



Ilan Ramon Center – Survey of Graduates

Executive Summary

November 2013

Program Description

The Ilan Ramon Science Center, located at Ben-Gurion University, supports twelve different programs for the development of academic excellence among students, including exposure to and enrichment in the fields of physics and astronomy. The ultimate goal of the center is to promote and develop physics studies in the southern district of Israel. The center works with students who are interested in physics, at all age levels and from all sectors of the population in the south. It enables them to access up-to-date knowledge and advanced physical facilities, along with instruction and guidance from professional counselors and advisors.

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of the research is to examine the impact over time of participation in the Excellence Program (that includes research projects in physics, Physics Olympics); and to assess the extent to which the program achieves its goals.

Research Method

A telephone survey was conducted among 112 graduates who completed the program in 2008. The survey examined the status of their studies and the perceived contribution of participation in the program.

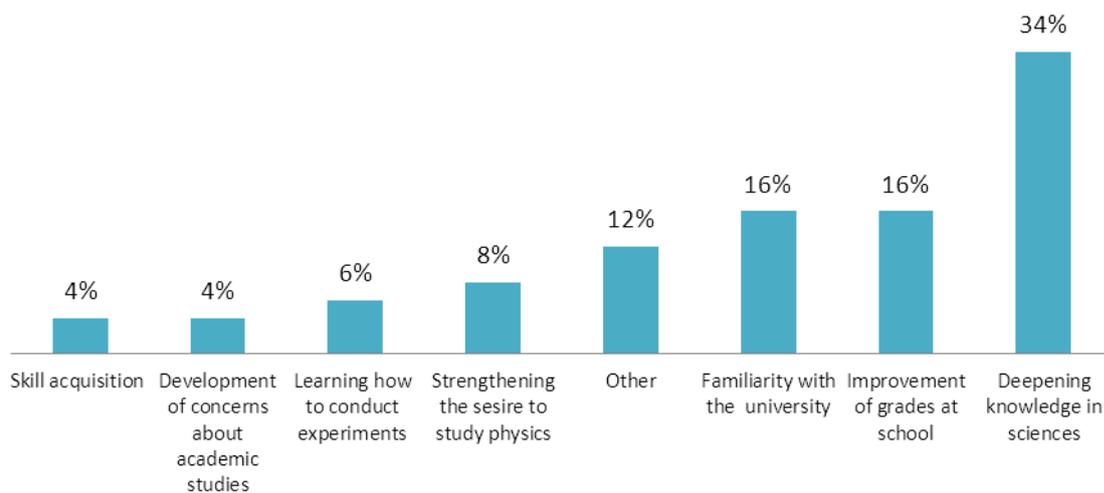
Main Findings

- An analysis of the survey findings shows that 93% of the program graduates are presently enrolled in academic studies or intend to study in the near future.
- Among the graduates who are enrolled in academic studies, 71% are studying at universities, the majority at Ben-Gurion University. The remaining 29% are studying at colleges, primarily in southern Israel.
- 71% of the graduates have chosen to study science and technology, and the rest have selected studies in the humanities and social sciences. An examination of the factors for choosing non-science studies revealed that approximately half of the humanities and social science students had not felt connected to the field of science and technology. The other half

report that they do not want to work in science in the future or do not believe that they will find work in the field.

- According to the graduates, the main contribution of the program is deepening their knowledge in science fields, and creating more positive attitudes towards science.

The most significant contribution of the program according to the graduates (N=46)



- The participants report that the program did not increase the probability that they would pursue academic studies; 95% of them said that they would have done so in any event.

Conclusions and Recommendations

According to the research findings, the majority of graduates of the Ilan Ramon Center programs study science and technology subjects in academic institutions, and their achievements are high. Based on this data it can be concluded that in the long term, the goals of the program are achieved. However, it is not possible to reach conclusions from the research regarding the unique contribution of the program in attaining these goals. It seems that the primary contribution of the program is the exposure of the participants to the world of academia and academic research. In addition, the program contributed to deepening the knowledge of the participants in physics subjects and to creating positive attitudes towards the sciences.