Same Education, Different Treatment: Analyzing Job-Search Experiences of Ultra-Orthodox Graduates Entering the Israeli Labor Market

Dan Kaufmann
The Department of Business Administration, Guilford Glazer Faculty of Business and Management, Ben Gurion University of the Negev, P.O.Box 653, Beer-Sheva, Israel. 8410501.
danka@bgu.ac.il

Reut Marciano
Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, Jerusalem, Israel. 20 Rdak St. Jerusalm, Israel. 92186.
reutmar@gmail.com

Lior Regev
Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, Jerusalem, Israel. 20 Rdak St. Jerusalm, Israel. 92186.
Lioregev@jiis.org.il

Abstract

In this study we examine employment discrimination against ultra-Orthodox Jewish (Haredi) academic graduates in Israel. During the last decade, attitudes towards higher education and employment within ultra-Orthodox communities in Israel have shifted dramatically, with a growing number of graduates seeking to integrate into the general workforce. During the years 2002-2012, the number of ultra-Orthodox students grew by 1000% and this growth trend is still ongoing.

Using questionnaires and interviews, we followed the entire job search process of 492 graduates of the same college, half of them belonging to the ultra-Orthodox community and the other half belonging to the general group. We found that although ultra-Orthodox candidates took longer to find a job, received fewer responses from potential employers, and received fewer invitations for job interviews, they experienced a similar level of job acceptance after being interviewed. We argue that personal interaction between employers and candidates can overcome initial negative biases. Policies encouraging direct communication between minorities/immigrants and the general population may thus have positive influence on the job search process. The conclusions of this study may be applied to other minority groups who share the same language with the general population such as second generation immigrants or other ethnic minorities.

Funding: This work was supported by the Administration of Research and Economy - Israeli Ministry of Economics.

Keywords: Discrimination; Labor Market; Ultra-Orthodox; Minorities; Employment.

1. Introduction

As societies become more diverse and multicultural, the issues of integrating immigrants and minorities in different social domains become more pressing (Tilly, 2011), with the labor market often at the center of this process. The literature substantiates the difficulties facing minority groups when they attempt to enter the job market and specifically those of college educated men (Wilson, Tienda and Wu, 1995). Typically, employment rates for minority groups are lower than those of the general population (Fleischmann & Dronkers, 2010), and they often receive lower salaries than their colleagues, even when holding similar jobs (Heath & Cheung, 2006,).

Furthermore, minorities are more likely to hold jobs for which they are overqualified. This is especially true for new immigrants who have little local experience (Lindley, 2009; Nielsen, 2011). Minorities also have greater trouble finding places of employment. A large-scale study conducted in the United States discovered that resumes from minority candidates resulted in lower response rates from potential employers than identical resumes sent by non-minority candidates (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). These findings were confirmed in similar studies conducted in job markets in other countries (Andriessen et al., 2012; Carlsson & Rooth, 2007; McGinnity & Lunn, 2011; Oreopoulos, 2009; Pager et al., 2009; Riach & Rich, 2002).

The present study builds on the knowledge accumulated in previous studies in this area, and focuses on a unique minority group in Israeli society: Ultra-Orthodox Jewish (UO) men and women. Unlike other minorities and immigrant groups in Israel (and other countries), their distinctiveness stems not from their language or ethnic characteristics which correspond with those of the general population. Rather, they are culturally and spatially segregated and isolated (Alfasi, 2013; Shilhav, 1993) and are distinct in their life style, dress, and strict interpretation of Jewish law, which often creates conflicts with other groups in Israel (Hasson, 2007). Moreover, they operate a completely separate educational system that (for boys) concentrates almost solely on religious studies, thereby offering almost no occupationally relevant training or education. Over many decades, the UOs community in Israel established a thriving "learning society" in which working-age men dedicated almost all of their time to religious studies, considering it their higher obligation and "calling" (Friedman, 1991). Their labor force participation rates, as well as their income level, were accordingly very low, with only 44.7% of UOs men being employed, compared with 76.7% of men in the general Israeli population (Bank of Israel, 2012). Though woman the participation rate in the labor market resemble the rate of the general population (65% and 74% respectively) they are still facing difficulties entering the market which result from their family status (in most cases they enter the market when they already have kids), the limited amount of professions they study, their willingness to work long hours and their career perceptions (Schwartz, 2008; Regev and Permisler, 2013). Following the decline of the traditional income resources of the UOs community, in recent years the economic distress of UO households has grown more pressing (Cohen, 2005), driving many young UO men to seek higher education and job training (Marcus, et.al, 2015). Accordingly, the rate of labor force participation for UO men has steadily increased in the last five years, from its rate of 39% in 2008 to 45% (Bank of Israel, 2012). Today, this process is at the heart of the contemporary public debate in Israel (see, for example, Kehonai, 2004; Shwartz, 2008), making it a source of interest for various academic studies (see: Lupu, 2003).

The goal of the study is to investigate whether or not, and to what extent, being UO affects the process of finding a job in the Israeli job market. To answer this question, 689 questionnaires were distributed to UO and non-UO graduates of the same academic college in Israel that offers education and training in the fields of law and business. In addition, in-depth interviews were conducted with UO graduates to obtain a richer description of their job search experience.

The study contributes to the literature regarding the labor market in a number of ways. The study provides findings about the discrimination and prejudice that minorities may face when first entering the job market, even when that group does not differ from the majority group in its ethnic and linguistic characteristics. It analyzes the complex barriers facing groups first entering the job market. Finally, the research reveals an important aspect of the process of integrating UO in the employment market in Israel that has yet to be thoroughly investigated – the employers' treatment of- and response to the attempts of UO individuals to find jobs.

In recent years, many researchers have examined the responses of potential employers during the first stages of a job search. Most of these studies were conducted using field experiments involving sending out resumes in response to job postings in newspapers and websites (see, among others: McGinnity & Lunn, 2011; Riach & Rich, 2002). While this method has many advantages, it covers only the first step of the job search and thus provides limited insight into the later stages of this process. In contrast, our method examines the entire

job search process. Therefore, it also offers insights into the actual outcomes for job seekers at the end of the process – a point that is missing (for obvious reasons) in experimental field studies. The study is based on questionnaires sent to graduates of the same academic college, studying in identical programs and classes, who differ only in their cultural group affiliation.

The paper is organized as follows. First, we present the relevant theories regarding the integration of minorities in the employment market, and the barriers they face (section 2). We then discuss this problem in the Israeli context (section 3). Next we outline the research method (section 4), and present the findings that underscore the differences between the job search process for UO and non-UO Jews (sections 5-7). Finally, we discuss the findings of the research (section 8).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Minority integration into the job market

The discussion of- and research into the integration of minorities in the work force, their relative wages and the barriers they face, has become a growing part of the public agenda in developed countries. Some countries, those that seek to foster multicultural views and policies, have set up governmental agencies to promote minority employment. The UK, for example, operates the Ethnic Minority Employment Stakeholders Group, which is dedicated to this issue and operates under the British Department for Work and Pensions (EMESG, 2013).

There are a number of reasons for this growing interest in the integration of minorities into the job market. The demographic – and therefore, economic – weight of minorities in developed countries is growing, and expected to grow further (Johnson & Lichter, 2010). Their integration into the labor force is seen as key factor in reducing poverty and other social problems that often arise from unemployment. From an economic point of view, such integration might have a positive effect on the growth of a country's GDP because it would increase employment rates. From a social viewpoint, such integration – especially in positions that require interpersonal skills – is considered a way of increasing social coherence (Crisp & Abrams, 2008; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). In Israel, as in other developed countries with a strong welfare system, such integration also has budgetary effects, since it helps reduce public spending on allowances and government support. In addition to its economic effects, quality employment has great personal value for the individual as well as for the minority group to which he or she belongs. Successful integration of a member of a minority group in employment can affect the perceptions of other members of the minority group regarding their chances of finding success in the job market (Crisp & Abrams, 2008).

The job market remains at the center of modern social life. Choosing and developing one's career path is a key factor in self-fulfillment and an important element in one's self-definition. The workplace and work itself play an important role in fulfilling one's psychological, social and personal needs (Doherty, 2009),enabling the expression of one's personal and professional capabilities, and offering opportunities for social engagement, while also providing interest and variety (Warr, 1999). In addition, given that (quality) employment provides one with a steady income, it allows individuals to provide for themselves and their families, thereby contributing to their well-being and self-esteem. Accordingly, the lack of proper employment, especially over time, is problematic for individuals and for society (Blustein, 2008; Green, 2009; Tiggemann & Winefield, 1984).

2.2 Impediments and barriers to entering the job market

A group first entering the job market, especially after being excluded and isolated (even willingly) from general public life, is likely to encounter difficulties and obstacles in finding adequate employment. These

barriers may arise from a variety of factors including the prejudice of potential employers, the conduct of the individual looking for a job, and the individual's lack of job skills and useful social networks. To some extent, these difficulties are inherent in the deficit of social capital for minority groups in comparison with the general population of job seekers (Behtoui & Neergaar, 2010; Parks-Yancy, 2006). A higher level of social capital, namely, the potential resources of one's social networks, usually relates to a higher level of education, extensive work experience and parental work experience (Behtoui & Neergaar, 2010).

In recent decades, a large portion of vacant positions (according to some studies, about 50%, see Calvó-Armengol & Zenou, 2003) are not publicly advertised. The search for workers for these positions is generally conducted in social networks and based on personal professional connections. These informal sources of information are of great value to the job seeker, and the degree of exposure to these sources is greatly affected by one's social status and the quality of his or her current and past social and vocational networks (Braddock & McPartland, 1987). These networks are often created during undergraduate and graduate studies, in various places of employment, and (in Israel), during mandatory military service. UO Jewish men generally do not attend university, have little experience in the general employment area and usually do not serve in the military. Therefore, in Israel, they are largely excluded from these potential social networks. Furthermore, given that minorities and disadvantaged groups are often underrepresented in high-paying jobs, the quality of their social networks and the relevant information that stems from them tend to be much lower. Nonetheless, they must still rely on those social networks as a major tool for job searching (Frijters et al., 2005). Aside from difficulties in finding jobs, a low level of social capital also correlates with difficulties in work placement and salary increases (Behtoui, 2006).

After finding relevant vacancies, the next step in the job search process is usually creating and submitting one's resume to potential employers. Studies in different countries determined that the call back rates for job inquiries from minority group members were significantly lower than for the general population, even when similar resumes were submitted (Andriessen et al., 2012; Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). In addition to prejudices the employer may have about the candidate based on his or her ethnicity, minority candidates may also face the in-group/out-group bias. Research has shown that this bias plays a major role in decision-making processes, specifically when dealing with categories and groups about which one has little knowledge (Fryer & Jackson, 2008). In the job market, employers tend to hire candidates who share similar values and cultural backgrounds as themselves or as the organization (Cornell & Welch, 1996). This employer bias is so well known and feared that many minority group members try to hide their ethnicity when looking for a job and drafting a resume. In the US, this phenomenon occurs among African-American and Hispanic job seekers (Davis & Muir, 2003). Another possible way for minorities and other excluded groups to avoid these barriers of job market integration is to become self-employed and establish an independent small business (Clark & Drinkwater, 2000).

The employer biases discussed above raise major obstacles that impede the integration of minorities into the labor market. However, these biases tend to diminish and sometimes disappear completely following long, meaningful interactions between the minority group and the general population. Such interactions lead to better acquaintance with the "out" group, removing the stigmas attached to them (Green, 2008). Therefore, the successful integration of minorities into the workplace might also affect their integration in other domains of public life.

The next stage in the job search process usually involves a face-to-face interview with potential employers. While the job interview allows the employer to learn more about the prospective employee, the employer's biases may also come into play at this stage (Huffcutt et al., 2011; Macan, 2009).

3. The Israeli Context: The UO in Israel and the Job Market

Israeli society is extremely heterogeneous and is composed of various sectors that differ in their

ethnic, economic, religious and cultural characteristics, as well as in their life styles and sets of values (Horowitz & Lissak, 1990). One of these groups is UO Jews, who account for about 9% percent of the Israeli population (Friedman, 2011). The actual size of the UO population in Israel is dependent on the method of measurement and the definition used to identify this group (Friedman et al., 2011) though most estimation varies between 9-11%.

In the last decade, the public debate regarding UO society has grown significantly in the academic, political and social discourse. There are two major reasons for this growing interest. The first is the dramatic growth of this group's absolute and relative size due to high birthrate. The second relates to the economic implications of the changing demographics. Given that only 45% of UO men are employed, and UO women tend to take part-time jobs, the poverty rate among UO households is 58% percent, and the average household income is less than half that of the national average (Bank of Israel 2012; Central Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Zicherman & Cahaner, 2012).

To fully understand the place and importance of the UO society in Israel, a thorough presentation of the characteristics of this group is required. The essence of UO life is a deep and binding commitment to the strict interpretation of Jewish law and to the tradition that evolved around it mainly during the eighteenth century in Eastern European Jewish communities (Cahaner & Mansfeld, 2012; Friedman, 1991). The UO society in Israel is spatially and culturally segregated from its surrounding population (Gonen, 2007; Hasson, 2007). Despite its relatively small size the UO group in Israel has significant political power, and its representatives in the Knesset, the Israeli parliament, often serve as the linchpin in the formation of ruling coalitions. Therefore, they have a say in budget allocations and issues of state and religion that is disproportionately large for their size in the population, leading to conflicts with the general non-orthodox population (Lupu, 2003; Zarembski, 2005).

The cornerstone of UO life is the "learning society," according to which the role of UO men is to devote most of their time to religious studies in a "kollel," a learning institution for UO married men (Freidman, 1991). To preserve the idea of the learning society, the UO separate themselves from the general Israeli public, including the Israeli job market (Zicherman & Cahaner, 2012). The exclusion from general Israeli society is expressed in most aspects of life. The independent UO educational system is not subject to the mandatory Israeli education curriculum and thus produces graduates who do not share the values or general knowledge of the broader society. The UO are also exempt from mandatory military service, to which all eighteen-year-old Jewish men and women in Israel are subject. Given the strong emphasis on religious studies, little importance is given to other occupations. Until recently, UO working men generally had jobs within the UO society. The concept of the learning society also created an unusual phenomenon in modern society – a community in which women bear the main responsibility for the breadwinning in the household, while the men pursued their studies. However, due to the large number of children in the average UO family, many UO women find it hard to hold full time jobs, so their relatively low income is often insufficient to keep their families above the poverty level (Shwartz, 2008).

The lack of instruction in general subjects such as math, English and computer studies disqualifies the graduates of schools in the UO community from employment in Israel's advanced, globally oriented economy. Young UO men interested in advanced training or higher education find they do not have the fundamental education needed to engage in such studies (Cohen, 2005; Lupu, 2003). Since most UO do not hold matriculation certificates, they are required, as per Israeli law, to complete a pre-academic training program that is aimed at closing gaps in math, English, science and technology and academic writing. Only after successfully passing general examinations similar to matriculation exams can they become eligible to enter the higher education system.

Another factor that contributes to the situation is the lack of incentive for seeking a job, given the relatively easy income sources that are available to UO households from the government and from philanthropic institutions. Subsidies negotiated by UO MKs (members of Knesset) and support from foreign philanthropies that value the learning society have traditionally reduced the need for finding paid employment. However,

changes in the last 10 years have led to a substantial shift in the approach of the learning society towards paid work. The main reason for these changes is the shift in the Israeli government's welfare policies that resulted in a cut to allowances and child benefits that had previously been a substantial source of income for the UO population. The accelerated demographic growth of the UO created a substantial change in the ratio of dependents to providers within UO society, leading to criticism from within the community as well as from the secular Israeli public. The rise in the number of UO adult students also demonstrates that a growing number of Haredi men disinclined to devote their life solely to religious studies, thus creating pressure from within the UO society to change its position regarding paid work for men (Cohen, 2005; Hakak, 2004; Lupu, 2003).

These trends in the UO view towards work, strengthened by shifting government priorities, led to an increase in the number of vocational and academic training programs geared specifically for the UO public. Accordingly, there has been a significant rise in the number of UO students in academic and vocational training, from about 2,000 in 2005 to 5,000 in 2011 (Bank of Israel, 2011). These newly educated academics are today seeking jobs that are commensurate with their new training. The change is considered so significant that some view it as the emergence of a new, productive, working UO middle class (Zicherman & Cahaner, 2012).

Many of the available training programs for the UO are offered at small academic colleges, often considered inferior in quality to other Israeli universities and academic institutions. Thus, the training and diplomas they receive may stigmatize them as second-rate when searching for a job, particularly in highly competitive fields such as law and business, the fields offered by many of the available programs discussed above.

Lack of previous work experience and vocational networks, self-imposed cultural isolation, and minimal acquaintance with- and access to the Internet and its applications (Malchi, 2009) are just some of the additional difficulties the UO face when entering the work force .

In addition, the UO must overcome the prejudicial stereotypes that many potential employers have about them as a group. A recent study documents the aversion of potential employers toward UO job candidates. The study also documents that young UO job seekers worry about job discrimination and the prejudice of employers, and express concern about the potentially hostile attitudes of their fellow workers towards them (Ya'akobi, 2010). Indeed, research indicates that such fears may not be unfounded. The Israeli job market has a record of discriminatory behavior toward minorities. Israeli Arab workers are known to face discrimination and prejudice in the job market (Semyonov, 1988), and the same holds true for Mizrachi Jews (those who emigrated to Israel from Moslem countries) (Sasson, 2006).

4. Methodology and Research Design

To investigate the differences between the job search experiences of UO and non-UO college graduates and the reception these two groups receive when attempting to enter the job market, we compared graduates from the same academic institution – evenly split between UO and non-UO – studying in parallel tracks and receiving identical qualifications. Students from the two tracks studied the same curriculum, taught by the same lecturers, and were required to complete the same assignments. One track was dedicated solely to UO men (as they refuse to study in mixed-gendered classes), and the other is a general track open to all other social groups. These conditions create graduates with the same academic education and accreditation, holding the same diploma, and differing only in being either UO or non-UO. A similar methodology was employed by Eisenberg and Laposata (2013) who examined differences in the salaries of men and women among graduates of the same college, thus allowing them to focus only on the criterion being measured.

The study uses quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative part is based on questionnaires sent to UO and non-UO students who graduated during last 8 years from 2005-2011, containing questions relating to the entirety of their job search process. It is important to note that the UO graduates' resumes easily identify them as belonging to that group by their former educational record (all UO graduate from "Yeshivas")

and their lack of military service. Thus, it can be assumed with a high level of certainty that employers could easily recognize specific resumes as belonging to UO students. The questions focused on the duration of the job search process, the number of responses from potential employers, and the number of calls for interviews that were received.

The qualitative part is based on analyzing the open questions where respondents were asked to describe their overall job-search experience, and in case they received negative answer from certain employer to explain the reasons for the rejection. In addition, 12 in-depth, face-to-face interviews were held with UO who took part in the survey. The selection of the interviewees was randomized.

We distributed the questionnaires via e-mail using an electronic form. We contacted our sample using online social networks and forums as well as contacts lists from the academic college. Responses were submitted over a period of eight weeks in 2012.

5. Results

In total, 689 respondents, UO and non-UO, answered the questionnaire, representing a response rate of 25%. Among those who graduated in the last 3 years, which consist of 66% of the survey, the response rate was 32%. After screening completed questionnaires and dismissing those that were irrelevant or lacking information, 492 questionnaires remained of which 218 were filled by UO and 274 by non-UO. 56% of the respondents were male.

Tables 1 and 2 present the demographics of the study's sample population. No significant difference was found in the average age of men and women in these two groups ($t(479.4)=1.14$, $p>0.05$).

Table 1:. Number of respondents by group and gender

	UO	*Non-UO*
Men	111	160
Women	107	114

Table 2: Average age of study population

Ages (years)	*UO*	*Non-UO*
Men	36.7	35.7
Women	31.2	31.8

5.1 No. of resumes sent

Before examining the responses from the job market, we asked the respondents who were seeking jobs as salaried employees to indicate the number of work places to which they submitted their resumes using several categories: 0-5, 6-15, 16-50, 51-100, and more than 100 work places. This variable is important as we assumed that the more CVs sent the higher the chances were of graduates hearing back from employers. The results are presented in table 3. A chi-square test found significant differences in CV sending patterns among UO and non-UO women (χ^2 (4, n=208)=14.724, P=0.005) who tend to send more CVs. No significant differences were found for males. This variable was then used as a control variable in all regression models.

Table 3: Number of resumes sent to potential employers

	Number of resumes sent (range)				
	0-6	*6-15*	*16-50*	*51-100*	*>100*
Non-UO	43.00%	23.00%	17.00%	9.00%	9.00%
Ultra-Orthodox	41.00%	23.00%	16.00%	9.00%	11.00%

χ^2 (4, n=181) P=0.98

5.2 No. of responses received from potential employers

The next question referred to the number of responses received from employers. Respondents were asked to report the number of responses received from potential employers (callbacks for interviews, further inquiries or requests for information) using the same numerical categories listed above. The results are presented in table 4. A chi square test was conducted to test for differences between the two groups. A significant difference was found between the two groups, with UO candidates tending to receive fewer responses from potential employers (χ^2 (3, n=457)=21.58, P=0.000). The vast majority of the UO job seekers--80%-- received no more than five responses. Such differences were found to be significant for both men and women.

Table 4: No. of responses received by job seekers (positive and negative)

	Number of responses received (range)				
	0-6	***6-15***	***16-50***	***51-100***	***>100***
Non-UO	67%	22%	11%	0%	0%
Ultra-Orthodox	80%	18%	2%	0%	0%
χ^2 (2, n=181) P=0.41					

5.3 Number of callbacks for interviews

-Respondents were asked to indicate the number of callbacks they received for interviews from potential employers. As noted previously, this stage is especially critical, because it offers job seekers the best opportunity to demonstrate their abilities and to learn more about the potential employer. As can be seen in table 5, non-UO respondents received on average 4.28 requests for interviews, while the UO received 3.16 callbacks on average. A t-test for comparing means found this difference to be significant (t(425)=3.926, p=0.000). This result indicates that job candidates who were not UO were 1.35 times more likely to be called for an interview. Test results were found significant also when testing for men and women separately.

Table 5: Average number of call backs for interviews

	Non-UO	***UO***
Number of call backs for interviews (average)	4.28	3.16
t(425)=3.926; p=0.000		

5.4 Length of the job search period

Another factor we examined was the duration of the job search process, from its inception and up to when candidates received a positive answer from an employer. We performed a t-test in order to analyze differences between the two groups. The results show no significant difference between the two groups (t(436)=1.567, p=0.441) while the average duration of the job search process lasted 5.44 months for non-UO and 5.09 months for the others. However, when comparing only men we found that for UO this process lasted on average 5.66 months while for non-UO only 4.32 months were required to complete the process (t(136)=0.770, p=0.04).

5.5 Becoming self-employed vs. working as an employee

Along with indicators of employer behaviors, we also investigated other factors that could shed light on the difficulties the UO encounter when trying to find employment. Given the studies suggesting that self-employment is an alternative for minorities who face difficulties in the job market (Clark & Drinkwater, 1998), we also examined the different patterns of choosing between self-employment and working as a salaried employee. Table 6 compares the responses of the two groups with regard to the question of whether they were seeking self-employment or salaried positions. Conducting a chi square test revealed a significant difference among the two groups with UO making up 57.3% of the self-employed (χ^2 (1, n=401)=6.262, P=0.012). This result should be attributed mainly for men since only 13 women (of which 9 UO) became self-employed. While these results do not necessarily indicate employers' behavior, they can be interpreted as additional evidence of the greater difficulty UO men have in integrating into the general job market.

Table 6. Percentage of each group planning self-employment or salaried jobs

	Salaried employment	Self employed
UO	61.4%	38.6%
Non-UO	79.4%	20.6%
χ^2 (1,n=224) P=0.03		

6. Regression models - The effect of individual factors

In order to isolate the effect being UO has on the job search process from other possible influencing factors, we designed four regressions models that control for the age of the participants in order to avoid the issue of ageism (Dennis & Thomas, 2007; Porcellato et al., 2010; Taylor & Walker, 1998), the number of CVs sent, grade point average, and field of study i.e. business, accounting or law. Marital status and number of children were excluded from the model because of multicollinearity reasons. Variables expressing previous work experience was also excluded since we found that for first jobs as a lawyer or an accountant such experience has almost no advantageous. Table 7 presents the correlation matrix of the dependent variables.

Table 7: Correlation Matrix of Independent Variables

	Grade point average	Type of degree	Ultra-Orthodox/ Non Ultra-Orthodox	Age	Number of resumes sent	Number of respons e	Number of call backs for interviews	Marital Status	Number of Children
Grade point average	1								
Type of degree	-.379**	1							
Ultra-Orthodox/ Non Ultra-Orthodox	-.122**	.196**	1						

Age	.025	-.249**	-.051	1					
Number of resumes sent	.076	.014	-.114*	-.108*	1				
Number of response	-.049	-.032	-.202**	-.074	.566**	1			
Number of call for interviews	.045	.021	-.180**	-.017**	.501**	.678**	1		
Time length	.036	.024	.020	-.007	.502**	.290**	.312**		
Marital Status	-.14	-.065	.170**	.305**	.000	.005	-0.94	1	
Number of Children	-.011	-.054	.312**	.611**	-.100*	-.191*	-.123*	.442**	1

*<0.05
**<0.01

The four regression models included the following dependent variables: the number of responses received from employers (either positive or negative); the number of callbacks received inviting candidates for interviews; the number of places at which a candidate was accepted for work; and the duration of the process from sending out a CV to job acceptance. The existence of multicollinearity was tested by calculating variance inflation factors (VIFs) using an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression. VIF values ranged from 1.01 to 1.15 indicating that multicollinearity should not influence the results.

Table 8 presents the results of the four linear regression models. In model 1, the independent variable is the number of responses (positive or negative) received from employers in response to CVs sent by graduates.

The results of regression model 1 illustrate that the variables UO, graduate's grade point average, and the control variable (number of CVs sent by graduates all had significant effects on the number of responses received from employers. Age and type of degree did not have a significant effect on the dependent variable. The same variables remain significant also when executing regression models that separate men and women.

Regression model 2 analyzed the effect of the independent variables on the number of callbacks for job interviews received by graduates. The results of the model show that being UO, the candidate's age, and the number of CVs sent by him/her significantly influence the number of callbacks received from employers, while the type of degree as well as grade point average have no significant effect on this dependent variable. Similar results were found in regression models that separate men and women.

A third regression model analyzed the effect of the independent variables on the number of job offers received. In this model the variable measuring the number of CVs sent was replaced by the number of interviews the graduate was invited to. The results of regression model 3 found that none of the variables had a significant predictive value for job acceptance except the number of interviews a candidate was invited to. Similar results were found in regression models separating men and women.

Finally, in regression model 4 we tested the individual factors explaining the differences in the length of the job search period. The results of regression model 4 demonstrate the significant effect being UO has on the duration of the job search period. Interestingly, the numbers of CVs sent out by a graduate was found to positively

contribute to the length of this process. This is probably because sending more CVs results in more callbacks for interviews, which in turn adds more time to the job search process. When separating men and women we found that being UO remains significant for men while for women it loses its significance.

Table 8. Result of Multiple regression Models Regression

Variable	*B*	*SE B*	*β*
model 1:			
UO /Non UO	-0.172	-0.051	-.134**
Age	-.0.003	0.003	-.0.036
Grade Point Average	.0.137	0.053	0.102**
Type of Degree	-0.018	0.028	-0.026
Number of Resumes Sent	0.267	0.019	0.550**
R^2 =0.592 R^2 Adj=0.350			
Model 2			
UO /Non UO	-0.826	0.275	-.132**
Age	-.0.047	0.016	-.0.127**
Grade Point Average	.0.099	0.193	0.022
Type of Degree	-0.003	0.149	-0.001
Number of Resumes Sent	1.080	0.101	0.462**
R^2 =0.273 R^2 Adj=0.264			
Model 3: Number of Job acceptance			
UO /Non UO	-0.169	0.120	-0.58
Age	0.004	0.007	0.022
Grade Point Average	0.075	0.082	0.037
Type of Degree	0.113	0.054	0.086
Number of Invitations for Interviews	0.293	0.019	0.629**
R^2 =0.414 R^2 Adj=0.406			
Model 4: Search period length			
UO /Non UO	0.158	0.076	0.090(*)
Age	-0.004	-0.004	0.041
Grade Point Average	-0.007	0.054	-0.006
Type of Degree	-0.002	0.042	0.002
Number of Resumes Sent	0.336	0.028	0.521**
R^2 =0.517 R^2 Adj=0.267			

* p < 0.05 ** p< 0.01 (*)=man only

7. Qualitative findings

Qualitative findings were collected from both questionnaires and from in-depth face to face interviews. The questionnaires included open-ended questions, allowing the respondents to elaborate on the job search process. Additionally, we conducted 12 in-depth interviews with UO job seekers. Whereas non-UO tended to describe their job search experience using words such as: "difficult", "negative", "exhausting", "tiring", "stressing", "un-pleasant" alongside positive words such as: "challenging", "interesting", "an experience" or even "refreshing" (with a ratio of 1:4 positive to negative descriptors) the UO respondents tended to use far more negative words such as: "horrible", "very difficult", "filling like a beggar", "not normal", "frightening", "humiliating" and more (with a ration of 1:10 positive to negative descriptors). Moreover, whereas non UO tended to provide external, non-personal, more objective and short descriptions of the process using expressions such as "the process was difficult", the UO descriptions of the process tended to be longer, more detailed and much more personal. They tended to describe themselves within the process using the first-person (grammar). Also, in 10% of the cases, UO related the difficulties of the process to their being UO: "people do not like to hire UO", "the social status of a Haredi person is lower", "I was rejected because I am UO", "as a Haredi person my chances are very low" and the like.

When asked about the reason for their rejections, 12% of UO mentioned that they felt the reason was their being UO. Some had been told, without being consulted on the matter, that their life style will not enable them to integrate with the existing employees in the work place.

The face-to-face interviews support these findings. Interviewees described the job search process for the UO as carrying with it special difficulties. In addition, they highlighted the bewilderment of employers when meeting an UO interviewee (even though this was known from their CV). Some mentioned that they had been asked questions which revealed the prejudices of the interviewer or reflected a fear of their otherness, like their ability to work in secular environment, their need for Kosher food, their ability to work extra-hours while raising large families, etc. Most of our interviewees highlighted their lack of relevant social networks and their dependency on friends and relatives who can open doors for them.

8. Discussion

The results of this study shed light on some of the difficulties facing Ultra-Orthodox graduates during their job search process. In fact, it appears that in all of the examined parameters, UO men and in most cases UO women too, experienced the process as more complex and unpleasant, and not-infrequently as hostile and intimidating. On average, the job search process was 1.34 months longer for UO men than for their non-UO counterparts. They received fewer responses to their resumes and were invited to fewer job interviews. Non-UO respondents were 1.47 times more likely to be called back for an interview after submitting their resumes. Studies carried out in other countries indicate that the time penalty in finding a job for being a minority member ranges between 1.12 and 2, averaging somewhere in the middle (McGinnity & Lunn, 2011). A study conducted in the US by Bertrand and Mullainathan (2004) found a penalty of about 1.5 for African Americans, compared to white Americans. The penalty found in this study generally corresponds with these prior studies. The regression models demonstrated that the discrimination towards UO remains significant and stable, even when controlling for other possible factors such as number of CVs sent, age, field of study and grade point average.

The study did not find significant differences in the rate of job acceptance between UO and non-UO. This finding emphasizes the importance of job interviews to the UO as they provide candidates with the opportunity to decrease their 'otherness' while enabling employers overcome prejudices.

We found greater tendency among UO men to become self-employed in their professional field rather than become salaried employees. This may provide evidence of the greater difficulties UO men encounter in the job market. The results accord with previous studies suggesting that minorities may favor self-employment

as a means of overcoming obstacles to employment in the job market (Clark & Drinkwater, 1998). However, this finding can partly be explained by the lack of UO lawyers and accountants within the UO community creating many of opportunities for self-employment.

The findings of this research are consistent with general theories about the effects prejudice and stereotyping associated with minorities has on the employment market. The complex political and social differences associated with the relations between the UO and non-UO in Israel may explain the apparent wariness on the part of employers. The Ultra-Orthodox community practices deliberate separateness from the general population that is reflected by their unique clothing, independent education system, living neighborhoods, avoidance of frequent interactions with the general populations and different attitudes towards national values (including army service). Moreover, in-group/out-group bias is also clearly evident here. The little knowledge that potential employers have about the UO in general and about them as employees in particular seems to affect their perceptions of the UO as potential employees. Indeed, we have seen that for the UO women, a group which has participated in the job market for many years, the job search process was much easier. Moreover, we see that though UO receive fewer invitations for interviews they are having the same acceptance rate after face to face interviews. This indicates the importance of personal interaction in reducing employers' fears. This finding should encourage policy makers to examine tools that encourage direct communication between individual minority groups and the majority in order to reduce ignorance related to the other.

Unlike many other studies that focused on the integration of a minority group that differs from the general population in race or language (such as African-Americans in the US or new immigrants to Ireland), this research investigated a minority group that resembles the general population in most characteristics and is not new to the country or society, though their introduction to the job market happened recently. In that sense, the entry of the UO into the workplace resembles the entry of women into the job market in the early twentieth century. Despite the many differences between the two groups, it seems that in both cases, the lack of faith in their abilities and fears about their inability to fit into the existing work environment strongly influence employers' hiring decisions. It is likely to assume that as UO participation in the job market expands, employers will feel less threatened by this group and the job search process will become similar to that experienced by other graduates.

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