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ACADEME AND THE FIELD: A TWO-EDGED SWORD

The academic world and its missions have undergone a series of revolutionary changes over the centuries. Despite these changes, community service is one mission that has remained an integral part of the landscape of higher education. Although sometimes marginalized, the mission of community service remains at the heart of higher education today, and exists not as an independent element but as an integral part of academic activities. The present study discusses the relationship between academe and the field in today's postmodern world, in the context of the Israeli academic world.

Keywords: *academe, academic world, community service, higher education, Israeli academic world.*

Introduction. The modern university was established on the principles of Lernfreiheit, a German term expressing academic freedom (literally, "learning liberty") – one's freedom to study and conduct research based on one's desires and proclivities [1]. The German concept, which sanctifies research for its own sake, quickly became a standard that was espoused throughout the Western world until the mid-twentieth century [2].

The status of academe, and the attitude toward its products, have varied over the years, based on the role of economics, nationhood, and religion in different societies. Initially, the transition to a capitalist economy, and subsequent transition to a capitalist society, had a profound impact on the status and conception of universities. These institutions, having been impervious to external events for decades, were subjected to examination and review, and required to demonstrate accountability for their operations. Thus began an extensive analysis of quality in higher education [3]. These "ivory towers," which had previously been free to operate according to independent standards, were now required to define their activities in terms amenable to assessment and quality control [4,5].

As part of growing efforts to define and conceptualize the role of academe and its quality, [6,7] the global economy, characterized by affluence and consumerism [8] and thinking in terms of input and output [9], has attempted to apply capitalist economic concepts to institutions of higher learning [10]. This is an attempt to quantify, improve efficiencies, and delineate the operations of these institutions, which had previously been public, self-administered organizations guided by self-defined norms and criteria [11].

Quality is a broad concept, defined variously by different people [12]. In the context of higher education, the complexity of this concept increases due to the existence of multiple stakeholders (students, staff, administration, government agencies), accounting for the broad range of opinions on the significance of quality in higher education [13].

In their article entitled "Defining Quality", Harvey and Green [14] present a wide range of definitions of quality in higher education. According to one, quality is the extent to which an academic institution fulfills its declared mission. This definition views quality as a subjective concept, based on the congruence between missions imposed on academic institutions and their achievement. In the current study, we adopt this definition and argue that academe's mission in the twenty-first century is threefold: research, teaching, and community service.

Academe and its mission

Many researchers have discussed the ideological origins of universities, their goals, and their missions [15–28]. In the context of academic institutions, the term "mission" describes the basic aim of universities [29] and their *raison d'etre* [30].

Until the early 1930s, the mission of academic institutions was an abstract concept; perhaps clear to the institutions themselves but not to outside observers. In the 1930s, US universities began publicly stating their official mission and organizational purpose in their catalogues [31]. The shift to an official mission statement was a shift from theory to practice. This move, which began in the United States, was initially adopted by academic institutions in Canada and the United Kingdom, and subsequently by most academic institutions in the West, by including definitions of aims and mission statements in their agendas [32].

Mission statements have been compared to concepts of organizational management: missions frequently express society's aspirations for higher education institutions. These aspirations represent the most general hopes and expectations envisaged for colleges and universities [33]. The significance of a mission statement is its translation of ideals into operational terms, and ultimately a mission statement can improve the operations and activities of academic institutions [31].

Currently, universities tend to declare missions that embody the three aspects of teaching, research, and public service, [34] although this trio does not always exist in practice. Over the years, the missions of the academic world have undergone several transformations that reflect historical changes in the relationship between the state and the universities as well as stages of development (pre-nation state, nation state, and globalization).

Changes in academic missions – a historical review

Universities were initially religious institutions, which were established and flourished in Europe in the late middle ages, between 1150 and 1500. Many social changes occurred in that period: the rise of mercantilism, accelerated urbanization, expansion of the middle class, increased

bureaucracy, and the blossoming of the Renaissance. As a result of all these, a demand for professional training emerged within the increasingly complex European society. Universities operated as professional teaching institutions, with the aim of meeting this need. They were organized as guilds of teachers and students (the origin of the word "university" is the Medieval Latin term for a guild — "universitas") and operated as quasi-corporations that protected their collective rights. The activities of universities were deeply embedded in the soil of medieval efficiency,[35] which viewed higher education as a functional institution providing graduates with a professional advantage expressed in financial terms. In this respect, medieval universities were schools with a modern outlook [36]. The institutions operated as a partnership of teachers and students with complete administrative autonomy, and were not subject to any government intervention [37].

University research existed but was the product of individual activities and not part of the institutional policy. Universities considered themselves corporations: they did not award research degrees or appoint teachers to research positions. The degree "doctor" (from the Latin *docere*, to teach) was the highest degree awarded, and it authorized recipients to teach at the highest level. Despite their indirect contribution to society, by creating an intellectual elite and graduates who later became pillars of society, universities considered themselves, first and foremost, professional organizations designed to protect members' interests.

This perspective began changing in the early modern period (1500–1800), an era that marked the rise of the independent nation state. These states were sovereign entities with well-defined borders, containing a population with a shared sense of nationality. The rise of the nation state had a detrimental effect on the autonomy of the universities, which as a result of the nationalization of the state, typically became institutions in service of the monarchy or government. In this new role, academic institutions engaged in teaching, research, and providing services to the community outside the institution [31].

The universities, which were controlled by the state at the municipal level, became a means for expanding the ruling elite. In his volume entitled "The University in Ruins," Readings [38] stated that the universities of that era had a socio-political mission and served as the ideological arm of the government. The state protected university operations, while the university protected the ideas of the state [38].

Academic universities flourished in Europe in the early modern era: over 190 universities were established in this period, most based in politics or religions, part of the conflict between Catholics and Protestants [31]. Research, teaching, and community service, while practiced by universities, were not performed for their own sake, but rather as a means of promoting the regime's national or religious agenda. As an arm of the government, universities were not free to administer their affairs independently, and enjoyed no academic freedom. The establishment of the University of Berlin in the early 19th century marked the end of this role of academe.

In 1810, Wilhelm von Humboldt founded the University of Berlin on the principles of teaching and research, with the academic freedom to study and perform research autonomously. The autonomous function of higher education was at the core of the Humboldtian approach, and became a symbol of higher education worldwide. These principles were translated into an approach that assumes that students should be trained for life as scholars, and that students are intellectually and mentally mature adults with a broad knowledge base. Consequently, lecturers considered themselves first and foremost research scholars, rather than teachers or knowledge mediators [19]. This model deeply affected the development of research universities all over the world, including the conceptualization of higher education in Israel [23,28]. All over the world, universities adopted the dual academic mission of research and teaching as the core of academic activities.

While the widespread adoption of this model by academic institutions formed a consensus concerning the declared mission of academe, in the second half of the 20th century modern universities could no longer afford to concentrate exclusively on creating knowledge [39]. At this time, the academic world was required to develop mobile resources, and to play a role in the conveyance and assimilation of technology in order to meet the needs of modern society [40]. The academic world was required not only to create theoretical knowledge, but to apply it to the concrete task of organizing information for action [41]. This move occurred as the world progressed from the nation state model to the global village model, in which each state constitutes an integral part of the global community. This change created the need to revisit the declared mission of the academic world [42].

Academe and its mission in a global world

As a result of the changes in the community, in technology, and in social structure, the community developed new expectations of universities: "It is not necessary to sit in a university in order to understand the power of changes occurring worldwide: markets are opening, the economy is becoming global, culture is becoming universal, technology is becoming more powerful and is increasing human capabilities for good and for worse, changes in the geopolitical structure, empowerment of the individual vis-à-vis society …" [43, p. 254]. All these led to a rethinking of the university's objective: "Is it's specific target knowledge per se, or should we intentionally expand the targets of the university to include the provision of social, cultural, and economic services, on a community and international level …" [ibid, p. 262]. After having undergone various transformations throughout its existence, from the teaching model, to the teaching-research-service model, to the dual teaching-research model, the academic community reverted to an earlier mission format of teaching, research, and community service [42].

Post-modern society is a knowledge society, further complicating the task of balancing research and teaching by adding a third dimension – community service [44]. Scott [31] argued that including community service in

contemporary universities is a natural extension of the democratization originating in US colleges in the 19th century. He stated that inclusion of "community service" in the missions of the academic world is a "fundamentally American" turn [p. 23].

Currently, the concept of community service has evolved into a tri-partite model known as the "metropolitan university": "This is not merely a university in a city, but of the city, obligated to meet the diverse needs of the city's residents … The university is a center of research and the source of intellectual leadership … that uses the city as a laboratory, a clinic, and a workshop … It offers access to higher education for people of all social classes … It listens to the community in a manner that allows it to maintain connection with its mission and conscience" (Bonner, cited in [42]).

The community service mission of metropolitan universities, both private and public, is yet another part of their double-turned-triple mission [45]. In the post-modern world, universities are considered social organizations designed to provide higher education services [31]. This perception brings the academe closer to the community, and shatters the ivory tower image attributed to research institutions [37]. In contrast to teaching and research, the service element tends to be more ambiguous, with indistinct boundaries [46,47]. Its role within and outside the campus is not clear, and some have compared it to a "the short leg of a three-legged stool" [48]. Indeed, the fluidity of this mission calls into question the precise nature of the community service undertaken by universities. Where does it begin and where does it end? Does it encompass community service on campus or off campus? It seems that of the three aspects of the academic mission, community service is that least understood by academic faculty [46].

Ward [45] argues that the role of community service may be clarified by differentiating between internal and external service. Internal service refers to activities designed to reinforce ties within a disciplinary field, such as participation in conferences and committees, reviewing papers for journals, advising groups of students, etc. This on-campus service to the discipline constitutes the hidden curriculum [46]. External service refers to services provided by the institution as a means of communicating with the public outside the academic world. External service may manifest itself in many forms, including consulting, teaching, and civic or community activities, their common denominator being the fact that they take place outside the campus context.

In the current study, we focus on the university's external service element, and specifically the professional training of students of physical therapy. This is preceded by a review of the goals and changes in higher education in Israel.

Mission of the Academe in Israel – Academe in Service of Society

In his volume *The State of the Jews*, Herzl outlined a detailed program for the establishment of a Jewish state: "The entire program in its basic form is extremely simple … sovereignty should be awarded us in some region in the world that would be sufficient for the justified needs of our nation. As for the rest, we will take care of it ourselves …" [49]. Among other things, "the rest" included the establishment of institutions of higher education. In his detailed vision, Herzl viewed the academe as a nation-building tool and gave it a special status in the fulfillment of Zionism.

The Zionist Movement headed by Herzl supported this approach by granting scientific research a central role in the Zionist revolution. As early as the First Zionist Congress, a program by Prof. Zvi Herman Shapira, entitled "The Future Letter", was presented with the purpose of establishing a research university in Israel [50]. The First Zionist Congress, which convened in 1897, almost fifty years before establishment of the State of Israel, affirmed the integral connection between establishing institutions of higher education in Israel and realizing the Zionist dream. In 1918, at the cornerstone ceremony of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Chaim Weizmann stated that despite the difficulties entailed in realizing the Zionist dream, "the Jewish people are aware that only by developing our spiritual attributes will we be able to satisfy our material needs" [50, p. 51].

Over the years, academic institutions in Israel, similar to their counterparts the world over, have been forced to address the issue of their formal mission. Despite (or perhaps due to) its young age, the State of Israel placed higher education high on the national agenda. Despite the short history of the country's higher education system, it has undergone fundamental value changes, reflected in the changing declared goals of academic institutions [51]. The history of higher education in Israel is a micro-cosmos of global trends, expressing a shift from higher education for education's sake – to occupational training; from the conception of education as a goal, to its conception as a means; from the value of learning for learning's sake and the sake of knowledge, discovery, and research – to the study of technologies and applied sciences; from an appreciation of excellence – to education whose primary value is equality [52].

The dynamics of the academic mission in Israel did not undermine the significance of the academic world in its service of Zionism and its role in the revival of Jewish intellectual life in Israel [15,22]. It was assigned the role of advancing science and education, values deeply anchored in Jewish heritage. Of the Hebrew University, Katzenelson stated (cited in [53]) that it was one of the primary tools for realizing the national vision. Chaim Nahman Bialik espoused this view when he declared that science (developed in the academic world) should be the goal of building the country and of improving and enhancing life (cited in [54]).

Institutions of higher education established in Israel after the state was founded in 1948 continued the course determined by pioneer institutions. In the first years of statehood, community service had a visible, distinct character, and an agenda of its own. For example, the Technion focused on agricultural research to promote economic growth, and the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, followed by additional universities, operated preparatory courses designed to reduce social gaps. In the 1970s, Bar Ilan University absorbed new immigrants as part of a Social

Work Faculty project, and Ben-Gurion University of the Negev played a role in the social and industrial development of the Negev.

These were all activities of a distinct social character, which the institutions viewed as their mission on behalf of the community. In those years, social activities were typically of an ideological nature, originating in the history of the development of higher education in Israel. Over the years, community service became a major agenda (similar to the pioneer outlook) fundamental for institutions' survival – a means of recruiting funding and utilizing economic opportunities. Programs initiated as a community service gradually became incorporated into the various disciplines and became external income-generating programs. For example, academic preparatory programs, which originally targeted specific populations (discharged soldiers of Sephardi background and low socioeconomic status), became open to all for a fee. Support programs for new immigrants became external education programs funded by ex-academic factors, and functioned as an additional income-generating channel. Community service activities, based on the concept of distinction from academic operations, became incorporated within the academic units themselves and lost their ideological status and singularity.

In the 21st century Israel community service continues to exist, but its form and motivators have changed. Higher education institutions in Israel operate social-oriented programs aimed primarily at supporting the institutions' economic survival and have consequently become an economic business for all intents and purposes.

The establishment of schools of healthcare professional training in higher education institutions, such as schools of medicine, nursing, speech therapy, physical therapy, and occupational therapy, is a major indication of the transformed goals of academe and of universities' recognition of their obligation to address contemporary social needs.

Findings from Israeli Research

Several studies were conducted in three different academic disciplines to explore the mission of academe and its social role in today's post-modern world. These studies highlight the extent to which community services have become an integral element of disciplinary programs. A case study of the Department of physical therapy at the Ariel University College [55] illustrates how academe and the field are closely related through implementation of the academe's community service mission. In this case, the academe is also strongly aligned with national interests concerning training of physical therapists. These associations are evident in the program's curriculum, which takes into account the needs of the field in designing students' practical training, integrating professionals from the field in specialty courses, and the extensive role of students' clinical training guided by professionals in the program. The study's findings also point to a close relationship between the academe and the field, through which the field absorbs graduates by providing them with jobs. At the same time, graduates report a high level of satisfaction with their profession and with the undergraduate

program. In this study, graduates expressed their satisfaction with the variety and challenge of their work, interpersonal relations, leadership, their ability to provide a high standard of treatment, and their degree of autonomy on the job. It is interesting to note that graduates reported that their satisfaction with the program is related to satisfaction with their job. Possibly, graduates with high achievements in the program are also those who succeed in their work, are more appreciated, and are naturally more satisfied. Findings of this study indicate no correlation between graduates' psychometric scores on admission to the program and their final average grade in the program, satisfaction with the PT program, or job satisfaction.

Findings of a second study in the discipline of Jewish History and Jewish Heritage studies [56] indicate that the Open University's Russian Program significantly contributes to national goals. In 1999, the Open University in Israel, the largest academic institution in the country, assumed the task of reinforcing ties between the Jewish Diaspora and Israel. Due to its character and size, this institution specializes in developing unique teaching methods for distance learning (study materials, lessons, assignments, exams, guidance, and training are all adapted to remote learning settings). The Russian Project was developed as a unique learning sequence in Russia for the independent states of the Former Soviet Union (FSU), allowing all Jews (and non–Jews) entitled to immigrate to Israel under the Law of Return (1950) to study in the Open University's academic track at no charge. This track focuses primarily on Jewish Heritage and Contemporary Israel Studies.[1] Communication between the University and FSU students (transfer of study materials, grading assignments, guidance) is conducted online with the assistance of local coordinators in major FSU cities.

One of the major considerations in developing the FSU program is growing cultural assimilation and the prevalence of mixed marriages within the Jewish community, and the fact that Jewish and Israeli cultural activities in the FSU conducted by global Jewish organizations and those of FSU Jews involve only a small proportion of the target population. The majority of this population is not affiliated with the Jewish community, and is not even known to active members of Jewish organizations in the FSU.

This program, initially conceived as an answer to the needs of the older Jewish population in the FSU who wished to strengthen their ties to their cultural roots, became over the years a point of attraction for adults aged 29 and younger

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[1] Courses offered in this track include: Introduction to Bible, Introduction to Talmud, Law and Philosophy in the Rambam's Texts, Jerusalem Throughout the Ages, From Exile to Independence, Jews in the Roman Empire, The Ashkenazi Hassidic Movement, Jews and Christians, Jews in an Era of Change, Ethiopia: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism, Chapters in the History and Culture of the Jews of Eastern Europe, Zion and Zionism: The History of the Zionist Movement 1881–1914, Hebrew Stories in the Early 20th Century, From National Homeland to Preparations for Statehood: The Jewish Settlement between Two World Wars, The Holocaust; Israel's First Decade (Part A – Development of Democracy in Israel). Additional courses are in various stages of development and production.

who participate in the program while attending other academic programs or holding a job.

Findings show that students reported a significant improvement in their knowledge of Jewish history, the Holocaust, and contemporary Israel, as a result of participation in the program. The project significantly reinforced learners' ties to Israel and Judaism and their desire to attend a higher education institution in Israel. This study indicates the academe's significance in fulfilling community service missions and stresses that community service benefits society even in conjunction with other actions. This contribution is particularly strong in relation to knowledge of the Jewish people and the land of Israel. The target population had limited prior knowledge in these areas, according to self–reports by program participants. The significant knowledge they acquired reinforced their ties to the Jewish people and the land of Israel. Even if the project's short–term contribution to immigration is relatively limited, it is clear from finding analysis that the program has an indirect impact on immigration, through participants' increased desire to attend higher education institutions in Israel.

A third study in Engineering [57] explored the practical implications of working on final projects in engineering, which typically involve work in local industries. Findings offer several clear conclusions. The vast majority of participants reported that their project had a most positive contribution on their engineering training, and also reported extensive application of theoretical knowledge. Most participants noted that they acquired new skills and that the project helped them find a job. The high proportion of graduates who believe that the project was an essential part of their engineering training was striking. The proportion of graduates who managed to combine theoretical studies within their practical project was also impressive. The vast majority of graduates were very satisfied with their project.

Discussion

This study examines the actual relationship between the academe and the field and whether this relationship, or aspirations to such a relationship, has a positive or detrimental effect on academe. Does it increase the predominance of the academe in view of social expectations of it as a source of power, validity, and authority, or does the

relationship weaken the academic world as an entity whose ultimate mission and source of strength and power is research, therefore potentially hampered and distracted by engaging in social tasks.

A review of literature and findings from several empirical studies on the relationship between the academe and the field indicates that both society and the academe itself seek such a relationship. The academic disciplines examined in the research maintain interactions with the field, either in the form of engineering projects in local industries, practical training, cross-over of faculty members, and otherwise. These programs represent a new means whereby the academe goes about fulfilling its third role in the post–modern era by assimilating community service and contribution to the community in its disciplinary practice and transforming such service into an integral part of various knowledge areas.

Therefore, the issue to be explored concerns the nature of such interventions and the limits of collaborative activities between the academe and the field. Findings show that today the policy of the Israeli Council for Higher Education (CHE) has two dimensions: on the one hand, academic institutions are encouraged to become involved in the field, yet at the same time, institutions are also advised to prioritize research goals. This policy is reflected in the policy of the CHE's Planning and Budgeting Committee on certification of new programs developed by academic institutions, budgeting decisions, and implementing a quality assessment and performance measurement process in academic institutions. We believe that this dual policy will persist in absence of a genuine resolution, although it may assume a different form over time as developments in the field are incorporated in the academe. This is certainly a good thing, in that it grants academic institutions the freedom to develop their own patterns of interaction with the field and define their own relationship between academic goals and practice in the field. This academic freedom to determine the extent and type of interactions between the academe and the field, in implementing programs and curricula, represents the very source of power and strength of the academic system, as each institution strives to define its own course in engaging with the needs of its local and surrounding population.

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АКАДЕМИЧЕСКАЯ И ОБЩЕСТВЕННАЯ ДЕЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ В РАМКАХ ВЫСШЕЙ ШКОЛЫ

В статье рассматривается проблема взаимосвязи между академической и общественной деятельностью человека в современном мире в контексте высшего образования Израиля. Высшая школа и ее миссия из века в век подвергались множеству революционных изменений. Несмотря на все эти перемены, общественная деятельность – это единственный феномен, который остался неотъемлемой частью высшего образования. Несмотря на то, что общественной деятельности довольно часто не уделялось должного внимания, на сегодняшний день она все же остается одной из центральных проблем высшего образования.

Ключевые слова: академическая деятельность, мир науки, общественная деятельность, высшее образование, научная жизнь Израиля.

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АКАДЕМІЧНА І ГРОМАДСЬКА ДІЯЛЬНІСТЬ В РАМКАХ ВИЩОЇ ШКОЛИ

У статті розглядається проблема взаємозв'язку між академічною і громадською діяльністю людини в сучасному світі в контексті вищої освіти Ізраїлю. Вища школа та її місія із століття в століття піддавалися безлічі революційних змін. Незважаючи на всі ці зміни, громадська діяльність – це єдиний феномен, який залишився невід'ємною частиною вищої освіти. Незважаючи на те, що громадській діяльності досить часто не приділялося належної уваги, на сьогоднішній день вона все ж залишається однією з центральних проблем вищої освіти.

Ключові слова: академічна діяльність, світ науки, громадська діяльність, вища освіта, наукове життя Ізраїлю.

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