

The Connection between Motivation and Job Significance among Academically Trained Employees: A Case Study of Workers in Out-of-Home Settings

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Abstract

Side by side with awareness of the rights of people with disabilities, attention is now focusing on the caregivers of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and on how they enhance the quality of life of this population group. In community-based residential facilities, these care workers provide people with IDD with training and support in activities of daily living, educational and social activities, and a wide range of medical and psychological treatments. Despite the challenges and significance of this work, there is a shortage of high-quality personnel. The current study examined the association between motivation and perceived meaning in one's job and satisfaction and intention to leave among care workers in out-of-home facilities for people with IDD. The sample included 79 care workers with post-secondary education employed at out-of-home facilities of the Welfare Ministry, in non-managerial roles as direct caregivers, counselors, and coordinators, in Northern Israel. The main finding of the study is low motivation and satisfaction. In addition, a positive association was found between work motivation and satisfaction with the workplace, and a negative association between satisfaction with the work itself, and intention to leave the workplace. No significant association was found between finding meaning in one's job and satisfaction with the work. The study sheds light on this important yet understudied area. Although it is very important to place skilled educated personnel in caregiving roles among the disabled in general and those with IDD living in out-of-home facilities in particular, it is also necessary to strengthen the ties between academic education and actual reality of working in the field with people with disabilities.

Keywords: motivation, job significance, academically trained employees, workplace, higher education, disabilities

1. Introduction

The purpose of the study, which was conducted from March-April 2020, was to examine the association between motivation and perceiving meaning in one's job and satisfaction and intention to leave among care workers in out-of-home facilities for people with IDD. In recent decades Israel and other countries have seen significant progress in the treatment of people with disabilities. This is evident in the development of services, legislation, and changing public attitudes on this topic. In accord with the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, of which Israel is a signatory, the Disabilities Administration Division at the Ministry of Labor, Welfare, and Social Services is in charge of providing services to this population, under the Welfare (Care of Retarded Persons) Law, 1969, and other laws.

The Disabilities Administration was established in August 2016 as part of a professional and strategic reform implemented by the Ministry of Labor, Social Affairs, and Social Services in its approach to people with disabilities. The change in the structure of the administration encompassed all the relevant elements within the field of disabilities and united three divisions that had previously been occupied with this area at the ministry (the Division for the Care of People with Intellectual Development Disabilities; the Rehabilitation Division; and the Service for the Care for People with Autism) in one joint administration (Shalom & Lehavi, 2017).

In the current study we explored the association between work motivation, finding meaning in one's job, and satisfaction and intention to leave among academic care workers at out-of-home facilities for people with IDD. The contribution of the current study may be manifested in increasing awareness of students and/or people with an

academic education in various disciplines, regarding the needs in the field, understanding this area and meaning in one's job, and thus increasing occupational motivation in this domain.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Occupational Motivation

Occupational motivation is defined as the individual's desire to try to perform productive activity related to the workplace and to behave in a way that is beneficial for the organization. This is supported by Wagner and Manor (Weinisch, 2003) who contend that motivation in organizations is important, since workers with high motivation who demonstrate satisfaction with their job and workplace display high commitment to the organization, high performance, persistence in their job, and no inclination to leave. Oplatka (2015) noted five main factors that affect one's work motivation:

- 1) Needs – for instance, the need for respect and appreciation;
- 2) Personal empowerment, i.e., an inner urge to do well and to attain achievements;
- 3) The cognitive-intellectual factor that operates according to various theories focusing on one's expectations of the job, of oneself, and of others;
- 4) Professional characterization – i.e., role features and professional demands;
- 5) Feelings and emotions regarding the nature of the job, the workplace, and satisfaction with them.

The potential for work motivation appears in different people in different ways, and not everything that motivates one will motivate another. Consequently, the Job Characteristics Model devised by Hackman and Oldham (1975) suggests five dimensions that affect work motivation and satisfaction: autonomy, feedback, skill variety, task identity, and task significance. The potential for motivation can be calculated using a quantitative formula. High motivation is related to the experience of three psychological conditions generated by satisfying intrinsic motivations: skill variety, task identity, and task significance. The two other components that determine the level of motivation are the sense of responsibility towards the job as a result of being granted wide autonomy, and receiving feedback that provides information on the outcomes of task performance. These theories represent diverse approaches to the topic of work motivation, which can also help understand the motivation to work with people with IDD and the significance of perceiving meaning in one's job.

2.2 Role Meaning

The perceived meaning of one's job is one of the factors that affects workers' degree of involvement, persistence, and satisfaction in the workplace. For different people, this sense of meaning might stem from different sources. Perceived meaning has also been found to affect other major life aspects, for instance people who feel that their work is meaningful feel that their life is more satisfying in general (Weir, 2013).

In fact, perceived personal meaning, self-fulfillment, and deep connection to the job were found to moderate the effect of moderate pay conditions: Certain occupations were found to be more strongly related to sense of meaning. For instance, people who work in the health fields are inclined to feel a higher sense of meaning. People tend to feel a stronger sense of meaning when their work affects others and has a positive impact on them and when they feel that they are utilizing their special skills in their job (ibid.).

In Israel, social workers who engage in direct treatment were found to relate to role meaning, their interest in the job, and the ability to use knowledge they had acquired, as the most positive characteristic causing them to remain in their job and role (Bargal & Guterman, 1996). Another finding indicates that workers who feel a lack of meaning in their work report more burnout than those who feel that their work is meaningful (Shirom & Ezrachi, 2003).

Evidence of the crucial place of work as providing meaning in life can be seen through the opposite situation – when people feel that they do not manage to realize the expected meaning in their work. Research on the negative impact of these situations raises consistent findings. When workers lose the feeling or do not manage to feel that their work is valuable and useful, the seeds of burnout begin to sprout. Perceiving meaning in one's job constitutes a defense against the emergence of burnout also in the case of a demanding and stressful job (Pines, 2004; Pines & Keinan, 2005).

Some people perceive their work as a "calling." They emphasize the satisfaction and social contribution achieved through their job. They perceive their work as inseparable from their life and are strongly invested in it. Work is for them a goal unto itself, where their aspirations and fields of interest receive maximal expression (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997).

2.3 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is one of the components of work most studied in the past fifty years (Rayton, 2006). The literature has many definitions of this term. Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a positive emotional state resulting from individuals' appreciation of their job. Some have expanded the definition, explaining that job satisfaction is workers' emotional response to their work in the organization, after comparing the expected outcomes to those achieved in practice (Camp, 1994).

The prevalent theories in the study of job satisfaction focus mainly on terms of needs or expectations and their fulfillment in one's job. Maslow (1954) contends that people have a hierarchy of needs that they strive to obtain and that are ranked by significance: physiological needs, safety needs, love and belongingness needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. The satisfaction model, based on this theory, determines that people will be satisfied with their job only if the organization in which they are employed provides an adequate response to these needs (Camp, 1994).

The research literature found that job satisfaction is a predictor of performance on the job (Heller, Watson & Ilies, 2004), physical and mental worker well-being (George & Jones, 2008), satisfaction with life (Baldwin & Padgett, 1989), and organizational commitment (Gaertner, 1999). In contrast, lack of job satisfaction is related to problems such as worker turnover (Feldman & Arnold, 1981), absence from work (Breugh, 1981), inclination to leave (Ghazzawi, 2008), and burnout.

The factors affecting job satisfaction are divided into personal and demographic variables and organizational variables. Personal variables found to affect job satisfaction are the workers' personality, the values they bring to the job, life satisfaction, and social influence (George & Jones, 2008). Additional demographic variables are the worker's age, level of education, seniority in the organization, gender, and marital status. Organizational variables found to affect job satisfaction are organizational culture, nature of the job, opportunities for promotion, pay, satisfaction with colleagues, satisfaction with one's superior and the company policy, job security, and organizational justice (Tanriverdi, 2008; Nadiri & Tanova, 2010).

As stated, the field of disabilities is perceived as a complex and demanding occupational field due to the high demands of this work, manifested in the need to handle physical as well as mental challenges that involve feelings of mental stress, pressure, and high burnout (Hensel et al., 2015). Nevertheless, some workers in this field express high satisfaction due to the sense of empowerment, achievements, responsibility, gratification, and meaning in their work. Job satisfaction can be manifested in a sense of pride at achievements, motivation to develop, and more (Mandler & Korazim, 2005).

2.4 Intention to Leave

Workers' intention or inclination to leave (or to desert) have been given many designations in the research literature, such as exit, turnover, leave, quit, flight, and withdrawal. This means individuals' tendency to relinquish a current job or work environment, usually in favor of another alternative that appears to them more suitable or tempting for various reasons (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Hom et al., 1992; Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999).

The inclination to leave reflects workers' views on their intention to leave the organization voluntarily. In certain circumstances, the inclination to leave can explain actual leaving, and various studies show that inclination to leave can explain up to 50% of the variance in actual leaving (Vandenberg, 1999; Chatman, 1991).

Sometimes the inclination to leave is perceived as "psychological" withdrawal from the organization, which expresses a sense of dissatisfaction with occurrences within it, both on the personal level and on the collective/organizational level. Leaving has different underlying causes – financial, psychological, management, sociological, and others (Hirschman, 1970).

The main theory in the literature explaining leaving and inclination to leave is known as the push-pull theory. The pull part of the theory is based mainly on a perception of the labor market as facilitating mobility and offering new opportunities. According to this perception, the more alternatives there are in the labor market, and the more attractive they are, the more workers will be motivated to try and switch jobs in order to improve their terms of employment. At the same time, it will be easier for employers to tempt workers and bring the best to join their ranks. Therefore, pull explanations stem mainly from developments in the wider environment and from macro-economic and social factors.

In contrast, the push part of the theory is based mainly on analysis of the organization itself and the individual's labor domain. Studies with this point of departure claim (Cohen, 1977; Hulin et al., 1985; Mobley, 1999) that intention to

leave and actual leaving by workers are caused mainly by intra-organizational factors. This approach stresses various work-related variables, including structural factors (such as autonomy and including workers in decision making) and situational factors (such as satisfaction, perceived meaning in one's job, commitment, realizing expectations, and peer support).

In addition to the push-pull approaches, the crisis theory (an unfolding theory) has developed in recent years. According to this outlook, many workers tend to leave the organization not as a result of pull or push factors but rather due to a process generated by the occurrence of a crisis event in the work environment. The crisis stimulates a perceptual process that may but does not necessarily end in intention to leave or even actual leaving. In contrast to the two traditional models of pull and push, the crisis theory argues for the existence of different types of departure decisions, for instance "impulsive departure" or "regular inclination to leave", which in many cases change or shorten the full departure process, as described by Mobley (1977). Any type of departure is also characterized by the development of special mental and cognitive conditions within the worker, and these determine the nature of the departure that will occur (Lee & Mitchell, 1994).

This study will examine the association between motivation and job significance on one hand and satisfaction with intentions to leave among care workers in out-of-home facilities for people with IDD on the other. In light of this theoretical perspective, we shall now focus on the field of IDD.

3. What are Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities – IDD?

The definition of intellectual and developmental disabilities is anchored in the Welfare (Care of Retarded Persons) Law, 1969. This is defined in the law as follows: "A person who, due to lack of development, deficient development of mental capacity with limited adaptive behavior is a person requiring care".

According to the American Psychiatric Association, IDD includes individuals with both decreased mental function and adaptive skills in the conceptual, social, and practical dimensions. These people have deficits in cognitive functions that are manifested in difficulties with drawing conclusions, solving problems, planning, abstract thinking, judgment, academic learning, and learning from experience; difficulties in adaptive functioning are manifested in life skills such as communication, social participation, and independent living. According to the DSM-5 on conceptual functioning, children with IDD with a moderate-severe level of functioning are characterized by limitations in learning to read, to write, and concepts of quantity, time, and space. In the area of practical functioning, they are characterized by partial independence in self-care skills, use of community resources, and need more time for learning and more mediation. The lower the level of functioning the more limited their degree of independence and the more intensive the assistance needed. In the area of social functioning, these children are characterized by difficulties with understanding social connotations and with the ability of social judgment. Linguistically, a linguistic delay is evident. Spoken language is simple and limited, with no complex structures (APA, 2013).

According to the accepted definition, there are four levels of IDD: mild retardation (IQ=52-67); moderate retardation (IQ = 36-51); severe retardation (IQ=20-35), and profound retardation (IQ <20). It is customary to perceive intellectual disability as a state that changes according to etiological factors and formal or informal support. Since about 40% of people with IDD have no etiology or clear reason for the disability, some researchers link it to external factors such as society and culture. This is reinforced by previous studies, which found a particularly high rate in countries and areas with a low socioeconomic status and in societies and cultures with unique norms and customs such as consanguineous marriage. According to this approach, it appears that IDD is a biological phenomenon that is generated and characterized according to the culture in which it appears and in the context of socioeconomic and political features (Nasser, 2013).

The population of people with IDD is one of the most vulnerable groups of all people with disabilities. The US Federal Developmental Disabilities Act defined mental disabilities as a handicap that appears before age 21 and that occasions disabilities in at least three main areas of learning, movement, self-orientation ability, self-care ability, language, financial independence as an adult, and independent accommodation ability (Laws et al., 2010). Care for this special community constitutes a considerable challenge for those who choose to take on the responsibility.

3.1 Rights of People with Disabilities

Due to the complexity of coping with difficulties in the above-mentioned areas, it is clear that children and adults with disabilities need diverse types of support and complementary services that would allow them a life of dignity, including opportunities for successful assimilation into the community (Laws et al., 2010). For most people throughout the world, living within a community is part of the normal texture of daily life. This, however, is not necessarily true for people with disabilities, who in many countries must contend with social stigma and a lack of

technology needed for easier access to public services and community support. Awareness of the previously mentioned issues have brought many countries to recognize the right of people with disabilities to live a life of complete inclusion in their own communities (Hensel et al., 2015).

The United Nations (UN) has recognized the rights of people with disabilities, and this is anchored in article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which determined that these people are entitled to live independently within the community. Article 19 determines that people with disabilities are entitled to live according to principles of equality, autonomy, and full integration in the community, and that they have the right to choose (the place and residential format); to receive support (access to a variety of services and personal support that maintain their dignity); and to enjoy access to community services and facilities, similar to the rest of the population (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017).

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, formulated in 2006, was signed by Israel in 2007 and ratified by it in 2012. Various laws were enacted in Israel over the years, aimed at recognizing the rights of people with disabilities, primarily the Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law – 1998 and the Basic Law - Human Dignity and Liberty – 1992 (Barlev & Sandler-Loeff, 2018).

In this context and subject to the rights of those with IDD, the latter are offered out-of-home facilities as supportive housing accommodations:

3.2 Out-of-Home Facilities for People with IDD

The policy of the Ministry of Social Affairs focuses on integrating people with IDD in the community, in residential facilities that are the least restrictive possible, and if possible in community-based residential settings. Accordingly, in recent years efforts have been made to refer people with IDD to community-based housing, and even in large residential homes the policy is one of openness regarding residents' freedom of choice and contact with the community (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016).

Out-of-home housing accommodations is an inclusive name for housing in a sheltered environment in a residential facility outside the family home that is regularly supervised by the Ministry of Social Affairs. This is a right to which any person diagnosed as having IDD is entitled. Out-of-home housing accommodations are a service that includes residing in an apartment where persons with special needs receive comprehensive and supportive care in all areas of life. Support is provided 24/7 throughout the entire year, by the staff of the facility that meets all their needs: medical care, assistance with daily activities, occupation, leisure activities, and food.

In Israel there are varied out-of-home facilities. These include large residential homes, hostels, apartments (including assisted living arrangements and satellite apartments, which are branches of large residential facilities), and foster care (an option available only for children). Most of the residents in out-of-home facilities (about two thirds) live in residential homes, and about one third in community-based housing, i.e., hostels and apartments (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016).

The number of out-of-home facilities for people with IDD in Israel, as of 2014, was 141 facilities intended for people with IDD (only), of them 63 residential homes – large facilities that house dozens of residents (at least 35); 48 hostels – community-based facilities with 13-34 residents; 30 residential arrays – facilities that encompass several community-based apartments, with 2-12 residents in each (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016). According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services (2019) in a summary conference for 2018 held in January 2019, the number of out-of-home facilities has grown and reached 305, of them 136 residential homes and branches that house 8,956 residents, and 169 community-based housing facilities with 6,743 residents. According to the summary, 156 residents were added to this service in 2018. Moreover, the plan for 2019 was presented, whereby 150 additional apartments would be opened in the community, and for 2020-2022 – 100 additional apartments. According to these data, it is possible to see an increase in the need for out-of-home facilities and in the response provided for this purpose (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016).

According to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services (2018), more than 15,600 people with IDD in Israel are currently in out-of-home residential facilities throughout the country. The service includes 135 facilities around the country, with both a therapeutic and a nursing care orientation. These facilities are approved and supervised by the Disabilities Administration Division at the Ministry of Social Affairs. These sheltered facilities are in charge of the direct and constant care of these people in all life areas, 24 hours a day seven days a week, throughout the entire year.

4. Caregivers at Residential Facilities for People with IDD

In Israel as elsewhere there is, as stated, growing awareness of the contribution of direct caregivers of people with IDD to these people's quality of life. In addition, there is increasing recognition that these care workers are the vanguard of the extensive array of services required by this population and that the work of the direct caregivers is most essential (Mandler & Korazim, 2005; Hensel et al., 2015).

Caregivers in residential homes have a significant impact on determining residents' quality of life and the conduct of the home, as they work directly with the residents. For this reason, employing suitable workers, preparing them for beginning actual work, their continued training, and following and providing feedback on their work, all demand that workers be trained for their job in the most professional way. The job requirements are that workers in residential facilities should have at least 11 years of schooling, or alternately a certified caregiver diploma (Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, 2015). As part of attempts and endeavors to improve the care of people with IDD in out-of-home facilities, the Division for the Care of People with IDD in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services has been operating for about four decades to impart to caregivers of residents with IDD professional tools, to empower them, and to reduce their sense of stress and burnout. Thus, in this framework caregivers in out-of-home facilities undergo training, at the end of which they receive a diploma certifying them to work in this field (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016). Hence, in order to meet the needs of residents with disabilities it is important to provide them with a therapeutic staff, experienced in the health professions, who are both readily willing and of and professionally able (European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017).

Barlev and Rivkin (2016) show that most of the personnel who work as caregivers and counselors in residential facilities are women (86%); nearly half (43%) are 34 years old or younger; and about half (51%) have an academic education, where the rest have only a high school education. This study also shows that caregivers in residential facilities have a very high level (61%) of job satisfaction. Almost all (83%) noted that they are most satisfied by their contribution to the residents, and almost all (87%) would choose this job again if they had the option. Most of the caregivers were very satisfied with the organization's attitude towards them and appreciation of their professionalism.

5. The Challenges of Workers Caring for People with IDD in Residential Facilities

Among the topics encountered by caregivers of people with IDD in out-of-home facilities are stress and burnout at work. Indeed, these phenomena have been studied with regard to the work of direct care workers and social workers working with people with disabilities (Søndenaa et al., 2015). Aggressive and challenging behavior, which can be verbal or physical, has been diagnosed as typical of people with disabilities. Hence, caregivers of people with IDD might be subjected to violent incidents, which might lead to burnout at work. The sense of burnout is characterized mainly by mental fatigue, and this might have a negative impact on the optimal functioning of caregivers at work. This can be manifested in minimal communication with the residents and their depersonalization, low morale, low perceived self-efficacy, a decline in the feeling of personal gratification at work, loss of compassion for the residents, and more (Howard et al., 2009; Søndenaa et al., 2015).

Hastings and Brown (2002) showed that the need to constantly contend with people whose behavior is challenging and unexpected might have a negative impact on the psychological well-being of caregivers. Then again, their study showed that the higher the caregivers' self-efficacy, the better able they are to cope with challenging behaviors.

Additional reasons for stress and burnout at work can be long work hours, lack of clarity regarding the nature of the job, lack of support by superiors, low output, and years of seniority (Søndenaa et al., 2015). These factors might ultimately lead to leaving the job and high turnover of caregivers. High turnover of workers creates, as stated, pressure and higher costs for the agencies who supply the workers, who must repeatedly train new workers in the effort to meet the demand (Laws et al., 2010).

Hensel et al. (2015) note that despite the great significance of direct caregivers, international studies show that the turnover of caregivers in community-based residential facilities for people with IDD is high, ranging from 10% in the UK to 50% a year in the US. A list of studies indicates such high turnover and its negative effect not only on the perceived security of the residents, who need a stable supportive environment, but also constituting a financial burden due to the constant need to recruit and train new caregivers. This turnover is the result of the demanding requirements of this work, manifested in the need to cope with challenges, both physical and mental, that lead to negative results such as mental stress, pressure, and high burnout. In addition, this type of work is usually not financially rewarding (Hastings & Brown, 2002; Hensel et al., 2015; Howard et al., 2009; Laws et al., 2010; Søndenaa et al., 2015). As stated, the demand for academic workers to care for people with IDD in out-of-home

facilities is greater than the supply. The purpose of the present study was to examine the association between motivation and finding meaning in one's job, and satisfaction and intention to leave among care workers in out-of-home facilities for people with IDD.

6. Higher Education: Providing Access to Academia and the Link to Actual Work in the Field

Higher education, i.e., imparting scientific and applied knowledge acquired by studying in an academic institution, is a vehicle that can be integrated in the frontline of the challenging care of people with IDD in out-of-home facilities. The number of those employed in this field has been increasing over the years, and such a job might provide them with a meaningful professional challenge leading to job satisfaction, in one's job (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016).

An academic degree is an accepted requirement for many jobs in the labor market. In addition, expanded access to higher education and the current surplus of Bachelor's degree graduates, has led to a phenomenon called credential inflation, namely, people are required to show academic credentials even for jobs for which there is no real need for an academic diploma (Davidovitch & Litman-Ovadia, 2011), as part of the attempt by workplaces to assure themselves of high-quality candidates.

This does not happen in the field of disabilities. Work as a counselor/coordinator in this field does not require an academic degree. The job requirements demand that workers in residential facilities have at least 11 years of schooling, or alternately a certified caregiver diploma (Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services, 2015). Although there is no demand for an academic degree, as part of the attempts and efforts to improve the care of people with IDD in residential settings, these facilities together with the Ministry of Social Affairs, act to give caregivers of residents with IDD professional tools, to empower them, and to reduce their sense of burnout. Some of them undergo training, at the end of which they receive a diploma certifying them to work in this field (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016). In contrast to Israel, in the US students acquire an education and training in all aspects related to working with people with disabilities on all functional levels, in appropriate tracks at universities and colleges. It seems that in Israel too, investing resources in recruiting high quality workers with an academic education will upgrade the care of people with disabilities.

One of the main goals encountered by Israel's Council for Higher Education is to provide access to academia to large sectors of society in peripheral areas. The challenge is to harness academia and graduates to work with and specialize in disabled populations in general and those residing in supportive facilities in particular.

The purpose of this study was to examine the association between motivation and perceiving meaning in one's job, and satisfaction and intention to leave among care workers in out-of-home facilities for people with IDD. In light of the above review and the theoretical and research perspective, the following hypotheses were formulated:

7. Research Hypotheses

- 1) A positive association will be found between work motivation and satisfaction with the workplace.
- 2) A negative association will be found between work motivation and intention to leave; the higher the motivation the lower the intention to leave.
- 3) A positive association will be found between perceived meaning in one's job and satisfaction with the workplace.

8. Method

8.1 Research Population

The study was held among a population of people with a higher education (academic degrees) working in out-of-home facilities and supported housing facilities for people with IDD: Kvutzat Ramot, Beit Ekstein, Greenberg Group, Akim, and Neve Kineret, in northern Israel. The target population was caregivers, counselors, and coordinators working in residential facilities, residential homes, hostels, residential arrays, and apartments in northern Israel. The study comprised 79 workers of residential facilities, all older than 18 and with a higher education, in facilities where the CEOs and directors had given their consent to participation in the study, and with the approval of the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Disabilities Administration to hold the study in the facilities.

8.2 Respondents

Personal background: The sample included 21 men (26.6%) and 58 women (73.4%). The participants covered the entire age range: 11 aged 20-25 (13.9%), 26 aged 25-35 (32.9%), 17 aged 35-45 (21.5%), 19 aged 45-55 (24.1%), and 6 aged 55 and older (7.6%). Most of the participants were married (57.0%), secular Jews (50.6%), living in the north (89.9%), born in Israel (93.7%), and with a medium economic status (81.0%).

Fifteen of those sampled had been working in the field of disabilities for up to one year (19.0%), 10 for 1-2 years (12.7%), 15 for 2-5 years (19.0%), 17 for 5-10 years (21.5%), and 22 for more than 10 years (27.8%). Thirty-six of those sampled were in charge of other workers (45.6%) and 43 were not (54.4%).

Employment background: Nineteen of those sampled were from community-based residential facilities (24.1%), 23 from hostels (28.3%), and 37 from privately owned residential homes (46.8%). Most of those sampled were from facilities with 25-50 residents (38.0%) and 27 were from facilities with more than 100 residents (34.2%). Eleven of those sampled were from facilities where the residents had been diagnosed with autism (13.9%), 36 from facilities with residents diagnosed as IDD (45.6%), 24 from facilities with multi-handicapped (30.4%), and 8 from facilities with rehabilitative residents (10.1%). Twenty-six of those sampled were characterized as independent (32.9%), 35 as having challenging behavior (44.3%), one as requiring nursing care (1.3%), and 17 as having multiple features (21.5%).

8.3 Research Instruments

The research questionnaire was based on a tool checking work motivation, developed in 1993 by Wetherbee and Wetherbee (1993). The reliability was originally (by Cronbach's alpha) 0.81. Moreover, the questionnaire was validated, as evident from the study conducted by Mathieu, Bruvold and Ritchey (2000). The research instrument was intended to capture the perceptions and views of workers with regard to their work in the domain studied. The questionnaire included two parts: a. A demographic part (personal information and occupational information); b. Statements related to four main areas: perceived meaning in one's job, motivation, intention to leave, and satisfaction with the workplace.

The research questionnaire was comprised of 43 statements ranked on a 4-point Likert scale: In the first part from 1 – not at all important, to 4 – very important; in the second part: from 1 – strongly object, to 4 – strongly agree; in the third part: from 1 – very dissatisfied, to 4 – very satisfied. The respondents were asked to mark the answer that most accurately describes their feelings regarding their field of work. In order for a high score on the variable “intention to leave” to indicate high intention to leave, all four items measuring this variable were reversed for purposes of the statistical processing. In the rest of the research variables no reversing was required or performed.

8.4 Research Procedure

Approval to conduct the study was received from the ethics committee at Ariel University, the Division for Research, Planning, and Control at the Ministry of Social Affairs, CEOs of the organizations, and directors of the facilities. After receiving all the approvals, the questionnaires were sent to the caregivers, counselors, and coordinators via the Internet (Google Docs). In cases of a low response, the researcher came to the residential facilities in order to explain the significance of the study and make sure that the workers had the time to complete the questionnaires and the ability to do so independently and that they returned them to the researcher.

The questionnaires were anonymous and the data processing was done with no identifying details. The questionnaire included an explanation that there are no correct answers and that it is intended for research purposes only and would be kept completely confidential. The questionnaires were distributed during March-April 2020 to 79 workers in 15 different residential facilities in northern Israel.

9. Research Findings

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the research variables

Variable	Mean (\pm Standard deviation)	Minimum	Maximum
Perceiving meaning in one's job	3.820 (\pm 0.522)	1.00	4.00
Work motivation	2.015 (\pm 0.627)	2.00	3.70
Satisfaction with the workplace	1.865 (\pm 0.574)	1.00	3.50
Intention to leave	3.155 (\pm 0.652)	1.00	4.00

Notably, the mean for the variable “intention to leave”, presented in Table 1, and all the other statistical processing of this variable, were calculated after reverse scoring.

It is evident from Table 1 that the mean of the respondents' agreement with the questionnaire's statements on the perceived meaning of the job was $M=3.820$ i.e., the participants supported statements that relate to the meaning of the job as an important part of their work in this field. For work motivation the mean was $M=2.015$, indicating fairly

low motivation to work in this field. For the variable of satisfaction with the workplace the mean was 1.865 , indicating a fairly low level of job satisfaction. For intention to leave the mean was 3.155 and the standard deviation 0.652.

In sum, the findings show low levels of motivation and satisfaction.

10. Testing of the Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: A positive association will be found between work motivation and satisfaction with the workplace.

To test the hypothesis a Pearson's correlation was calculated.

Table 2. Correlation between work motivation and satisfaction with the workplace

	Motivation	Satisfaction
Motivation	1	0.601**
Satisfaction		1

** $p < .01$

It is evident from the findings (Table 2) that there is a significant positive association between the variables work motivation and satisfaction with the workplace ($r_p = .601$, $p < .01$). Namely, the greater the work motivation the greater the satisfaction with the workplace. The hypothesis was confirmed.

Nevertheless, as shown in Table 1, the findings indicate that when motivation and satisfaction were examined separately were found to be low.

Research Hypothesis 2: A negative association will be found between work motivation and intention to leave the workplace. To test this hypothesis, a Pearson's correlation was calculated.

The findings indicate a significant negative association between the variables of work motivation and intention to leave the workplace ($r_p = -0.834$, $p < .01$). Namely, the greater the work motivation – the lower the intention to leave.

Research Hypothesis 3: A positive association will be found between perceived meaning in one's job and satisfaction with the workplace. To test the hypothesis that there will be a positive association between the meaning of one's job and satisfaction with the workplace, a Pearson's correlation was calculated to check the correlations.

No significant association was found between the variables of meaning in one's job and satisfaction with the workplace ($r_p = -0.184$, $p > .05$). Therefore, the hypothesis was rejected.

In order to more deeply understand the factors that affect job satisfaction, another statistical analysis of the findings was conducted, finding that:

No significant statistical difference was found in job satisfaction between Jewish workers (Mean = 1.92, standard deviation 0.61) and Arab workers (Mean = 1.79, standard deviation = 0.52). In both groups, satisfaction was relatively low ($t=1.086$, $d.f.=77$, $p=0.281$).

No significant statistical difference was found in job satisfaction between workers in residential homes (Mean = 1.78, standard deviation 0.54) and workers in community-based residential facilities (Mean = 1.93, standard deviation = 0.59). In both groups, satisfaction was relatively low ($t=-.169$, $d.f.=77$, $p=0.246$).

The statistical association between satisfaction and demographic variables (gender, religion, religiosity, formal education, country of birth, financial situation, and the worker's age) was explored. A significant difference in satisfaction was found between women and men. Women displayed higher satisfaction than men ($t=-2.189$, $d.f.=77$, $p=0.032$).

(Women's mean=2.095, standard deviation = 0.731) (Men's mean = 1.780, standard deviation=0.486).

Table 3. Differences between men and women in job satisfaction

Satisfaction	Men (n=21)		Women (n=58)		Difference
	M	S.D.	M	S.D.	t
	1.780	0.486	2.095	0.731	-2.189

The statistical association between satisfaction and occupational variables (type of residential facility, number of residents in the facility, features of the residents, seniority at work, and occupational status as to whether in charge of other workers) was explored. A significant statistical association was found between the features of the residents and satisfaction. Workers in facilities where the residents were characterized as semi-independent reported higher satisfaction (Mean = 2.018, standard deviation 0.666) than workers in facilities where the residents were characterized differently (Mean = 1.731, and standard deviation 0.445) ($t=2.270$, $d.f.=77$, $p=0.026$).

A multivariate analysis model (multi-linear regression) was designed to predict satisfaction by intention to leave, work motivation, and meaning of one's job, gender, and residents' features (see Table 3). The model was found to be significant and to explain 69.4% of the variance in the variable of satisfaction. The only variable found to have a significant and independent contribution to predicting the variable of satisfaction was intention to leave. Significantly, the higher the intention to leave the lower the job satisfaction.

Table 4. Multiple regression analysis for predicting the variable of satisfaction with the workplace

Predicting variable	B	β	t
Meaning in one's job	0.025	0.023	0.324
Motivation	0.204	0.098	1.318
Intention to leave	-0.706	-0.706	** - 11.204

** $p<.01$

In addition, a multivariate regression model was designed (hierarchical multi-linear regression). In the first step, demographic predictors were entered (gender and sector), in the second step occupational variables (characterization of residents, seniority, type of facility), in the third step the predictors of the research model (intention, motivation, and meaning) (see Table 4). In each step, the model was found to be statistically significant. In the first and second steps, gender was found to have a significant contribution to predicting satisfaction, where women were more satisfied than men. The explained variance in the first and second step was very low. In the third step the model was found to be significant and explained 69.4% of the variance in the variable of satisfaction. The only variable found to have a significant and independent contribution to predicting the variable of satisfaction was intention to leave. Significantly, the higher the intention to leave, the lower the job satisfaction.

Table 5. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis for predicting the variable of satisfaction with the workplace

Predicting variable	B	B	t	R2	R2Δ
<u>Step 1</u>					
Gender	0.330	.256	2.314*	0.008	0.008
Sector	0.167	.147	1.328		
<u>Step 2</u>					
Gender	.323	.251	2.225*	0.152	0.072
Sector	.121	.106	.944		
Resident characterization	-.223	-.195	-1.734		
Seniority	-.041	-.104	-.932		
Type of facility	.174	.152	1.365		
<u>Step 3</u>					
Gender	.079	.061	.880	0.725	0.573
Sector	.131	.115	1.743		
Resident characterization	-.046	-.041	-.605		
Seniority	.005	.014	.207		
Type of facility	.009	.008	.120		
Meaning in one's job	.008	.007	.098		
Motivation	.228	.110	1.376		
Intention to leave	-.678	-.771	-9.738**		

* $p<.05$

** $p<.01$

11. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the association between motivation and meaning in one's job – and intention to leave and satisfaction with the workplace, among caregivers/counselors/coordinators with a higher education of people with disabilities in residential facilities.

The first research hypothesis was confirmed, finding a positive association between motivation to work and job satisfaction among workers with an academic education employed in the field of people with disabilities, such that the higher the worker's motivation the higher the job satisfaction.

This finding is compatible with studies that found an association between motivation and satisfaction. For instance, Weinish (2003) defined occupational motivation as the individual's desire to put an effort into productive activity related to the workplace and to behave in a manner that contributes to the organization and that grants one satisfaction. This is supported by Wagner and Manor (2001, in Vidislavski & Shemesh, 2009), who contend that the existence of motivation in organizations is important since workers with high motivation express satisfaction with their work and with their workplace, display high commitment to the organization, show high performance, persist in their work, and are not inclined to leave, etc. An important finding arising from this study was low levels of motivation and satisfaction. Also confirmed was the second research hypothesis, whereby a negative association would be found between work motivation and intention to leave, such that the higher the motivation the lower the intention to leave.

This finding is compatible with a list of studies (Cohen, 1977; Hulin et al., 1985; Mobley, 1999) showing that persistence and commitment to the workplace are related to high work motivation, which stems from autonomy and including workers in decision making as well as from situational variables (such as satisfaction, perceiving meaning in one's job, realizing expectations, peer support).

At the same time, the research finding indicating low intention to leave contradicts a trend shown by various researchers (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986; Hom et al., 1992; Lee & Mitchell, 1994; Lee et al., 1999, 1996; Mobley, 1977; Steel & Ovalle, 1984; Tett & Meyer, 1993;), whereby the employment market is characterized by considerable mobility and workers are not always loyal to their workplace and might be drawn by more tempting employment terms in other places.

This contradiction can be explained by the study of Lee and Mitchel (1994), who claim that the choice between leaving or staying in an organization also involves the question of the alternative, i.e., where to go. When reaching a decision, a large number of possibilities are weighed and analyzed by the worker's perception of his or her environment. According to the findings of the current study, it seems that workers with an academic background who decide to work in this field are not looking for more tempting employment terms rather for a meaningful and satisfying workplace.

The third research hypothesis was not confirmed. No positive association was found between the meaning of one's job and satisfaction with the workplace. Hence, thorough understanding of the job's purpose is not enough to predict the worker's satisfaction. Understanding per se is not sufficient and might even lead to tension and burnout, leaving the job, and high turnover, due to the constant coping with people whose behavior is challenging and unexpected, long work hours, as well as the lack of clarity regarding the nature of the job (Søndenaa et al., 2015).

This finding contradicts a study showing that perceiving meaning in one's job is one of the factors affecting the worker's involvement, persistence, and satisfaction with the workplace (Weir, 2013). A study conducted in Israel found that social workers engaged in direct care of people with special needs relate to the role's meaning, their interest in it, and the ability to use the knowledge acquired, as the most positive feature contributing to their remaining on the job and in their role (Bargal & Guterman, 1996).

Another finding that arose in this study is higher satisfaction among women than among men. This finding can be explained by many studies that examined the differences in job satisfaction between the genders, finding that women express higher levels of satisfaction than men. This situation is called the "gender paradox in the labor market" (Clark, 1997. Kaiser, 2005). The differences in satisfaction between women and men may stem from a combination of women's low expectations of their job and the relative improvement in their condition in the labor market over the years. Another study suggests that women's satisfaction with their job rises the greater their proportion in the workplace (Sloane & Williams, 2000). This finding proposes that a female majority at the workplace facilitates better conditions for women. In a female work environment, the workplace is more flexible with regard to family matters and therefore there is more consideration concerning work hours (Bender & Heywood., 2006).

These research findings make it possible to understand to a certain extent the associations between job satisfaction and the independent variables. Nevertheless, there is still room to expand the professional literature in order to increase motivation and improve workers' satisfaction and thus upgrade the service provided by the caregivers. It is important to understand the factors that affect their work and their ability to provide better service. When workers are treated respectfully, understand and know who they must work with, what is required of them on the job, what tools are at their disposal in caring for people with special needs, we will also see satisfied workers who are interested in continuing to work in this field.

It appears that beside awareness of the rights of people with disabilities in society, attention is being focused at present on the significance of the workers who care for these people as well as on their contribution to the quality of life of this population (Hensel et al., 2015; Mandler & Korazim, 2005). These workers provide people with IDD in residential facilities with a large range of medical and psychological treatments, educational and social activities, training and support in residents' daily activities. They have a considerable impact on the experience, opportunities, and quality of life of people with disabilities (Barlev & Rivkin, 2016; Mandler & Korazim, 2005). The caregivers cope with many daily challenges. Providing professional training for them is very important (Hutzler, 2015).

Nevertheless, this area is still a negligible part of the public discourse and knowledge; it is sometimes called the "backyard" of Israeli society (Bitman, 2015). It reaches the headlines mainly when significant events occur, particularly negative ones. The public discourse includes no thorough treatment of issues such as what is required of workers and what makes them suitable for this challenging and unique work environment. This is a domain that is not attractive for people with an academic education. Many of them choose not to enter such an intense ongoing emotional burden coupled with unattractive pay.

Contribution of the Study

The staff in the caring, educational, and health professions is an important component in ensuring proper care of the population under discussion. There are also studies dealing with IDD that promote job-steadiness of workers in the hope that they will remain in their jobs.

In recent years, many issues have risen with regard to the employment policy of these workers. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services (2015) claims that although in the world, as well as in Israel, awareness of the contribution of direct caregivers to the quality of life of people with IDD has been increasing, the issue of these workers, i.e., the significance of their work versus the challenges it involves, has yet to be examined. Other researchers too (Hensel et al., 2015) have stated that, in contrast to the fairly comprehensive research on the negative consequences of working in residential facilities for people with IDD, little research has been devoted to factors that retain workers in this domain. Therefore, the contribution of the current study may be manifested in increasing awareness among students and/or people with an academic education in the various disciplines regarding the actual needs in the field, understanding this area, and the meaning of working with people with IDD. In this way, we will generate occupational motivation in this area.

How can we encourage the recruitment of academic workers to the labor market affiliated with residential facilities? How can we raise the satisfaction of workers in this area? Examination of motivation, perceived meaning in one's job, and the satisfaction of those who are already working in these settings, might enhance the perception of this occupation as upholding values and as rewarding – and promote the recruitment of new professional and high-quality workers.

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