



The Ethiopian National Project



Myers-JDC-Brookdale Institute  
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Youth

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# **The Ethiopian National Project: Research Report of the Matriculation Exams in 2007 of 12th Grade Students who Received Scholastic Assistance through the ENP Program**

Dalia Ben-Rabi  
Ruth Baruj-Kovarsky  
Miriam Cohen-Navot,  
Viacheslav Konstantinov  
Methodological consultant: Assaf Ben-Shoham

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The Ethiopian National Project is partnership between  
The United Jewish Communities-Federations of North America (UJC),  
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The ENP's goal is to advance Ethiopian-Israeli youth through programs that respond to their scholastic, emotional, and social needs. The scholastic assistance program is its flagship program and has been implemented since early 2005. The target population comprises all Ethiopian-Israeli students (those born in Ethiopia and those whose parents were born in Ethiopia) in seventh through twelfth grades who are not receiving assistance through another program and are not in a special education class.

The scholastic assistance program has expanded considerably since it was first introduced. In 2006/07, it was implemented at 120 junior high and high schools in 23 localities and served approximately 7,000 Ethiopian-Israeli students. The program, which is implemented after school hours, provides scholastic assistance to small groups of students throughout the school year. Every participant receives weekly instruction in different school subjects of about four hours. The high school students also receive intensive assistance before their matriculation exams. In addition, all participants join in social activities and some receive personal attention and coaching.

The current study examined the matriculation achievements of the students who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program who graduated in 2007<sup>1</sup>. The analysis is based on data provided by the Ministry of Education.

## **Achievements of Students at Participating Schools**

Most of the Ethiopian-Israeli twelfth graders (73%) at schools participating in the program received scholastics assistance through the ENP program. The other Ethiopian-Israeli students at those schools did not receive any direct input from the program, apparently for two main reasons: (1) They were participating in other programs that responded to their needs or (2) They were not motivated to take part.

Table 1 presents the 2007 matriculation achievements of all Ethiopian-Israeli 12<sup>th</sup> grade students at schools participating in the program, as well as those who received direct assistance. The table shows that 46% of the graduates at the participating schools were eligible for a matriculation certificate and 28% achieved the threshold requirements for admission to university. The table also shows that the results of the students who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program were higher than those of the other students: 52% were eligible for matriculation certificate and 32% achieved the threshold requirements for admission to university.

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<sup>1</sup> Information on other aspects of the scholastic assistance program is presented in a 2008 report by Cohen-Navot, M., Baruj-Kovarsky, R., Levi, D., and Konstantinov, V. Information about the ENP youth centers is presented in a 2009 report by Baruj-Kovarsky, R. and Cohen-Navot, M. A study of the ENP program to prevent alcohol and drug abuse and a study on implementation of the scholastic assistance program is currently in progress will be published shortly.

**Table 1: Matriculation Results of Ethiopian-Israeli Twelfth Graders at Schools Participating in the Program in 2007 (Percent)**

	All Ethiopian-Israeli Students at Participating Schools	Students Who Received Scholastic Assistance through the ENP Program
Eligible for matriculation certificate	46.1	52.4
Eligible for university matriculation certificates	28.4	32.5
Passed mathematics (%)	60.7	67.3
Passed English (%)	74.1	81.1
Passed Hebrew (%)	73.7	82.1

### **Analysis of the Program's Impact on the Participating Students' Achievements**

In order to assess the impact of the ENP scholastic assistance program on the students' achievements, we compared the achievements of students who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program with those of students from non-participating schools with similar characteristics. The analysis sought to answer the question "What would have happened had the program *not* been implemented at the school?" by examining differences between Ethiopian-Israeli students who participated in the program and similar students from schools where the program was not implemented. The difference in the achievements of the students in the two groups can be interpreted as an estimate of the program's impact.

The statistical analysis is based on matching each student who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program with three similar Ethiopian-Israeli students at other schools. The control group was selected from 1,440 Ethiopian-Israeli students at 222 Jewish high schools not participating in the program.

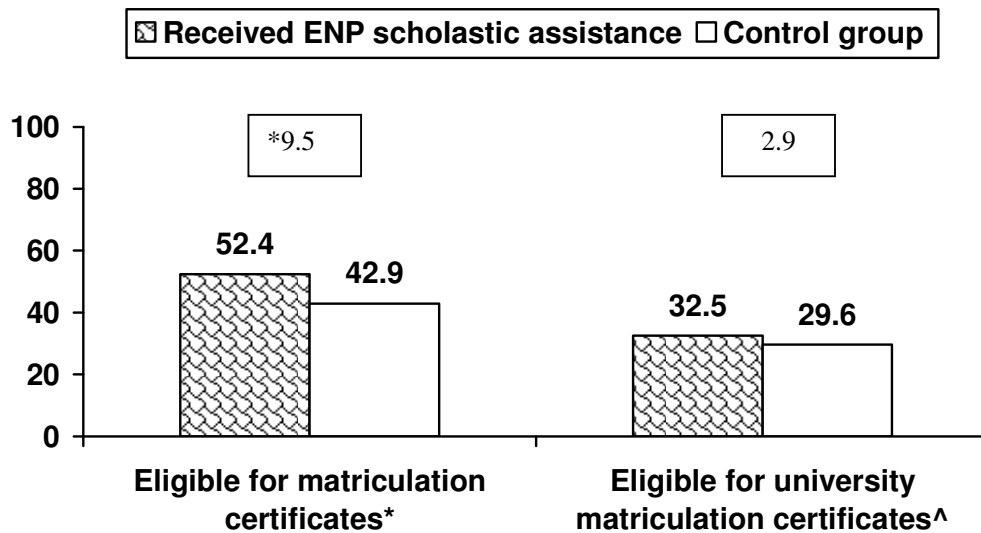
The matching was based on sociodemographic characteristics of the students themselves (e.g., gender, mother's education, and country of birth) and characteristics of the school attended (e.g., scholastic achievements of Ethiopian-Israeli students in previous years and scholastic achievements of all students at the school in the study year, sociodemographic characteristics of the total student populations and structural features such as the size of the school).

The analysis included the 55 schools where the program was implemented for 12<sup>th</sup> graders in 2007. At some of the schools, the program had been implemented for two years and at others, only one. Matriculation exams are generally spread over all three years at high school and it can be assumed that the students took some of the exams before they joined the program. Consequently, the results reflect the impact of only partial "exposure" to the program.

The analysis presented here relates to the achievements of the students who personally received scholastic assistance through the ENP program. This is a different strategy than the strategy of the analysis that was conducted previously for the 2006 data which examined the achievements of all Ethiopian students in the participating schools. Note that the students who received scholastic assistance through the program may from the start, have had higher pre-program capability achievements or motivation, than those who did not. Since we have no information about the prior scholastic level of the students, we could not match the control group in this respect.

Figure 1 shows the results achieved by 12<sup>th</sup> grade students who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program and by similar students at schools without the program (the control group). Significant differences can be seen between the two groups in the percentage of students who achieved matriculation certificate eligibility (a gap of 9.5 percentage points, constituting an increase of 22.1%). No significant difference was found in the percentage of students whose results met the university admissions threshold.

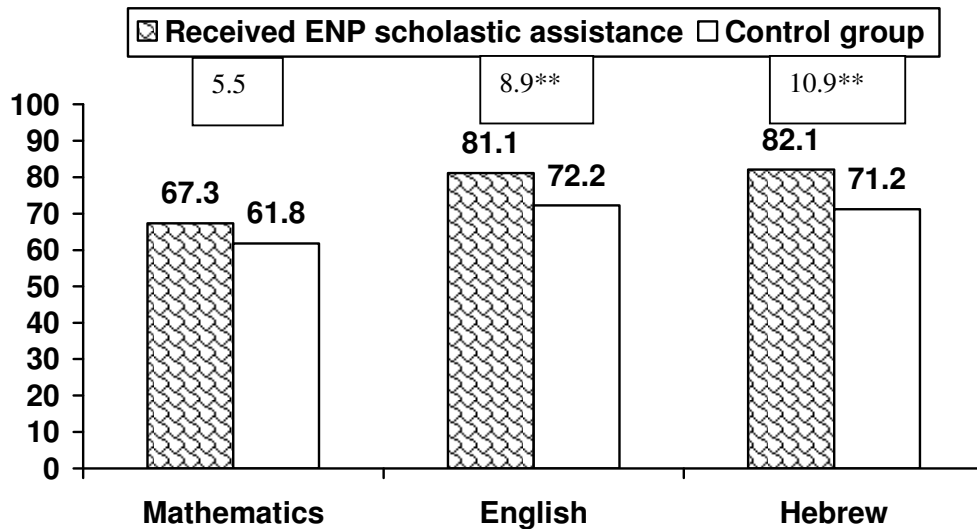
**Figure 1: Matriculation Results of Students who Received ENP Scholastic Assistance and Students in the Control Group (2007): Eligibility for Matriculation Certificates, and for University Matriculation Certificates**



\* P<0.05

^ Eligible for matriculation certificates and at least 4 test units of English

**Figure 2: Matriculation Results of Students who Received ENP Scholastic Assistance and Students in the Control Group (2007): Percentage of Students Who Passed Exams in Mathematics<sup>^</sup>, English<sup>^</sup>, and Hebrew**



<sup>^</sup> Passing scores at level acquired for matriculation certificates (at least 3 test units)  
**\*\*P<0.01**

Figure 2 shows significant differences in favor of the students who received scholastic assistance through the ENP program, relative to the control group, in the achievements in English (a gap of 8.9 percentage points, **constituting an increase of 12.3%**) and Hebrew (a gap of 10.9 percentage points, **constituting an increase of 15.3%**).

In conclusion, this analysis indicates that the program has succeeded in enhancing achievements among participants in the program (regarding eligibility for matriculation certificates, and success in the English and Hebrew exams). It is important to continue examining the students' results over time, so as to be able to track multi-year trends and in order to assess the program's impact on students' achievements as the number of years that the 12<sup>th</sup> graders taking exams have received assistance will increase.