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at the Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies

Taglit-Birthright Israel Evaluation: 2007 North American Cohorts

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As a consequence of a large increase in the number of Birthright Israel trips for North American Jewish young adults during 2007, penetration rates reached nearly 15% for some U.S. cohorts and nearly a quarter of Canadians. As Birthright Israel continues to expand and provide experiences for a larger number and increasingly significant proportion of young adult Jews, it is important to understand how the program affects its participants.

The present report describes the North American cohort that participated in Birthright Israel trips during winter 2007 (December 2006 through February 2007). Applicant characteristics are described and reactions of participants to the program approximately three months post trip are analyzed. The Jewish attitudes and behaviors of participants and nonparticipants are compared.

The report draws on data collected in surveys conducted approximately three months before the trip and three months afterwards, as well as data gathered through the program's registration system. All Birthright Israel applicants were included in both surveys, including those who participated in the program, as well as those who applied but did not go. The analysis was designed to isolate the impact of the program from respondents' background characteristics.

Findings

- Most 2007 participants and applicants were college-aged, between 19 and 21 years old. Other than by age, on most dimensions, including religious affiliation and educational background, U.S. and Canadian applicants appear to reflect the diversity of their respective national Jewish communities.
- Participants' ratings of their tour guide, bus community, encounter (*mifgash*) with Israeli peers, and overall learning environment were quite high, although there was variation across buses. The learning experience shows the least variation, which suggests that Birthright Israel provides a standardized, high caliber experience.
- A majority of respondents report that they learned a great deal about Israel's landscape and natural environment, Israeli culture, modern Israeli history, and Jewish history. Participants felt they learned the least about Jewish customs and practices, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Israeli social problems.
- Half the respondents strongly agreed that the trip encouraged them to become more involved in their Jewish communities back at home. In contrast, a little over a quarter strongly agreed that the program encouraged *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) and fewer still agreed to a great extent that

it encouraged participants to become more observant or to donate money to Israel or the Jewish community.

- The strongest program effects were in term of attitudes to Israel and the Jewish people. Comparison with nonparticipants indicates that Birthright Israel strengthened participants' feelings of connection to Israel and the Jewish people, as well as their desire to establish a Jewish family. The probability of participants feeling "very much connected" to Israel three months after the trip is 62% compared to 21% among nonparticipants.
- Overall, the extent of engagement in Jewish communal life of participants and nonparticipants three months after the trip resembled their level of engagement before the trip. On campus, Birthright Israel had its largest impact among those who were the most active attendees before the trip.
- Three months after the trip, participants were significantly more likely to view Israel as a "lively democracy," "multi-cultural society," and "potential future home" than those who applied but did not go. Participants were also more attuned to Israel, checking news of the country more frequently than nonparticipants.
- Participants tended to remain in contact with their bus companions. As well, the overwhelming majority of participants also

reported talking about the trip with potential participants.

- One third of participants indicated that they were very likely to return to Israel during the next two years. An additional quarter indicated that they were somewhat likely to return during that time frame.

As impressive as these program impacts might be, the gap between the program's strong impact on identity and its modest impact on engagement in Jewish life after the trip remains a paradox. It both calls for further investigation and for experiments to test options for post-trip engagement. It might be the case that Birthright Israel's impact on identity will develop into stepped-up organizational engagement in future years, as alumni establish families. Additional long-term studies will be necessary to ascertain the extent to which the impact of Birthright Israel persists and how it develops over time. Moreover, as Jewish organizations increase outreach to alumni, further research will be needed to assess the fit between the aspirations of alumni and the programs that seek to attract them.

INTRODUCTION

By the end of 2007, Birthright Israel's seventh year, the program will have provided a ten day educational experience in Israel for more than 150,000 Diaspora Jewish young adults. The majority of participants have come from North America (more than 70 percent). In addition, forty-four countries are represented among program alumni. The program dramatically expanded in 2007 as a result of a major philanthropic gift, and the total participants for the year numbered more than 30,000 young adults (nearly a 50 percent increase from the previous year).¹ At the same time, particularly in North America, demand for the program has substantially exceeded available places. More than 15,000 eligible applicants did not receive a place on a trip, and that number would have been higher except that registration periods were cut short, in part to avoid disappointing more individuals.

This report describes the North American cohort that participated in the program during winter 2007 (December 2006 through February 2007). It includes a description of the characteristics of applicants, with a particular focus on participants, and provides an analysis of the reactions of participants to the program approximately three months post-trip, along with a comparison of the Jewish attitudes and behaviors of participants and applicants. The goal of this report is to describe and understand the impact of Birthright Israel. Although prior evaluation studies (see Saxe, Sasson & Hecht, 2006; Saxe, Kadushin, Hecht, Rosen, Phillips, & Kelner, 2004; Saxe, Kadushin, Kelner, Rosen, &

Yereslove, 2002) make clear that the program's impact is strong and robust, as the program increases its reach, the population of participants has changed. As well, the context is ever-changing—both in terms of the issues facing Diaspora Jewry and the status of Israel. The present report is designed to add to the body of knowledge about a program that remains the largest experiment in Jewish education ever undertaken (cf. Saxe & Chazan, forthcoming).

As Birthright Israel continues to grow and provide experiences for a larger number, and increasingly significant proportion of young adult Jews, it is even more important to understand how the program affects its participants. Although the present report is limited, in that it only reports on three month outcomes and is restricted to North Americans, we have established baseline effects that can be monitored over time. In addition, the analyses have been designed to isolate the impact of the program from participant and applicant background characteristics. Our goal is to assess the degree to which the program continues to provide effective education and positively impact the trajectory of development of young adults.

METHODOLOGY

The present report focuses on North American applicants to—and participants in—the winter 2007 trips. The report draws on data collected as part of the program’s registration system, along with surveys conducted approximately three months before the trip and three months afterwards.²

Surveys were administered via a web interface. All Birthright Israel applicants were included in both surveys, including those who participated in the program, as well as those who applied but did not go. Respondents were contacted via an email that included a link to the survey website.³ Those who did not respond were recontacted up to three times by email. After three email follow-ups, a representative sample of nonrespondents to the post-trip survey was called by Cohen Center staff who encouraged individuals to complete the survey on-line.

Among participants, the response rate was 75.3 percent for the pre-trip survey and 51.3 percent for the post-trip survey (AAPOR Response Rate 2; see Appendix A). For nonparticipants, the comparable response rates were 35.3 percent for the pre-trip and 24.3 percent for the post-trip survey. Using demographic data available from the registration system, analyses were weighted to account for non-response (see Appendix A).

CHARACTERISTICS OF PARTICIPANTS AND APPLICANTS

The pre-trip survey indicates that Birthright Israel continues to attract a broad and diverse group of Jewish young adults. Approximately equal proportions of women and men applied to the program. Most participants and applicants were college-aged, between 19 and 21 years old (Figure 1), and were somewhat concentrated in sophomore college classes (Figure 2).

Participants and nonparticipants resided in all parts of the United States and Canada, with the largest number applying from the northeastern United States (Figure 3).

Figure 1. Age of Participants

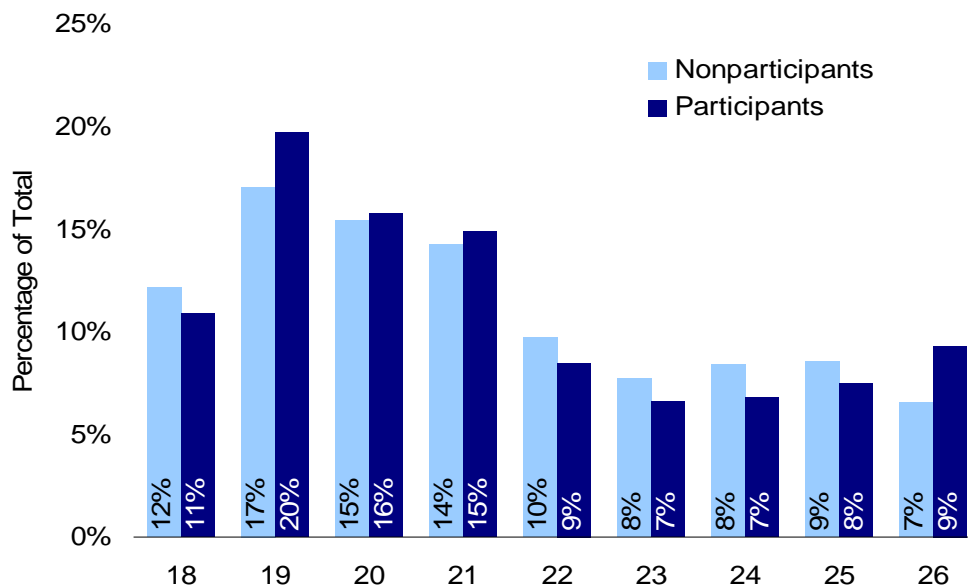


Figure 2. Student Status of Participants

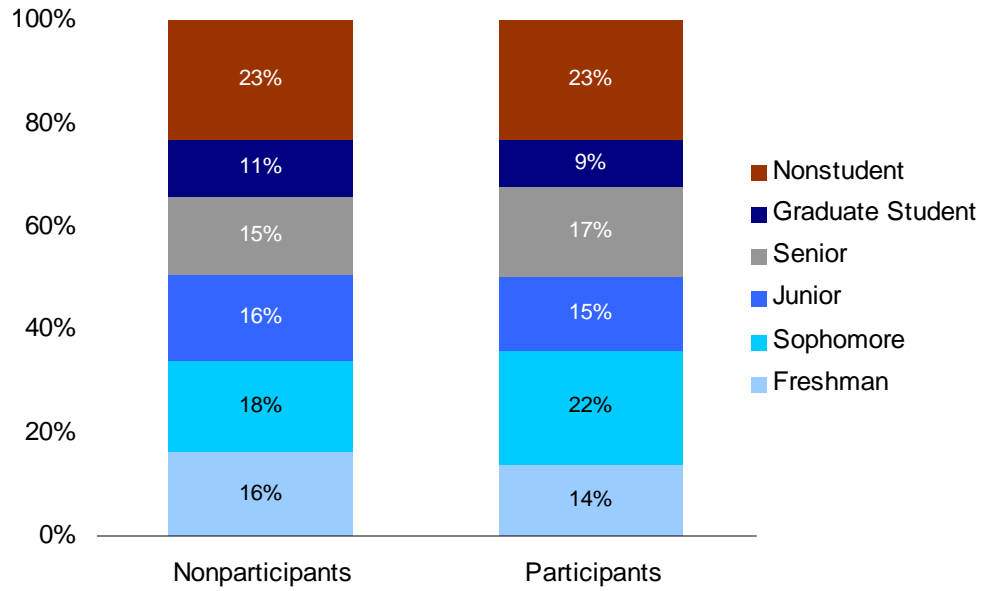
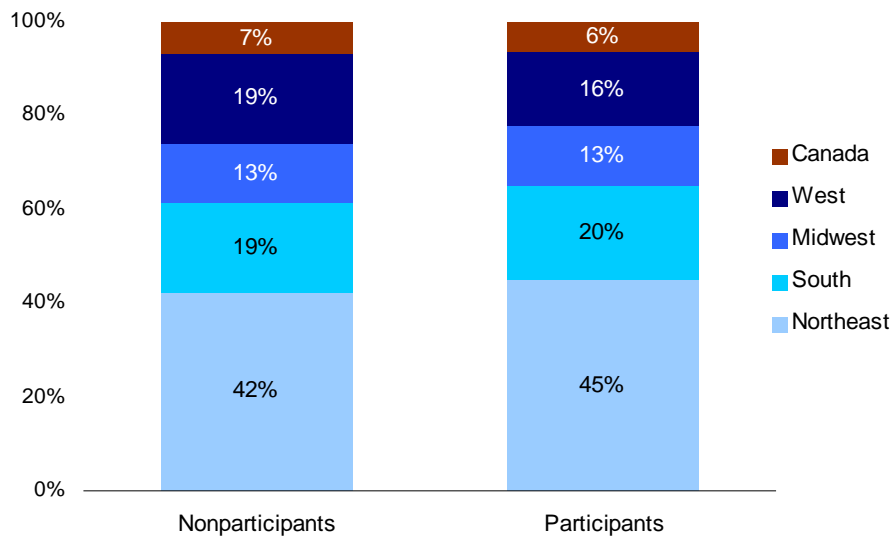


Figure 3. Region of Residence of Participants



Other than by age, on most dimensions, program applicants reflect the diversity of their respective national Jewish communities. When asked about their identification with a Jewish denomination, the largest group among U.S. participants was Reform, followed by Conservative, Just Jewish, and Orthodox (Figure 4). Among Canadian participants, the largest group was Just Jewish, followed by Conservative, Reform, and Orthodox. Forty percent of North American participants reported having received minimal Jewish education prior to high school (one day a week

Hebrew school or less); 60 percent received no formal Jewish education during the high school years (Figure 5). Three-quarters of participants indicated that they had celebrated a bat or bar mitzvah, and half attended a Jewish summer camp at some point in their lives. U.S. program participants differed from the general American Jewish population in that they were more likely to have two Jewish parents (82 percent) and were somewhat less likely to be Orthodox (Figure 6).

Figure 4. Denomination of Participants by Country of Residence

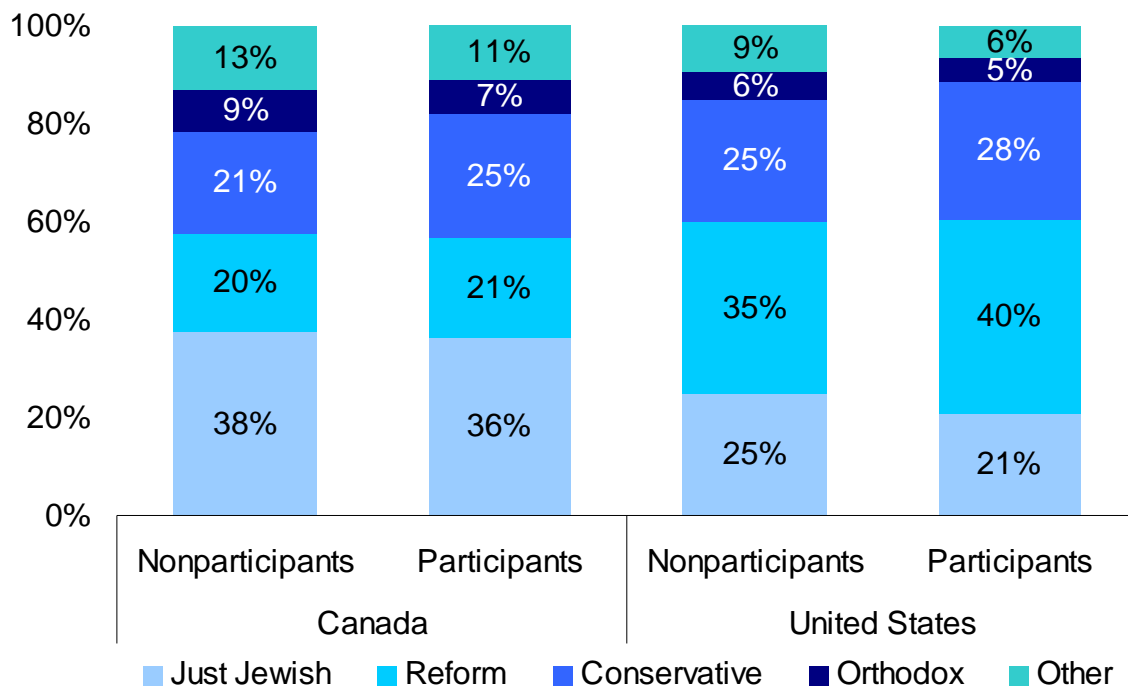


Figure 5. Jewish Education of Participants

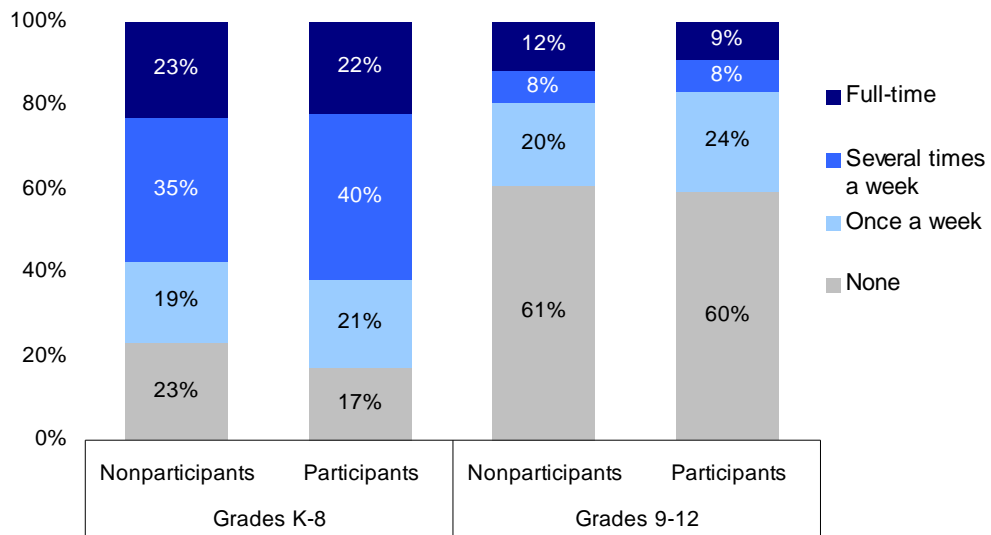
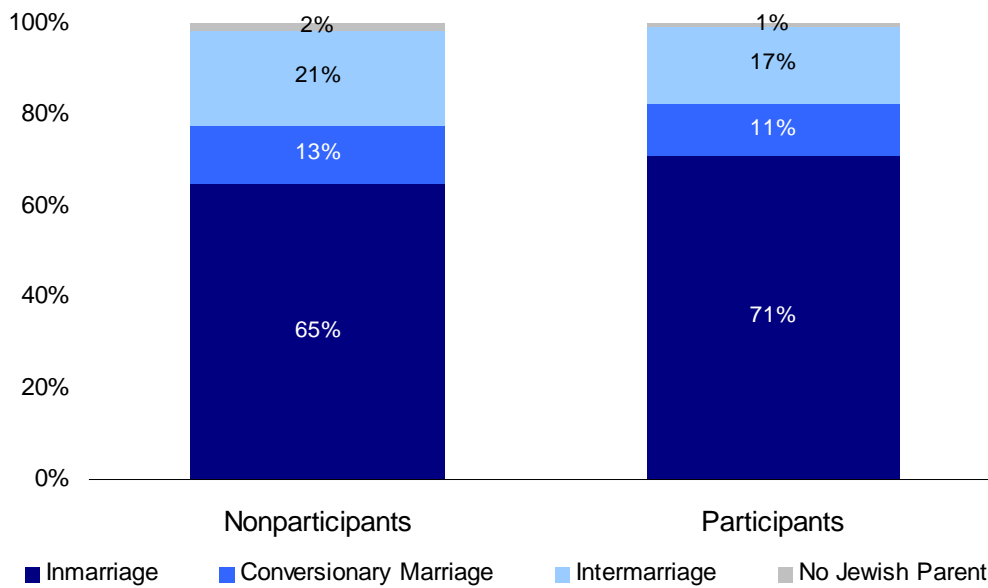


Figure 6. Parental Marriage Type of Participants

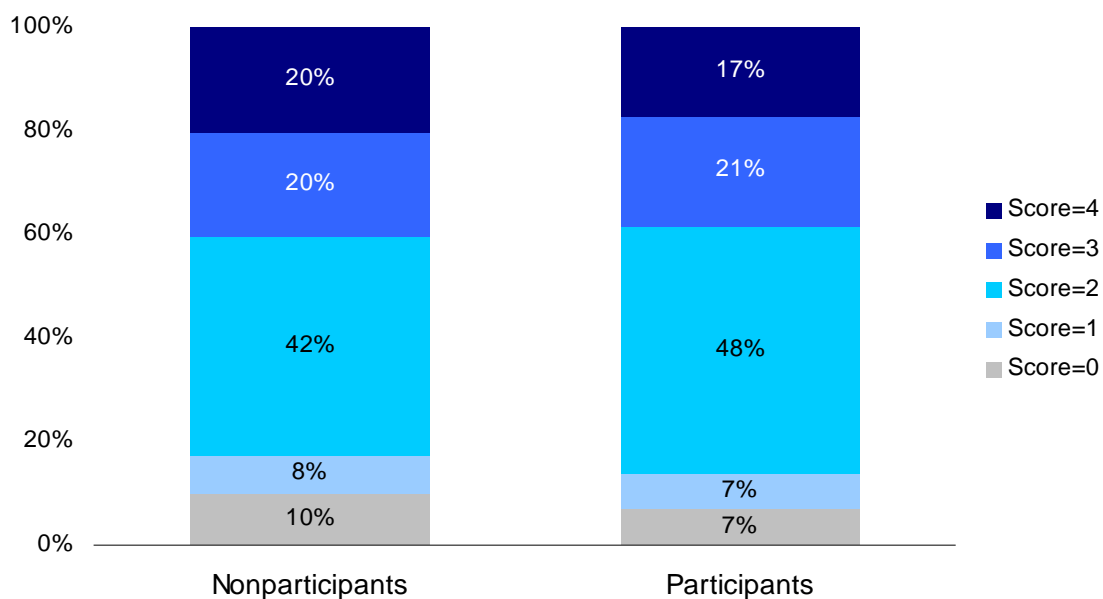


In addition to denominational affiliation, participants and nonparticipants were similar to one another in terms of their families' religious observance. To summarize the types and levels of Jewish observance, a scale was created composed of four items (see Appendix B):

1. Family regularly lit Hanukkah candles when in high school
2. Family regularly held or attended Seder when in high school
3. Family regularly lit Shabbat candles when in high school
4. Family kept kosher when in high school.

About 17 percent of participants and nonparticipants reported having been raised in a household that observed all elements of the scale. Another 20 percent grew up in households that observed three out of four elements of the scale. Nearly half were raised in households that observed two out of the four scale items. Small numbers came from households that observed only one or none of the items (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Childhood Ritual Practice Scale Score of Participants



As a consequence of the sharp increase in enrollment, Birthright Israel’s penetration of the potential market of Jewish young adults reached its high point in 2007. In the figures below, we examine overall participation in

Birthright Israel by birth cohort and proportion of total cohort population. Figure 8 shows the total number of Birthright Israel participants by year of birth (birth cohort) for all years of the program including both winter and summer.

Figure 8. Participation by Birth Year by Country of Residence

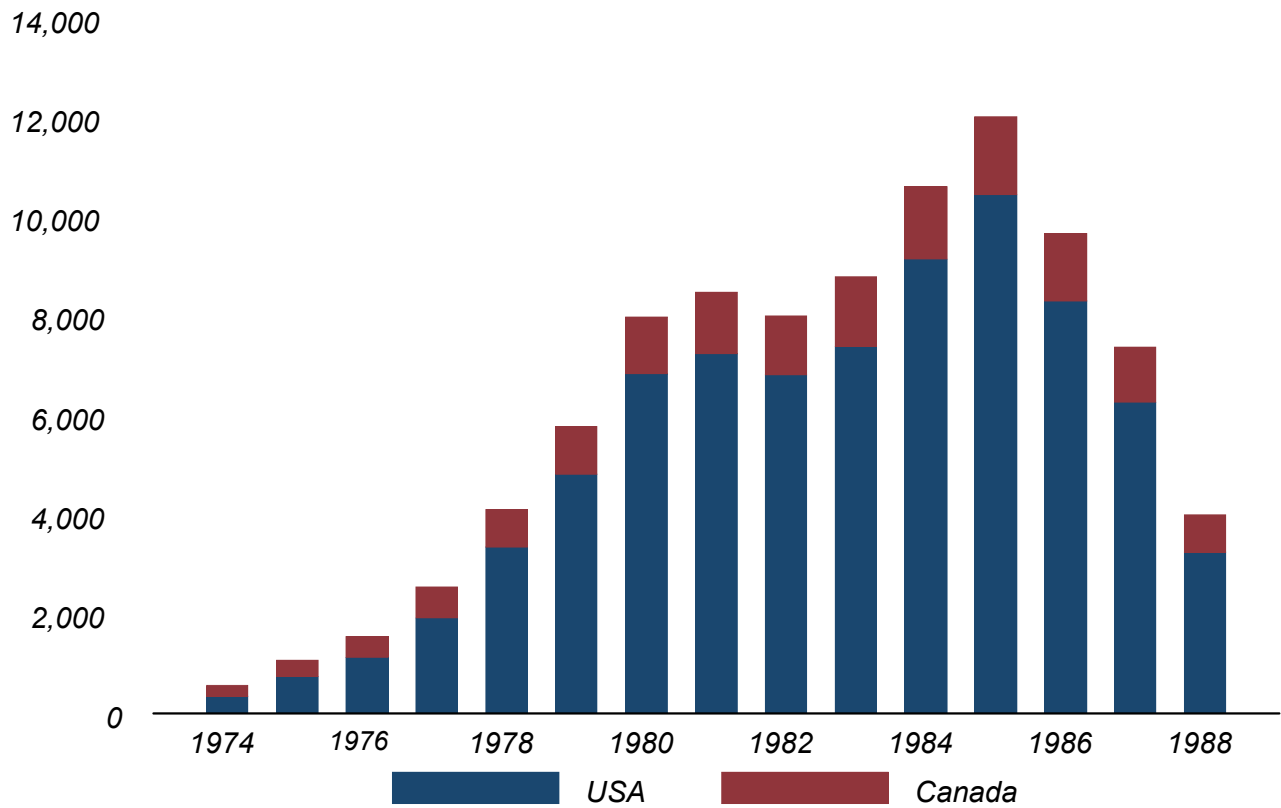
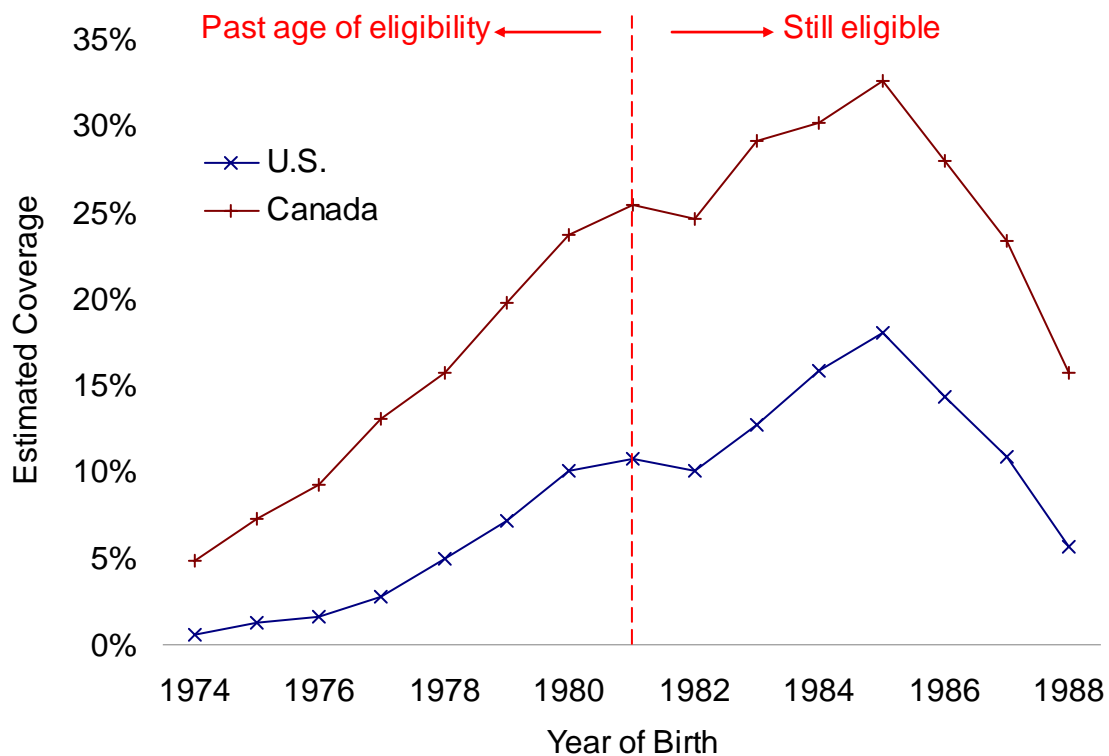


Figure 9 shows the estimated proportion of the young adult population in the United States and Canada who have participated in Birthright Israel.⁴ For individuals at the cut-off age, approximately a quarter of Canadian Jewish young adults have participated in Birthright Israel compared to a tenth of American Jewish young adults.⁵

The continuing growth of the program, however, has had a considerable impact, with participation among younger cohorts peaking at

about one-third of young adults in Canada and one-sixth of young adults in the United States. These figures do not take into account people who would have been ineligible to participate in Birthright Israel because they had already been on a peer trip to Israel, so coverage of the eligible population is likely to be slightly greater than shown. As these cohorts age, levels of participation will increase as some of those who have not yet gone participate in Birthright.

Figure 9. Estimated Coverage of Eligible Population by Year of Birth



EVALUATION OF THE BIRTHRIGHT ISRAEL EXPERIENCE

Approximately three months following the winter 2007 trips, surveys were again sent to all applicants and participants. One goal of the post-trip survey was to understand how the trip was experienced by participants. Accordingly, participants were asked to evaluate several dimensions of the program, including:

- The tour guide, bus community, encounter with Israeli peers,
- The educational program,
- The trip’s personal meaning,
- The trip’s central messages.

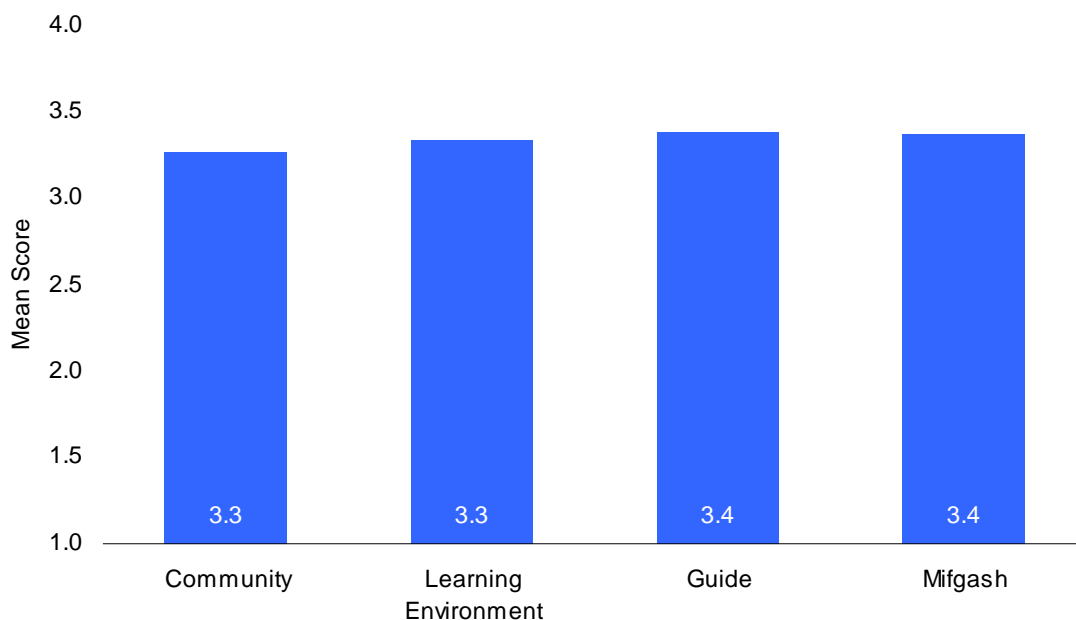
Each of these factors is addressed in turn below.

Guide, Community, and Mifgash

Every Birthright Israel tour bus includes, together with 35-40 participants, 4-8 Israeli peers (usually soldiers) who spend at least 5 days with the group, an Israeli tour guide, trip staff from abroad, a security guard and a bus driver. The survey asked a number of questions regarding the quality of the bus community, the performance of the tour guide, the quality of the encounter (*mifgash*) with the Israeli peers, and the learning environment. Scales were constructed for each of these dimensions of the trip experience (see Appendix B).

Figure 10 shows the average scores for each scale. In general, the ratings are quite high (more than 3 on a 1-4 scale), although there was

Figure 10. Perceptions of the Bus Environment



considerable variation across buses (Appendix B, Figure B1). The learning experience shows the least variation, which suggests that Birthright Israel has been successful at providing a standardized experience of high caliber.

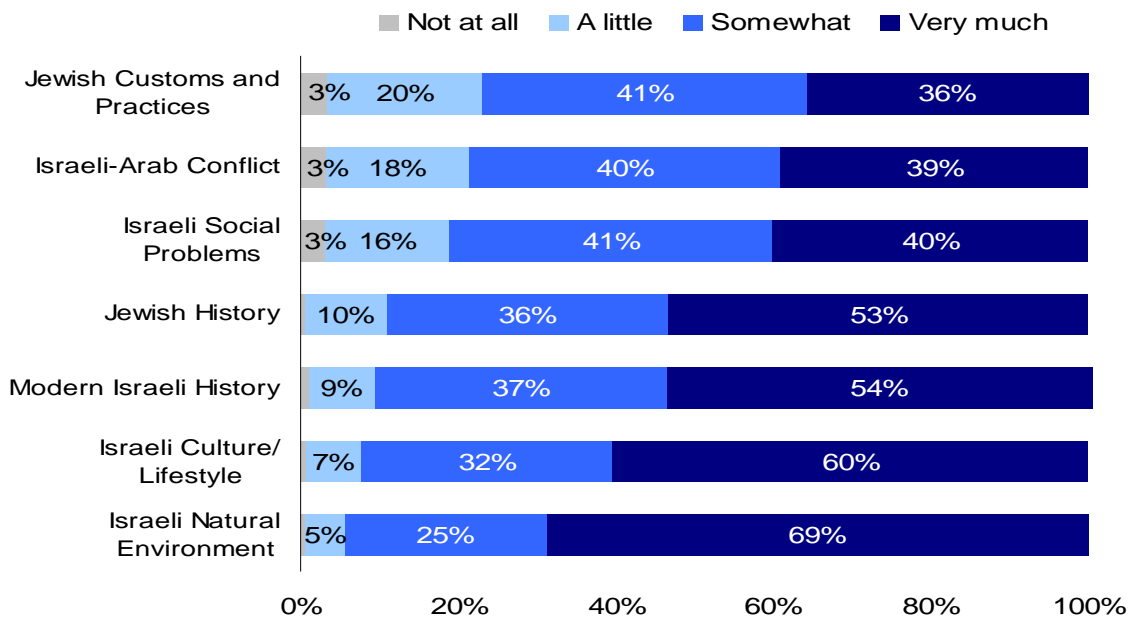
Positive assessments about one dimension were associated with positive assessments of other dimensions. Age played a role in positive assessments of the bus experience, with younger participants feeling more positively about both the social environment and the learning environment. Orthodox participants—perhaps because of their extensive Jewish education—tended to rate the learning experience lower than did other participants. (See Appendix C for

details about which factors were associated with positive perceptions.)

Educational Program

Participants were also asked how much they learned about selected topics related to Israel, Judaism, and Jewish history (Figure 11). (These items constituted the Jewish education scale referred to above.) A majority of respondents felt that they had learned “very much” about Israel’s landscape and natural environment, Israeli culture, modern Israeli history, and Jewish history. Participants felt they learned the least about Jewish customs and practices, the Arab-Israeli conflict, and Israeli social problems.

Figure 11. Learning About Israel and Judaism

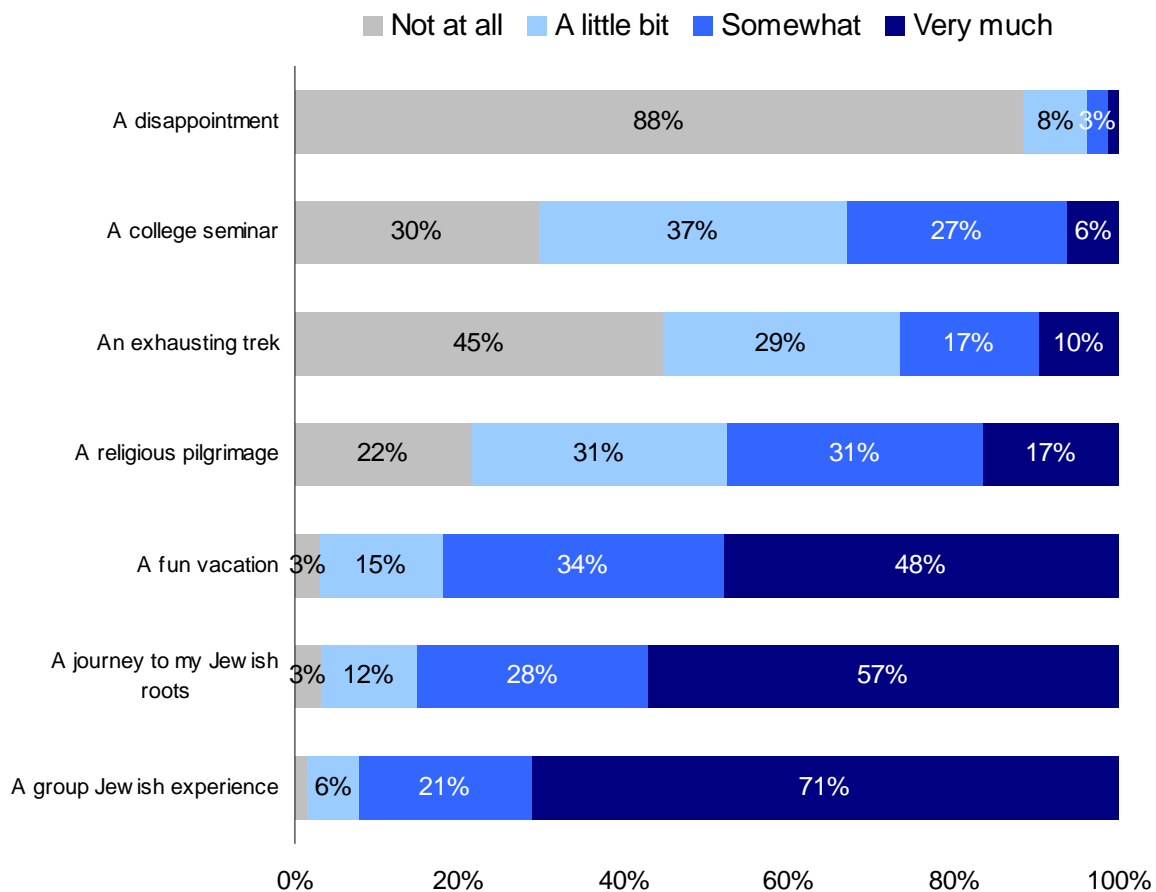


Meaning of the Trip

To help us understand how participants felt about the overall experience, they were asked to characterize the trip by choosing one of several descriptive options (see Figure 12). Overall, participants favored descriptions that included Jewish content (i.e. the trip was most like a “group Jewish experience” and “journey to my Jewish roots”). Relatively few, however,

ascribed much religious significance to the trip, with less than a fifth strongly agreeing that the trip was like a “religious pilgrimage.” Just under half strongly agreed that the trip was like a “fun vacation.” Most did not endorse the arguably negative descriptions of “an exhausting trek” and “a college seminar.” Participants overwhelmingly rejected the notion that the trip was a “disappointment.”

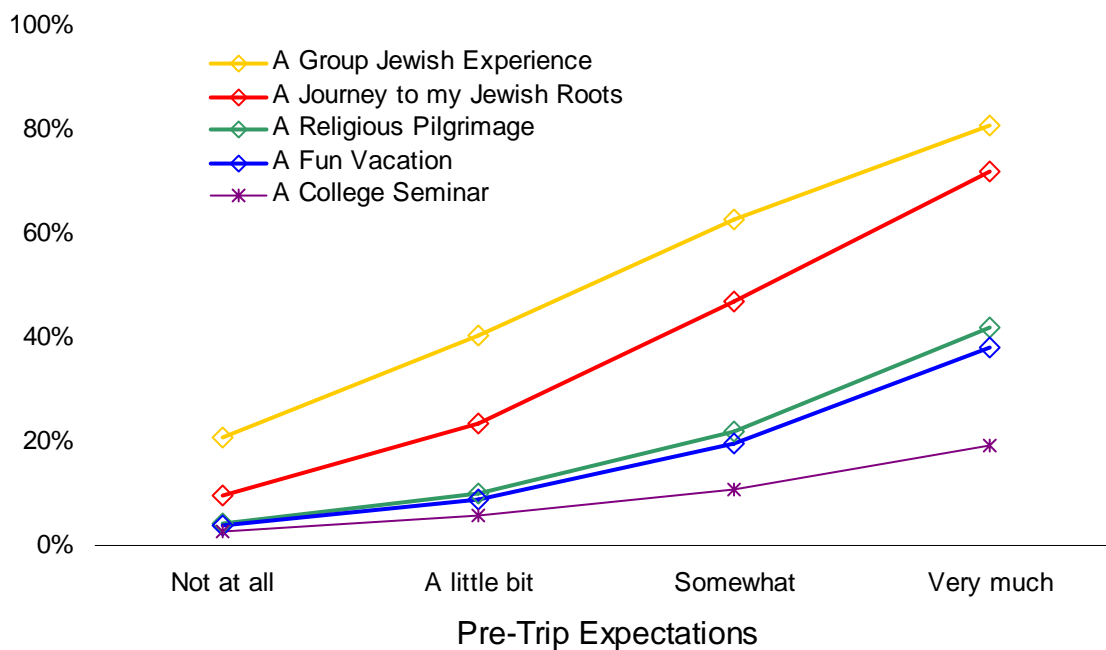
Figure 12. Perceptions of the Trip



Participants’ pre-trip expectations were the strongest predictor of their perceptions of the trip. That is to say, thinking that the trip *would be* a fun vacation was the strongest predictor of actually thinking the trip *was* a fun vacation. This implies that, to some extent, what participants got out of Birthright Israel was determined by what they brought to it. Given high expectations (fueled by the friends and siblings who are the primary referrers of applicants), the trip does not disappoint. Comparing participants’ pre-trip expectations with post-trip impressions, we see that this effect was strongest for the specifically Jewish dimensions of the trip (Figure 13).

Participants’ background also had a strong effect on how they perceived the trip. Age, in particular, was related in some way to almost all of the different descriptions. Younger participants were more likely to view the trip as a fun vacation, and to a lesser degree, as a religious pilgrimage or a group Jewish experience, while older respondents were more likely to think that the trip was an exhausting trek, a disappointment, or a journey to their Jewish roots. There were small gender differences and differences based on student status: Women were somewhat more likely to view the trip as a group Jewish experience, and men more frequently viewed the trip as a fun

Figure 13. Probability of Answering Trip Felt "Very" Much Like Description



Note: Adjusted estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix C).

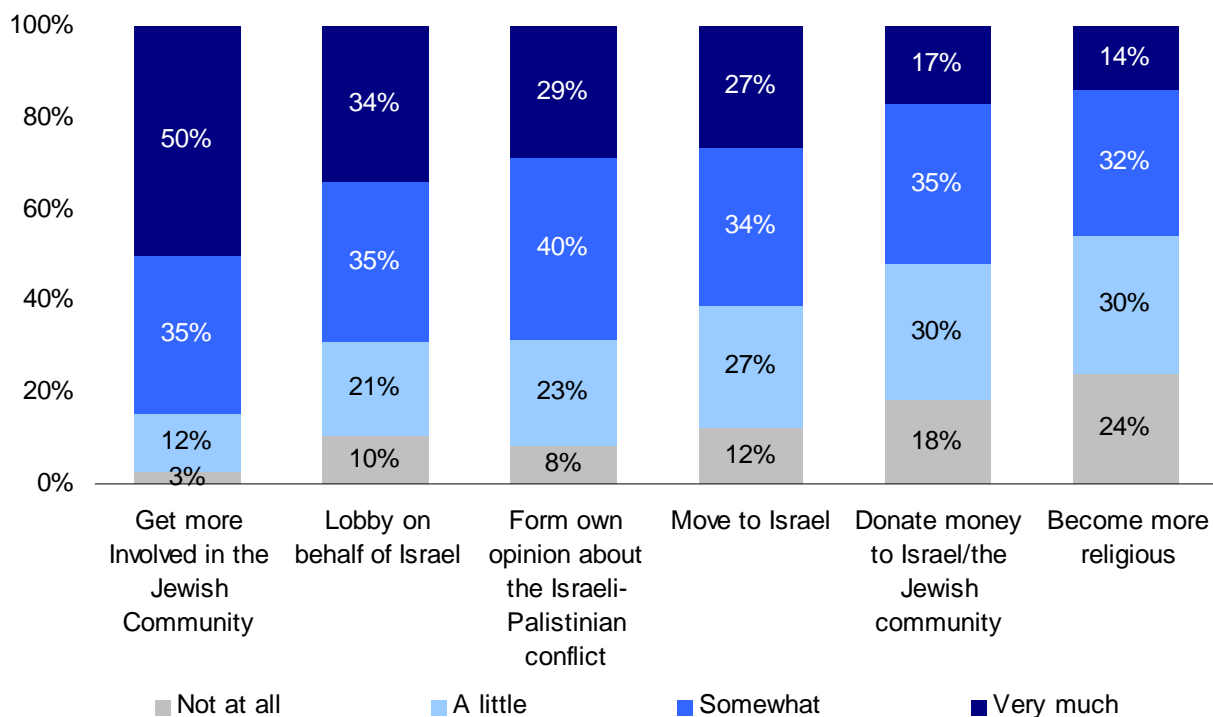
vacation. Current students were less likely to view the trip as a college seminar or a group Jewish experience, but more likely to view the trip as an exhausting trek and a disappointment.

Participants who were on buses that were highly rated in terms of learning environment were more likely to regard the trip as a group Jewish experience, journey to their Jewish roots, and college seminar. Those who were on buses that were more highly rated in terms of community were more likely to think of the trip as a fun vacation and a group Jewish experience. Groups on buses with highly rated mifgashim were more likely to think of the trip as a group Jewish experience.

Messages of the Trip

To help us understand what “take away” messages participants perceived, they were asked to indicate to what extent they felt encouraged by the program to engage in various aspects of Jewish life. As Figure 14 illustrates, half the respondents agreed “very much” that the trip encouraged them to become more involved in their Jewish communities back at home. In contrast, a little over a quarter agreed “very much” that the program encouraged *aliyah* (immigration to Israel) and fewer still agreed “very much” that it encouraged participants to become more observant or to donate money to Israel or the Jewish community.

Figure 14. Degree Participants Felt Encouraged To...



The participants' perceptions varied in terms of both bus and individual background characteristics (see Appendix C). Participants on buses with guides who were rated more highly tended to feel less encouraged to act in particularly Jewish ways than those on buses with lower rated guides.⁶ It may be that excessive exhortation leads to negative perceptions and, potentially, lowered effectiveness in carrying out the goals of Birthright Israel. Conversely, participants on buses with higher rated mifgashim felt as if they had been encouraged to a greater extent. It may be the case that more profound person-to-person contact with Israelis leads to a greater sense that one is expected to act in a more Jewish fashion. The characteristics of individual participants (for example age and gender) also appeared to mediate perceptions, with women and older participants feeling a higher degree of encouragement to pursue identifiably Jewish behaviors.

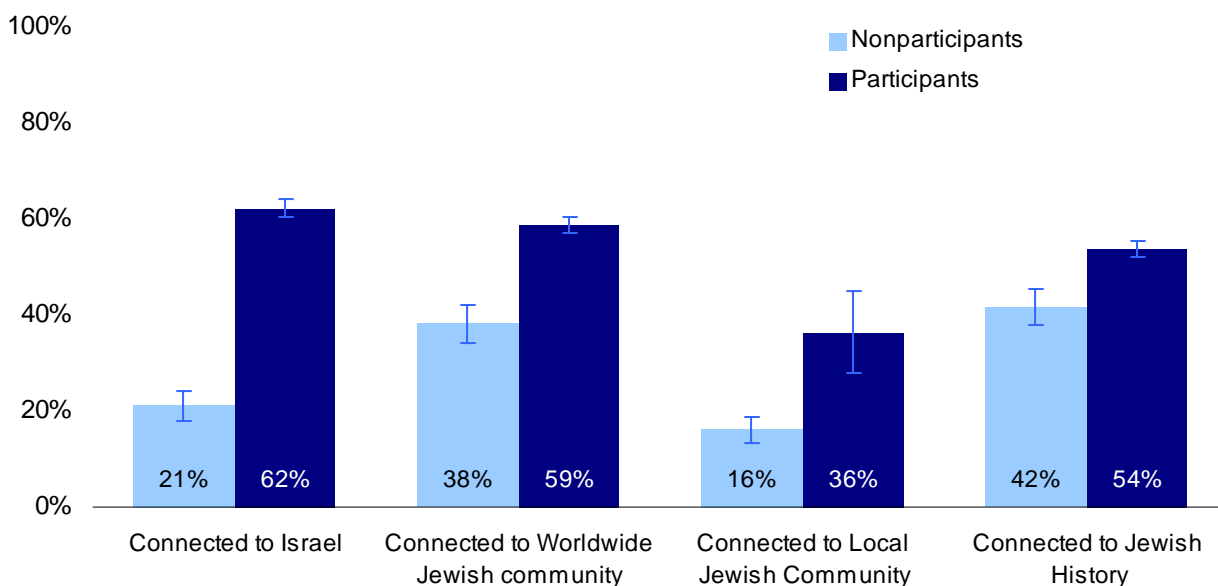
IMPACT OF THE TRIP EXPERIENCE

Participant and non-participant reactions to a variety of questions regarding Jewish identity and engagement were measured in both the pre-trip and post-trip surveys. The analyses discussed below compare the responses of participants with those of applicants who did not go. As noted earlier, prior to the trip, the two groups were highly similar. The main reason given by nonparticipants for not going on trips was that the timing was inconvenient. Still, to ensure that comparisons between the two groups isolate the effects of the trip and not any other differences between participants and nonparticipants, the comparisons reported in this section statistically controlled for all pre-trip differences. Most analyses below therefore report the probability of various trip effects after pre-trip differences between participants and nonparticipants have been statistically controlled for.

Jewish Identity

Participating in Birthright Israel strengthened participants’ feelings of connection to Israel and the Jewish people, as well as their desire to establish a Jewish family. The strongest program impact was on participants’ feelings about Israel. As indicated in Figure 15, participants were three times as likely (62 percent versus 21 percent) to report feeling “very much” connected to Israel. They were also substantially more likely (59 percent versus 38 percent) to feel very connected to a worldwide Jewish community, and somewhat more likely to feel very connected to their local Jewish community and Jewish history. These findings mirror research on previous Birthright Israel cohorts indicating that the program has

Figure 15. Probability of Being “Very Much” Connected to Elements of Jewish Identity



Note: Estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix C for details).

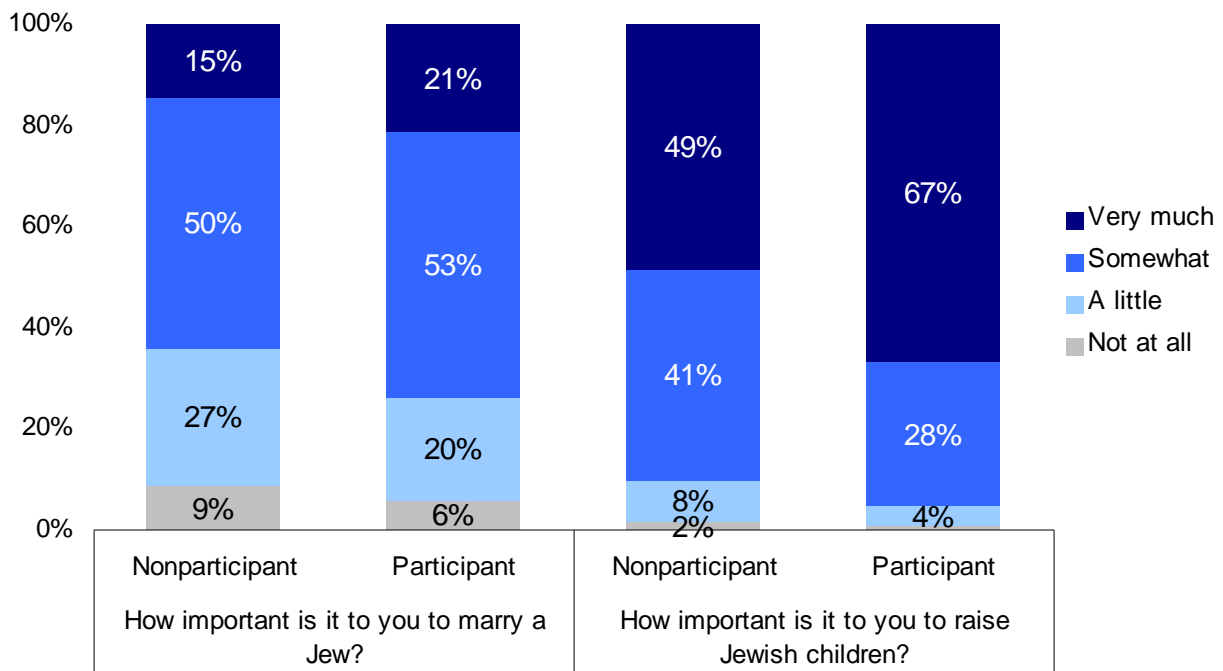
its greatest impact on participants’ sense of connection to Israel and Jewish life (Saxe et al., 2002, 2004, 2006). Previous research indicates, however, that this effect moderates over time, though a significant difference in attitudes between participants and nonparticipants remains.

The impact of Birthright Israel on sense of connection to Israel and being Jewish was remarkably consistent. In fact, the participants’ background in Jewish education had no significant mediating effect on the trip’s impact. In other words, the impact of the trip did not differ significantly across groups formed by different levels of Jewish education. In terms of increasing sense of connection to Israel and other aspects of Jewish identity, Birthright Israel had roughly the same impact for an

individual who received no Jewish education as for someone who attended day school (See Appendix C for details).

Program participants were also more likely to indicate a desire to establish a Jewish family. Orthodox participants varied little in their responses to these questions before and after the trip and were therefore excluded from the following analysis. Non-Orthodox participants (the vast majority) were substantially more likely than nonparticipants to agree that raising Jewish children was very important (67 percent compared to 49 percent). The effect on the desire to marry a Jewish partner was, however, more modest, with 21 percent of participants regarding it as very important compared to 15 percent of nonparticipants.

Figure 16. Estimated Probability of Responses on Jewish Family Life



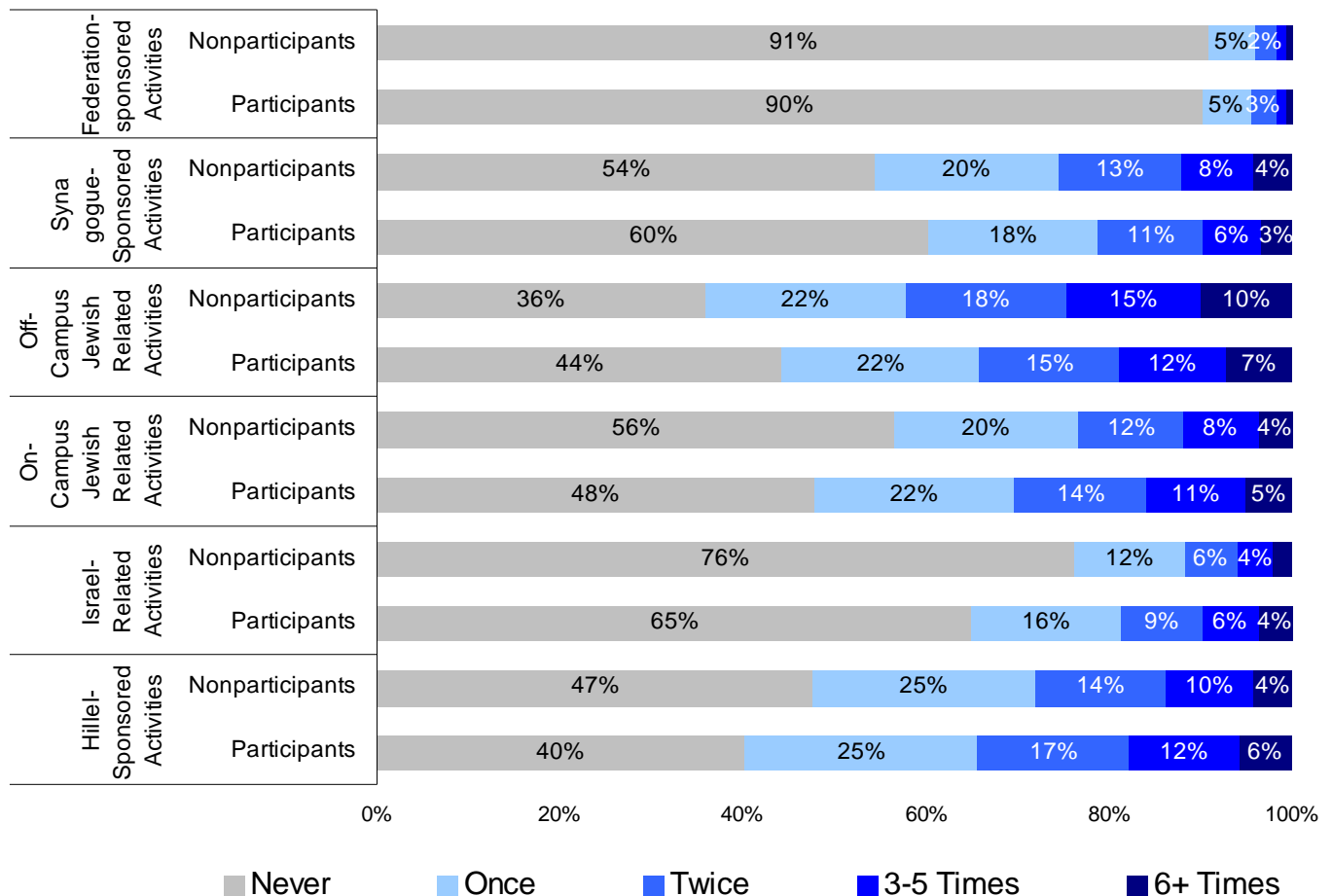
Note: Non-Orthodox respondents only. Estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix C for details).

Jewish Engagement

The Birthright Israel experience also influenced Jewish religious behavior and community engagement, albeit less dramatically. Thus, only campus-based participants reported increased engagement in Jewish activities post-Birthright Israel (compared to nonparticipants),

and mostly for Israel-related activities (Figure 17). One factor suppressing differences is that nonparticipants (particularly those who responded to the survey) may have planned to participate in the next round of Birthright Israel (summer 2007).

Figure 17. Estimated Probability of Participation in Various Activities

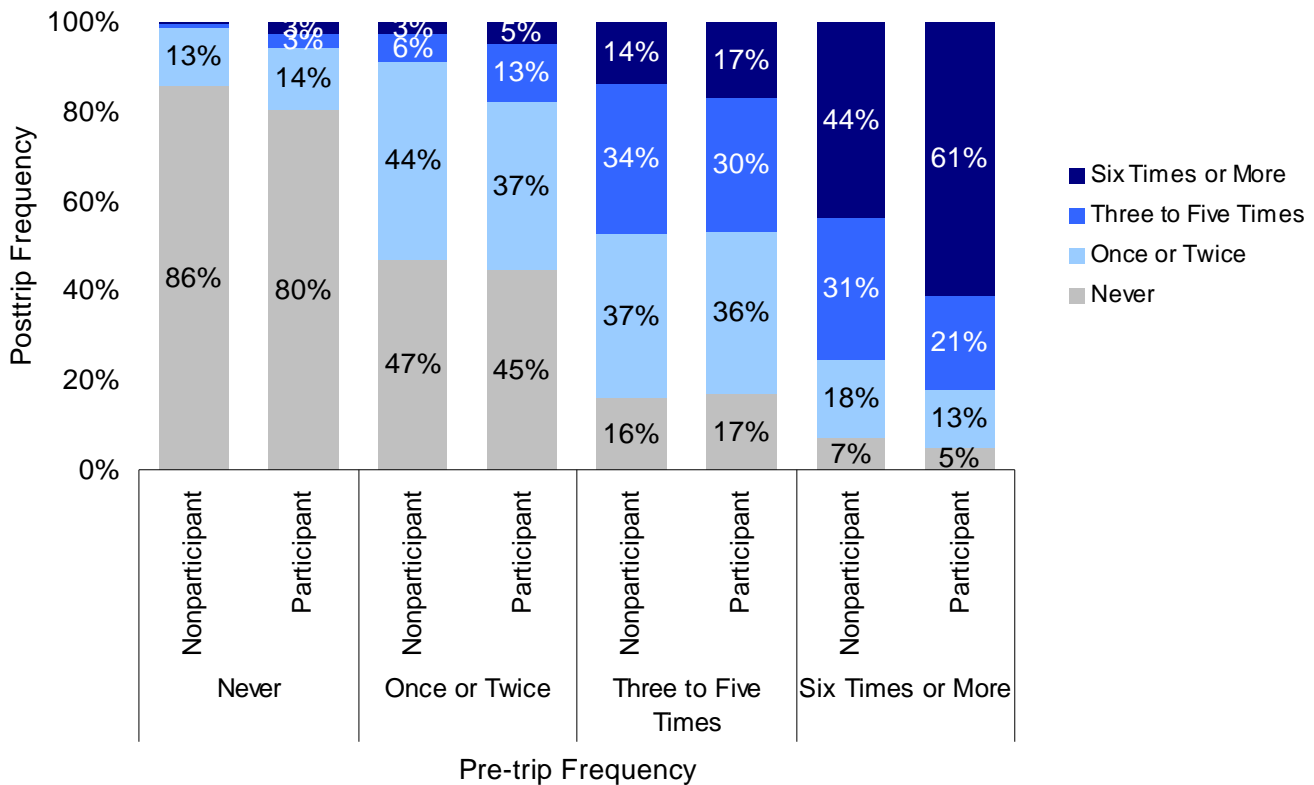


Note: Estimates from regression equation (see Appendix C for details).

Overall, the behavior of participants and nonparticipants after the trip resembles their level of engagement before the trip. On campus, Birthright Israel has its largest impact among the people who were the most active attendees before the trip. Figure 18 shows the post-trip attendance at Hillel of participants and nonparticipants. It is only among people who reported attending Hillel six times or more prior to the trip that there is a discernable gap between participants and nonparticipants in post-trip attendance.

More important than participation in Birthright Israel was whether a person was invited to participate in activities. People who received invitations, not surprisingly, were more likely to attend. Being invited to participate by Hillel not only made one much more likely to participate in Hillel-sponsored activities, but also Israel-related activities and other Jewish activities on campus. Invitations from synagogues also had a positive effect on participation in synagogue sponsored activities, as well as Jewish activities on- or off-campus and Israel-related activities.

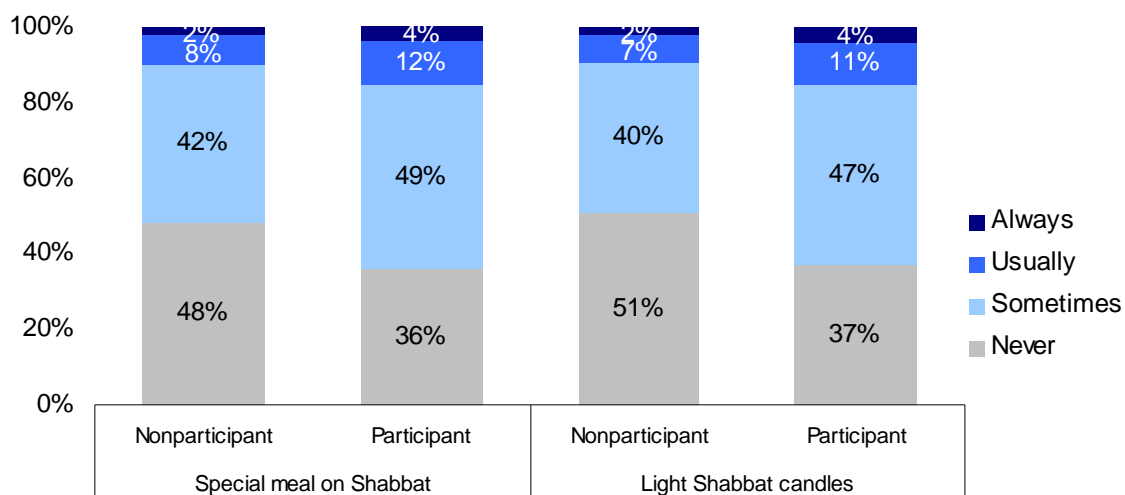
Figure 18. Post-trip Frequency of Attending Hillel Activities by Pre-trip Frequency



Among those who did not participate in any activities after the trip, controlling for other factors, Birthright Israel participants were more likely to cite a lack of time or lack of interest as reasons for not attending activities. There were no significant differences between Birthright participants and nonparticipants regarding not knowing people to go with, not knowing when or where activities were taking place, or not feeling a sense of connection with other people at the activities. These are, of course, the reasons applicants expressed for nonparticipation—we cannot say whether participants actually were busier or not or whether the experience of participating in the trip led them to interpret why they did not attend differently. The increased likelihood of citing lack of interest in these activities may be the mirror image of an intensive and stimulating Birthright Israel experience—ordinary Jewish programming may seem humdrum by comparison.

Participation in Birthright Israel also had moderate effects on Jewish observance. Program alumni were somewhat more likely than their counterparts who did not go to report having lit Shabbat candles or attended a special Shabbat meal. As Figure 19 indicates, the probability of having a special meal for Shabbat on at least some occasions was 65 percent among participants, in comparison to 52 percent for those who applied but did not go. The estimated probability for ever lighting Shabbat candles was 62 percent for participants compared to 49 percent for nonparticipants. On the other hand, participants were no more likely to attend Jewish religious services than were nonparticipants. The association between having a special meal for Shabbat and participation on Birthright Israel is consistent with previous research (Saxe et al. 2004).

Figure 19. Estimated Probability of Shabbat Observances



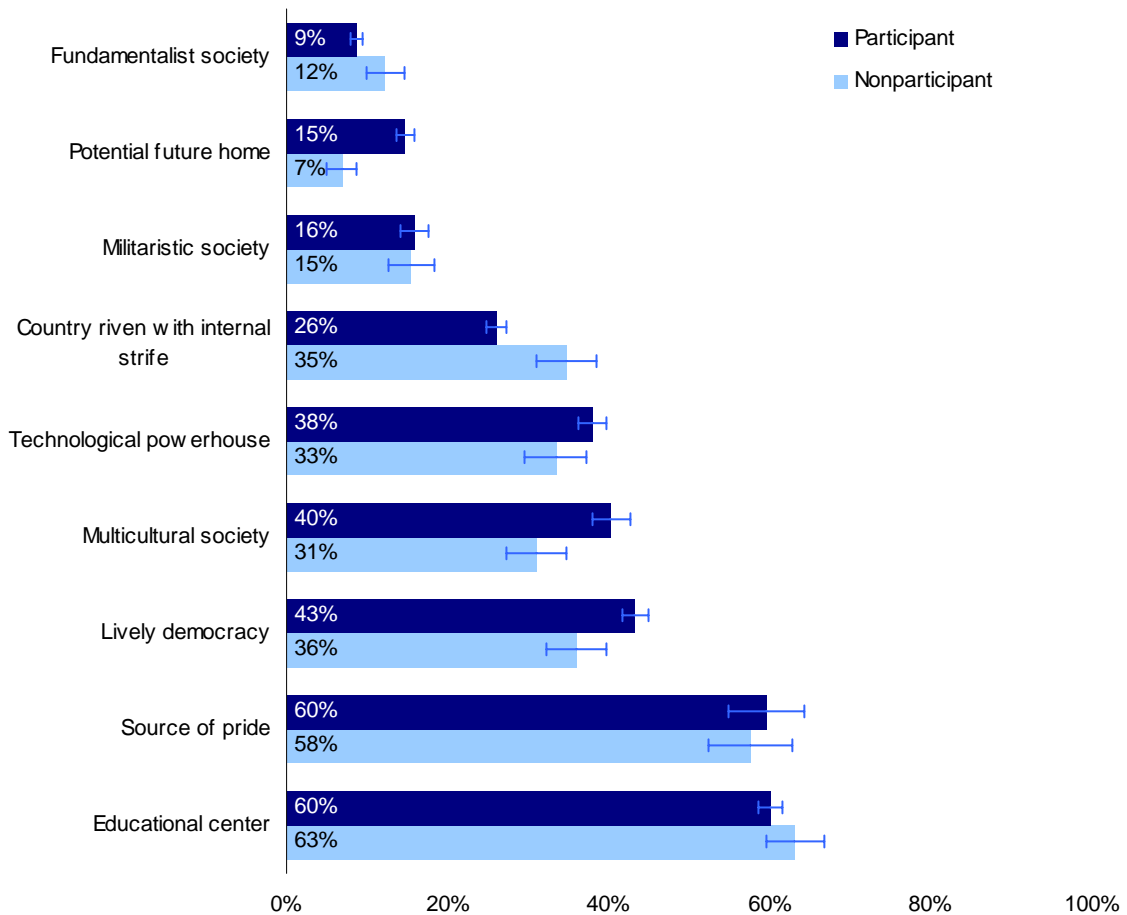
Note: Estimates from regression equation (see Appendix C)

Impressions of Israel

Both participants and nonparticipants shared a positive disposition toward Israel prior to the trip. Those who participated in the program, however, returned with a number of vivid impressions that differentiated them from those who applied but did not go. Three months after the trip, participants were significantly more likely to view Israel as a “lively democracy,” “multi-cultural society,” and “potential future

home” than those who applied but did not go. The difference between participants and nonparticipants was sharpest with respect to viewing Israel as a potential future home, with participants twice as likely to view aliyah as a possibility than nonparticipants, though the overall proportions remained small. On the other hand, participants were significantly less likely to view Israel as a “fundamentalist society” and a “country riven with strife.”

Figure 20. Probability of "Very Much" Agreeing with Various Perceptions of Israel



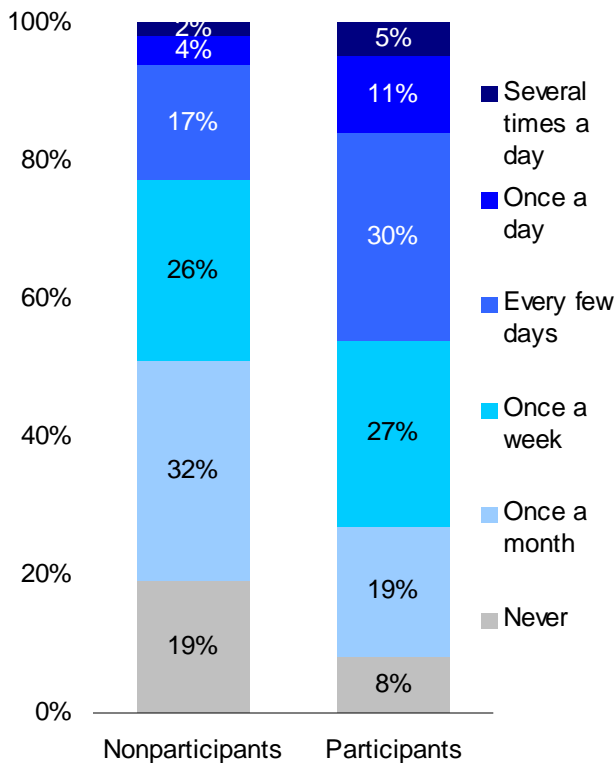
Note: Estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix C).

Following Israel in the News

Participants were more attuned to Israel, checking news of the country more frequently than their counterparts who applied to the program but did not go. Specifically, as Figure 21 indicates, participants were much more likely to report checking news of Israel at least weekly (73 percent versus 49 percent). Participants were also more likely, when checking news, to consult an Israeli news source, such as the

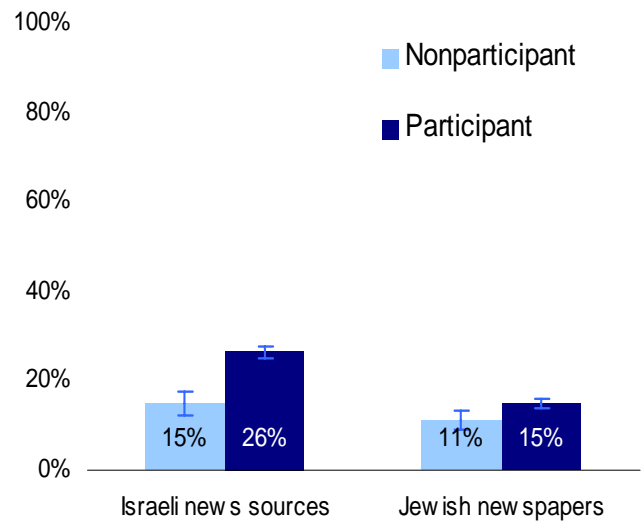
English on-line editions of *Haaretz* and the *Jerusalem Post* (see Figure 22). Overall, the most cited source of news about Israel for all applicants was cable news channels such as CNN and MSNBC (51 percent), followed by network news (35 percent) and the *New York Times* (34 percent). Israeli news sites followed (24 percent), nearly coequal with local newspapers (23 percent).

Figure 21. Probability of Checking News about Israel



Note: Estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix C).

Figure 22. Probability of Checking News about Israel using Jewish News Sources

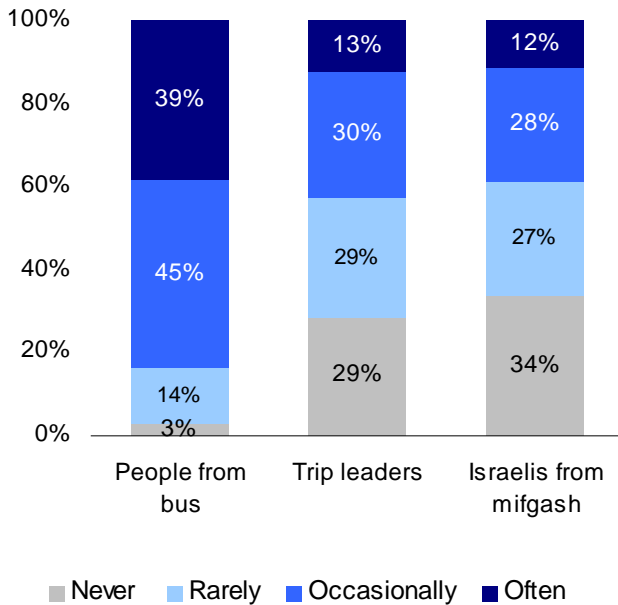


Note: Estimates from regression analysis (see Appendix

Keeping in Touch

Regardless of their level of engagement with the broader Jewish community, Birthright Israel alumni tended to remain in contact with their fellow travelers. As shown in Figure 23, 84 percent of alumni reported keeping in touch with other tour participants “occasionally” or “often.” A smaller, but still sizeable proportion—40 percent—reported keeping in touch with the Israeli tour participants.

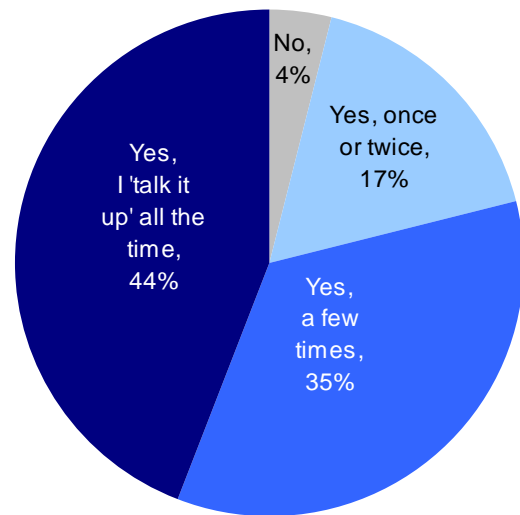
Figure 23. Frequency of Keeping in Touch with People from Trip



Promoting Birthright Israel

In what might be the most consistent and widespread form of post-trip engagement, 79 percent of Birthright Israel alumni reported “talking up” the program at least a few times (Figure 24).

Figure 24. Frequency of Encouraging Others to Register



The frequency with which alumni encouraged others to go on Birthright Israel differed in terms of a number of alumni characteristics and trip experiences (see Appendix C). Individuals with more Jewish friends were more likely to recommend the trip than others. Officers in Jewish organizations were also more likely to recommend the trip, as were those whose parents were highly engaged in Jewish organizational life. Some aspects of the bus experience also appeared to matter. A participant’s rating of the mifgash was the

second most important factor in frequently recommending Birthright Israel (after having Jewish friends), and thinking highly of the social environment of the bus was also important. Less important, but still associated with recommending the program, was a positive evaluation of the learning environment, believing that the trip was a fun vacation, and believing that the trip was a journey to their Jewish roots. Conversely, viewing the trip as a disappointment and thinking the trip was an exhausting trek made one less likely to recommend the experience. Women were more enthusiastic salespeople for the program than were men, as were younger participants. Orthodox Jews (perhaps because many of their peers are ineligible) were far less likely to recommend Birthright Israel than participants from any other denomination. Canadian participants were also less likely to recommend the experience.

Plans for Return

A final measure of program impact is the attitude of alumni regarding the possibility of returning to Israel in the near term. One third indicated that they were very likely to return to Israel during the next two years (Figure 25). An additional quarter indicated that they were somewhat likely to return during that time frame. Among those who indicated that they might return, most thought that they would come back to travel or visit family and friends (Figure 26). Forty percent, however, indicated interest in returning to volunteer, and 21 percent interest in a university study abroad program.

Figure 25. Likelihood of Returning to Israel in the Next Two Years

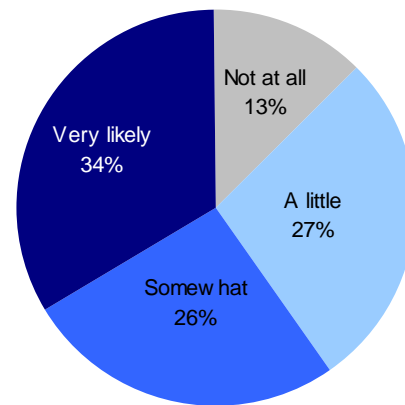
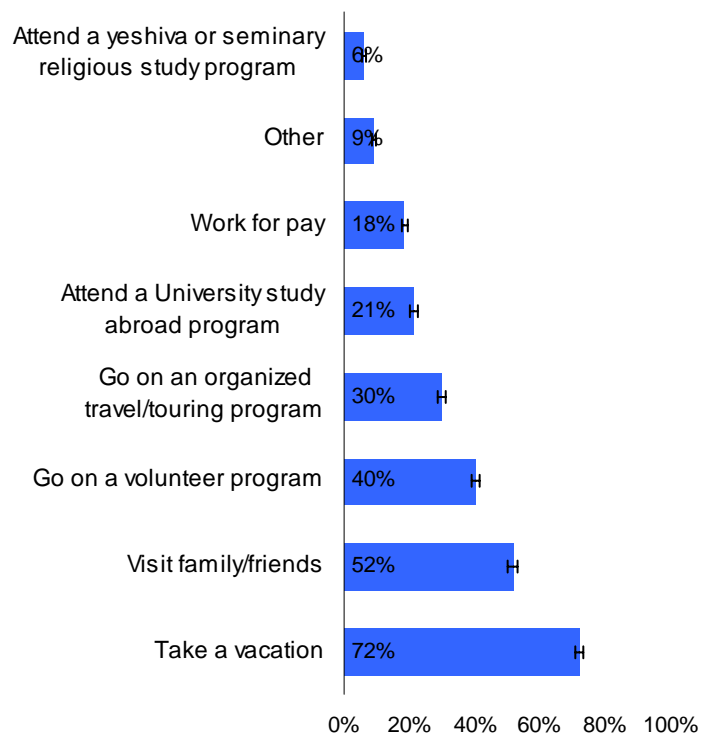


Figure 26. Potential Activities Upon a Return Trip to Israel



CONCLUSION

Birthright Israel remains a young program and is still undergoing change as it adapts to taking ever-larger groups of participants on its ten day educational journeys. What is clear, however, from the systematic study of the largest group of program applicants—those from North America—is that Birthright Israel is attracting a broad cross-section of Jewish young adults. The applicant pool is not only large, but broadly represents American and Canadian Jewry in terms of place of residence, denomination, and Jewish education. The pool seems likely to continue to grow as alumni spread the word among friends, acquaintances, and family members.

In terms of the program itself, participants generally rate their guides highly, describe their bus community as friendly, and express enthusiasm about their mifgash with Israeli peers. Birthright Israel has managed to provide a high quality experience even as the program has expanded. Perhaps, the increased size makes the experience even more intense. As powerful as the bus groups are, being part of a much larger movement intensifies the experience and allows for even wider social networking. A significant segment of an entire generation has now had a Birthright Israel experience.

Evaluation data indicate that the Birthright Israel experience had a positive impact on a wide range of outcomes. Relative to their peers who did not go on the trip, alumni feel a stronger degree of connection to Israel and the Jewish people, expressed greater levels of

commitment to establishing Jewish families, held more positive views of Israel, and were somewhat more engaged in a variety of individual and group Jewish activities, including attending Shabbat meals and joining in Jewish activities on campus. Moreover, the effect of the Birthright Israel experience on sense of connection to Israel and other aspects of Jewish life is evident among participants across a variety of Jewish backgrounds, extending from those with no formal Jewish education to those with extensive Jewish education.

As impressive as these program impacts might be, the gap between the program's strong impact on identity and its modest impact on engagement in Jewish life after the trip remains a paradox. It both calls for further investigation and for experiments to test options for post-trip engagement. Roughly two-thirds of Birthright Israel alumni report attending just one Jewish activity, or no Jewish activity, during the three months following the trip. Engagement in Jewish communal life among older alumni living in the community appears to be modest as well. In fact, the current survey results show no positive Birthright Israel impact on post-trip engagement in Jewish communities beyond the college campus.

What are the implications of modest levels of post-trip Jewish engagement for the staying power of the Birthright Israel experience? Longitudinal studies (Saxe et al. 2004, 2006) suggest that the identity impacts of Birthright

Israel persist over several years, notwithstanding the pattern of post-trip organizational engagement. It might be the case that Birthright Israel's impact on identity will develop into stepped-up organizational engagement in future years, as alumni establish families. Additional long-term studies will be necessary to ascertain the extent to which the impact of Birthright Israel persists and how it develops over time.

Moreover, as Jewish organizations increase outreach to alumni, further research will be needed to assess the fit between the aspirations of alumni and the programs that seek to attract them. With more than 120,000 Birthright Israel alumni populating North American Jewish communities, and tens of thousands of new participants in each round of the program, it is vital to understand how they wish to engage with Jewish communities, organizations, and Israel.

NOTES

1. A large gift provided by philanthropists Sheldon and Miriam Adelson enabled Birthright Israel to send more than 12,000 additional participants.
2. All surveys were released simultaneously (October, 2006 and March, 2007). How long before/after the trip depends on the date of the trip (some began in late December, 2006; most took place in January, 2007) and how quickly the respondent replied. Surveys were kept open for 4-6 weeks.
3. The link in the invitation email and subsequent follow-ups included a unique URL to ensure that only the recipient of a specific survey invitation could respond to the survey. Responses were tracked to ensure that each individual only completed a single survey.
4. The Canadian estimates use the Canadian census (which asks about religion and ethnicity), which puts cohort size at c. 5,000. It is more difficult to estimate the size of the Jewish young adult population in the United States. Estimates of the size of the population provided by the United Jewish Communities' (UJC) National Jewish Population Survey 2000-01 are problematic (Saxe, Tighe, Phillips, & Kadushin, 2007). General problems notwithstanding, the estimates for 18-26 are extremely unreliable, in part because of the difficulty reaching young adults by landline telephones. Although UJC estimates each cohort at 44,000, our analyses indicate that the population of each cohort (Jews by religion) is much higher: between 58,000 and 89,000 (See Saxe et al., 2007). One of the difficulties is that these numbers reflect the number who consider themselves to be "Jews by religion." A large number who have Jewish parents, and may even have been brought up with some religious education, may identify in ethnic/secular terms, or may only identify when they have a reason (such as eligibility for Birthright Israel).
5. As Birthright Israel is presently eight years old and has a window of eligibility of nine years, no one age group has yet had its full opportunity to participate. The youngest persons eligible to participate in the first Birthright Israel trips of the winter of 1999-2000 were born in 1981 and are now in their last year of eligibility. Older age groups had ever shorter periods of eligibility, with the shortest window of opportunity for those born in 1973, who had only winter 1999-2000. Those born after 1981 have not yet "aged out" of eligibility—the younger the group, the more years of eligibility they have left.
6. With the exception of forming one's own opinion on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, each of the different topics can be seen as aspects of a single measure of feeling encouraged to act in ways associated with Jewish identity (see Appendix B).

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APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY

Pre-trip Survey

Sample

During the registration period for the winter 2006-7 more than 15,000 applicants started the registration process. Of these, nearly 12,000 were identified as eligible applicants. All eligible applicants (N=11,966) were invited to participate in an online pre-trip survey about their background, views, and expectations of the trip. After the survey was launched, it was discovered that one applicant had died prior to the trip. This applicant was removed from the sample, and the final sample was N=11,965.

Invitations and Reminders

Initial invitations to participate in the survey were sent on November 14, 2006. After survey administration began it was discovered that a battery of questions relating to the importance of being Jewish was accidentally omitted from the questionnaire. The survey was republished on November 20, 2006 with the additional questions. Respondents who had already completed the survey were not recontacted. Thus, the number of respondents to these questions is lower than those responding to the rest of the questions in the survey. Those who were not presented the questions were assigned a missing value to indicate this fact.

Three email reminders were sent to sample members who had not yet responded.

A total of 80 email addresses produced a bounce back message. However, it was unclear whether failure to deliver the invitation or reminder emails was permanent. Since registration to the program was recent and required the use of a valid email address, all emails were treated as valid.

There were few explicit refusals to complete the survey. Just over three percent of those who clicked on the survey link did not complete the survey (logged on, no response), or started the survey but only answered a few questions (break-off).

The survey was closed on December 18, 2006.

Response Rates

Overall response rate to the survey was 62 percent (including surveys partially completed). Response rates among participants and nonparticipants were calculated using actual landing data (after the trip). The response rate for participants was 75 percent while that of nonparticipants was 35 percent.

Table A1. Pre-trip Survey Final Dispositions

	Nonparticipants		Participants		Total	
<i>Complete (I)</i>	1395	34.6%	5909	74.5%	7304	61.0%
<i>Partial (P)</i>	27	.7%	61	.8%	88	.8%
<i>Refusal and Break-off (R)</i>	148	3.6%	222	2.8%	370	3.1%
Break-off	82	2.0%	165	2.1%	247	2.1%
Refusal	7	.2%	2	.0%	9	.1%
Logged on, no response	59	1.4%	55	.7%	114	1.0%
<i>Noncontact (NC)</i>	2463	61.1%	1740	21.9%	4203	35.1%
No response	2463	61.1%	1740	21.9%	4203	35.1%
<i>Total</i>	4033	100.0%	7932	100.0%	11965	100.0%
RR1 =		34.6%		74.5%		61.0%
I / (I + P + R + NC + O)						
		35.3%		75.3%		61.8%
RR2 =						

Post-Trip Survey

Sampling Frame

All eligible applicants who were invited to participate in the pre-trip survey were considered for the post-trip sample. Three groups were excluded from the sample:

- Respondents to the pre-trip survey who applied to the summer 2007 trips. The evaluation plan calls for the surveying of all applicants to the trip twice: once shortly after their first application (the pre-trip survey) and a second time after they return from a trip or no longer apply for future trips (the post-trip survey). Winter 2006-07 applicants who ended up not going on the trip and who then re-applied to go on the summer 2007 trips were excluded from the sample. These reapplicants will be surveyed for a post-trip survey after they return from the summer trips or, if they do not go on the summer trip and do not apply again ($n=413$).
- Those who refused to participate in the pre-trip survey. Those who explicitly refused to participate in the pre-trip survey were not contacted again to complete the post-trip survey ($n=9$).
- Nonrespondents to the pre-trip survey who applied to the summer 2007 trips. These applicants were treated as new applicants and were sent an invitation to participate in the pre-trip survey for summer 2007 applicants ($n=458$).

The final sample for the post-trip survey included 11,085 persons.

Invitations and reminders

An initial invitation to participate in the survey was sent on March 26, 2007. Two email reminders to complete the survey were also sent. In addition, in an attempt to increase response rates, a thank you note was sent to all participants who completed the survey. Participants were asked to contact their friends from the trip and encourage them to complete the survey. A special personalized note to nonrespondents was sent to those who did not complete the survey after three weeks from one of three Birthright Israel alumni, each of whom used a personalized email account to send a note to nonrespondents. The alumni followed up and responded to any email inquiry. In total, three different notes were sent.

Phone Follow-up

A sample of 2,170 non-respondents was drawn for the purpose of intensive phone follow-up. The sample included all nonparticipants who responded to the pre-trip survey but had not responded to the post-trip survey until that point ($n=685$), and a random sample of participants who responded to the pre-trip but not to the post-trip survey ($n=1,385$). In addition, a random sample of 100 participants who did not respond to either survey was included in the calling sample.

Callers were Brandeis University students, most of whom were Birthright Israel alumni. Callers

were trained to use the automated calling system and tried to convert reluctant sample members. A total of 2,155 calls were made between April 16 and April 23, 2007. A total of 1,576 email invitations were re-sent after a phone conversation or after a message was left on a voice mail. A week after calls were made, a final reminder was sent to all those who were called and then sent a request to participate in the survey.

Nonresponse

A total of 196 email invitations were returned undeliverable. 37 of those for whom invitations were undeliverable were included in the calling sample. For 13 cases, new email addresses were obtained (yet, they did not respond to the survey even after invitation was resent). Ten cases confirmed their email address (yet, they did not complete the survey). There was no direct contact with the rest of the cases in the sampling call. As for the rest of those whose invitations were undeliverable there is no further information.

40 sample members were unable to participate in the survey because they were away with no internet access or had a disability that prevented them from participating.

There were 146 explicit refusals to participate in the survey. Most of the refusals were from persons requesting to be removed from the email list. Other reasons for refusal included no time, disinterest in helping Birthright Israel, and an insistence that the survey has already been completed.

Outcomes

Overall response rate to the survey was 43 percent. The response rate for participants was 51 percent while that for nonparticipants was 24 percent.

Nonresponse Adjustments

Registration data was used to compare respondents to nonrespondents on a variety of dimensions including trip participation. Within participants and nonparticipants, weights were constructed using iterative proportional fitting to ensure that the sample matched the population on these key variables.

Table A2. Post-Trip Survey Response Rates

	Nonparticipants		Participants		Total	
Not invited	878	21.8%	2	.0%	880	7.4%
Invited	3155	78.2%	7930	100.0%	11085	92.6%
Total	4033		7932		11965	
<i>Complete (I)</i>	763	24.2%	3951	49.8%	4714	42.5%
<i>Partial (P)</i>	2	.1%	38	.5%	40	.4%
<i>Refusal and Break-off (R)</i>	129	4.1%	319	4.0%	448	4.0%
Break-off	41	1.3%	188	2.4%	229	2.1%
Refusal	71	2.3%	75	.9%	146	1.3%
Logged on, no response	17	.5%	56	.7%	73	.7%
<i>Noncontact (NC)</i>	2243	71.1%	3600	45.4%	5843	52.7%
No response	2166	68.7%	3481	43.9%	5647	50.9%
Email undeliverable	77	2.4%	119	1.5%	196	1.8%
<i>Other (O)</i>	18	.6%	22	.3%	40	.4%
No response (disabled)	2	.1%	3	.0%	5	.0%
Out of country, no email	16	.5%	19	.2%	35	.3%
Total	3155		7930		11085	
RR1 =		24.2%		49.8%		42.5%
$I / (I + P + R + NC + O)$						
RR2 =		24.3%		51.3%		42.9%
$(I + P) / (I + P + R + NC + O)$						

APPENDIX B: INDEX CONSTRUCTION

Table B1. High School Ritual Practice Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Easiness $P(X_j=1)$	Observed Guttman Errors	Expected Guttman Errors	Loev- inger's <i>H</i>	<i>Z</i>	$H_0: H_j \leq 0$ <i>p</i>
Kashrut	7620	0.233	412	1353.7	0.696	44.132	< 0.001
Shabbat candles	7620	0.357	438	1465.7	0.701	46.154	< 0.001
Seder	7620	0.881	106	534.3	0.802	23.726	< 0.001
Scale	7620		478	1676.8	0.714	47.444	< 0.001

Table B2. Bus Experience Indices: Learning Environment Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Item-Test Correlation	Item-Rest Correlation	Average Inter-Item Covariance	Alpha
Israeli culture	3980	0.6944	0.5768	.2181758	0.7956
Jewish history	3978	0.7037	0.5817	.2141589	0.7943
Jewish customs	3975	0.6835	0.5267	.2101233	0.8051
Arab-Israeli conflict	3980	0.7268	0.5847	.2011369	0.7941
Modern Israeli history	3981	0.7491	0.6434	.2074738	0.7845
Israeli social problems	3981	0.7373	0.6036	.2004206	0.7901
Israeli environment	3979	0.5747	0.4428	.2399392	0.8153
Test scale				.2130616	0.8211

Note: Scale score is mean of items.

Table B3. Bus Experience Indices: Bus Guide Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Item-Test Correlation	Item-Rest Correlation	Average Inter-Item Covariance	Alpha
Friendly	3974	0.6744	0.5537	.150320	0.7118
Promoted one political perspective*	3973	0.6464	0.4346	.142303	0.7381
Knowledgeable	3977	0.5910	0.4805	.166001	0.7302
Contributed to feeling of community on bus	3969	0.6782	0.5348	.144594	0.7113
Promoted one religious perspective*	3972	0.6127	0.3954	.148837	0.7474
Difficult to understand*	3972	0.6230	0.4362	.148916	0.7331
Open to concerns and questions	3973	0.7138	0.5855	.140516	0.7010
Test scale				.148783	0.7543

Note: Scale score is mean of items. * Reverse scored.

Table B4. Bus Experience Indices: Mifgash Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Item-Test Correlation	Item-Rest Correlation	Average Inter-Item Covariance	Alpha
Personal connections with individuals	3979	0.8528	0.7163	.3075719	0.8521
Made feel connected to my Israeli peers	3980	0.8867	0.7884	.2996367	0.8213
Made aware of what we have in common	3978	0.8518	0.7391	.3298574	0.8425
Important in helping understand Israel	3984	0.8337	0.7058	.3349160	0.8539
Test scale				.3179934	0.8772

Note: Scale score is mean of items.

Table B5. Social Environment Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Item-Test Correlation	Item-Rest Correlation	Average Inter-Item Covariance	Alpha
Felt like group of friends	3998	0.7917	0.7094	.2684564	0.8364
Were respectful toward each other	3997	0.6577	0.5462	.2959003	0.8568
Felt like a community	3991	0.7906	0.7064	.2673804	0.8364
Were disruptive or distracting*	3990	0.6327	0.4875	.2906709	0.8659
Formed friendships with others on bus	3977	0.6830	0.5615	.2842759	0.8552
Felt like part of bus community	3973	0.8287	0.7392	.2449183	0.8300
Group atmosphere enhanced experience	3980	0.8214	0.7242	.2430148	0.8325
Test scale				.2706542	0.8645

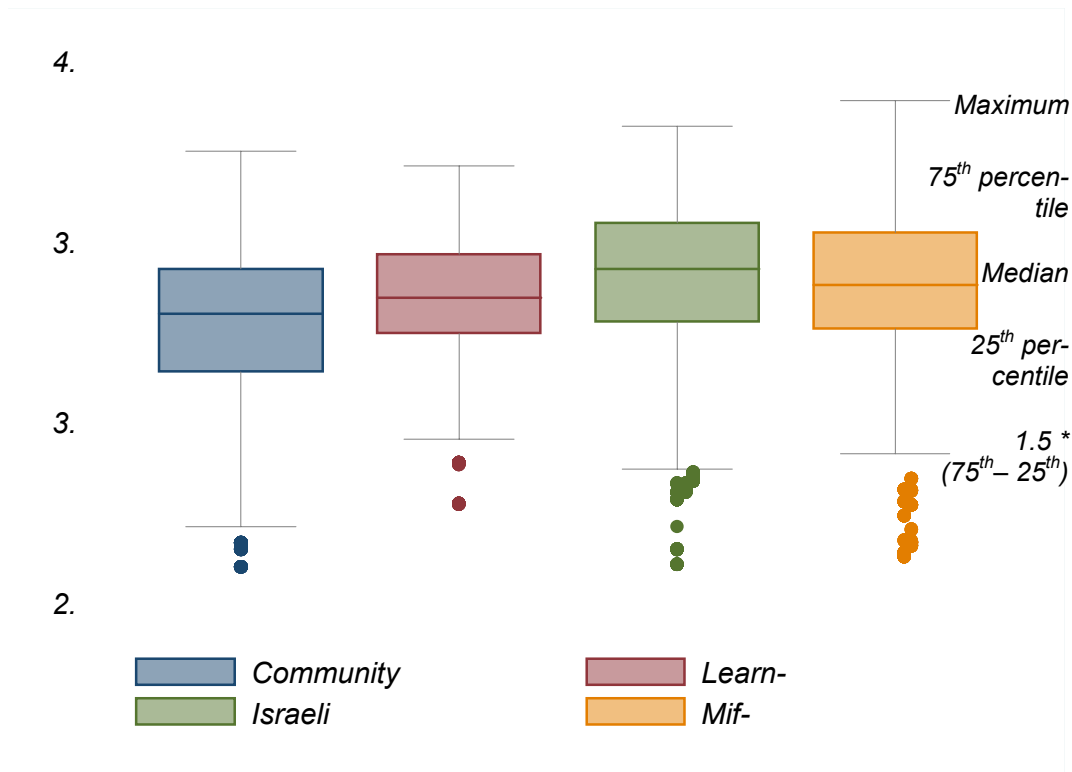
Note: Scale score is mean of items. * Reverse scored

Table B6. Social Environment Index: Encouragement Index

Item	<i>n</i>	Item-Test Correlation	Item-Rest Correlation	Average Inter-Item Covariance	Alpha
Move to Israel	3946	0.6807	0.4917	.2819982	0.7274
Get more involved in Jewish community	3941	0.6957	0.5558	.2918651	0.7130
Become more religious	3943	0.6706	0.4762	.2855662	0.7321
Donate money	3944	0.6827	0.4955	.2818534	0.7263
Lobby on behalf of Israel	3941	0.6950	0.5127	.2772132	0.7211
Consider continuing your Jewish journey	3934	0.6430	0.5078	.3148665	0.7273
Test scale				.2888975	0.7593

Note: Scale score is mean of items.

Figure B1: Bus Average Perceptions of Bus Environment



The middle line of the box is the median score, or that which 50 percent of buses exceeded and 50 percent fell short of. The upper and lower bars of the box respectively show the 75th and 25th percentiles. The 75th percentile is the point at which 25 percent of buses exceeded and 75 percent of buses fell below, while the 25th percentile is the opposite—75 percent of buses lie below and 25 percent of buses above. The lower whisker of the chart is 1.5 times the interquartile range (IQR) from the median. The IQR is the 75th percentile minus the 25th

percentile. Dots below the lower whisker show the scores of buses that are outliers, scoring particularly poorly. The upper bound of the whisker is the maximum score (no bus scores positively exceeded 1.5 times the IQR).

APPENDIX C: REGRESSION EQUATIONS

Table C1. Fixed-Effects Linear Regression of Bus Experience on Selected Variables

Item	Community	Guide	Learning	Mifgash
Age	-.033*** (.005)	-	-.151* (.068)	-
Age ²	-	-	.003* (.002)	-
Student	-.082** (.025)	-	-	-
Reform/Recon.	-	-	.037 (.023)	-
Conservative	-	-	.006 (.025)	-
Orthodox	-	-	-.144** (.053)	-
Other	-	-	-.088* (.042)	-
Guide	.163*** (.021)	-	-	.076** (.023)
Learning	.172*** (.017)	.144*** (.013)	-	.236*** (.018)
Mifgash	.288*** (.014)	.039** (.012)	-	-
Bus community	-	.099*** (.013)	-	.344*** (.017)
Intercept	1.943*** (.141)	2.461*** (.052)	5.071*** (.734)	1.203*** (.090)
$n_{\text{individual}}$	3893	3856	3902	3894
n_{groups}	214	214	214	214
R^2 (within)	.206	.084	.007	.195
R^2 (between)	.098	.141	.011	.036
R^2 (overall)	.187	.083	.007	.161

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Guide, learning, mifgash, and community independent variables are individual index scores. Dependent variables are at the bus level.

Table C2. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Post-trip Perception on Selected Variables

Item	Fun Vacation	College Seminar	Religious Pilgrimage	Trip to My Jewish Roots	Group Jew- ish Ex- perience
Pre-trip Expectation	2.51*** (.11)	2.00*** (.07)	2.58*** (.09)	2.91*** (.12)	2.51*** (.12)
Female	.71*** (.04)	-	-	-	1.19* (.08)
Age	-	-	.97** (.01)	.58* (.12)	-
Age ²	1.00*** (.00)	-	-	1.01* (.01)	1.00*** (.00)
Reform/Recon.	.85† (.07)	-	1.24*** (.10)	-	1.18† (.11)
Conservative	.80* (.08)	-	1.24** (.10)	-	1.23* (.12)
Orthodox	1.11 (.22)	-	1.26 (.21)	-	.54** (.11)
Other	.89 (.14)	-	1.12 (.16)	-	.83 (.15)
Attended camp	.86* (.06)	-	-	-	-
Worked at camp	1.25** (.10)	-	-	-	-
HS observance	.92* (.03)	-	-	-	-
Student	.81* (.07)	.76*** (.05)	-	-	.69** (.07)
Bus community	2.87*** (.41)	-	1.68*** (.24)	-	4.95*** (.81)
Learning	-	2.03*** (.34)	2.05*** (.37)	4.73*** (.85)	-
Cut 1	.92	2.53	4.26	-1.38	2.90
Cut 2	2.91	4.24	5.89	.544	4.83
Cut 3	4.76	6.35	7.69	2.26	6.62
<i>n</i>	3333	3331	3337	3348	3339
DF	12	3	8	4	9
<i>F</i>	53.43	144.48	105.42	192.16	55.57

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Bus community and learning are bus averages.

Table C3. OLS Regression of Encouragement on Selected Variables

Item	Coefficient
Female	.120*** (.020)
Age ²	-.000** (.000)
Learning	.335*** (.064)
Guide	-.108* (.044)
Mifgash	.127** (.044)
Intercept	1.781*** (.256)
<i>n</i>	3889
DF	5
<i>F</i>	19.21
<i>R</i> ²	.024

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. Learning, guide, and mifgash are bus level averages.

Table C4. Logistic Regression of Being “Very Much” Connected to Elements of Jewish Identity on Selected Variables

Item	Jewish history	Israel	Worldwide Jewish community	Local Jewish community
Participant	1.62*** (.14)	5.94*** (.62)	2.29*** (.21)	1.55*** (.16)
Pre-trip connection	7.16*** (.48)	13.32*** (1.31)	6.76*** (.49)	8.56*** (.64)
Female	1.16* (.08)	1.38*** (.09)	1.23** (.08)	-
Age	-	-	-	.36*** (.10)
Age ²	-	-	-	1.02** (.07)
HS observance	1.10** (.04)	-	1.08* (.04)	-
Reform/Recon.	-	1.29** (.11)	1.62*** (.14)	1.60*** (.18)
Conservative	-	1.71*** (.17)	1.95*** (.20)	2.15*** (.25)
Orthodox	-	3.10*** (.70)	2.64*** (.50)	4.53*** (.81)
Other	-	1.77** (.30)	1.13 (.18)	2.31*** (.43)
Intermarried	.69*** (.06)	.68*** (.06)	.678*** (.06)	-
Conversionary	.83† (.09)	1.02 (.11)	.85 (.09)	-
Student	-	-	.78** (.06)	-
<i>n</i>	3916	3893	3900	3984
DF	6	10	11	8
<i>F</i>	163.49	88.08	92.49	147.01

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for denominations is Just Jewish. Reference category for parental marital status is inmarried.

Table C5. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Connection to Israel on Selected Variables by Type of Jewish Education before High School

Item	No Jewish education	One day a week	Multiday	Day school
Participant	4.31*** (.99)	7.93*** (1.97)	8.87*** (1.58)	3.93*** (.92)
Pre-trip connection	9.12*** (1.87)	11.92*** (2.72)	19.24*** (3.63)	16.41*** (3.60)
Female	1.35† (.23)	1.27 (.18)	1.42** (.15)	1.52* (.27)
Age	1.03 (.03)	.94* (.03)	.95* (.02)	.94† (.03)
Reform/Recon.	2.01*** (.38)	1.02 (.17)	1.15 (.20)	1.05† (.27)
Conservative	2.70** (.80)	1.27 (.36)	1.49* (.27)	1.36 (.35)
Orthodox	7.28*** (4.02)	5.90 (6.77)	1.89 (1.78)	1.93* (.65)
Other	2.80** (.87)	1.80 (.78)	1.32 (.44)	1.41 (.51)
Intermarried	.55*** (.09)	.88 (.17)	.68† (.14)	.86 (.31)
Conversionary	.82 (.24)	.88 (.17)	1.18 (.20)	1.17 (.40)
<i>n</i>	701	824	1592	733
DF	10	10	10	10
<i>F</i>	20.43	16.94	32.02	19.21
Wald test ($\beta_{none} = \beta_x$)				
<i>F</i> (1, 4016)	-	3.28†	6.23*	.08

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Note: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Reference category for parental marital status is inmarried. Wald test tests equivalency of coefficients for participation in Birthright Israel between given equation and equation for those who received no Jewish education.

Table C6. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Connection to Jewish History on Selected Variables by Type of Jewish Education before High School

Item	Jewish history	Israel	Worldwide Jewish community	Local Jewish community
Participant	1.62*** (.14)	5.94*** (.62)	2.29*** (.21)	1.55*** (.16)
Pre-trip connection	7.16*** (.48)	13.32*** (1.31)	6.76*** (.49)	8.56*** (.64)
Female	1.16* (.08)	1.38*** (.09)	1.23** (.08)	-
Age	-	-	-	.36*** (.10)
Age ²	-	-	-	1.02** (.07)
HS observance	1.10** (.04)	-	1.08* (.04)	-
Reform/Recon.	-	1.29** (.11)	1.62*** (.14)	1.60*** (.18)
Conservative	-	1.71*** (.17)	1.95*** (.20)	2.15*** (.25)
Orthodox	-	3.10*** (.70)	2.64*** (.50)	4.53*** (.81)
Other	-	1.77** (.30)	1.13 (.18)	2.31*** (.43)
Intermarried	.69*** (.06)	.68*** (.06)	.678*** (.06)	-
Conversionary	.83† (.09)	1.02 (.11)	.85 (.09)	-
Student	-	-	.78** (.06)	-
<i>n</i>	3916	3893	3900	3984
DF	6	10	11	8
<i>F</i>	163.49	88.08	92.49	147.01

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Note: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for parental marital status is inmarried. Wald test tests equivalency of coefficients for participation in Birthright Israel between given equation and equation for those who received no Jewish education.

Table C7. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Connection to Worldwide Jewish Community on Selected Variables by Type of Jewish Education before High School

Item	No Jewish education	One day a week	Multi day	Day school
Participant	2.73*** (.55)	2.14*** (.43)	2.19*** (.31)	2.14*** (.43)
Pre-trip connection	8.74*** (1.60)	6.07*** (1.00)	6.23*** (.72)	8.91*** (1.55)
Female	.93 (.15)	1.20 (.18)	1.17 (.12)	1.63** (.27)
Reform/Recon.	2.60*** (.50)	1.08 (.19)	1.62** (.29)	1.35 (.35)
Conservative	2.74*** (.78)	1.45 (.44)	1.72** (.32)	1.94** (.46)
Orthodox	6.69*** (3.54)	4.44† (3.83)	2.33 (1.65)	2.88*** (.85)
Other	.91 (.28)	1.52 (.52)	.67 (.26)	1.85† (.62)
HS observance	1.13 (.09)	1.15 (.13)	1.05 (.07)	.93 (.08)
Intermarried	.73† (.13)	.98 (.17)	.53*** (.09)	.23*** (.08)
Conversionary	.52* (.16)	.82 (.19)	.74* (.11)	1.69† (.50)
Student	.65* (.12)	1.12 (.18)	.86 (.11)	.55** (.12)
<i>n</i>	702	825	1595	735
DF	11	11	11	11
<i>F</i>	21.00	14.73	28.16	20.18
Wald test ($\beta_{none} = \beta_x$)				
<i>F</i> (1, 4016)	-	.72	.81	.74

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Note: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for parental marital status is inmarried. Wald test tests equivalency of coefficients for participation in Birthright Israel between given equation and equation for those who received no Jewish education.

Table C8. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Connection to Worldwide Jewish Community on Selected Variables by Type of Jewish Education before High School

Item	No Jewish education	One day a week	Multiday	Day school
Participant	2.02** (.53)	1.85* (.46)	1.49* (.24)	1.18 (.26)
Pre-trip connection	10.01*** (2.18)	10.18*** (1.72)	7.21*** (.83)	11.19*** (1.99)
Age	.77 (.57)	1.00** (.07)	.41* (.19)	.41 (.29)
Age ²	1.00 (.02)	1.40** (.02)	1.02† (.01)	1.02 (.02)
Reform/Recon.	2.26** (.53)	1.40 (.36)	1.20 (.28)	2.08* (.70)
Conservative	1.87† (.61)	2.19* (.79)	1.50† (.35)	3.32*** (1.04)
Orthodox	6.44*** (2.84)	3.17 (2.49)	-	5.39*** (1.78)
Other	2.32* (.85)	2.57* (1.15)	1.62 (.66)	3.27** (1.36)
<i>N</i>	716	840	1628	742
DF	8	8	7	8
<i>F</i>	23.18	29.54	54.63	35.95
Wald test ($\beta_{none} = \beta_x$)				
$F(1, 4016)$	-	.06	1.00	2.51

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Note: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for parental marital status is inmarried. Wald test tests equivalency of coefficients for participation in Birthright Israel between given equation and equation for those who received no Jewish education. Orthodox omitted from multiday model as predicted success perfectly.

Table C9. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Items on Jewish Family Life on Selected Variables

Item	Marrying a Jew	Raising Jewish children
Participant	1.58*** (.19)	2.11*** (.29)
Pre-trip importance	7.87*** (.63)	8.31*** (.79)
Female	.78* (.08)	-
Reform/Recon.	1.11 (.17)	1.83*** (.28)
Conservative	1.85*** (.32)	2.42*** (.45)
Other	1.83** (.39)	1.71* (.43)
HS observance	1.15* (.07)	-
Intermarried	.54*** (.09)	.65** (.10)
Conversionary	.90 (.14)	.93 (.20)
Cut 1	3.68	3.25
Cut 2	5.44	5.18
Cut 3	7.79	7.45
<i>N</i>	1816	1813
DF	9	7
<i>F</i>	93.47	102.53

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Orthodox respondents excluded because of lack of variance (virtually all reported marrying a Jew and raising Jewish children were very important) led to multicollinearity and unreliable estimates.

Table C10. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Post-trip Activities on Selected Variables

Item	Hillel	On-campus	Off-campus	Israel	Synagogue	Federation
Pre-trip freq.	2.63*** (.08)	2.17*** (.08)	(.04)	-	2.06*** (.07)	1.88*** (.06)
Participant	1.35** (.13)	1.41** (.18)	.71*** (.07)	1.73*** (.17)	.78* (.08)	1.07 (.14)
Hillel invite	5.21*** (.60)	2.24*** (.28)	-	2.20*** (.20)	-	-
Chabad invite	-	1.43*** (.13)	1.27** (.09)	1.84*** (.13)	-	-
Synagogue invite	-	1.41*** (.16)	1.91*** (.17)	1.45*** (.12)	3.14*** (.28)	1.38** (.14)
Federation invite	-	-	-	-	-	5.52*** (.58)
Other invite	-	2.30** (.72)	2.39*** (.49)	2.06*** (.34)	-	1.79** (.34)
Age	-	.86*** (.02)	-	-	.93*** (.02)	-
Age ²	1.00* (.00)	-	-	-	-	-
Freshman	-	-	-	2.71*** (.34)	-	-
Sophomore	.72** (.07)	-	-	1.93*** (.23)	-	-
Juni or	.66** (.09)	-	-	1.23 (.17)	-	-
Seni or	.63** (.11)	-	-	1.25† (.16)	-	-
Grad. student	.45** (.14)	-	-	.58** (.10)	-	-
Reform/Recon.	-	-	-	-	1.18 (.14)	1.45* (.21)
Conservative	-	-	-	-	1.62** (.23)	1.52** (.23)
Orthodox	-	-	-	-	5.12*** (1.76)	1.91** (.44)
Hrs. Jewish ed.	-	-	-	-	.83** (.06)	-
Hrs. Jewish ed. ²	-	-	-	-	1.03** (.01)	-
Not U.S. resident	-	-	-	-	.64* (.11)	-
Born FSU	-	-	-	-	-	1.60* (.28)
Born Israel	-	-	-	-	-	1.42 (.64)
Cut 1	2.36	-.47	1.37	2.49	1.17	3.94
Cut 2	3.40	.46	2.25	3.35	2.07	4.81
Cut 3	4.26	1.27	3.06	4.09	2.97	5.74
Cut 4	5.55	2.54	4.15	5.17	4.12	6.78
<i>n</i>	3015	2202	3057	3960	2833	3956
DF	8	12	10	14	11	12
<i>F</i>	193.62	63.86	73.75	45.02	82.11	65.31

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Hillel, on-campus, and off-campus activities limited to pre- and post-trip students only. No pre-trip frequency for Israel activities because pre-trip question asked only of students. For student status in Hillel, off-campus, and on-campus models freshman is reference category. For Israel events, nonstudent is reference category for student status.

Table C11. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Current Observance on Selected Variables

Item	Shabbat meal	Shabbat candles
Participant	1.67*** (.14)	1.66*** (.17)
Pre-trip frequency	7.24*** (.39)	4.69*** (.32)
Reform/Recon.	1.01 (.09)	1.55*** (.18)
Conservative	1.30** (.13)	2.04*** (.27)
Orthodox	7.09*** (1.80)	9.81*** (4.56)
Other	1.87** (.27)	1.95** (.38)
Hrs. Jewish edu.	-	.82** (.06)
Hrs. Jewish edu. ²	-	1.04** (.01)
Born in Israel	2.25** (.61)	-
Born in Canada	-	2.08*** (.41)
Jewish friends	1.32*** (.05)	-
Cut 1	4.87	3.56
Cut 2	7.14	5.93
Cut 3	8.66	7.28
<i>n</i>	3995	2860
DF	8	10
<i>F</i>	247.60	87.34

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Reference category for place of birth is all countries bar that listed in the model.

Table C12. Logistic Regression of "Very Much" Agreeing with Images of Israel

Item	Educa- tional center	Riven with In- ternal Strife	Techno- logical Power- house	Li vely Democracy	Mul ti- cul tural soci ety	Fundamen- tal ist soci ety	Source of pride	Potential future home	Milita- rist ic soci ety
Parti ci pant	. 88 (. 08)	. 66*** (. 06)	1. 22* (. 11)	1. 35** (. 12)	1. 50*** (. 13)	. 68** (. 08)	1. 99*** (. 18)	2. 35*** (. 35)	1. 03 (. 11)
Pre-trip image	3. 20*** (. 21)	4. 09*** (. 30)	9. 95*** (. 77)	5. 32*** (. 37)	4. 04*** (. 27)	6. 13*** (. 74)	6. 72*** (. 50)	9. 01*** (1. 08)	5. 54*** (. 50)
Female	-	-	. 79** (. 06)	. 71*** (. 37)	-	-	-	-	-
Age	. 97* (. 02)	-	-	. 96** (. 01)	. 52* (. 13)	. 92** (. 03)	-	. 93*** (. 02)	. 55† (. 18)
Age ²	-	-	-	-	1. 01* (. 01)	-	-	-	1. 01† (. 01)
Reform/Recon.	1. 28** (. 11)	. 74** (. 07)	1. 10 (. 11)	-	-	. 72* (. 10)	1. 39*** (. 13)	. 89 (. 12)	. 52*** (. 06)
Conservati ve	1. 74*** (. 16)	. 61*** (. 06)	1. 46** (. 16)	-	-	. 66** (. 10)	1. 88*** (. 20)	1. 08 (. 16)	. 49*** (. 06)
Orthodox	1. 27 (. 22)	. 74 (. 15)	1. 45† (. 28)	-	-	1. 58† (. 38)	2. 65*** (. 60)	2. 65*** (. 56)	. 42*** (. 10)
Other	1. 32† (. 21)	1. 03 (. 17)	1. 72** (. 32)	-	-	1. 62* (. 38)	. 95 (. 15)	1. 46† (. 33)	. 86 (. 16)
Student	. 73** (. 07)	-	-	-	-	. 62** (. 10)	-	-	. 69** (. 09)
Intermarriage	-	-	-	. 75** (. 06)	-	-	-	-	-
Conversi onary marriage	-	-	-	1. 00 (. 10)	-	-	-	-	-
HS observance	-	-	1. 12** (. 05)	-	1. 08* (. 04)	-	-	-	-
Born Canada	-	-	1. 74*** (. 27)	-	-	-	-	. 93 (. 18)	. 97 (. 18)
Born Israel	-	-	2. 48** (. 78)	-	-	-	-	5. 19*** (1. 52)	. 59 (. 20)
Born FSU	-	-	. 98 (. 15)	-	-	-	-	1. 00 (. 18)	. 52*** (. 09)
Born other	-	-	1. 21 (. 23)	-	-	-	-	1. 34 (. 33)	1. 21 (. 29)
Attended camp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1. 42*** (. 14)	-
Worked camp	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1. 25* (. 14)	-
<i>n</i>	3940	3913	3908	3820	3940	3906	3946	3928	3929
DF	8	7	12	6	5	8	6	13	13
<i>F</i>	46. 95	63. 28	85. 36	111. 66	92. 86	33. 75	126. 38	40. 42	33. 72

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Reference category for parental marriage type is intermarriage. Reference category for country born is United States.

Table C13. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Frequency of Checking News about Israel on Selected Variables

Item	Odds Ratio
Participant	2.80*** (.27)
Female	.52*** (.04)
Born Canada	.95 (.16)
Born Israel	4.66*** (1.59)
Born FSU	1.33* (.18)
Born other	1.30 (.29)
Reform/Recon.	1.19† (.12)
Conservative	1.41** (.16)
Orthodox	1.26 (.35)
Other	1.24 (.22)
Intermarriage	1.33** (.12)
Conversionary marriage	1.50*** (.18)
N. parents' organizations	1.08* (.04)
Hrs. Jewish edu.	.83** (.05)
Hrs. Jewish edu. ²	1.03** (.01)
Jewish friends	1.17*** (.05)
Cut 1	-1.21
Cut 2	.32
Cut 3	1.47
Cut 4	2.97
Cut 5	4.27
<i>n</i>	2821
DF	16
<i>F</i>	18.22

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. Reference category for country born is United States. Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Jewish friends as measured pre-trip. Parents' organizations is sum of belonging to synagogue, JCC, donating to Federation, and belonging to other organization.

Table C14. Logistic Regression of Using Israeli and Jewish News Sources on Selected Variables

Item	Israeli	Jewish
Participant	2.05*** (.21)	1.43** (.17)
Female	.77*** (.05)	1.43*** (.13)
Age	-	.393** (.13)
Age ²	-	1.02** (.01)
Born Canada	1.62** (.24)	2.60*** (.43)
Born Israel	4.75*** (1.29)	1.25 (.45)
Born FSU	.89 (.12)	.83 (.16)
Born other	1.62* (.32)	1.48 (.40)
Reform/Recon.	.94 (.09)	1.12 (.15)
Conservative	1.43** (.16)	1.29† (.18)
Orthodox	2.36*** (.44)	4.07*** (.77)
Other	1.79** (.30)	1.12 (.23)
Intermarriage	1.22* (.12)	- -
Conversionary marriage	1.40*** (.15)	- -
Jewish friends	1.18*** (.04)	1.25*** (.05)
N. parents' organizations	- -	1.25*** (.05)
<i>n</i>	4029	4121
DF	13	14
<i>F</i>	17.27	20.63

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Odds ratios shown (standard errors in parentheses). Reference category for country born is United States. Reference category for denomination is Just Jewish. Reference category for parental marriage type is intermarried. Parents' organizations is sum of belonging to synagogue, JCC, donating to Federation, and belonging to other organization. Jewish friends as measured pre-trip.

Table C15. Ordinal Logistic Regression of Frequency of Recommending Birthright on Selected Variables

Item	Odds Ratio
Female	1.45*** (0.09)
Age	.96** (0.01)
Reform/Recon.	1.10 (0.09)
Conservative	1.10 (0.10)
Orthodox	.47*** (0.08)
Other	1.04 (0.15)
Number of parents' organizations	1.09** (0.03)
Non-American	.52*** (0.07)
Jewish friends	1.50*** (0.05)
Jewish org. officer	1.50*** (0.15)
HS observance	.94† (0.03)
Learning environment	1.53*** (0.11)
Mifgash	1.94*** (0.11)
Social environment	1.67*** (0.10)
Fun vacation	1.16*** (0.05)
Return to Jewish roots	1.57*** (0.07)
Exhausting trek	.90** (0.03)
Disappointment	.61*** (0.05)
Cut 1	3.03
Cut 2	5.33
Cut 3	7.40
<i>n</i>	3457
DF	18
<i>F</i>	71.30

† $p < .1$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses. Number of parents' organizations is the sum of belonging to a JCC, belonging to a synagogue, donating to a Jewish federation, and belonging to another Jewish organization. Jewish friends is as measured prior to trip. Fun vacation, return to Jewish roots, and exhausting trek as measured post-trip.

