

The Use of Database for the Retrieval of Information in Judaica Data in High Yeshivas

Miriam Hiller (Daum)

Abstract:

The world of high Yeshivas that is characterized by a traditional and conservative study methodology faces technological innovation in the shape of religious data base. On the one hand, this innovation presents "Halacha" problem or questions. On the other hand, it presents a great potential. This thesis examines how this data base will be accepted at various high Yeshivas.

The hypotheses of this research divide the high Yeshivas into two types:

a. "Hesder" Yeshivas, Yeshivas that integrate army service with religious studies; b. Ultra-orthodox Yeshivas. The first hypothesis is that the entrance of the religious data base at the "Hesder" Yeshivas would be natural. In the ultra-orthodox there could be indecisiveness at the beginning because of their more conservative character and fears of breaking "Halacha" laws. However, this data base will eventually and perhaps more slowly be used at these Yeshivas, too.

For the purpose of this research, the use of information in Judaica database is defined as a dependent variable, and the type of Yeshiva as an independent variable. Ten Yeshivas were chosen for each type according to their geographical dispersion. An interview regarding the possibility of introducing religious data base at the Yeshivas was held with a Rabbi of the Yeshivas.

At the Ultra-orthodox Yeshivas, the reason for the postponement of the entrance of the data base was generally the concern of breaking the Halacha. Therefore, there was a need to understand the personal view of the leading

Rabbi in each Yeshiva. Moreover, a questionnaire was distributed to measure the use of religious data base at the Yeshivas.

The results of the research show that the hypotheses were indeed correct. Evidently there is a great readiness on the part of the Yeshivas to accept the religious data base and they have entered most of the "Hesder" Yeshivas quite naturally. At the Ultra-orthodox Yeshivas, the religious data base did not enter as quickly. Not only were they concern with breaking Halacha laws, but also there were other reasons such as economic factors and low level technology to consider. Despite the fact that in comparison to the "Hesder" Yeshivas the entrance of the religious data base into the Ultra-orthodox Yeshivas was slow, the actual adoption of this data base was surprising and faster than was expected by the hypothesis of this paper.

This research paves the way to order research that will deal with the question of what the religious library will look like in the 21st century. Will the computer replace the religious books? How will "Beit Hamidrash" look? What will the home religious library look like? How will the religious data base be accepted at the high Yeshivas in the future?

Research such as this has pragmatic significance. It can influence many areas such as commerce and technology of designing more data base and other branches that stem from them.

system no. 332000

היל.שם תשן"ג A078.10285