

Name Change as an Expression of Belonging, Commitment, and Affiliation With Jewish-Israeli Life: A Case Study Among Jews of Ethiopian Descent

Nitza Davidovitch, Tiblet Aylin

Ariel University, Ariel, Israel

Many Ethiopian immigrants to Israel had their names changed to traditional Jewish names when arriving in Israel as children, as part of the melting pot conception. The purpose of the current study was to examine the perception of Jewish-Israeli identity among Jews of Ethiopian descent with the reverse name change they performed in adulthood. For this study, 144 respondents were sampled, of whom 120 had had their name changed when immigrating to Israel. Of those whose name was changed, 100 later changed their name back to the original name given by their parents. The study utilized an attitude questionnaire that sought to explore three research hypotheses. The first hypothesis was that the Jewish Israeli identity of those whose name had not been changed was stronger than that of those whose name was changed. With regard to this hypothesis, significant differences were found in the Jewish identity of those whose name had been changed and those who had not, such that those whose name had been changed portrayed a weaker sense of Israeli identity than those who had not. The second hypothesis was that those who changed their name back had a stronger Jewish Israeli identity than those who did not. The findings indicate that those who changed their name back show a weaker Jewish Israeli identity than those who decided not to revert to their original name. The third hypothesis was that various personal variables have an effect on the perception of Jewish identity, in addition to the name change. The control variables were not found to be significant, i.e., sex and age had no significant influence on Jewish Israeli identity. These findings reinforce the findings concerning the previous hypotheses and indicate that Jewish Israeli identity is considerably connected to the name change. The main research finding is that the name change has an effect on the Jewish Israeli identity of Jews of Ethiopian descent, and this is a double effect. The outcomes of the name change cause these people to feel that they were forced to erase their culture, their original identity, and their original conceptions and norms. For members of the Ethiopian community in Israel, the name change is a symbol of cultural obliteration, a symbol of the attempt to create a melting pot within Jewish society. The reverse name change generates an improvement in their Israeli identity, and appears to be a way for members of the community to portray themselves and their identity within Israeli society.

Keywords: Ethiopian descent, identity, *culture*

Introduction

People are given a name at birth, and this name often represents their identity and roots. In Ethiopia, Jews had only given names. They had no surnames. A person's name consisted of his or her given name, chosen at birth or immediately afterwards following traditional rules of the Ethiopian community. When arriving in Israel, the large majority of Ethiopian Jews, particularly the younger people, were compelled to change their names arbitrarily to names allocated by representatives of the establishment.

The purpose of the current study is to examine the association between the change of one's given name and the sense of commitment and affiliation with Jewish Israeli life, among Jews of Ethiopian descent in Israel. The study seeks to understand how the name change, which appears to be a symbolic act, has far-reaching influences on the identification of Ethiopian Jews with the Jewish Israeli narrative. The study seeks to explore this by referring to two aspects of the name change. The first aspect is changing one's name when immigrating to Israel and the second is the decision to revert to the original name when the immigrant reaches adulthood and the symbolism of this change for him or her, whether it is related to weak or strong Jewish Israeli identity.

The contribution of the study is in its attempt to portray multiculturalism as a means of reinforcing collective identity and not necessarily of weakening it. The study seeks to show that the melting pot model, formerly perceived as suitable for educating and for shaping collective memory is no longer relevant and may be replaced with the syncretic model, i.e., reshaping Israeli culture by integrating and merging all the cultures that comprise Israeli society as a society of immigrants.

Literature Review

Israeli society is multicultural and it is comprised of a large number of different ethnic groups. The 1950s were characterized by an "assimilative" melting pot approach, namely, creating a dominant culture while intentionally disregarding different cultural groups and encouraging them to abandon their cultures of origin. This approach is based on the principle of egocentrism, whereby the center determines the rules of the game. As an outcome of social marginality, Levinson and Rosman (1993) found that, in their first year or two in Israel, immigrant children from the former Soviet Union felt that they had a different family system, one that had been customary abroad. Their parent figures appeared to them different than perceived in their country of origin and they viewed their parents as weaker and less confident. These findings support the claim of Roer Strier (1996) who deals with the relationship between immigrant parents and their children and identifies three typical parenting styles. One is the kangaroo style, whereby parents raise their children in the spirit of the culture they brought with them and protect themselves from external influences. The second is cuckoo style, whereby they have absolute trust in socialization agents and release themselves from any significant role in their children's education. The third is the chameleon style, whereby parents teach their children to live in both worlds. At home, they maintain certain cultural characteristics and outside they behave and dress as compatible with social norms. According to Sever (1997a) use of the melting pot model generated sub-societies in Israel. The first sub-society is called "response marginality". This is a general name for groups that became accustomed to harsh conditions, lack of hope, and inability to succeed as a result of the game rules set by the center (underprivileged neighborhoods). These groups do not accept the social "game rules" and create their own rules (delinquent societies, etc.).

For this reason, according to Sharaby (2002), syncretism constitutes an intermediate course that reconciles and bridges between cultures when such a need arises. Sharaby (2010) states that cultural bridging is in fact a “celebration of diversity” and that it puts an end to society’s denial of this diversity. By analyzing the initial process undergone by members of Bnei Ravid, a workers’ agricultural settlement (moshav) populated by Yemenite immigrants, as well as their dealings with members of the Moshavim movement, Sharaby (2002) shows how a syncretic model can succeed where the melting pot concept did not. With regard to Jewish immigrants from Ethiopia, as shown below, the name change is an example of a melting pot approach that proved a complete failure.

Ethiopian Jews in Israel

The Ethiopian minority in Israel is characterized by most major features of minority groups and is distinguished from Israeli society in appearance, culture, and language. This minority in Israel suffers from an attitude of disregard by both the establishment and society at large, in many dimensions. For example, it is represented in the printed press mainly in local newspapers, and only in locations where this minority is more dominant (Behar, 2004). In order to understand the challenges faced by Ethiopian Jews in Israel, this chapter will refer to difficulties encountered by minorities and will then present features typical of the coping of Ethiopian society.

Minorities are groups of people within the majority population, discerned by national, ethnic, religious, cultural, linguistic, and other characteristics. The minority is defined within society in two ways. First, by the majority group—which distinguishes and separates itself from the subgroup, and secondly by members of the minority group who initiate a separation between themselves and the majority. The Arab minority in Israel has most of the major characteristics of a minority group and is distinguished from Israeli society in its nationality, religion, culture, and language. In addition, the Arab minority is part of the Arab world that includes the countries surrounding Israel, and since there a conflict between the Arab world and Israel has been raging for many years, the Arab minority is significantly affected by this state of affairs (Adan, Ashkenazi, & Alperson, 2005). The Jewish Mizrahi minority exemplifies how minorities and subgroups deal with mainstream society. In the three years after establishment of the State of Israel, the population of the young state doubled, with half the 650,000 new immigrants arriving from North Africa and Central Asia (Rosen-Lapidot & Goldberg, 2013). In addition, in 1956 and 1967, after the Six Day War, a large wave of Jewish immigrants from Morocco, North Africa, Iraq, and Iran posed a significant threat to the hegemony of the Ashkenazi leadership and to the figure of the native Israel, characterized up to that time by Western cultural features with which the immigrants’ culture had no connection. The culture of the immigrants included elements such as beliefs with regard to the evil eye, worship of holy people, and many spiritual elements that were not compatible with the ruling Ashkenazi culture. These cultural discrepancies led to the exclusion of members of Mizrahi groups from the public sphere and their children encountered discrimination and a sense of alienation that led many of them to delinquency and unemployment (Lehmann & Siebzeher, 2006).

The Ethiopian Minority in Israel

The immigration of Ethiopian Jews, also called “Beta Israel”, to Israel began in the 1960s in the form of illegal clandestine immigration. Most of these immigrants came in two main waves. The first was Operation Moses in 1984-1985 and the second was Operation Solomon, in the early 1990s (Rapoport, 1986). In Operation

Moses 6,700 Jews were brought to Israel, and in Operation Moses 15,000 (State Comptroller, 2008). In these cases there was ultimately no problem with implementation of the Law of Return, as following a lengthy public debate they were accepted as Jewish citizens for all purposes. Nonetheless, there was a dispute as to their absolute Judaism, and therefore some were required to undergo conversion according to strict guidelines when arriving in Israel (Spector, 2005).

The first time there was a problem with the immigration of Ethiopian Jews in the context of the Law of Return was in the 1960s and 1970s. The common conception in those days was that the Ethiopians, and particularly the Falashmura, are not Jews since they converted to Christianity. Hence, they are not entitled to immigrate to Israel by virtue of the Law of Return. For this reason, Ethiopian Jews were not brought to Israel in an organized manner and there was no intention of bringing them, unlike the “ingathering of exiles” policy in this period regarding other locations around the world, such as efforts made to bring Yemenite Jews, Eastern European Jews, Moroccan and Tunisian Jews, and others to Israel.

As of 2017, about one hundred and sixteen thousand Jews of Ethiopian descent are living in Israel. Members of this ethnic group suffer greatly from social discrimination and encounter many economic and cultural challenges, because they came from a country that did not reach the same levels of progress as Western countries (Schuster, 2009). These challenges involve not only economic and cultural aspects rather also more vital needs such as healthcare services. The major challenge encountered by older members of this group is the language gap. Language gaps essentially reduce the communication abilities between the establishment and citizens and make it hard to provide adequate services (Burgana, 2007). All these show that the Ethiopian minority in Israel suffers from many hardships on an economic basis and also on a social and cultural basis. The representation of members of this group in the media, for example, reinforces stereotypes and intensifies their challenges.

Challenges Encountered by Ethiopian Immigrants—Merging Africa With the West

Immigration involves the transition from a familiar place, familiar social and ideological conditions, to another place, creating differences that are not sufficiently clear to the immigrant. Immigrants must undergo considerable changes both in their attitude to the environment and in the perception of new social concepts. They must accept new laws, deal with a new life style, and hence form a personal perception and insight of their new circumstances (Ben David, 1994). Any immigration to a new country involves a risk of culture shock. Immigrants bring with them a great deal of baggage: their common and personal past, in addition to lengthy and deep psychological pressures (tension). In some cases tension might facilitate the enlistment of mental and physical forces and create opportunity, but considerable and lengthy pressure might lead to undesirable consequences. New immigrants cope with pressures that begin with the decision to leave—to sever ties with their past, as well as with feelings of uncertainty, fear, and suspicion, adjusting to the lack of laws, distrust in the law, disrespect for the rules, and inability to apply them. Most immigrants lack the psychological readiness for a new life and thus develop inappropriate expectations in the first stages of absorption in Israel (Kataiba-Wenger, 1994).

When maintaining a daily life style, immigrant families naturally strive to preserve traditional practices. Conspicuous examples are recipes, home decorations, clothing worn by the older generation, etc. Immigrant families from traditional countries preserve traditional behavior patterns such as role distributions within the family, educational methods, and respectful conduct towards elders. On festivals immigrants preserve contents

and texts with similar formats to those customary in their country of origin and in this way the traditions help conserve and consolidate the family identity. With the increasing recognition of the role of structural and cultural pluralism in absorbing societies, another issue has attracted interest as well—the significance of the continuity of traditional patterns for absorption processes and of the woman-mother's role in preserving the various traditions rooted in the family system. These traditions that preserve past formats for the family's continued functioning are very important and they contribute to the preservation and consolidation of the family and group identity (Morag-Talmon & Atzmon, 2013).

Immigration often demands a heavy personal price as many immigrants leave behind a familiar environment, social status, and career for which they had made many efforts in order to come to a foreign place. In addition, the main difficulty generating a sense of alienation is the language barrier. Language has been identified by many researchers as a major source of difficulty hampering the integration of immigrants around the world and in Israel in particular (e.g., Eckstein, Cohen-Goldner, & Larom, 2006). The reason is that even if immigrants are skilled and have a higher education, their ability to apply these skills is limited due to language problems. As a result, the integration rate of immigrants drops the higher the immigrant's training. For example, immigrants with a scientific and academic education find it harder to find work in their profession due to the difficulty in realizing their capabilities (Plug & Kasir, 1993; Morag-Talmon & Atzmon, 2013).

For example, Palmer (2010) examined the features of the *buna* ceremony among Ethiopian immigrants to the UK. The study explored to what degree the original ceremonial principles, role distribution, and meaning of the ceremony for participants and observers, are preserved. Palmer's conclusion is that when immigrating to another country many cultural features from the person's homeland are obliterated and he or she finds it hard to adjust to the new circumstances. When people come from a traditional African country and live in an advanced Western country their difficulties intensify and they tend to withdraw into their community and its values.

The Educational Dimension of the Ethiopian Community—Communication Difficulties Between Teachers and Parents From the Community

In light of the above, residents of Ethiopian descent cope with many challenges that they encounter as immigrants, all the more so as they have a significantly different cultural background. As a result, they have trouble becoming integrated in the school system. Since the current study focuses on relationships between parents and teachers with regard to this ethnic group, this chapter will seek to present several factors characteristic of this relationship, which indicate potential difficulties in managing the parent-teacher relationship.

The first factor is discrepancies in the social norms related to the family structure. Among Ethiopians in Africa, the family structure was distinctly patriarchal. Women had traditional roles of housework and childrearing, and they and the children were inferior to men and the elderly. Extensive family relationships had an important place in the culture of this society and social and cultural life took place within this circle rather than in the nuclear family. The figure of authority in the family was the father, who was responsible for supporting the family and for discipline. The role distribution was clear and hierarchical (Shitrit & Maslovati, 2000). According to Ethiopian cultural codes, children were raised to obey and accept authority, and to respect their parents, family leaders, and village elders. From age 6 children helped their parents with farming and caring for the sheep, and a select few were sent to school. Learning one's duties was achieved gradually, in imitation of the adults. Family members lived under one roof and helped each other out financially and socially. Girls were married off from the age of 9 and boys from the age of 16 (Sever, 1997b).

One of the clashes that reflect intercultural discrepancies between immigrants from Ethiopia and veteran Israelis is the family structure and the attitude to older people. As stated, the norm in Ethiopian families is a traditional hierarchy of authority. Families that came from Ethiopia were usually traditional-patriarchal families, with a hierarchy that dictates a system of norms and behaviors that allow no deviations. According to the Ethiopian cultural way of life, young people are instructed to respect their elders and obey their authority. This led to misunderstandings in the encounter between Ethiopian youth and Israeli society, both with their peers and with adults who often did not interpret their behavior correctly. The encounter between two such cultures produced misunderstandings that had far-reaching implications for the absorption process of Ethiopian immigrants in Israel (Habib et al., 2012) and that had a potentially detrimental impact on their identity.

Therefore, and since the Ethiopian head of the family was little able to support his family, the status of adults (parents, religious leaders, and elders) was negatively affected and undermined. The elders too experienced an adjustment crisis and lost their authority. The religious leadership lost its force and the youth remained bereft of guidance, often becoming their parents' guides (Habib et al., 2012; Sever, 1997; Edelstein, 2003).

Shabtai (2001) examined the components of group identity that preceded immigration as well as the identity components embraced by the immigrants subsequently, for instance physical features, given names, names granted by family members, perception of Judaism, language components, belonging to minority groups in Ethiopia, music as a cultural property, and more. In the process of immigration, Jews of Ethiopian descent replaced their given names with Hebrew names as part of the "melting pot" policy. Today the trend is to return to the original names as part of the syncretic conception presented by Sharaby (2011).

Changing the names of members of the Ethiopian community sought, according to Shabtai (2001), to create a contrast between social identity and personal identity. One's group identity is defined as meaning given to the affiliation with or belonging to a certain group of people. This identity begins with people and is then further granted to places and sites that can become "national", and later on to the land where the group of people live when forming their identity. Cohen (2005, p. 46) defines social identity as "a multi-value cultural social code shared by a group of people." In contrast to the personal identity, that distinguishes an individual from others, the group identity seeks to connect the individual and portray the features that he or she shares with others (Cohen, 2005).

The above definitions indicate that group identity is a response to the relatively simple question of "who are we," and the answer to this is often complex. The answer of who we are is formed by examination of the consciousness of belonging, collective memory, shared sense of fate, shared values, personal features, etc. Social identity can be summarized in one sentence as the degree to which the group examines its past and future—where it has come from and where it is headed (Cohen, 2005).

Group identity is that which forms one's conception of "we" and "they". According to this perception, group identity is the degree to which one identifies as part of a certain group when comparison with another group is necessary, for instance in times of conflict, with regard to one's worldview, etc. (Onorato & Turner, 2004). Social identification enables one to more easily reach decisions with regard to circumstances and to complex issues, as these are interpreted based on the social structures and values of the group to which he or she seeks to belong (Cohen, 2005). Hence, social identity is also formed to a great degree through stereotypes. The reference to certain groups by means of stereotypes characterizes the boundaries of these groups for the individual and simplifies the perception of the group by its members and by others (Onorato & Turner, 2004).

For many, the group identity makes it possible for individuals to form more positive views of themselves, and this is why they seek to belong. The higher their motivation to appear better to themselves, the stronger their group-related social identity. People tend to identify with groups perceived by society in general as having a more positive image (Roccas, 2003).

The individual's group-related social identity is not one-dimensional. A person may have several group identities. For example, a woman can belong simultaneously, from a social viewpoint, to the group of women, to the group of people with right-wing political views, and to other groups. The question is what psychological process occurs within such a person when his or her social identities clash or when it is necessary to form a view regarding an individual who has several social identities. When the individual's social identity is complex, he or she might adhere to one identity and enhance it while neglecting the others, or alternately manage the complexity, particularly when the select identities are not very conflictual (Roccas & Brewer, 2002).

Various studies have shown that when one must form an opinion as to the group identity of an individual who has several social identities, one identity is significantly enhanced while the others are devalued. This psychological process can be identified as a cognitive bias in order to simplify reality for the individual. In contrast, some are of the opinion that the process of forming an attitude on an individual with many social identities occurs in such a way that the connection between the identities causes the observer to form an opinion/conception that is not compatible with the social identities of the observed individual. Be this as it may, in a situation of multiple social identities people reach biased opinions regarding individuals (Roccas & Brewer, 2002).

A person's perceived self-identity also depends on the group's public status. Roccas (2003) examined people's social identity with regard to certain groups by examining the perceived status of the group within the general public as perceived by individuals in the group. The study was conducted by associating respondents with one of two groups, a real group and a theoretical group. The findings indicated that the higher one's perception of the public group's status, the more he or she identifies with it. Another finding showed that when the individual thinks that the potential group has a higher status, his or her social identity with regard to the other group becomes stronger, and vice versa. One's social identity is formed on two levels, the personal connection to a certain group, which is a more intimate and stronger connection, and the connection to a wider collective idea, though the individual has no connection to most people who advocate this idea. The mutual relations between one's personal identity and social identity constitute an intricate system, and social identity has a considerable influence on personal identity. The manner in which society perceives the individual and his or her place in the society has a significant effect on the individual's self-concept (Onorato & Turner, 2004).

Accordingly, the research question is:

Is there an association, and to what degree, between changing one's given name and the sense of commitment and affiliation with the Jewish-Israeli existence, among Israeli Jews of Ethiopian descent?

The following research hypotheses were derived from this question:

- The Jewish-Israeli identity of those whose name was not changed is stronger than that of those whose name was changed.
- Those who changed their name back have a stronger Jewish-Israeli identity concept than those who did not change their name back.
- Various personal variables have an effect on one's perceived Jewish identity, in addition to the name change.

Method

Respondents

This study examined the population of Israelis of Ethiopian descent, of which 144 participants were selected by means of a convenience sample. Of these, 120 had had their name changed when arriving in Israel, and 100 of them chose to change their name back while the rest did not. The age range of the respondents was 18-50. Forty of the respondents were women and the rest men.

Research Tool

The research tool used is an attitude questionnaire for examining differences in the perceived Jewish-Israeli identity among Israelis of Ethiopian descent whose name was changed. The questionnaire was comprised of two parts.

1. The first part included a request for personal information such as sex, age, and country of birth. In addition, in this part the respondents were asked two main questions:

- Was your name changed when you immigrated to Israel? Yes/no
- If your name was changed when you immigrated to Israel, did you decide to change your name back?

Yes/no

2. Questionnaire on Jewish social identity among Israelis of Ethiopian descent who had changed their name—In order to examine the level of Jewish-Israeli identity, a questionnaire designed by the researcher was used. The questionnaire consists of fourteen statements with which the respondent was asked to state his or her level of agreement on a 6-point scale, with 1 denoting not at all and 6 denoting strongly agree. The overall score on the questionnaire was measured by the general mean of responses to all statements. Sample items:

- I invest a great deal of time in efforts to become integrated in society.
- It is important for me to become integrated in Israeli society.

The level of reliability for the questionnaire on Jewish-Israeli identity was 0.623.

Research Procedure

The study was conducted during 2017. The questionnaires constructed were distributed at first to participants based on personal acquaintance and then the initial respondents were asked to recommend family members and friends. They were also distributed on the Facebook social network. When providing the questionnaire, respondents were given a short concise explanation of the study's purpose and were assured that their details would remain anonymous. The respondents were also told that no identifying detail would be revealed and that they could stop answering the questionnaire at any time. The study included 144 participants.

Findings

To examine the research question, a *t*-test for independent samples was used. The following table presents the findings:

The research findings show significant differences in the level of Jewish identity between those whose name was changed and those whose name was not changed, such that those whose name had been changed showed weaker Israeli identity than those whose name had not been changed. In addition, the following table indicates that those who changed their name back display a weaker Jewish-Israeli identity than those who decided not to change back their name. The significance of these findings will be discussed at length in the discussion chapter.

Table 1

Differences in Jewish-Israeli Identity by Name Change

	<i>Name changed at immigration</i>	<i>Name not changed at immigration</i>
Mean	3.531888	4.51875
Variance	0.289571	0.017405
Number of respondents	120	21
<i>t</i> Stat	**-5.7271	

** $p < 1\%$

Table 2

Differences in Jewish-Israeli Identity by Name Change

	<i>Changed their name back</i>	<i>Did not change their name back</i>
Mean	4.0175	3.005208
Variance	0.055508	0.030203
Number of respondents	100	41
<i>t</i> Stat	**17.05774	

** $p < 1\%$

Once differences were found in respondents' level of Jewish identity by the prior name change, a more complex statistical analysis was held to examine differences in the effect of the name change on one's Jewish-Israeli identity, with the addition of controlling variables such as sex and age, in order to check for differences in the level of Jewish-Israeli identity as associated with various personal features. In order to examine these dimensions, a multivariate linear regression model was used:

Table 3

Multivariate Linear Regression Model, Dependent Variable: Jewish-Israeli Identity

	<i>Coefficient value</i>	<i>Standard deviation</i>	<i>t</i> Stat
Intercept	3.144862	0.18312	**17.17374
Sex	-0.1125	0.075457	-1.49092
Age	-0.00179	0.005226	-0.34168
Was your name changed when arriving in Israel (1=yes, 0=no)	0	0	**65535
Did you change your name back as an adult (1=yes, 0=no)	0.862205	0.070961	**12.15045
<i>R</i> SQUARE	0.880844	0.17418	**89.70832

The research findings indicate that the *R* square is fairly high (88.08%), such that some of the variables account for the change in Jewish-Israeli identity. Nonetheless, the controlling variables were found to be insignificant, i.e., sex and age have no significant influence on Jewish-Israeli identity. These findings support those presented the previous tables and show that Jewish-Israeli identity is connected to a large degree to name change.

Discussion and Conclusions

This study sought to examine the association between name change among Israelis of Ethiopian descent and their Jewish-Israeli identity. The study was based on a foundation of correlational quantitative research and used an attitude questionnaire to examine the research question.

The main research findings are that changing one's name has an effect on the Jewish-Israeli identity of Israelis of Ethiopian descent, indicating a double effect. As a result of the name change members of this group feel that they were forced to obliterate their culture, original identity, and original perceptions and norms. For members of this group the name change symbolizes cultural eradication, the attempt to create a melting pot within Jewish society (Edelstein, 2003), indicating that Ethiopian culture is inferior and thus Jews immigrating to Israel must embrace a different identity than their original identity (Izikovich & Buck, 1991).

When reaching adulthood, people of Ethiopian descent can choose whether to revert to their original name or remain with the name given them by the Jewish Agency and the establishment. Those who returned to their original name show evidence of a deeper and more significant Israeli identity. Although the meaning of returning to the original name might symbolize a desire to distance oneself from Israeli culture, in practice returning to the original name seeks to present Ethiopian culture as part of Israeli culture. For people of Ethiopian descent, resuming their original name is an opportunity to portray their culture and merge it with Israeli culture, and a way of influencing Israeli culture and depicting it as multicultural and pluralistic, as well as accepting other cultures. The meaning of this finding is that reinforcing one's personal identity as a member of the Ethiopian community. The relationship between one's personal identity and group identity is a multidimensional, intricate, and changing system, and at relatively ages, as in the research group, personal identity has fairly strong mutual relations with group identity. The research respondents see the Israeli group identity as part of their personal identity, formed in accordance with their ambition to preserve their original culture, and personal and group identity might become mixed to such a degree that the boundaries between them become completely blurred. Further to this claim, it is possible to follow the opinion of Roccas (2003) and contend that social status has a not inconsiderable effect of blurring one's personal and group identity. When people have high status in a society this legitimizes their life style, which receives positive reinforcement from the surroundings. Such people form a personal conception of the group identity as suitable for them and embrace its values to such a degree that these values become fully assimilated in their personal identity.

These findings lead to the conclusion that cultural inclusion, understanding, and permitting freedom of action and expression in the public sphere are manifested first and foremost in legitimizing symbols such as people's given name. Then, acceptance and welcoming of the symbols into the prevalent culture in the immigrants' destination country enables them to add new cultural contents to the existing culture and to reshape it. A possible claim is that the melting pot model characteristic of Israel in past years (Izikovich & Buck, 1991) has now been replaced by the syncretic model (Sharaby, 2002), which seeks to show that cultural understanding and inclusion, as well as cultural bridging, are evident when the dominant culture is affected by other cultures that come into contact with it.

Another conclusion stemming from the above findings is that reinforcing Jewish identity must occur together with cultural containment. Jewish or Israeli identity cannot be experienced or perceived in only one manner, and each ethnic group or subgroup within the culture seeks to express its unique identity and to integrate the Israeli identity within it.

The purview of the current study is limited because it does not examine respondents' perceived Jewish Israeli identity qualitatively through in-depth interviews. Further research may do well to expand the picture generated with regard to the issue studied. Further studies should also increase the number of respondents in order to enable more extensive support of the findings. Differences in the perception of Jewish Israeli identity can also be examined as affected by immigrants' age and the duration of their residence in Israel.

In summary, this study examined aspects related to the Jewish Israeli identity of members of the Ethiopian community. The study sought to explore how the name change of Ethiopian immigrants has affected their Jewish Israeli identity. The research findings indicate a double effect. When immigrating to Israel, the name change points to the intrusion affected by the establishment and the attempt to force the hegemonic culture on members of this ethnic group. The attempt to obliterate the identity of these people leads them to display a sense of alienation towards Jewish Israeli society and they find it hard to embrace the Jewish and Israeli narratives. When reaching adulthood, people of Ethiopian descent can choose to return to their previous name. Those who chose to revert to their former name were found to portray a stronger Jewish Israeli identity. This shows that one result of tolerance and cultural containment, which are an expression of society's multiculturalism, is that society manages to bring its citizens and subgroups to identify with its values and to embrace them more strongly.

These findings indicate that the assimilating melting pot perception is ultimately unable to lead people to embrace an identity or to produce a homogeneous collective memory, rather it is precisely containment, mixing, and merging (syncretism) that are capable of generating an Israeli identity characterized by a diverse image and ideological wealth, forming a human mosaics that constitutes a complete jigsaw puzzle.

References

- Adan, H., Ashkenazi, V., & Alperson, B. (2005). *To be citizens in Israel*. Ministry of Education, Curricula Branch. [Hebrew]
- Adler, C., & Sever, R. (1998). *Summit or asset—Education for everyone and educational nurturing*. School of Education, Hebrew University, Jerusalem: Research Institute for Innovation in Education (publication 156). [Hebrew]
- Beilock, S. L., Rydell, R. J., & McConnell, A. R. (2007). Stereotype threat and working memory: Mechanisms, alleviation, and spillover. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: General*, 136, 256-276.
- Ben-David, Y., Zelnick, P., Ben-Aharon, A., & Giron, A. (1994). *The intercultural encounter: Immigrants and veterans*. Jerusalem: ELKA, JDC. [Hebrew]
- Ben-Zeev, T., Fein, S., & Inzlicht, M. (2004). Stereotype threat and arousal. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 41, 174-181.
- Burgana, D. (2007). Linguistic and cultural instruction of social services—Patterns of interaction between caregiver and client within the healthcare services among Ethiopian immigrants in Israel (field study). *Hed Ha'ulpan Hahadash*, 91. [Hebrew]
- Bustin, E. (2007). Linguistic and cultural mediation of social services. *Hed Ha'ulpan Hahadash*, 91. [Hebrew]
- Cohen, A. (2005). *Non-Jewish Jews, Jewish Israeli identity, and the challenge of expanding the Jewish Nation*. Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University and Keter Books Publication. [Hebrew]
- Eckstein, Z., Cohen-Goldner, S., & Larom, T. (2006). *The integration of Former Soviet Union immigrants in the Israeli labour market*. Tel Aviv University: Pinchas Sapir Center for Development. [Hebrew]
- Edelstein, A. (2003). The identity perception of Israeli teens of Ethiopian descent. *Mifgash Le'Avoda Hinuchit Soztialit*, 18, 73-97. [Hebrew]
- Geertz, C. (1990). *The interpretation of cultures*. Translated from English. Keter. [Hebrew]
- Habib, J., Ben-Rabi, D., Somekh, S., Konstantinov, V., & Angel, M. (2012). *Evaluation of the PACT and PACT+ Projects to promote Ethiopian-Israeli children and their parents—Summary of final report*. Jerusalem: Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute. [Hebrew]
- Izikovich, R., & Buck, R. (1991). Models guiding the education of immigrant children in Israel. *Iyunim Bechinuch*, 52, 33-50. [Hebrew]
- Kalderon, N. (2000). *Pluralists despite themselves, on the multiple cultures of Israelis*. Haifa: Zemora-Bitan.
- Kataiba-Wenger, A. (1994). *The '90s immigration: Psychological aspects—View from within*. Jerusalem: ELKA, JDC. [Hebrew]
- Larson, K. E., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2017). Cultural competence and social desirability among practitioners: A systematic review of the literature. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 76, 100-111.
- Lehmann, D., & Siebzeher, B. (2006). Holy Pirates: Media, ethnicity, and religious renewal in Israel. *Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere*, 91-111.

- Levinson, S., & Rosman, M. (1993). Citing New immigrant teens from the Former Soviet Union. In S. Levinson (ed.), *Psychology in schools and in the community in times of calm and emergency*. Tel Aviv: Re'em. [Hebrew]
- Morag-Talmon, P., & Atzmon, Y. (2013). *Immigrant women in Israel*. Jerusalem: Mossad Bialik. [Hebrew]
- Onorato, R. S., & Turner, J. C. (2004). Fluidity in the self-concept: The shift from personal to social identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 34(3), 257-278.
- Palmer, D. (2010). The Ethiopian Buna (Coffee) Ceremony: Exploring the Impact of exile and the construction of identity through narratives with Ethiopian forced migrants in the United Kingdom. *Folklore*, 121(3), 321-333.
- Plug, K., & Kasir, N. (1993). *Employment of immigrants from the CIS: The short term*. Series of papers for discussion 93.04. Bank of Israel. [Hebrew]
- Rapoport, L. (1986). *Redemption song: The story of operation mores*. Harcourt.
- Roccas, S. (2003). The effects of status on identification with multiple groups. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 33(3), 351-366.
- Roccas, S., & Brewer, M. B. (2002). Social identity complexity. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 6(2), 88-106.
- Roer, S. D. (1996). An ecological study of childcare quality: A call for attention to the cultural context. *Journal of the European Early Childhood Education Research Association*, 4, 77-88.
- Rosen-Lapidot, E., & Goldberg, H. E. (2013). The triple loci of Jewish-Maghribi ethnicity: Voluntary associations in Israel and in France. *Journal of North African Studies*, 18(1), 112-130.
- Schuster, M. (2009). Increasing access to healthcare services by linguistic minorities: The translation service "Voice for Health" as a test case. PhD dissertation, Bar-Ilan University. [Hebrew]
- Schweid, E. (1997). Pluralism as social agreement and as a personal perspective. In E. Paldi (ed.), *Education in the test of time* (pp. 275-283). [Hebrew]
- Sever, R. (1997a). "As Though All is Fine"—*Intercultural mediation in Israel, why is it necessary and how is it to be done?* Hebrew University, Jerusalem: Institute for the Research of Nurturing in Education, School of Education. [Hebrew]
- Sever, R. (1997b). *Intercultural mediation in Israel: Why is it necessary and how is it to be done? Yeshut, project for integrating immigrant students in the school system*. Hebrew University, Jerusalem: Institute for the Research of Nurturing in Education, School of Education. [Hebrew]
- Shabtai, M. (2001). Living with a threatening identity: Experiences of life with a different skin color among young people and teens of Ethiopian descent in Israel. *Megamot*, 1/2, 97-112. [Hebrew]
- Sharaby, R. (2002). *Syncretism and adjustment—The encounter between a traditional community and a socialist society*. Tel Aviv: Cherikover. [Hebrew]
- Sharaby, R. (2010). Organizer of Henna Ceremonies in Israel: Bridge between past and present. In D. Bar-Maoz (ed.), *Tehuda*, 26, 18-23. Society for Yemenite Tradition and Culture. [Hebrew]
- Shitrit, A., & Maslovati, N. (2000). Intensity and structure of teens' value and behaviour systems: Comparison between immigrant students of Ethiopian descent and Israeli-born students. In N. Maslovati and Y. Iram (eds.), *Research in education and its implementation in a changing world* (pp. 203-223). Tel Aviv University. [Hebrew]
- Spector, S. (2005). *Operation Solomon: The daring rescue of the Ethiopian Jews*. Oxford University Press.
- State Comptroller. (2008). *Opinion Paper—Application of the Government Decisions concerning Immigration of the Falashmura*.