need for specific, adapted, and systematic educational processes in order to meet the increasing demand for qualified and skillful workforce, there is still a clear discrepancy between university curricula and job requirements. To reduce this gap and address this inadequacy between demand and supply of professional competences, large business organizations are tailoring their own

training programs and delivering them through corporate universities based on job-related needs assessment and talent management programs. On the other hand, educational institutions, universities, and technical schools in the Euro-Mediterranean region are rethinking the process, whereby knowledge is produced and competences are developed through different and innovative study programs that also enhance student employability. In particular, this is meant to meet the expectations of small businesses, provide the necessary competences to support their competitiveness, and enable access to cost effective knowledge generation and development opportunities.

Attempts have been made to implement new learning strategies in academic institutions in line with Mode 2 of knowledge production, which is carried out in the context of application, trans-disciplinary, heterogeneous, *heterarchical* and transient, socially accountable and reflexive (Gibbons et al. 1994). Maintaining that the contemporary graduate and professional studies focus too much on the analytical decision making, Mintzberg, for instance, developed this critique by advocating pedagogical devices that improve the situational, collaborative, and global problem solving capabilities of the contemporary managers (Mintzberg and Gosling 2002).

In this paper, we introduce the major trends that are shaping higher education processes in general, we discuss the main challenges that training and academic institutions are facing in the Euro-Mediterranean region, and draw up an agenda to facilitate the design and the implementation of effective continuing education services and programs. Building on valuable input and meaningful insights collected during the workshop organized by the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) on 22 November 2013 in Brdo pri Kranju (Slovenia), we will suggest critical success factors and recommendations that have the potential to lay the foundations for a roadmap on how to develop and implement value-generating continuing education programs.

RETHINKING LEARNING PROCESSES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Learning is a process through which people acquire new knowledge, including skills and specific competences, from experience or by ob-

serving others, and assimilate and organize this knowledge in relation to the prior knowledge in memory in order to make them retrievable for use in both routine and non-routine action (Anderson 1982; Holcomb et al. 2009). By learning people construct meaning through
[190] experience and create new reality in the context of social interaction (Weick 1995). Hence learning becomes the outcome of dynamic social processes of sense-making, which are not only cognitive or behavioral but also affective and holistic (Gibb 2001; Cope 2005). It is a dynamic process of awareness, reflection, association, and application that involves the transformation of experience and knowledge into functional learning outcomes (Rae 2006).

We can distinguish between experiential learning and vicarious learning. Experiential learning is described as the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience (Kolb 1984), whereas vicarious learning can be defined as observational learning involving modeling the behaviors and actions of others (Bandura 1977).

Entrepreneurial learning has recently emerged as a new practice to promote and reinforce entrepreneurship and leadership attitudes and behaviors through educational and pedagogical processes (Alvares et al. 2013; Remeikiene, Dumciuviene, and Startiene 2013). Scholars define entrepreneurial learning as a process through which people acquire, assimilate, and organize newly formed knowledge with pre-existing structures, and the way in which learning affects entrepreneurial and leadership action (e. g. Rae and Carswell 2001; Warren 2004; Cope 2005; Corbett 2005).

The increasing integration of entrepreneurial learning processes into the higher education curriculum, particularly in the Euro-Mediterranean region, stems from the growing importance given to both intrapreneurship and entrepreneurship as economic determinants of innovation and growth, as well as efficient mechanisms to encourage youth employment. Such entrepreneurial learning processes have been incorporated into the existing curricula or leveraged through new training programs including professional study programs and continuing education programs.

The examples include course content, which uses case material,

simulations (Hindle and Angehrn 1998), trial and error, divergent thinking (Sternberg and Lubart 1999), and various 'hands-on' approaches (Gorman, Hanlon, and King 1997; Vesper and McMullan 1988). Other approaches for instance include, Heinonen and Pikkijoki's (2006) four-stage entrepreneurial process model connected with behaviors, skills, and attributes, which introduces an entrepreneurial-directed approach to education based on circles of experiential learning, with new activity producing both new experience and new thinking through reflection. This is an example of action learning approach, which is a structured and collaborative process of inquiry undertaken through questioning, acting, sharing experience, and reflection on problem-solving in practical situations (Rae 2009). Another learning strategy is PBL or Problem-Based Learning where learning is student-centered with teachers acting primarily in the role of facilitators (Hanke and Kisenwether 2005). Such strategy significantly increases self-efficacy and the ability to cope with uncertainty, both key characteristics of successful leaders and entrepreneurs. Similarly, business planning education has also been used in different academic settings based on the assumption that the students who have learned to plan should demonstrate increased mastery, knowledge, and comprehension that would assist them in the initiative taking process (Honig 2004).

However, academic-led studies on the most relevant professional skills suggest that communication and writing skills remain relevant, while the provision of the analysis skills needs refocusing (Wong 1998; Ozawa and Seltzer 1999; Alexander 2001). The educational policy efforts aimed at stimulating leadership, innovation, and initiative taking should primarily focus on developing creativity, critical thinking, and reflection among individuals, which in turn can have a profound influence on both their motivation and their ability to develop valuable knowledge through their professional lives (Politis 2005).

Entrepreneurial learning is not fully accepted or adopted by universities and technical schools or even higher education as a whole, as their values of practical and emergent learning challenge the 'bureaucratic control' culture of academe, which still privileges programmed knowledge (Gibb 2002; Rae 2009).

EFFECTIVE TRAINING AND HIGHER EDUCATION CHALLENGES

The universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region are faced with the question regarding the relevance of their study programs due to the changing skill base of the economy. Consequently, an increasing number of voices point out the irrelevance of the disciplinary basis of universities (Meira Soares and Amaral 1999). For example, the model of interdisciplinary education leading to a degree in business and law or political science and IT hardly exists (Pawlowski 2001).

More creative learning processes should be incorporated in higher education at both the organizational level (Clark 1998), as well as the program level (Volkmann 2004), accordingly. Students need programs that support a range of ways that are often unplanned, emergent, short-term, and non-sequential (Gibb 2002; Atherton 2007). Hawkins (1998) has long advocated for planning education to incorporate basic management theory and skills. Pedagogical techniques should be developed that focus on the applied hands-on activities, resulting in experiential learning, as opposed to the teaching of general principles (Honig 2004). Just as graduates should be able to write an essay expressing their personal thoughts or a scientific paper providing evidence against hypotheses; they should also be able to write a project plan, setting forth an idea for a new social or business project and a test of its viability (Etzkowitz and Zhou 2008).

The universities and academe in the Euro-Mediterranean region have been criticized for their inability to provide such programs. Academics are prone to teach what they know, not what their students or stakeholders need (Miclea 2004). The expression 'stakeholders' is more and more used to denote the environment of a university. They include students, as well as graduates, people of the neighboring towns and villages, local and regional authorities, and the business sector (local and national) (Pawlowski 2001). In the current universities, students use learning 'pushed' at them in programmed or curricular structures, instead of engaging in a dynamic experience of developing their venture 'pulled' learning as they require in response to their questions and problems (Mumford 2006; Rae 2009). This process supports thinking 'inside the box,' whereby students are taught

an ideal method and are encouraged to conform to it (Honig 2004).

The whole university culture becomes questionable. Miclea (2004) describes this culture as being built on individual performance where students are evaluated through individual examinations. This practice is neither good nor bad; however, it is simply not favorable to the training and development of innovation skills. [193]

In the recent years, we have seen many universities taking specific actions to adapt to the new social and business needs. Barnett (1994) defined the changing situation as a shift 'from higher education in society to higher education of society.' Universities have developed technology transfer capabilities and extended their teaching from educating individuals to shaping organizations through innovative education (Etzkowitz and Zhou 2008).

Since industrial development will increasingly depend on knowledge, education is thus a major economic resource (Amaral 1991). In his recent statement Peter Drucker (2000) claims that education has become the main item of the Gross Domestic Product. In such a knowledge-based socio-economic regime, the societies in the Euro-Mediterranean region expect the universities to do much more for the communities in solving economic and social problems; however, governments are at the same time reducing their financial support and are becoming unreliable patrons (Kristensen 1999). A new actor, the 'market,' has replaced the public administration as the driving force behind the development of higher education, as well as the main employer of its training and research products (Neave and Van Vught 1994). This calls for the reinforcement of the global role of the universities – from basic science to innovation and production agents to fostering economic development and growth. Through imagination, ambition, leadership and cooperation of individuals from universities, industry, and government, all three institutional spheres can participate in the birth of hybrid training programs that meet market expectations, boost innovation, and effectively contribute to economic and societal change.

Such cooperation mechanisms should also be strengthened between countries sharing the same regional concerns and facing similar economic and developmental challenges, which is the case in the Euro-

Mediterranean region. Professional study programs and continuing education programs represent an opportunity to experiment with such innovative educational approaches and promote Euro-Mediterranean cooperation between universities and other industrial and government
 stakeholders. The Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI), for instance, can offer a potential platform for such initiatives building on its network-based organization, knowledge diversity, and management flexibility.

AN ACTION AGENDA FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDY PROGRAMS AND CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

In order to play a strategic role in the current socio-economic landscape, the academic institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region should promote and develop innovative, creative and high quality teaching in collaboration with industrial and government stakeholders and implement new pedagogical methods focused on mobilizing the resources and the potential of students for the learning process (Kristensen 1999). The educational institutions should also have the ability to integrate research-based learning, market-sensitive teaching and lifelong learning programs (Miclea 2004), professional, tailor-made and short courses (Cummings 1999), and project-based courses with inter-disciplinary groups and action-learning programs. Learning by discovery and teaching and learning by means of research processes must become the norm (Clark 1991) to ensure effective continuing education programs. From a structural perspective, in order to accommodate the needs of the new continuing education programs, the academic institutions can develop new units outside their existing departments to introduce new environmental relationships and new modes of thought and training that overcome the bureaucratic impediments of the current organizational designs.

While developing such study programs, the universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region should integrate the learner-centered approaches that strengthen the active nature of learners' involvement. Such approaches should also emphasize learning in action and competence development, instead of traditional classroom teaching based on

knowledge transfer (Elia and Poce 2010). In such a learning environment, students will be acting as knowledge workers to analyze trends and generate new ideas that they can then translate into lab projects through collaborative networks facilitated by mentors, tutors, and testimonials. Content should be designed, created, and shared for the purpose of developing project-oriented and context-specific competences, instead of being delivered as fragmented pieces of knowledge. Consequently, the team project thus becomes the major result and deliverable to evaluate training effectiveness. Content delivery should also emphasize both theory and practice as intertwined learning processes to support the development and generation of interdisciplinary and experiential knowledge.

Technology can also facilitate such a learning strategy through an efficient and real-time access to multi-domain and diverse knowledge resources, and also through collaborative learning and interactive global spaces. Advanced e-Learning platforms offer such features and functionalities and can be integrated with face-to-face learning modalities (*blended learning*). However, efforts should be made to develop market-oriented and rich content, ensure efficient delivery and the attainment of intended learning objectives while using virtual spaces.

In a similar vein, the instructional design principles should be applied to develop the right content and decide on the accurate learning methods. While developing study and continuing education programs, a thorough needs assessment should be conducted to identify the initial knowledge of learners, understand the learning needs, and come up with specific intended learning objectives to keep the training process focused and to target particular competence levels. To prevent inclusive and all-encompassing training programs that meet the students' desires and wants, but not necessary their learning needs, clear design procedures should also be implemented based on the learners' readiness, their learning styles, and the transferability conditions of the learning outcomes. This can also help with some decision making processes, including for instance time and planning, location, and the selection of trainers. As per learning evaluation, this should not be limited merely to the learners' satisfaction, reaction, and the acquisition of learning material and content. Evaluation should particularly

focus on the behavioral change (e. g., creativity and innovativeness, risk taking, entrepreneurship, leadership etc.) and the results or tangible outcomes (e. g., projects, solutions etc.).

With the proliferation of accreditation bodies and agencies, the
[196] Euro-Mediterranean universities and academic institutions should adhere to the accreditation processes having a global perspective and should not be merely limited to program content and delivery. The quality assurance standards should also emphasize the stakeholder's perspectives and cooperation with industry and government (e. g. advisory boards), market-oriented competence development, admission and administrative processes, faculty management, program sustainability, research and laboratories, learning infrastructure and technology, student mobility and exchange programs, and study abroad programs. All these represent the fundamental catalysts to maximize the benefits of a training experience. The universities should also ensure outside funding by adapting to the market-type modes of action (e. g., patenting, spin-off companies, incubators, and university-industry partnerships). The raised funds from such activities are generally used for investment in quality standards and structure for education and training.

The faculty should also be encouraged to play the role of *entrepreneurial scientists* and network builders (Etzkowitz et al. 2008) to identify job market trends and skill needs, and incorporate potential opportunities into the learning curricula that will help the learners develop value creating competences. To fulfill this requirement, the supporting staff and faculty members should have the necessary competences in strategic management, project management, knowledge management, and a clear understanding of modern pedagogy.

EMUNI WORKSHOP: TOPICS AND GUIDELINES

Building on this agenda, the Workshop on 'Study programs, professional upgrading study programs, and summer schools in the Euro-Mediterranean region' organized by the Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI) on 22 November 2013 in Brdo pri Kranju (Slovenia) was intended to setup a knowledge sharing platform and promote debates and discussions that address the following questions:

1 What is the role of continuing education, professional study programs and summer schools in the current socio-economic regime in the Euro-Mediterranean region?
2 What continuing education and professional study programs should we develop to meet the current socio-economic needs of the Euro-Mediterranean region? [197]
3 What are the priority areas and competences that the Euro-Mediterranean universities should focus on to develop continuing education and professional study programs?
4 What needs assessment, design, delivery, and evaluation approaches should we adopt to deliver customized learning experiences?
5 What learning methods and approaches can we promote to maximize the benefits of continuing education and professional study programs in the Euro-Mediterranean region?
6 What quality assurance standards and accreditation processes should we develop to offer efficient and effective continuing education and professional study programs in the Euro-Mediterranean region?
7 What is the role of technology and e-Learning to deliver flexible, customized, self-paced, and collaborative learning experiences?
8 What partnership mechanisms should we foster to promote the university–industry–government collaboration for effective and innovative learning processes?
9 What is the role of faculty and supporting staff to design, deliver, facilitate, and evaluate the effectiveness of study programs, continuing education, and professional upgrading study programs?
10 How can the universities in the Euro-Mediterranean region support the development of the market-oriented study programs, continuing education, and professional upgrading study programs from strategic, structural, and cultural perspectives?

The workshop was performed as a brainstorming session facilitated by the author. The participants in this workshop were encouraged to

provide their own perspective, contribute to addressing the abovementioned questions, and share their experiences and practices. The objective of the workshop was to come up with a tentative roadmap for successful design and delivery of study and continuing education pro-
 grams by the Euro-Mediterranean universities and higher education institutions in the Mediterranean region.

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Besides the abovementioned action agenda, the participants stressed the importance of the following aspects:

- While recognizing the importance of the learners' motivation, a global perspective still needs to be adopted. The motivational factors can be different based on the learners' needs, expectations, and culture. A clear difference should also be made between motivation and interest, even though, from a practical point of view, such concepts are still considered as intertwined.
- Universities' culture remains a crucial element while designing and implementing professional study programs. Such a culture encompasses values, beliefs, procedures, management and leadership styles, human resource management processes, communication channels etc. While developing new programs, universities should ensure the fit between their strategies, their structural variables, and their culture.
- An assessment of the industry's cultural readiness is fundamental to understand the stakeholders' needs and expectations in regards to the social sciences profiles. It is important for the universities to develop multi-cultural Euro-Mediterranean Industrial Advisory Boards to provide clear orientations on the job market trends and human resource needs. Such Advisory Boards can also help identify the specific criteria and mechanisms to facilitate the recognition of issued degrees by employers in different Euro-Mediterranean countries.
- When performing a needs assessment in order to set the learning objectives and the design criteria, particularly in the case of the Euro-Mediterranean programs, priorities should be iden-

tified based on both technical skill requirements and cultural aspects. The Euro-Mediterranean universities should also seek dual or multiple branding strategies through building dual or multiple study programs with partners from different countries to attract students and also accommodate different cultural and skill needs. [199]

- To support the network-based structure of the majority of Euro-Mediterranean universities and to ensure its smooth functioning, it is fundamental to set efficient communication channels to promote knowledge sharing and idea generation processes among partners that can consequently inform decision makers to support the program design and implementation. It is also suggested to develop specific Consortia for each study program, involving universities, industry, and government.
- While designing the study programs, an increasing emphasis should be placed on team work. Small teams of learners can work on real problems identified by the industry partners to promote collaborative work, as well as problem-based and project-driven learning. Such collaborative work can be supported through the use of efficient, flexible, and modular e-Learning technologies.
- For evaluation matters, the Euro-Mediterranean universities should focus more on the quality criteria including placement rate, learning processes, employability, entrepreneurial behaviors (e. g., patents and spin-offs), instead of the current interest in primarily assessing the quantitative criteria (e. g., student body, number of programs etc.) to meet the budgetary and reporting requirements.

To sum up, it is highly recommended that the Euro-Mediterranean universities incorporate the following practices when designing and the study program curricula:

1 The Euro-Mediterranean universities should act as network-based academic institutions through building strong cooperation ties and effective collaborative learning and research programs involving other academic institutions, industry partners,

and government organizations. Through the mapping of all members' competences, areas of expertise, and context specific expectations, the Euro-Mediterranean universities can assess the needs at a large scale and leverage distinctive capabilities and competences to design customized, market-oriented, and project-driven study programs. This can also help such universities in their assessment of the potential members' in-kind contributions (know-how, infrastructure and logistics etc.) to ensure efficient implementation of various collaborative actions. Through such competence mapping, the Euro-Mediterranean universities can (a) build and deliver dual or multiple study programs fitting the needs of specific markets, (b) develop solid collaboration mechanisms with industry and government at local and regional levels, (c) setup multi-cultural advisory boards to help with program design, delivery, evaluation, and sustainability, and (d) seek program accreditation in different countries based on comprehensive quality assurance criteria. The Euro-Mediterranean academic networks will also serve as promotion channels to communicate the study programs in different countries and identify potential learners and stakeholders. The same competence mapping process can be used to identify research strengths, resources, and opportunities for subsequent planning and development.

2 While designing study programs, the Euro-Mediterranean universities should integrate innovative, value-adding, and value-generating learning processes and applications. Such innovative processes should involve mentors, learners, tutors, and testimonials who will be working collaboratively according to a network configuration to integrate theory and practice and facilitate dynamic and experiential learning, as well as market-oriented competence development. Such interdisciplinary learning processes should also make use of diversified knowledge resources and promote the integration of technology to support interactive learning, access to multi-domain knowledge, team-based and collaborative projects, and lifelong learning.

3 The Euro-Mediterranean universities should also apply the

principles of Instructional Design when developing study programs, including:

- *Needs assessment:* based on the learners' self-efficacy to determine the intended learning objectives and target competences and skills;
- *Design:* to develop content and select the most appropriate learning methods based on the learners' readiness, their learning styles, and the conditions to transfer learning to the job market;
- *Delivery:* to select the trainers and decide on the location and time variables;
- *Evaluation:* to assess the learners' reaction, learning outcomes, behavioral changes, and the results of the learning experience.

4 The Euro-Mediterranean universities should also promote the use of e-Learning and distance education technologies to facilitate the collaboration among members and the access of learners to rich content and diverse knowledge resources. Such technologies can also provide flexible, interactive, and dynamic learning experiences through the adoption of specific applications, including video/audio files, virtual classrooms and online tutoring, virtual libraries, online tests, online simulations, learning games, online forums and chat rooms etc. The Euro-Mediterranean universities can initially experiment with such technologies through the blended-learning mechanisms and MOOCs (Massive open online courses). In the long run, action should focus on making such universities real technological Euro-Mediterranean Hubs on e-Learning and Distance Education in specialized fields.

CONCLUSION

Technological advances, globalization, and socio-economic transformations are causing higher education institutions to rethink their educational offerings in order to meet the increasing demand for knowledge workers having distinctive profiles, entrepreneurial attitudes, and

innovation skills. In such an ever-changing environment, the academic and training institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region are expected to adopt innovative and interdisciplinary learning processes that leverage collaborative networks and team-based projects, involve different stakeholders, promote the use of multi-domain knowledge resources and technology, facilitate interactive working mechanisms, and target specific market-oriented competence needs. This paper presents an action agenda on how higher-education institutions in the Euro-Mediterranean region can develop strong collaboration ties with other academic organizations, businesses, and governments to build synergies, leverage their assets and capabilities, maximize learning, identify market opportunities, and diversify continuing education offering. This will also require a clear transformation in terms of academic management and organizational structures to support the collaborative networks and gain the necessary flexibility that will help the universities to respond efficiently and effectively to the increasing market needs. Based on the data collected during the EMUNI's workshop in 2013 this paper also suggests the critical success factors and recommendations on how to facilitate the required transformation in the Euro-Mediterranean universities and continuing education institutions from strategic, organizational, and cultural perspectives. We believe these recommendations have the potential to lay the foundations for a roadmap to support the development of value-adding continuing education processes and programs.

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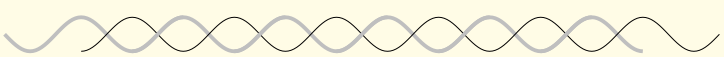

Résumés

Printemps arabe et le désir de retour des Égyptiens d'Italie

VIVIANA PREMAZZI, ELENA AMBROSETTI, ERALBA CELA
et TINEKE FOKKEMA

Un enthousiasme généralisé provoqué par le Printemps Arabe a marqué la première ainsi que la seconde génération des Egyptiens d'Italie et les a poussées à s'investir dans des formes variées d'engagement socio-économique. Ce nouvel enthousiasme se transformera-t-il en une intention réelle de retour en Egypte ? Ce paramètre reste largement ignoré. En nous appuyant sur les principales théories migratoires, nous formulerons les questions de recherche suivantes : quelles sont les motivations traditionnelles sous-tendant la volonté de retour des Egyptiens d'Italie de première et de deuxième génération ? Les changements, survenus en Egypte après le printemps Arabe, renforcent-ils le désir de retour ? Les données ont été collectées par sondage qualitatif effectué au sein de la communauté egyptienne de Turin et de Rome entre 2011 et 2013. Les conclusions semblent indiquer que la volonté de retour est appuyée par les liens transnationaux qui ont été renforcés par le Printemps Arabe, mais le retour définitif ne semble pas être à l'ordre du jour pas plus pour la première que pour la seconde génération. La volonté générale va plutôt vers l'adoption d'un mode de vie transnational.

Mots clés : de retour ; transnationalisme ; Italie ; Egypte ; Printemps Arabe
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L'égalité des sexes ? Attitude des hommes musulmans d'Israël envers l'accès des femmes à l'éducation supérieure

DAN SOEN

Israël est un pays binational avec une minorité arabe représentant environ 20% de sa population. La minorité arabe se trouve dans un état intérim, en voie de transition d'une conception de vie traditionnelle et collective vers une conception moderne et individualiste. Les Arabes israéliens reconnaissent le fait que l'éducation est la clé pour atteindre un statut socio-économique respectable. Une des manifestations du changement social en cours est la part croissante des femmes issues de la communauté arabe dans l'éducation secondaire et supérieure. Les femmes constituent deux tiers d'étudiants arabes dans les établissements d'éducation supérieure israéliens. Notre article a pour

objet d'analyser l'impact de l'éducation et de la religiosité des hommes musulmans en Israël sur leurs attitudes vis-à-vis du droit des femmes à l'éducation supérieure. La conclusion principale de notre recherche est qu'un large soutien se dessine envers le droit à l'éducation supérieure des femmes. Notre étude a démontré l'impact de la religiosité et de l'éducation sur les attitudes des personnes interrogées.

Mots clés : égalité des sexes ; égalité des chances ; éducation supérieure ; Juifs ; Arabes

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Langage technologique comme langage commun de la population euro-méditerranéen

AUGUSTO SEBASTIO

L'Internet et les réseaux sociaux fournissent des nouvelles formes d'espaces publics. Quasiment des continents virtuels, ces espaces sont peuplés par des individus de race, langage et religion différentes, communiquant à travers une seule langue et utilisant un mode, ainsi qu'un outil, unique. A l'époque de la participation sociale extrême, nous sommes contraints à réfléchir sur le rôle des politiques futures d'éducation. Nous ne pouvons pas ignorer le langage de base dans lequel le people euro-méditerranéens se reconnaissent, ce langage leur permettant de dialoguer sur tous les côtés du bassin méditerranéen. La technologie fournit l'opportunité pour le dialogue, ainsi que la reconnaissance mutuelle et l'accréditation entre les peuples partageant la mer Méditerranée et le monde. L'Internet représente le vrai centre des Etats membres de l'Union européenne. Il nous offre un bien commun, générant la reconnaissance entre les individus et la volonté de communiquer. De surcroît, l'Internet conduit au rejet de la protection des données personnelles et empêche la gestion de ses pouvoirs par des organismes privés. Le but de cet article est d'envisager les effets de la société électronique sur les politiques méditerranéennes.

Mots clés : cyberdémocratie ; langage technologique ; information

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Actualisation des compétences interculturelles de recherche des doctorants dans une société mondiale

INGA DAILIDIENE, RITA VAIČEKAUSKAITĖ et LORETA STAŠKŪNIENĖ

La mondialisation est en train de changer les caractéristiques qualitatives de notre société, influençant à la fois la vie et la mentalité des individus. La mon-

dialisation est également liée aux changements dans le cadre de l'enseignement supérieur. Le processus de Bologne et le traité de Lisbonne conduisent et obligent chaque pays à créer un milieu international intégré et harmonisé pour l'enseignement supérieur en Europe. Les études de doctorat occupent une place intégrale dans la structure de l'enseignement supérieur. Par conséquent, l'internationalisation est un impératif important pour le développement des études doctorales. Au cours de l'internationalisation, les compétences interculturelles sont essentielles pour les étudiants. En premier lieu, nous supposons que l'impact de la mondialisation sur l'internationalisation reste encore sous-estimé. La mondialisation rend l'internationalisation non seulement plus intense, mais aussi qualitativement différente. Deuxièmement, nous observons un manque d'analyse systémique sur le développement des compétences interculturelles de recherche dans le cadre des études de doctorat. Dans l'article, nous mettons en parallèle le besoin pour des compétences interculturelles de recherché avec cette question rhétorique et critique : « Sont des doctorants d'aujourd'hui prêt à résoudre les problèmes mondiaux de demain ? »

Mots clés : mondialisation ; interculturalisme ; internationalité ; compétence interculturelle

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Repenser les programmes d'études professionnelles et la formation continue dans la région euro-méditerranéenne : Programme d'action et propositions

KARIM MOUSTAGHFIR

Le nouveau dynamisme changeant et compétitif a transformé les ressources de connaissances en avantages stratégiques les plus importants qui sont indispensables pour la création et le maintien de l'avantage compétitif dans le milieu d'affaires d'aujourd'hui. Les entreprises, ainsi que les organismes publics, ont besoin de travailleurs de la connaissance afin de rationaliser leurs processus, différencier leurs produits et offres de services et créer la valeur pour leurs parties prenantes. Il existe un écart entre la demande pour ces profiles spécifiques et l'offre actuel des ressources humaines. Ainsi, les établissement d'enseignement supérieur sont contraints à repenser leurs pratiques d'apprentissage et le processus par lequel les ressources de connaissances sont élaborées, appliqués, et renouvelés. L'article analyse ce dynamise et éclaire les changements qui influencent les processus d'apprentissage liés aux programmes d'études professionnelles et à la formation continue, no-

tamment dans la région euro-méditerranéenne. L'article formule une programme d'action afin d'enrichir ces programmes, soulignant le rôle des approches pédagogiques innovatrices, l'importance de la conception pédagogique, la valeur ajoutée de la technologie de l'information, ainsi que les réformes structurelles et celles concernant les ressources humaines, nécessaires à l'échelle de la organisation de l'Université. L'article, s'appuyant sur la contribution des participants au cours de la Conférence d'EMUNI donnée en 2013 (« EMUNI 2013 HE&R Conference »), suggère des propositions spécifiques pour assurer que les universités euro-méditerranéennes sont des catalyseurs dans la restructuration, la gestion et la mise en œuvre des programmes d'études professionnelles compétitives et ciblées, reposant sur des structures en réseau et sur l'identification et l'optimisation des capacités distinctives des partenaires et de leurs compétences de base.

Mots clés : programmes d'études professionnelles ; développement des compétences ; approches d'apprentissage innovatrices ; conception pédagogique ; technologies d'apprentissage
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Povzetki

Arabska pomlad in namen povratka Egipčanov, ki živijo v Italiji, domov

VIVIANA PREMAZZI, ELENA AMBROSETTI, ERALBA CELA
in TINEKE FOKKEMA

Široko razširjeno navdušenje, ki ga je povzročila arabska pomlad, je vplivalo tako na prvo kot na drugo generacijo Egipčanov v Italiji in je privedlo različnih oblik delovanja in družbeno-političnega udejstvovanja. V kolikšni meri pa se bo to novo navdušenje preoblikovalo v dejansko odločitev o povratku v Egipt, je v veliki meri neraziskana tema. V skladu z glavnimi migracijskimi teorijami smo obravnavali naslednja raziskovalna vprašanja: kateri tradicionalni teoretični argumenti se nanašajo na namen o povratku prve in druge generacije Egipčanov v Italiji? Ali so spremembe v Egiptu po arabski pomladi okrepile njihovo namero o povratku? Podatki so zbrani s pomočjo kvalitativnih intervjujev, opravljenih v letih 2011–2013 z Egipčani v Torinu in Rimu. Rezultati kažejo, da so transnacionalne vezi, ki jih je okrepila arabska pomlad, spodbudile zamisel o povratku, čeprav do dokončnega povratka verjetno ne bo prišlo, niti prve niti druge generacije, sprejeli pa bodo transnacionalni način življenja.

Ključne besede: namen povratka; transnacionalizem; Italija; Egipt; arabska pomlad
IJEMS 6 (2): 109–131

Enakost med spoloma? Odnos izraelskih muslimanskih moških do enakih možnosti za ženske v visokem šolstvu

DAN SOEN

Osnovna predpostavka članka je, da je Izrael praktično dvonarodna država, kjer arabska manjšina predstavlja približno 20% prebivalstva. Arabska manjšina je trenutno v prehodnem stanju – to je prehodu iz tradicionalnega, kolektivnega načina življenja v sodobni, individualistični način. Izraelski Arabci priznavajo dejstvo, da je izobraževanje ključnega pomena za socialno-ekonomski status. Del družbene spremembe je naraščujoča prevlada žensk v srednješolskem in visokošolskem izobraževanju v arabskem sektorju. Danes ženske predstavljajo približno dve tretjini arabskih študentov v izraelskih visokošolskih zavodih. Članek poskuša raziskati vpliv izobraževanja in religioznosti

izraelskih muslimanskih moških do pravice žensk do opravljanja visokošolskega izobraževanja. Glavna ugotovitev raziskave je široka podpora pravici žensk do visokošolskega izobraževanja. Ugotovljeno je bilo, da na njihovo vedenje vplivajo religioznost in izobrazba anketirancev.

Ključne besede: enakost med spoloma; enake možnosti; visoko šolstvo; Judje; Arabci

IJEMS 6 (2): 133–158

Tehnološki jezik kot skupni jezik populacije Sredozemlja

AUGUSTO SEBASTIO

Internet in družabna omrežja prinašajo nove oblike javnega prostora, virtualnih celin, naseljenih z ljudmi različnih ras, jezikov in religij, ki komunicirajo v enem jeziku, na en način in z edinstvenim orodjem. V času skrajne družbene participacije je nemogoče ne upoštevati vloge prihodnjih politik izobraževanja. Ne moremo mimo osnovnega jezika, v katerem se ljudje Evro-Sredozemlja prepoznavajo, in ki jim omogoča interakcijo z vsemi stranmi Sredozemlja. Tehnologija predstavlja most dialoga ter vzajemno spoštovanje ljudi, ki si delijo Sredozemsko morje in svet. Internet je pravo središče članstva Unije in zagotavlja skupno dobro, ki ustvarja medsebojno spoštovanje in pripravljenost za komuniciranje, poleg tega pa ima za posledico opustitev varstva osebnih podatkov ter vpliv na zasebne subjekte. Namen tega prispevka je predvideti učinke elektronske družbe na politike Sredozemlja.

Ključne besede: e-demokracija, tehnološki jezik, informacija

IJEMS 6 (2): 159–170

Aktualizacija medkulturnih kompetenc raziskovalnega dela doktorskih študentov v globalizirani družbi

INGA DAILIDIENE, RITA VAIČEKAUSKAITĖ in LORETA STAŠKŪNIENĖ

Globalizacija spreminja značilnosti družbe glede kakovosti, kar vpliva tako na življenje kot tudi na miselnost ljudi. Tudi visokošolsko izobraževanje pridobiva nove razsežnosti v povezavi z globalizacijo. Bolonjski in Lizbonski dokumenti usmerjajo in obvezujejo vse države, da ustvarjajo celovit in usklajen mednarodni prostor visokošolskega izobraževanja v Evropi. Doktorski študij je sestavni del strukture visokega šolstva, zato je internacionalizacija pomembna za njegov razvoj. V procesu internacionalizacije je potreba po medkulturnih kompetencah študentov splošno priznana. Menimo pa, da je vpliv globalizacije na internacionalizacijo vendarle še vedno podcenjen.

Globalizacija internacionalizacije ne le krepi, ampak tudi spreminja v kvaliteti. Poleg tega pa je premalo sistemskega razvoja medkulturnih raziskovalnih kompetenc doktorskega študija. Potrebo po medkulturnih raziskovalnih kompetencah povezujemo z naslednjim kritičnim in retoričnim vprašanjem: »So današnji študenti doktorskega študija pripravljeni na reševanje jutrišnjih globalnih problemov?«

Ključne besede: globalizacija; medkulturnost; mednarodnost; medkulturne kompetence

IJEMS 6 (2): 171–185

Ponovna presoja študijskih programov za izpopolnjevanje in nadaljnjega izobraževanja v evro-sredozemski regiji: načrt ukrepov in priporočila

KARIM MOUSTAGHFIR

Nove konkurenčne in spreminjajoče se dinamike so vire znanja spremenile v najbolj strateško sredstvo oblikovanja in vzdrževanja konkurenčne prednosti v današnjem poslovnem svetu. Za podjetja in podobne javne organizacije je potrebno, da delavci z znanjem racionalizirajo postopke, diferencirajo izdelke in ponudbo storitev in ustvarjajo vrednost za deležnike. Neskladje med povpraševanjem po takšnih specifičnih profilih in trenutno kadrovsko ponudbo povzroča ponovno presojo učnih praks in procesov visokošolskih zavodov, s katerimi razvijajo, uporabljajo in obnavljajo vire znanja. Članek analizira te dinamike ter osvetljuje spremembe, ki vplivajo na učne procese v zvezi s študijskimi programi za izpopolnjevanje in nadaljnjim izobraževanjem, zlasti v evro-sredozemski regiji. Članek predstavlja načrt ukrepov, s katerimi bi ti programi bolj poudarjali vlogo inovativnih pedagoških pristopov ter pomen pedagoškega načrta, dodano vrednost informacijskih tehnologij ter potrebne strukturne in kadrovske spremembe na ravni organizacijskih zasnov univerz. Na podlagi prispevkov udeležencev, zbranih na EMUNI HE&R konferenci 2013, članek ponuja posebna priporočila o tem, kako lahko evro-sredozemske univerze igrajo spodbujevalno vlogo pri preoblikovanju, usmerjanju in izvajanju konkurenčnih in ciljno usmerjenih študijskih programov za izpopolnjevanje, ki temeljijo na strukturah mrež in na lociranju ter uporabi specifičnih kompetenc in možnosti različnih partnerjev.

Ključne besede: študijski programi za izpopolnjevanje; razvoj kompetenc; inovativni učni pristopi; pedagoški načrt; učne tehnologije

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