



JDC- BROOKDALE INSTITUTE OF GERONTOLOGY AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

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Interim Report: Selected Findings

**A SURVEY OF YOUNG ETHIOPIAN IMMIGRANTS**

*Chen Lifshitz      Gila Noam*

*This study was carried out with the assistance and financing of JDC-Israel.*

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## Abstract

This national survey, conducted by the JDC-Brookdale Institute with the assistance of JDC-Israel, is the first to present information on the quality of the absorption of young immigrants from Ethiopia. The survey population comprised 3,400 young adults who came to Israel between 1984 and 1985 as part of "Operation Moses".<sup>1</sup> In light of their background and on the assumption that these young people had the best chance of finding employment in a broad range of skilled jobs, considerable resources were invested in their vocational training.

Sixty-two percent of the immigrants, including a majority (85%) of the males and a significant proportion (39%) of the females, participated in vocational training courses. From the total population of young Ethiopian immigrants, we interviewed 670 individuals, who constituted a representative stratified sample. Conducted between June and August 1992, the survey examined the difficulties and achievements of these young immigrants in various areas of life, particularly that of employment. In addition, the survey appraised the contribution of vocational training programs to their integration into jobs and society. This interim report presents selected findings of the survey, principally those in the area of vocational training and employment.

The findings indicate that despite the serious unemployment problem confronting Israel and the immigrants' need to be absorbed into a modern job market significantly different from that of their country of origin, the majority (83%) of males have been absorbed into jobs, are serving in the army, or are participating in one or another educational or vocational training program. More than two-thirds (68%) of the men and a significant proportion (41%) of the women are working.

Finding a job is only the first step on the road to absorption into employment. The type of job into which the immigrant is absorbed is of great importance. Of those who are employed, three-fourths (78%) of the men and about half (45%) of the women are working in a wide variety of skilled jobs: The men work primarily as skilled workers in industry and construction or as high-level service workers, while the women are employed primarily as nurses, dental technicians, and assistant nursery school teachers.

The survey sheds light on the contribution of vocational training to the absorption of immigrants into employment. Training gives women a significant incentive to seek work. The proportion of women working among those who participated in vocational training courses is twice that of women who did not undergo training -- 57% versus 29%, respectively. Moreover, 60% of the women who completed vocational training courses work in skilled jobs, as compared with 27% of the women who did not complete vocational training courses.

Vocational training also contributes to the absorption into skilled jobs of immigrants with modest educational backgrounds. Of the immigrants with low levels of education, the percentage of those who completed vocational training courses working in skilled jobs is

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<sup>1</sup> Those surveyed were between the ages of 16 and 30 when a census of the entire Ethiopian immigrant population was taken by JDC-Israel in 1985/6. Almost all of those surveyed -- 92% -- are now between the ages of 22 and 35.



practically three-times that of those who did not participate in vocational training courses -- 70% versus 25%, respectively.

The economic status of the immigrants has not improved at the same rate as has their employment situation. It seems that their economic difficulties can be attributed to the relatively low proportion of women who work, the not insignificant proportion of immigrants employed in unskilled jobs, and the relatively little seniority that has accrued to immigrants.

The majority (78%) of immigrants are satisfied with their absorption into Israeli society, and most (88%) of them feel that the attitude of veteran Israelis toward them is good. In addition, the immigrants are exposed to the media; it seems that in this, too, they have become integrated into society. There is no doubt that military service, completed by most (90%) of the men, helps acquaint immigrants with the norms of Israeli society.

The findings of the survey indicate that a number of strides have been made toward absorbing the immigrants into employment, and into society. However, they also indicate that several areas and groups require special attention. Action must be taken to strengthen the ability of the immigrants to earn enough to cover their basic needs. It will be necessary to develop avenues for job promotion, and to increase the participation of women in vocational training courses and strengthen their command of Hebrew. This will improve their chances of being integrated into the job market, especially in skilled jobs and, consequently, their ability to contribute to the financial security of their families.



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## 1. Background Characteristics

Interviews were conducted with a representative stratified sample of approximately 670 young adults, most of them between the ages of 22 and 35, representing the 3,400 young immigrants from Ethiopia who arrived in Israel during "Operation Moses". Men and women were equally represented in the sample.

More than one-third of the immigrants -- 53% of the women and 23% of the men -- arrived in Israel with no formal education. Forty-two percent of them, or 63% of the men and 21% of the women, had worked in Ethiopia, mostly in agriculture.

Sixty percent of the immigrants (52% of the men and 69% of the women) are married and live with their spouses; 28% (42% of the men and 14% of the women) are single; 11% are divorced or separated; and 1% are widowed. Eleven percent of the immigrants (17% of the women and 4% of the men) head single-parent families.

Ninety percent of the men have served in the army, including the 11% who are presently serving in the army, most of whom are aged 24 or under.

## 2. Participation in Vocational Training Courses

The majority of immigrants arrived in Israel with very little education. Most began vocational training courses as soon as they had completed Hebrew language studies (*ulpan*). Only a few immigrants entered other post-secondary study programs.

### 2.1 Participation in Vocational Training by Gender, Age, and Level of Education at the Time of Immigration

Sixty-two percent of the immigrants participated in vocational training courses -- a decisive majority (85%) of the men and a significant proportion (39%) of the women. The rate of participation in vocational training courses was particularly high among those aged 19-24, with about three-quarters (76%) taking part in vocational training courses, as compared with 58% of those aged 25-39 (see Table 1).

Table 1: Participation in Vocational Training Courses, by Gender and Age (in %)

	Total (N=3,415)	Men (N=1,699)	Women (N=1,716)
Total	62	85	39
Age 19-24	76	88	64
Age 25-39	58	84	31

The proportion of immigrants participating in vocational training courses increases with the level of education among both men and women. As expected, however, a lower proportion of immigrants with post-secondary education participated in these courses (see Table 2).

Table 2: The Rate of Participation in Vocational Training Courses, by Gender and Years of Education in Country of Origin

	Years of Education				
	Total (N=3,415)	0-2 (N=1,529)	3-8 (N=1,062)	9-12 (N=799)	13-14 (N=25)
Total	62	37	76	91	81
Men	85	74	88	95	79
Women	39	19	55	86	100

### 2.2 *The Goals of Vocational Training*

In most cases, the Ethiopian immigrants participated in vocational training courses geared specifically for them and designed to meet their special needs by The Ministry of Immigrant Absorption, the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, JDC-Israel, the Jewish Agency, and other agencies. These courses had two major goals. One was to improve the immigrants' chances of being absorbed into employment, and the other was to increase their chances of employment in a skilled job.

### 2.3 *The Components of Vocational Training Courses*

The majority of vocational training courses for Ethiopian immigrants had four components: study of the vocation; practical work in the vocation, geared toward acquainting the immigrant with work methods and equipment and giving him actual work experience; study of Hebrew, geared toward strengthening his command of the language and improving his performance on the job; and general studies, geared toward broadening his education.

### 2.4 *Course Length*

The vocational courses were of varying lengths: two-year courses, which included vocational, general, and Hebrew-language studies; one-year courses; and short-term courses, whose duration was less than one year. About half (48%) of the immigrants participated in short-term courses; a similar proportion (45%) participated in two-year courses; and a few (7%) participated in one-year courses.

### 2.5 *Course Types*

The courses were adapted to specific target populations, and had differing admissions requirements. Usually, the main admission criterion was level of education and a personal assessment of each candidate. On occasion, workshops were organized to acquaint the immigrants with certain courses, and to determine which of these courses were most appropriate for each individual.

For a list of the vocations studied in the various courses by the level of education required for admission, see Table 3.



Table 3: Vocational Training Courses, by Level of Education Required for Admission

Level of Education			
Up to 8 Years	At Least 8 Years	9 Years or More	12 Years
Sewing	Auto mechanics	Practical nursing	Dentist's assistants
Welding	Child care aides	Electrician	Registered nursing
Carpentry	Printing	Airplane body work	Educational social work
Plumbing	Clerical work	Heavy machine operation	Bookkeeping
Geriatric aides		High school equivalency	
Jewelry making			

The most prevalent courses among the men were those that trained them for skilled work in industry and construction: auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, and auto electrical work. The most prevalent courses among the women were those that prepared them for jobs in the helping professions -- practical nurses, geriatric aides, child care aides. Courses in sewing and bookkeeping were equally popular (see Table 4).

Table 4: Participants in Vocational Training Courses, by Gender\*

Course Name	Total Participants	Men	Women
Total	2,839	2,021	818
Auto mechanics	409	409	-
Welding	250	250	-
Practical nursing	158	48	110
Sewing	157	-	157
Bookkeeping	137	57	80
Construction	121	118	3
Carpentry	114	114	-
Geriatric aides	115	-	115
Auto electrician	111	111	-
Mechanics	79	79	-



Table 4: Participants in Vocational Training Courses, by Gender\* (cont'd)

Course Name	Total Participants	Men	Women
Electronics	89	68	21
Child care aides	88	6	82
High school equivalency	82	79	3
Plumbing	69	69	-
Jr. grade and electrical engineering	58	45	13
Jewelry making	57	13	44
Hospital orderlies	46	-	46
Machine technician	44	44	-
Electrician	41	41	-
Airplane body work	39	39	-
Dentist's assistants	35	3	32
Prep. for jr.-grade engineering	34	25	9
Clerical work	33	3	30
Printing	26	26	-
Driving	28	28	-
Computer program operators	25	11	14
Educational social work	24	21	3
Community social work <sup>1</sup>	17	-	17
Other	353	314	39

\* Some of the immigrants participated in two courses, and were therefore counted twice.

<sup>1</sup> Serves as a translator/aide, and eases interactions with bureaucracy (e.g., accompanies immigrants on clinic visits, visits to government agencies); provides practical assistance and support during the absorption process.

As noted, most of the vocational training courses for Ethiopian immigrants had four components: vocational studies, practical work, general studies, and Hebrew language studies. The immigrants were asked about various aspects of the courses, and whether they felt the courses influenced their chances for absorption into employment. Questions were asked about the curriculum, the difficulties encountered during the period of study, and the social relationships the immigrants had during this period.

## 2.6 *Participants' Satisfaction with the Courses*

The majority (66%) of immigrants, especially participants in short-term courses, were satisfied with the time devoted to vocational studies (66%) and practical work (79%), though they expressed a desire that Hebrew language and general studies be expanded.

About half (48%) of the participants were satisfied with the time devoted to the study of Hebrew. Relatively fewer immigrants participating in one-year courses (28%) expressed satisfaction with the time devoted to Hebrew study. Immigrants who arrived in Israel with a high level of education expressed relatively greater satisfaction with the time allotted for vocational and Hebrew studies. All those with 10 or more years of education were satisfied with the time devoted to vocational studies, as compared with 62% of those with three years of education or less.

Attitudes toward Hebrew studies followed a similar trend. Seventy percent of those with higher levels of education expressed satisfaction with the time devoted to the study of Hebrew, compared with 43% of those with little education.

General studies were included in only some of the courses, usually the two-year courses. Only about 40% of the participants in these courses felt sufficient time was devoted to these subjects.

## 2.7 *Difficulties Encountered while Studying*

The immigrants were asked about the difficulties they encountered while studying. About half of them felt that the material being studied was too difficult, and most of them had difficulty understanding the language. It is possible that language comprehension problems were at the root of difficulties in understanding the material studied in class.

Three-fourths of the immigrants found it difficult to manage financially while studying. Most of the immigrants resided in dormitories or were involved in intensive study and did not work during this period. Their main source of income was the assistance provided by the Ministry of Immigrant Absorption. All of the immigrants cited financial problems as among the most difficult they encountered while studying.

Most of the immigrants arrived in Israel with little or no close family; most (62%) of them found it difficult to be so far from their families. Many noted that the absence of relatives and the longing for family created a sense of loneliness and made it difficult for them to concentrate on their studies.

# 3. Employment

## 3.1 *Rates of Employment, by Age, Gender, and Marital Status*

Of the immigrants surveyed, 54% are working, 17% are not working but are looking for work, and an additional 28% are neither working nor looking for work. About one-third (35%) of the immigrants who are not currently employed, were employed in the past.



Table 5: Employment, Army Service, and Studies among Young Ethiopian Immigrants, by Age and Gender (in %)

	General Total (N= 3,415)	Men			Women		
		Total (N= 1,699)	19-24 <sup>1</sup> (N= 373)	25-39 <sup>2</sup> (N= 1,326)	Total (N= 1,716)	19-24 <sup>1</sup> (N= 428)	25-39 <sup>2</sup> (N= 1,288)
Employed	54	68	35	77	41	44	39
Serving in the army	6	11	44	2	1	-	1
Studying	3	4	9	2	1	6	-
Unemployed and looking for work <sup>3</sup>	17	15	15	16	19	23	18
Total working, serving in the army or studying	63	83	88	81	43	50	40

<sup>1</sup> - Mostly ages 22-24

<sup>2</sup> - Mostly ages 25-35

<sup>3</sup> - Includes those studying or about to complete army service

The rate of employment among men is higher than that among women. Sixty-eight percent of the men are employed and an additional 15% are unemployed<sup>2</sup>, while 41% of the women are employed and 19% are unemployed (see Table 5).

About 35% of the younger men aged 19-24 are employed. However, it should be noted that more than half of the men aged 19-24 are serving in the army (44%) or studying (9%), such that, in all, 88% of the young immigrant men are employed, in the army, or in an educational or training framework. Three-fourths of the immigrant men aged 25-39 are employed, a rate similar to that among the parallel age group in the veteran Jewish population.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> We follow the Central Bureau of Statistics definition of an unemployed person as being one who is not working but is seeking work. Thus, in this report, an individual who is neither working nor seeking work is not considered "unemployed".

<sup>3</sup> All of the data on employment rates among the veteran Jewish population are based on the Central Bureau of Statistics. 1992. *Statistical Abstract for Israel 1992*, No. 43 (Table 4, p. 20), Jerusalem.



Among the women, the trend is not uniform: The employment rate is highest (50%) for those aged 22-24. It seems that thereafter, because of marriage and childbirth, the employment rate drops, standing at about 39% for women aged 25-39 -- a rate lower than that (58%) for women of the same age in the veteran population.

About half of the immigrants have been working for a relatively short time: Approximately one-fourth of them have been working for six months or less, 15% have been working for up to one year, and an additional 16% have been working for up to two years. The remainder of the employed immigrants have been working for two years or more.

There are differences in the employment rates of married and unmarried immigrants. Among about half (53%) of the married couples, one spouse was employed, while among an additional 35%, both spouses were employed. Among relatively few (12%) of the married couples, neither spouse was employed. Among the unmarried and separated, a high percentage are not working: About half (48%) of the single immigrants and about three-fourths (74%) of the heads of single-parent families were not employed.

### *3.2 The Contribution of Vocational Training to the Absorption of Immigrants into Employment*

As noted, a great many resources were invested in the vocational training of young immigrants, on the assumption that they had the best chance of being absorbed into a wide range of skilled jobs. The men participated primarily in courses that trained them for skilled jobs in construction or industry (auto mechanics, welding, carpentry, construction skills, and the like), while the women participated primarily in courses that trained them for work in the helping professions (child care aides, community social workers, nurses, dentist's assistants, and the like).

A high percentage (more than three-fourths) of those who completed training in caregiving vocations have been absorbed into employment, especially graduates of courses for nurses, dentist's assistants, and community social workers. Graduates of some of the technical courses -- especially welding, carpentry, airplane body work, and operation of heavy machinery -- have also been absorbed into employment with great success (more than 70% are employed).

The unique contribution of vocational training courses to the entry of women of all ages and all levels of education into the job market is worthy of note. The employment rate of women graduates of vocational training courses is double that of women who did not undergo training -- 57% versus 29%. Moreover, a high percentage (43%) of women who did not undergo training are neither working nor looking for work, as opposed to only 19% of those who completed vocational training.

### *3.3 Occupations in which Immigrants Find Employment*

Despite the high proportion of immigrants who arrived in Israel with little or no education, many (about two-thirds) have been integrated into skilled jobs: About one-third (36%) of the immigrants are employed as skilled laborers in industry and construction; 13% are employed in service jobs that require training (policemen, prison wardens, and career army personnel); 13% are employed in technical positions; some (4%) work as clerks; and a few (1%) hold scientific or academic positions.

About one-third (34%) of the immigrants are employed in unskilled jobs: one-fifth (19%) of them work as laborers in industry and construction; 13% are service workers in positions that require little training or few skills (janitors, cleaning women, chamber maids); and 2% work in unskilled jobs in agriculture (see Table 6).

Table 6: The Distribution of Occupations of Immigrants, by Gender (in %)

Occupation	Total (N=1,816)	Men (N=1,440)	Women (N=676)
<b>Skilled</b>			
Academic and scientific	1	1	-
Professional and technical	13	10	18
Clerks	4	6	-
High-level service workers	13	15	10
Skilled laborers in industry	36	46	17
<b>Unskilled</b>			
Low-level service workers	13	5	27
Unskilled laborers in industry	19	16	26
Agriculture	2	2	2

Men and women have found employment in different occupations. Among those working in skilled jobs, a relatively higher percentage of women are working in technical and professional positions (principally as nurses and translator/aides). In contrast, a higher percentage of men are working in skilled jobs in industry and construction and high-level service jobs (policemen, prison wardens, and border police or career army personnel).

A lower proportion of men than women are employed in unskilled jobs -- 22% versus 55%, respectively. Women were absorbed more than men into low-level service jobs -- principally as hospital orderlies or as unskilled aides in institutions. In addition, a higher proportion of women are working in unskilled jobs in industry.

Participation in vocational training courses contributes to the integration into skilled jobs of male and female immigrants of all education levels, but especially of women and immigrants who arrived in Israel with little or no education.<sup>4</sup> Seventy percent of those with little education who completed vocational training are now working in skilled jobs, as opposed to only 25% of those who did not undergo vocational training.

<sup>4</sup> These data were examined using a multivariate analysis.



### 3.4 Immigrants' Satisfaction with Work

An additional measure of the quality of the immigrants' absorption into employment is their attitude toward their work. The immigrants were asked whether they were generally satisfied with their work and salary, how interested they were in their work, whether they were satisfied with their chances for promotion, and whether their job allowed them to utilize the skills and knowledge they had acquired through training. They were also asked whether they were working in an occupation in which they wanted to work.

The majority (68%) of immigrants were satisfied or very satisfied with their work. Women were more satisfied with their work than were men (75% versus 64%, respectively).

Satisfaction with specific aspects of work was lower. Sixty-one percent of the immigrants reported that their work was interesting. More than half (54%) of them reported being satisfied with their chances for promotion, 45% said they were using their abilities and training, and 42% reported being satisfied with their salaries. Only about half (48%) of the immigrants were working in an occupation in which they wanted to work.

It is not yet clear whether the fact that the immigrants' satisfaction is lower with regard to salaries and promotions is due to their being employed primarily in industry, to their developing expectations that could not be realized in the relatively short time they have been in the job market, or to their not being employed in fields for which they were trained.

It should be noted that immigrants in certain jobs -- principally academic, professional, clerical, and high-level service jobs -- expressed a high degree of satisfaction. A higher proportion of immigrants who completed vocational training reported having good salaries than did immigrants who did not complete vocational training. There is no uniform trend regarding other measures of satisfaction.

Table 7: Measures of Satisfaction with Work, by Gender (in %)

	Total	Men	Women
Measures of Satisfaction:			
Satisfied or very satisfied with work	68	64	75
Receive good salary	42	44	39
Good chance of promotion	55	56	53
Opportunity to utilize skills and training	45	45	45
Sufficient independence	90	87	95
Work in occupation of their choice	48	48	47



### 3.5 *Immigrants who are not Working*

Fifteen percent of the immigrants (both men and women) are not working but are looking for work (i.e. unemployed), and an additional 28% (17% of the men and 40% of the women) are not working and are not looking for work.

In evaluating these data, the severe unemployment plaguing Israel's job market should be taken into account. Many immigrants have lost their jobs only recently, and others who are now entering the job market face competition with a large number of other job-seekers. Of the immigrants who are not currently working, about half have been out of work for a short time only: 35% have not worked for between one and six months, and 14% have not worked for between seven months and a year. In addition, 21% of the immigrants have been out of work for one to two years, and 30% have not worked for more than two years.

**Immigrants who are not working but are looking for work (the unemployed):** Of the men who are not working but looking for work, 64% have been unemployed for fewer than six months, and an additional 23% have been unemployed for seven months to a year. This would seem to reflect the recent high unemployment rate in the market. Women who are unemployed remain out of work for a more prolonged period. One-third (34%) of the unemployed immigrant women have not worked for one to six months, 17% have not worked for seven months to a year, and nearly half -- 49% -- have not worked for more than a year.

**Immigrants who are neither working nor looking for work:** Twenty-nine percent of the immigrants are neither working **nor looking for work** -- 17% of the men, and 40% of the women. As age increases, the proportion of men who are neither working nor looking for work decreases. Fifty-one percent of the men aged 18-24 are neither working nor looking for work, while only 7% of the men aged 25-49 are neither working nor looking for work. It appears that the majority of the older immigrants have become integrated into the job market, while the younger immigrants are serving in the army or studying. Indeed, the main reasons cited by younger men for failure to look for work were army service (57%), study (22%), and illness (11%).

Among the women, the situation is different. As age increases, the proportion of women who are neither working nor looking for work also increases. About one-third (32%) of the women aged 18-24 are neither working nor looking for work, as compared with 34% of the women aged 25-39. The main reasons cited by women for failure to look for work were pregnancy or the need to care for children (76%), and illness (14%). Younger women (7%) also cited studies as a reason for failure to look for work.

## 4. The Economic Situation of the Immigrants

The immigrants were asked to evaluate their economic situation by answering "yes" or "no" to the question, "Do you have enough money to pay bills and rent and to purchase essential items such as food, clothing, and transportation?" Responses indicate that immigrants face a significant amount of financial difficulty. Only one-third of the immigrants reported that their income was sufficient to cover their basic needs (food, clothing, transportation). It may be hypothesized that these financial problems are due to the number of immigrants employed

in unskilled jobs, the relatively high proportion of women who are not working, and the relatively little seniority that has accrued to immigrants. Indeed, a significant proportion (58%) of the immigrants, including about half (49%) of those whose current income is not sufficient to cover their basic needs, expect their economic situation to improve over time.

Most (65%) of the immigrants live in rented apartments in public housing. Only one-fifth of them live in apartments they or their spouses own. The remainder of the immigrants live in absorption centers (4%) or hostels (6%), in apartments owned by a relative who is not a spouse (2%), in apartments rented privately (1%), or in temporary houses or caravans (1%).

The apartments of the majority of immigrants have basic furnishings, generally donated by public agencies. For example, not insignificant percentages of immigrants have telephones (83%) and washing machines (66%). However, 10% of the immigrants do not have an oven or a water heater, and an even larger percentage lack space heaters.

## **5. Acquisition of the Hebrew Language and Exposure to the Media**

Knowledge of Hebrew is the key to communication between immigrants and veteran Israelis. It improves the chances of finding employment, and eases absorption into Israel.

The great majority of immigrant men do not have difficulty carrying on a simple conversation and reading or writing a simple letter in Hebrew. The women, however, tend to have difficulty learning Hebrew, regardless of how long they have been in the country. One-third of them have difficulty carrying on a simple conversation in Hebrew, 60% of them find it difficult to read a simple letter in Hebrew, and about 70% of them find it difficult to write a simple letter in Hebrew. About one-fourth (26%) of all the immigrants (male and female) stated that learning Hebrew is the most difficult task they have encountered since arriving in Israel.

The immigrants are exposed to the Israeli media. The majority (83%) of them listen to Hebrew-language radio broadcasts or watch television daily. More than half (55%) of them read a newspaper at least once a week.

## **6. Satisfaction with Absorption**

The majority (84%) of immigrants are satisfied or very satisfied with their absorption into Israel.

## **7. Social Relationships**

The decisive majority (88%) of immigrants report that the attitude toward them of most veteran Israelis is good or very good. The social lives of the immigrants still revolve around relationships among themselves. Forty-one percent of the immigrants meet with other



immigrant friends at least once a week. Only a small percentage of the immigrants meet with veteran Israelis with any frequency.

Table 8: The Frequency of Social Interaction or Recreation with Immigrant Friends and Veteran Israelis (in %)

	Immigrant Friends	Veteran Israelis
<b>Frequency of Interaction</b>		
Daily or almost daily	21	9
Once a week	20	6
At least once a month	21	16
Have not met during the past month	38	69

## 8. Summary and Conclusions

This survey of young Ethiopian immigrants provides a picture of the quality of their absorption as reflected in their vocational training, employment, standard of living, and social relationships.

The decisive majority of the men and a significant proportion of the women have participated in vocational training courses.

Despite severe unemployment and the need for the immigrants to become integrated into a modern job market, significantly different from that in their country of origin, the majority (68%) of the men have been absorbed into employment, and are employed at a rate similar to that among the veteran Jewish population. The employment rate for women is lower (41%), partly because those who are not working are pregnant or taking care of children.

The very entry into the job market represents one measure of success in absorption into employment. Beyond this, it is noteworthy that a high percentage (65%) of immigrants are working in skilled jobs, although a not insignificant proportion still work in unskilled jobs.

As noted, many resources were invested in vocational training courses for these immigrants, and the survey sheds light on their contribution to the immigrants' absorption into employment. Vocational training provides a significant incentive for women to seek work. Moreover, immigrants who underwent some kind of vocational training, especially those who arrived in Israel with little or no education, were absorbed into skilled jobs at a higher rate than were immigrants who did not undergo training. In addition, those who completed vocational training courses were more satisfied with their jobs and salaries than were those who did not complete such courses.





The immigrants' economic situation is not improving at the same pace as is their employment situation. It seems that their financial difficulties are at least partly the result of the relatively low proportion of women who are employed, of the not insignificant percentage of immigrants employed in unskilled jobs, and of the little seniority immigrants have had time to accumulate.

Most (78%) of the immigrants are satisfied with their absorption into Israel, and the majority (88%) of them feel that the attitude of veteran Israelis toward them is positive. In addition, the immigrants are exposed to the Israeli media, and it seems that here, too, they are involved in what is happening in Israel. Here it is worth noting the contribution of the army. The vast majority (90%) of immigrant men have served or are serving in the army -- a framework which acquaints them with the norms of Israeli society.

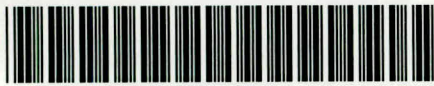
On one hand, the findings of this study indicate that a number of strides have been made toward absorbing Ethiopian immigrants into employment and into Israeli society. On the other hand, a number of areas and a number of groups still require special attention. For example, more must be done to increase the immigrants' earning capacity to meet their basic needs. The need to develop career paths within workplaces so that immigrants may improve their situation is apparent. Vocational training for women should be intensified, as should efforts to strengthen their command of Hebrew. This in turn will improve their chances of being absorbed into the job market and into skilled jobs, and of thereby contributing to the economic stability of their families.



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A survey of young Ethiopian immigrants /

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