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Intrinsic Motivators for People Serving Adults with Disabilities

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Intrinsic Motivators for People Serving Adults with Disabilities

By

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Abstract

The revolving door of staff and supervisors serving adults with disabilities distresses not only the agencies serving these individuals, but the clients, the economic well-being of the agency, the financial pockets of the state, and on the morale of the staff left behind. This qualitative research project analyzed expert thoughts and opinions from nine professionals currently or recently working in the field of adults with disabilities alongside a literature review. The results of the research depicted that for most professionals intrinsic incentives would enhance staff retention when they are being extrinsically compensated for their work. Based on the results of this study more needs to be done at the state level to increase the funding for staff and supervisors serving adults with disabilities which may increase staff retention and effectively cost agencies and the state less money.

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Introduction

Since 1773 when the first psychiatric hospitals opened, individuals with mental illnesses and developmental disabilities were housed and taken care of there. The need of beds in these facilities grew at an alarming rate and over-crowding became a fast issue. Other issues soon became apparent that were all a direct result of over-crowding of patients such as; staffing shortages, uncleanly areas, poor conditions for staff and clients, and abuse and maltreatment. In 1963 President John F. Kennedy signed the Community Mental Health Centers Act which called for drastic mental health reform (University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism & Kaiser Health News and Capital News Service, 2012).

After the Act was signed psychiatric hospitals started to close displacing many people out on the streets with no resources to care for themselves. Group homes and day programs were the new opportunities for individuals that were created after the state hospitals closed. Within these facilities individuals with disabilities were given new freedoms and worked towards gaining as much independence as possible. Group homes and day programs are staffed according to need, with individuals needing more assistance having staff at smaller ratios than higher functioning individuals.

Day programs and group homes determine how much money to require the county to pay per client based on their level of care and need of staff. An individual with alone time and minimal needs for care and assistance is going to cost the county less to house and to place in a day program than someone who physically needs a lot of care or someone who behaviorally needs a lot of care. Due to high amounts of money one to one staffing costs, day programs and group homes are constantly having to prove the need and are having to create programs designed to move the individual into bigger (and therefore cheaper) staffing ratios.

Every year as times get tougher the state cuts their budget for individuals with disabilities. The budget has not increased to meet inflation and demand. The companies serving adults with disabilities take the money they get from the county and use it to pay for staff and other fees (such as utilities, food, rent, etc.). Therefore, with budgets continually getting cut and not increased (or increased enough to meet inflation), staff's pay and benefits have not continued to match the times.

As wages continue to remain stagnant, finding staff to work with adults with disabilities has started to enter a time of crisis. Many day programs and group homes are being hit hard with staff openings they can't fill or keep filled for long. When companies can't keep and retain staff and therefore run short they run the risk of abuse, neglect, and maltreatment occurring due to lack of staff and client supervision.

All of this begs the question as to what staff supporting adults with disabilities should get paid. Working at Wal-Mart or Aldi Grocery is measureable, a manager can watch their staff and quantify whether or not they work the register correctly, assist customers at a satisfactory rate, or stock and clean areas of the store correctly and as needed. However, how can the state measure someone assisting another person? How does someone measure another person's happiness and growth since working with a staff? How does someone measure and quantify personal care? How does a company retain staff when the pay for caring for a person is close to the pay in another field that doesn't come with as much human responsibility? Are there attributes supervisors and companies can have that help retain staff? With all this in mind, this study attempted to answer, "What are the intrinsic motivators that help keep people employed in the field of adults with disabilities?"

Literature Review

Employees are motivated to do their job well for a variety of reasons, but for social work and social services a common theme is because people care about what they do (Prendergast, 2008). Companies that serve people often are on the low end of the professional pay scale so people employed at these companies do so because they care and they want to help and serve people. This study aimed to explore the reasons people retain their jobs in the field of disabilities and what the reasons are for leaving their places of employment. This study also reviewed causes of staff turnover in the field of adults with disabilities, staff retention in the field, reward and punishment theories, and what companies can do to retain staff.

Staff Turnover

Staff turnover has been and continues to be a problem in social services, particularly when working with adults with disabilities. As the federal minimum wage continues to increase it can be reasonably assumed that turnover for the companies offering services for adults with disabilities will increase as well. In 2007 federal minimum wage was $5.85 an hour and most day programs or group homes paid $9-$11 an hour. There were more individuals willing to work in the field and struggle through the high demands, stress, and direct care because they were being compensated for it. Now, in 2015 for large employers in Minnesota (several group homes and day programs would fall under this category) pay minimum wage at $9 an hour with a slated increase of .50 cents in August of 2016. The problem lies in that the wages in most group homes and day programs remain the same as they were in 2007, therefore, more and more employees are moving to less stressful and demanding jobs for the same pay. This is evidenced by one study that found in 2008, the care staff turnover from 35 different organizations was 21.2%. Of this 21.2%, 43.2% had only worked there one year and 62.5% had worked at these companies for two

years (Community Care, 2008). However, in 2008 (compared to 2015) the gap between federal minimum wage and the wages paid at group homes and day programs was bigger, therefore, providing an extrinsic work incentive to retain employment in the field that no longer exists.

Overall job dissatisfaction has also been linked to high turnover for staff working with adults with disabilities. High turnover not only affects the clients and continuity of care (loss of knowledge about the clients and their care, and reduced productivity among the remaining staff (especially if they are short staffed for a time)), but it also financially affects the company in a negative manner as the costs of recruitment, interviewing, and training are expensive (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995, Biron & Boon, 2013, Dess & Shaw, 2001). Abbasi and Hollman (as cited by Wells & Peachey, 2011) estimated that the visible and hidden costs of turnover equals around $11 billion dollars annually for some organizations! Turnover impacts a number of factors within organizations. It tends to be dysfunctional for the organization seen by the disruption of costumer relations, decreases in the remaining staff's work morale, and overall decreases in organizational performance (Wells & Peachey, 2011).

There are many reasons for staff turnover in the field of working with people with disabilities, including; low pay, poor work conditions, being poached by better social service providers, high stress, limited opportunities for advancement, excessive workloads, above average incidents of work place climates with low morale, lack of feedback and communication from supervisors, first time employees don't like it, poor supervision and training, high amounts of paperwork, poor company policies, poor work-site conditions, poor supervisory support, and experiencing burnout (Staff Turnover, 1957, Community Care, 2008, Pollack, n.d., Cherniss, 1988, Institute of Management & Administration, 2008, Bradley & Sutherland, 1995).

Another unsavory cost of turnover is when an employee makes the decision to quit but hasn't found a new job yet. This feeling of disengagement from the work place can affect the employee's performance (poor service to clients) which has a direct impact on the company's performance (and retention of clients due to poor performance) (Biron & Boon, 2013). During this time the employee is more apt to do less work or lower quality work since they are not as committed to the job. Interestingly, according to one study that examined the feelings of home helps (direct care staff) and social work supervisors, the supervisors reported that they thought about leaving their jobs at rates of 1 ½ times the rate of direct care staff. Also, direct care staff reported feeling greater commitment to the company and were less likely to be absent from work due to illness (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995).

Company induced staff turnover. There are two forms of staff turnover that are generated by the company, downsizing and dismissals (or terminations). The two are different in theory but the end result is the same, employees are forced to leave their place of employment. When a company dismisses a person from employment they are typically let go for reasons of poor performance, breaking company policies and procedures, or not being a good fit for the organization. When a company downsizes theoretically anyone is at risk of being let go. There are benefits to a company that either terminate or downsize and they are, an infusion of new ideas from new staff and changes in policies and practices within the organization. However, due to the time frame of replacing staff with recruiting, interviewing, running background checks, passing tests/screens, and training, it can take a while for any pros of the termination/downsizing to become apparent (McElroy, Morrow, & Rude, 2001). Involuntary turnover is commonly named "functional turnover" since this form of turnover is controlled by the company and it is

assumed that in most cases the under-performing employees are the ones being asked to leave

(Wells & Peachey, 2011).

Stress and burnout. Burnout is defined as a person experiencing emotional exhaustion,

depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment in the workplace (Bradley &

Sutherland, 1995). Burnout is a real threat to individuals working in social services due to the

high stress that comes with employment in the field. Burnout is the body's reaction to stress

those results in a person disengaging from the job. Jobs that are high in stress are directly

correlated to negative employee behaviors such as, absenteeism, turnover, and poor performance.

Staff employed in the field of adults with disabilities have reported high stress levels that are

typically indicative of psychiatric disorders (Hatton et al., 1999). Multiple studies have indicated

that supervisors and administrators play a direct role in the possibility of staff burnout.

Supervisors have increased the potential for burnout by behaving in certain ways, such

as, not supporting staff, making situations more difficult than necessary, creating poor work-site

conditions, fostering poor staff characteristics such as poor performance and low productivity,

low consideration for staff, poor structure, and spending too much time interacting with staff

(Cherniss, 1988, Seltzer and Numerof, 1998, Dierendonck, Borrill, Haynes, & Stride, 2004). For

a supervisor to be considered high in consideration they need to be sensitive, sympathetic,

tolerant, and supportive. Likewise, for a supervisor to be considered high in structure they need

to be task oriented, have high standards, provide clear goals, and provide frequent feedback for

staff (Cherniss, 1988).

Jobs in social services (especially jobs requiring direct care) go hand in hand with stress.

According to one study, when working with adults with disabilities stress can be manifested in

many different ways including, physical and verbal behaviors, direct care (feeding, bathing, etc.),

dealing with other people's finances (and therefore being at risk of being accused of missing money or inaccurate banking information), the feeling of client dependence, and dealing with death and loss of clients. Stress can have a lot of negative consequences on a person's health including a variety of illnesses (some life-threatening) such as heart disease and cancers (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995).

Mind (as cited in Ginn & Sandell, 1997) recognized that work stress leads to a substantial proportion of sickness absence. According to two separate studies (Rickford as cited in Ginn & Sandell, 1997 & Bradley & Sutherland, 1995), these absences due to stress have a negative effect on a company's economic pockets.

According to one study of 74 home helps and 63 social workers, 63% of people employed as home helps and social workers for people who were elderly or disabled felt that problems at work caused more stress than problems at home. Also, half of the people employed as home helps agreed that feeling depended upon by their clients was a significant source of stress (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995).

Another common source of stress for direct care providers is the feeling of isolation. Many people employed at group homes or as a Personal Care Assistant (PCA) in a person's home do not have other staff on site to fall back on if things get tough. Not having a social network while at work can increase psychological distress in a crisis situation and have negative impacts on a staff's health (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995). Another study found that when people work in the presence of others, observe the performance of others while at work, and have their work directly affect their co-workers it affects a person's effort and motivation while at work (Carr & Walton, 2014).

In addition, social workers employed in the field of adults with disabilities frequently stated that the vulnerability of their clients and the inadequacy of resources were two of their biggest stressors. Another common source of stress for social workers in the field is their lack of time. Many social workers take work home and many more put in overtime while at the office (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995). In most cases work from home or overtime in the office is not compensated monetarily by the company. Also, according to another study in relation to time in social services, 9% of staff felt their job kept them away from their family too much, 25% wished they had more time with their family, and 41% reported rushing through their work to get home (Ginn & Sandell, 1997).

Physical and emotional exhaustion. Employment in the field of adults with disabilities is both rewarding and exhausting. Fifty percent of individuals (that provide direct care and social workers) reported feeling physically exhausted once a week or more and more than a third of both groups stated they regularly felt emotionally exhausted (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995). In a different study 25% of all staff felt emotionally or physically exhausted after work most or all of the time, however, only 2% reported feeling that way when they showed up to work (Ginn & Sandell, 1997). Employees who suffer from either physical or emotional exhaustion (or both) on a frequent basis are likely to display inefficiency at the work place and ineffectiveness (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995).

Supervisor's role. A supervisor can either help staff turnover or increase the likelihood staff will leave an organization. Supervisors are already less likely to experience burnout than staff due to being further removed from the problems with clients and being able to blame these problems on the staff (Kreps, 1997). There were some surprising findings about supervisor's attitudes and behaviors that can affect staff. For example, one study found that supervisors who

interacted with their staff more increased burnout and staff turnover, whereas supervisors who

interacted less, spent more time in their office (and therefore less time watching staff), spent

more time planning, organizing, and advocating for staff, and kept staff informed about

significant work related problems, increased staff retention (Cherniss, 1988). Interestingly, one

study found that how a supervisor rated a staff's performance had no bearing on the staff's

intention to leave an organization (Biron & Boon, 2013).

Supervisors also tend to treat their staff differently which can lead to both staff retention

and staff turnover. When a supervisor has a high quality relationship with staff they provide

more intrinsic opportunities for staff, such as more interesting and desirable tasks, increased

responsibility, greater status, information sharing, career development opportunities, personal

support and approval, and extrinsic motivators when able, such as tangible rewards and benefits

(Biron & Boon, 2013). Supervisors who are able to cultivate this type of relationship with staff

are helping retain good staff for their company. Another key aspect of a high quality relationship

between a supervisor and a staff is a feeling of autonomy for staff and supervisors who are

supportive of it (Pelletier & Vallerand, 1996). Staff that are in a high quality relationship with

their supervisor are more likely to show a strong commitment to the company and give loyalty

and trust back to their supervisor (Biron & Boon, 2013). Staff that are in a high quality

relationship with their supervisors and therefore has positive expectations while at work are more

likely to receive supportive and clear feedback and are more likely to receive opportunities to

learn new and difficult job tasks (Pelletier & Vallerand, 1996).

According to Biron & Boon, (2013), a low quality relationship with a supervisor is

marred by lack of respect, trust, and resource sharing. Having a poor relationship with a

supervisor has many negative connotations on staff, such as increased staff turnover. A negative

relationship with a supervisor can outweigh any extrinsic motivator a company is offering that

staff to stay employed (Biron & Boon, 2013). Supervisors who are controlling in nature may

view that they have no other choice than to pressure staff, direct them more than necessary, and

offer less choices. Staff that are seen as unproductive by the supervisor are at a higher risk of

cultivating a low quality relationship. Staff viewed as unproductive are also at a higher risk of

supervisors trying to control and punish them as the way to motivate them (Pelletier &

Vallerand, 1996).

Further, supervisors who model "transformational leadership" can help increase staff

retention. Transformational leadership is a respected system in social services because it

influences an employee's perceptions of being valued by the supervisor and the company. A

company that promotes transformational leadership fosters an environment where supervisors are

able to produce high quality relationships with staff due to their behaviors. A supervisor who is

able to step into the role of a transformational leader would have certain qualities, such as, being

an inspiration, being charismatic, providing situations that are intellectually stimulating, and

giving each staff individual consideration. These qualities are very similar to the components of

a high-quality supervisor-staff relationship mentioned earlier, and overall, it is generally agreed

upon that employees who have high quality relationships with their supervisors are more

satisfied with their jobs and are therefore less likely to leave them (Wells & Peachey, 2011).

Supervisors are also at risk of burnout and turnover even if it is a smaller risk than staff.

One common cause of supervisor burnout is that supervisors are increasingly being asked to do

more with less. Supervisors report client's behaviors as less stressful than dealing with

bureaucracy and lack of resources to do their job (Hatton et al., 1999). Supervisors can also be

under a lot of stress from different personalities at work. Supervisors can be in the difficult

position of receiving pressures from the upper management while also being pressured from their

staff (Pelletier & Vallerand, 1996).

Poaching. Another common reason staff or employees leave a social services

organization is because they are poached by organizations that can offer them something better,

whether it be better pay, hours, benefits, less stressful environment, a more desirable position or

a more desirable population to work with. Employees considered to be high on the social

network chain are at a greater risk of being poached by other social service companies, meaning

the poached employee would be able to bring valuable colleagues with them (Dess & Shaw,

2001).

Staff Retention

Extrinsic incentives. Extrinsic motivation is defined simply as doing something because

of an external reward ranging from motivators such as high hourly wages, bonuses, and/or other

benefits (Deci, 1972, Reiss, 1978, Stringer, Didham, & Theivananthampillai, 2011). There are

differing findings in studies regarding whether or not extrinsic incentives work. According to one

study, extrinsic incentives (pay increases, bonuses, paying above market value, the possibility of

promotion, and the threat of pay cuts (Stringer et al., 2011) leads to an increase in staff effort,

due to the theory that an individual wouldn't expend much effort without these incentives

(Kreps, 1997). Also, when staff is hard to come by (due to the diminishing labor pool) salary and

the conditions of the work environment are necessary to keep employers competitive. The need

for increased salaries and other extrinsic motivators also increases when the labor pool is largely

women (as in the field of adults with disabilities). Women (especially single women with

children) are constantly on the lookout for better pay, advancement or promotions, and places of

employment that offer chances for professional development (Ewalt, 1991).

On the other hand, it is generally agreed upon that if a staff undertakes a task because he or she does so only for the extrinsic incentive he or she will come to hate it (Kreps, 1997, Benabou & Tirole, 2003). Also, it is generally agreed upon that an individual who completes a work task because they want to (intrinsic motivation) but starts to be rewarded extrinsically (money) will start to complete the task only for the extrinsic value (their intrinsic motivation will decrease). For example, when an employee begins work with the population of people with disabilities they soon learn that they either love the job or hate it. For the individuals who love the work, they typically do so for its intrinsic values (the rewards of helping people and making a difference). However, a problem occurs when wages (extrinsic motivation) are factored into a job that is high in intrinsic value. Research has found that when employees engage in something they love and are being paid for it, they start to be motivated not by their love for the job, but for the wages they are receiving. Then research has found that when staff and supervisors feel that they have worked up to their wages they are typically not motivated to go above and beyond their job duties (Deci, 1972).

Intrinsic incentives. Intrinsic motivation is defined in its simplest sense, as a person doing something because they want to (Deci, 1972, Reiss, 1978). It can be hard to stimulate feelings of intrinsic motivation in the workplace but not impossible. One way to stimulate feelings of intrinsic motivation is to foster a group work environment. One study found that individuals who felt they were working on a project because they were part of a team reported doing so because they had interest in the project and worked on the project 48% longer than those who felt they were working on a project alone (Carr & Walton, 2014).

The ability to feel intrinsically motivated in relation to working at a day program or group home, where the work can seem hard, tedious, at times boring, and strenuous, can help the

staff decrease the depletion of their regulatory resources. This is because these employees will find their effortful work less burdensome (Carr & Walton, 2014). Intrinsic incentives can create pride in the workplace and can make the work seem interesting to staff. Employment high in intrinsic value tends to require staff to be creative which can be a desirable characteristic, however, these jobs also tend to be harder to define, measure, and tasks are more uncertain in nature (Kreps, 1997). This is true of employment at a day program or group home facility for it is near impossible for the state or other benefactors to measure human care and life in monetary terms. According to two different studies, jobs high in intrinsic value (therefore completed because the staff wants to do it versus staff completing it because they are getting paid for it) are more enjoyable (Kreps, 1997, Benabou & Tirole, 2003).

Intrinsic praise. One common theme in regards to intrinsic motivators that work (and are free) is the use of praise in the work place. A supervisor who gives meaningful quality praise will strengthen intrinsic motivation in the workplace by fostering self-determination and competence in his staff (Deci, 1972). One study found that positive feedback led to greater intrinsic motivation in test subjects than no feedback did in the control group (Koestner, Zuckerman, & Koestner, 1987). For positive feedback to be most effective, supervisors need to focus on the staff's ability and not the staff's effort (saying "You're great at this!" versus "I can see you tried really hard.") (Koestner, et al., 1987).

Interestingly, men and women respond to and accept praise differently. For example, one study found that women displayed more intrinsic motivation in the no-praise control group where men displayed less intrinsic motivation in the no-praise control group. It's hypothesized that women may be more sensitive to social reinforcement and therefore may have found the praise received in the other groups (effort praise and ability praise) more controlling. Another

interesting contradiction found in the same study was that women felt more self-determination after receiving effort praise where men felt more self-determination after receiving ability praise (Koestner, et al., 1987).

Wage increases. People employed in social services often feel they don't get paid enough for the job they do. This feeling is at odds with what being employed with social services really means. Being employed in social services and therefore being in a position to help and care for people, is by nature, a job high in intrinsic value. But what happens when employees try to put an extrinsic value on a job high in intrinsic value?

There is no incentive an organization can offer their staff that comes close to money (Stringer et al., 2011). According to one study, when aspects of a job become motivated by money (extrinsic motivators), the people employed in the job can and typically do increase their performance. Typically if a person feels overpaid for the job they are doing they do more to make up for the feeling of inequity (Deci, 1972). However, when that feeling passes, performance will drop and their intrinsic motivation will have decreased in the interim (Deci, 1972 and Stringer et al., 2011). Also, employees are apt to compare their pay with their co-workers and in doing so decide if their pay is fair considering the amount of effort they put into their work. The perception of pay fairness can have a damaging and lasting impact on an employee's motivation and work place performance (Stringer et al., 2011).

Another problem with wages in social services revolves around the fact that the majority of employees are women. Women's wages have become more important to a household, not only for single women but also for women living in a two income environment. Women's wages are needed by families to keep them out of poverty (Glendinning & Miller and Harrop & Ross as cited by Ginn & Sandell, 1997). Men in the field are also negatively affected by low wages as

men still feel pressured by society, friends, and family to be the primary financial support a family needs (Moss & Brannen as cited by Ginn & Sandell, 1997).

Company goals. The Goal Theory proposes that staff will perform better if goals that they need to achieve at work are difficult, specific, and attractive (Katzell & Thompson, 1990). Having clear employee goals helps them understand what is expected of them while at work and helps them channel their effort into exactly what needs to be done (Stringer et al., 2011). Having clear, difficult, specific, and attractive goals also helps lead to higher motivation levels (Stringer et al., 2011 and Katzel & Thompson, 1990).

However, goal setting can at times only lead to temporary positive effects in the work place. For example only staff who have high self-confidence will feel they can meet a goal if it is designed to be harder than necessary. Also, staff have to be committed to the goals which typically only happen when staff find the goals suitable for the workplace and their position within the workplace (Katzell & Thompson, 1990).

Reward and Punishment Theories.

Herzberg's hygiene and motivator needs. According to Furnham, Forded, & Ferrari, (1999), Herzberg's theory on hygiene and motivator factors in the work place theorizes that a staff cannot be truly happy in a work setting until their hygiene factors have been met. Herzberg's hygiene factors are such work place qualities as: quality supervision, interpersonal relations, good physical working conditions, a good salary, quality company policies and administrative practices, benefits, and job security. In the hygiene and motivator theory, if a staff does not find the above hygiene factors to be favorable, they will become dissatisfied with their job (Furnham et al., 1999).

Also according to Herzberg's theory, once the hygiene needs have been met than a staff or employee needs their motivator needs met. Herzberg's motivator needs are such things as; achievement, recognition, the work itself, personal responsibility, and advancement in the work place (Furnham et al., 1999). According to this theory, these motivator factors need to be met in a positive manner for an employee to be satisfied with their position within a company. Herzberg's theory is very similar to intrinsic motivators. For example, one study defined intrinsic motivation as feeling good, gaining new skills and abilities, job security, chances to learn new things, promotion, accomplishment, freedom, praise from the supervisor, and friendship with co-workers (Stringer et al., 2011).

Thorndike's Law. According to Reiss, (1978), Thorndike's law explains human motivation differently than Herzberg's theory. According to Thorndike's law human motivation is motivated by rewards and punishment. Accordingly employee motivation is expected to be strengthened by rewards and weakened by punishment. In congruence with this theory, rewards that strengthen motivation can either be intrinsic or extrinsic in nature as long as the employee is motivated by it (Reiss, 1978).

Methods of Staff Retention

There are values, motivators, and incentives companies can provide their social workers (supervisors) and staff that will help to retain them in the field. For example, one common stressor for staff was the feeling of isolation (often seen for direct care staff in group homes). Staff who get to know their fellow staff on a more intimate basis feel greater responsibility for the well-being of their co-workers, meaning they are going to be less likely to quit if it means leaving their co-workers in a short staffing bind (Biron & Boon, 2013 and Dess & Shaw, 2001). Companies that schedule events on a fairly regular basis for staff to get together outside of work

(company picnics, team building days/activities), could increase staff retention and help reduce their daily stress (Bradley & Sutherland, 1995 and Katzell & Thompson, 1990).

Another way employers can help retain staff is to have family friendly policies. Women who have children while employed for a company will have an easier time going back to work and maintaining employment if a company has policies that allow her to have a dual relationship with work and home. These policies will also affect men giving them an easier time managing home and work. Women also have a hard time returning to work full time so any availability on the company's behalf to make that transition easier, such as allowing her to come part time for a short period of time, will also help retain women as staff (Ginn & Sandell, 1997).

Additionally, one way to keep high performers employed in an organization is to rid the workplace of perceptions of unfair work contributions. Employees are more apt to voluntarily terminate a position they are currently holding if they view themselves as working harder than other staff and not be compensated or recognized for their contributions. Supervisors and companies can help alleviate these feelings by not only recognizing an individual's contributions to the company but by also reinforcing equal work distribution between all employees (Biron & Boon, 2013).

Another beneficial way to help retain employees is to understand their personality. According to Gray's Theory on introverts and extroverts in the work place, a supervisor cannot treat the two the same (Furnham et al., 1999). This theory asserts that extroverts respond to reward and introverts respond to punishment (or to avoid a punishment). This theory is considered a double edge sword because too much reward and too much threat of punishment can have a negative impact on the employee as well. Therefore, it would behoove a supervisor to

know how to motivate their employee (through reward or punishment) and to find the right balance to do so (Furnham et al., 1999).

Staff retention can be enhanced by having a consistent sociotechnical system. This can be done by organizations in a variety of ways such as; making jobs attractive, hiring staff whose motives and values are consistent with the job, having work goals that are clear, challenging, attractive, and attainable, providing staff with the material resources to be able to complete their job effectively, creating supportive social environments, and reinforcing performance (Katzell & Thompson, 1990).

Another simple way to increase staff retention is through supervisor positive reinforcement and task involving situations. Task involving situations tend to increase staff intrinsic motivation. Any positive verbal reinforcement received from supervisors during these tasks will not come across in a controlling manner. Since task involving situations increase intrinsic motivation staff are more likely to work on them longer, for they will enjoy doing them. Positive feedback received during these tasks (that are about one's ability and not one's effort) will further positively fuel these situations, has been proven to keep staff working on tasks longer, and will help keep staff employed (Koestner et al., 1987).

Summary

There is extensive research available on intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in the work place (most of the research done has been in the hotel industry) and extensive research available on the reasons behind high turnover in social services as a whole. One area that needs further study is the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators for social services with an emphasis on the different population's social service agencies serve. Another area of study that needs to be explored is the high turnover specific to the population served.

Conceptual Framework

I used two theories to assist with analyzing the data in this study, Grounded Theory and Social Learning Theory. According to two different authors, Grounded Theory does not necessarily belong to one school of thought or another, it is a basic research theory that allows the researcher to compare and analyze data sets while looking for themes and codes based on the answers to the interview questions. These codes and themes were used to theorize about social structures and patterns within the social services (working with adults with disabilities) work place (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006 and Scott, 2009).

The other theory this study used is the Social Learning Theory. According to two different authors, Social Learning Theory was created by Albert Bandura and is centered on the premise that individuals learn through observation and imitation. This theory explains how people use positive and negative reinforcement to establish new behaviors. (For example, a staff member caught doing something good and is verbally praised for doing it will be more apt to do the behavior again, not only for the external praise but for the internal praise they feel for completing the behavior). This theory also explains that behavior that is modeled (by parents, co-workers, supervisors, mentors, etc.) also helps an individual learn the behavior (McLeod, 2011 & SocialWork@Simmons, 2014).

Methods

Research Design. The researcher utilized qualitative research methods to interview five direct care staff and four supervisors who were all either employed in the field or had been in the last year. To be considered a supervisor those chosen for the interview needed to have (minimally) a four year college degree and be working as a coordinator, site supervisor, or upper management. A direct care staff did not need to have a four year college degree but was not excluded if they had one.

Sample characteristics. The researcher used the snow ball interview technique by asking six individuals who are already employed (or recently employed) in the field to participate in the interview. Each person that consented was asked at the end of the interview to refer two individuals they know who meet the work eligibility requirements and would be interested in participating in the survey. If those individuals consented to the interview they were asked to refer two people to the study. The snow ball technique was used till a minimum of eight interviews was conducted.

Eight participants were working or had recently worked for a company serving adults with disabilities in Rochester, Minnesota; the other participant had worked for a facility in Kasson, Minnesota. Three participants lived outside of Rochester and commuted to work. Of the nine interviews with professionals employed or recently employed in the field of adults with disabilities four out of the nine participants had recently left their position for employment at a large corporation in Rochester, Minnesota. Three out of the four who were hired on at the large corporation were hired in entry level positions that paid more than their former employment working with adults with disabilities.

Of the remaining participants who were still employed in the field of adults with

disabilities, three out of the four stated they will only remain so if they can move into different

roles at their place of employment. The nine participants had spent anywhere from 2 to 17 years

working with adults with disabilities. Four out of the nine participants started in the field due to a

referral from a friend in the field and eight out of the nine participants were women. (See table

one for demographics on specific participants.)

Protection of Human Subjects. This study received approval from the St. Catherine

University Institutional Review Board. Participants in this study were not contacted prior to

approval from the Institutional Review Board and interviews did not take place until after

approval was received. Prior to being interviewed each participant read and signed a consent

form (see consent letter for interviews in Appendix A). All names and other personal identifying

information were withheld from all documentation and all transcripts. All consent forms and

audio tapes will be destroyed no later than June 1, 2016. The questions involved in the interview

were noninvasive and did not afford any risks to the participant. The interviews did not discuss

or collect information about vulnerable individuals the participants have or are currently working

with.

Data Collection Instrument and Process. Supervisors and direct care staff were

interviewed (see Appendix B for interview questions) using the same set of questions to explore

their different perspectives regarding the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators regarding staff

retention with adults with disabilities. All of the interviews took place in the participant's home

or in the researcher's home depending on where the participant was comfortable completing the

interview. On average the interviews took one hour to complete and due to fear of retribution

from their places of employment several participants asked not to be audio taped (at which time

it was explained that transcription would have to occur during the interview which lengthened the process for those individuals).

      Data Analysis Plan. The researcher transcribed all the interviews and looked for codes and themes using a master coding log. The researcher used these codes and themes to help support (or refute) the literature review. General themes were predetermined, including, intrinsic motivators, extrinsic motivators, education and experience, and reasons people enter and leave the field. After reviewing the transcripts, the emerging themes were extrinsic motivators (wages, benefits, and supervision), the inability to draw upon intrinsic motivators (lack of enjoyment, intrinsic motivation and coping, job satisfaction) and positive intrinsic motivators (staff to client relationship, reward, company based incentives, and job satisfaction). These themes represent responses from four or more participants. Every effort was made to ensure that individual responses were represented in an aggregate review and there was no selection bias.

    The researcher used Grounded Theory (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006 and Scott, 2009) to look for themes in the information from the literature review and opinions from the interviews and used Social Learning Theory (McLeod, 2011 & SocialWork@Simmons, 2014) to examine any themes of positive and negative reinforcement in relation to intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in the work place.

Findings

This qualitative study used Grounded Theory and Social Learning Theory. The use of

Grounded Theory helped determine the codes and themes throughout this section. Social

Learning Theory was used to evaluate the participant's answers in regards to positive and

negative situations that led or did not lead to new behaviors. Based on analysis of the interviews

the following codes and themes emerged: extrinsic motivators (wages, benefits, and supervision),

the inability to draw upon intrinsic motivators (lack of enjoyment, intrinsic motivation and

coping, job satisfaction) and positive intrinsic motivators (staff to client relationship, reward,

company based incentives, and job satisfaction).

Lack of Insufficient Extrinsic Motivators.

Lack of insufficient extrinsic motivators was one theme that was identified through the

analysis of the interviews by the researcher. Several themes emerged including low wages, poor

benefits, and the effects of supervision. These themes emerged through the participants responses

in the interviews.

Wages. In reference to what extrinsic values motivate people without a college degree to

seek employment in the field of adults with disabilities participants stated the following; *"A*

paycheck. It's not a big paycheck but (…)" another participant had this to say; *"For the people*

who have never done it before, or even if they have (…) they either can't find another job or they

need a paycheck. It's not really about the clients." Lastly, one participant related in reference to

their own experience, *"(…) told by friends that it is easy money. You can go and sleep at a house*

and get paid for it."

The following quotes from participants are in regards to personal or known stories they

have experienced of requests for extrinsic motivators being denied that led them or someone they

know to leave their place of employment. *"I feel that (...) offers very little in extrinsic motivators for staff to stay. I believe our turnover and retention could be much better if there were more consistent, tangible, and targeted incentives for staff throughout the year."* One individual who had left the field stated, *"You got to get paid a lot more to work in (...). I can't think of anyone who would stay."*

Three participants had either been in this position or knew someone who has; *"I asked for a raise to come back full time. (...) I was turned down."* Also, *"(...) asked for a raise on her year review and was turned down (...) even though she is the staff that holds (...) together. Her supervisor even wrote a letter stating (...) deserves the raise and she was denied."* Lastly, *"(...) yeah another supervisor at (...). At their four year review they asked if they could get a bigger raise because another supervisor who had been there for two years was making more than they were and her supervisor turned the request down. Played a factor in her quitting."*

When asked about moments where the participants felt that they weren't paid enough to be doing the work they were asked to do, participants answers ranged anywhere from the amount or responsibility and paperwork to being in the middle of violent situations. One participant stated in reference to their position as a supervisor, *"Being a program coordinator you have a lot of responsibilities and you're expected to get them done even when you're short staffed and your job coaching on top of your job. (...) Level of responsibility does not match level of pay."* Another supervisor also mentioned the amount of work they are responsible for, *"In the past 6 months a supervisor decided not to come back and I had to cover 2.5 programs. And currently given an extra work load and not given anything financial in return."*

Many participants mentioned the level of care they provide, for example one individual stated, *"(...) like when we are tube feeding or have to do seizure lifesaving medications which is*

like nursing duties and we are not paid for nursing duties.” Another participant stated, *“I am taking care of other people’s family members and I have my own family members to take care of and that’s really hard when you’re barely making above the minimum wage bracket. At a group home you do a lot of things a nursing assistant does like cathing and tube feeding and you are trained to do it as staff and we are not qualified and we are not being paid nursing wages.”* Along the same pattern another participant indicated, *“Ugh when I had to be trained on tube feeding. (…) would not bring a nurse in to feed (…) and now we have more tube feedings and they are all different. Being with (…) and having to do charting that is really required by a medical person. It’s all involved with medical issues and I’ve had to be trained on them and ridiculed on them saying we are not good enough to do the work yet we have to be trained on them and we don’t get any extra pay for it.”* Lastly, one individual with group home experience stated, *“Flu season. Just that. Flu season.”*

Another theme that emerged was the feelings of inadequate pay when working with a violent situation, one supervisor stated, *“Uh yeah, when I went home last Friday and my arms were so bruised it hurt to pick up my daughter. It’s not worth it and I am one of the highest paid employees. When I get spit on in the face or when I get poop on me.”* Another individual mentioned a time while she was pregnant and working with violent clients, *“When I got smacked in the head when I was pregnant.”* Lastly, one individual discussed a time where they dealt with a dangerous situation and were alone in the community, *“(…) when I was being choked by my lanyard and when I was being stabbed with scissors. The lanyard didn’t break when I was being choked by it and when the client whipped scissors out of her back pocket and chased me with them I was like (…) I don’t get paid enough for this.”*

Participants had a variety of responses to being asked what they would change about their job if they could. Many responses involved changing extrinsic reinforcement (in the way of pay and bonuses) they receive at their place of employment. *"Oh (...) I'd get paid more. And so would my staff. (....) my staff would be able to get their bonus. I'd be able to get my bonus."* Another supervisor stated, *"Better wages for staff, more motivation for staff to work in the field, higher wages, more incentives, less staff turnover, better retention, more job opportunities (...)"* Another participant stated, *"(...) also change staff pay. (...) create more advancements for less turnover."*

Participants were asked what benefits companies could offer their employees in the absence of higher wages. Two participants could not come up with an answer that did not involve the extrinsic motivator of wages, stating *"More money. (...) I don't know (...) that's a tough one. Nothing. Higher wages."* and *"(...) you should be paid for what you are qualified to do."*

Surprisingly, when asked if money was no issue what a fair wage would be for staff and supervisors most participants gave wages that were not that much higher than current wages in most areas. Participants gave ranges such as, *"I would say staff at $14 and starting supervisors at $18."* Some participants mentioned experience playing a factor in wages such as, *"If it is an unexperienced staff at the time I'd say at least $15-$16 an hour and as a supervisor I'd say at least $23-$25 an hour"* and *"Staff? I'd say between $15-$20 depending on factors and supervisors obviously should make more so maybe like $20-$30 depending on education."* Another individual mentioned the difference in extra training and abilities of staff saying, *"(...) those of us who have lots of medical training should be paid $25 an hour. I also think when we are short staffed and we have to do our job and someone else's job we should be paid time and a*

half." One supervisor noted the importance of wages making a difference to the lives of the entry level staff, *"At least $60,000 a year for supervisors, for staff I'd say $15-$20 an hour. Which isn't a whole lot more than they are making now but that makes a difference for the lives they are living."* Lastly, one individual mentioned the difference between their current place of employment and their past place of employment working with adults with disabilities saying, *"Well considering I am working at (...) with no stress staff should make about $18 an hour. Supervisors should make $25ish."*

Benefits. Another common theme involving things participants would change about their job if they could was the Paid Time Off (PTO) policy. One participant stated, *"My pay. Definitely not getting what I know I deserve. Some of the policies. Like not taking a day off. (...) It's your PTO you should be able to use it as you want."* Another participant very eloquently stated, *"A lot of things. (...) Calling in sick and using PTO was difficult. Not many people wanted to work the overnight shift so finding someone to work for me was like walking through the fires of hell."*

When asked about what benefits companies could offer employees in the absence of higher wages many participants gave answers that were extrinsic in nature. Many individuals remarked upon the importance of good fringe benefits such as health insurance, bonuses, PTO, and childcare. In regards to health insurance benefits participants indicated, *"Reasonable insurance premiums, regular bonuses (...)"* and *"Having good benefits."* Another individual stated, *"Having bonuses is nice when they don't get taken away for stupid reasons. No overtime is a negative thing as well because sometimes it would be nice to put in an extra half hour to finish what you have to do."* Another individual referenced their benefits and company policies as well, *"(...) better health benefits. If they had health insurance like (...) has that would be*

helpful. PTO. You accrue PTO which is a benefit, you work for it, you earn it but when it's time

to take time off they shouldn't be able to reject it unless there are multiple people who want the

same day off. They shouldn't be able to reject it because they are short staffed, that is not my

fault." Lastly, one supervisor discussed the common issue staff face with consistent and

affordable childcare, *"(...) child care (....) Bonuses. Health insurance. Holidays off."*

Supervision. Another theme that emerged was the quality of the participant's direct

supervisor or the management team of a facility. In reference to the question about what

participants would change about their job if they could several participants remarked upon their

supervisor. One participant stated, *"I wish that (...) was more assertive and I'm not sure how to*

explain it. I love (...) but they are not good at (...) organizing and getting their skills ready. They

are our leader but they are not the best at getting things set up so we have to figure stuff out on

our own (...) they could be more aware of what is going on in the room and have a better handle

on it (...) is supposed to be in charge. They are supposed to write up the programs and

implement the programs but we do." Another staff stated, *"Better leadership. Better leadership,*

more support from (...) to the next level up."

Another individual remarked upon the challenges a supervisor faces with balancing the

needs of staff with the mandates of upper management, *(...) better understanding from upper*

management for program needs, more progressive thinking cultures at (...) from upper

management, better support from upper management for programs." Another supervisor

observed the communication standard and policies from upper management stating, *"I'd change*

the communication standards or lack thereof. Or kind of the back-handed policies that get put in

place. Something is set and there are many loopholes that change it as they go."

Participants were asked to describe a time when their supervisor positively or negatively influenced their work motivation. A majority of participants commented on the supervisor's negative influence saying, *"I feel like they negatively affected my work (…) like sometimes when they won't get their skills set up and regulated I feel like if they aren't going to care than I'm not going to care. They are supposed to set up their skills box and if (…) doesn't care to do it and I don't get paid to do it then why do it."* Another staff described a violent situation in which they had expressed concern to their supervisor prior to the situation. After the situation (and subsequent violent situation) they stated they tried to talk to their supervisor and were shut down. The participant stated, *"I just shut my mouth. I knew I wasn't going to be right in that situation."* Another staff commented on the high risk of getting into trouble for not providing the correct level of care stating, *"A negative one was when (…) wasn't taking care of (…) and I was blamed for it. I didn't do anything and I didn't have any rights to come back and say anything."*

Supervisors also mentioned issues or concerns with the supervision the receive from upper management and how that affects their work. One supervisor mentioned the lack of gratitude for their hard work in a stressful environment saying, *"(…) lack of saying thank you, lack of recognizing hard work. That negatively affects my work motivation."* Another supervisor commented on the style of their supervisor saying, *"(…) she is also very nonconfrontational which can be frustrating. So it's like you could have done more but you didn't."* Another supervisor also commented on the high risk of getting in trouble saying, *"My prior supervisor was a complete {expletive}. They tried getting me for everything and anything I could possible screw up over."*

Inability to Describe Intrinsic Motivators.

The inability to describe intrinsic motivators was another theme that was identified through the analysis of the interviews by the researcher. Several themes emerged including lack of enjoyment of participant's current or former place of employment, inability to use intrinsic motivation as a means of coping with stressful events at work, and poor job satisfaction.

Lack of enjoyment. In reference to what the participants enjoy doing at work one supervisor stated, *"Leaving. (…) What do I look forward to doing? I don't know."* Another supervisor stated, *"Not crying that day."* A participant working as a community job coach stated, *"Leaving the site. I hate being in center."* Another participant stated in reference to their position, *"(…) the job I have at (…) is physically hard, and the clients have challenging behaviors (…)"*

Intrinsic motivation and coping. In reference to whether intrinsic motivators were of assistance in helping cope with moments of inadequate extrinsic compensation for what they were dealing with, participants had mixed responses. One participant stated in reference to handling a violent situation with a client, *"No. It was the end of the day and I just wanted to leave."* One supervisor reflected upon their position clarifying what keeps them employed there, *"Well actually what keeps me there is the flexibility of my schedule (…)"* One participant who had recently left the field for a different field stated, *"(…) when I think about the first reason I stayed at work it was because of outside motives. I had to stay there until I was married. Then I was pregnant so I had to stay there until I gave birth. So I always stayed for personal reasons."* Another participant who had described a violent situation said, *"Hell no. NO. The only thing I could think of is I wish I could retaliate but that I was glad I was a better person than that."* Another participant stated in reference to her position at a group home facility where they worked alone, *"I think it was more like, if I don't deal with this moment I'm going to get arrested*

and there is no one else around to do it.” Lastly, one participant stated, *“No, you can't reflect at that time. You know you are already working in a pretty thankless job so when you're being ridiculed at the time you can't reflect on the good things. I need to take a break, take a walk, cry it off, but no not in the moment I can't reflect on that.”*

Job satisfaction. An interesting finding arose when participants were asked for the reasons they felt non-college educated individuals entered the field of adults with disabilities. The interesting connection was that a majority of those interviewed stated something around the ease of getting a job in the field, not the intrinsic motivation of working in the field. One supervisor stated, *“Cause it's an easy field to get into, easy to get hired.”* Another supervisor stated, *“(...) there is a lot of open positions. It's very easy to get a job as there are a lot of open positions. (...) If they are not happy with one agency they can move onto the next because there is most likely an opening.”* Another participant stated, *“It's a quick job. (...) It's an easy job to get hired into.”* Lastly, one participant stated in reference to many group home facilities in Minnesota, *“It's easy. It is! You just have to be 18 and have a driver's license with a good record. (...) doesn't even drug test.”*

Lastly, when asked to rate their current or former position in the field of adults with disabilities, four participants (of nine) rated their position between 1 and 5 (1 being the lowest). One supervisor reflected upon the constantly changing policies and the inconsistent staffing saying, *“3 because of the pay because of the (...) changing in the rules and guidelines, and I'm burnt out period. I am just burnt out. The physical aggression and the lie that it is going to get better gets old.”* One participant commented on their recent job change, *“2. Just because I don't know, you don't get paid enough for what you do really. I'm ten times happier cleaning (...) rooms than I was taking care of people.”* Another supervisor stated, *“(...) a 5. Some days I can*

handle it and some days I can enjoy it and the other half I question my decision to work and why do I put in the work and effort and there is no incentive for that." Lastly, one participant commented on how the negative intrinsic and extrinsic motivators affected their overall impression of their job, *"I'd probably go with a 5. (...) working with people with disabilities (...) teaches you a different way of viewing them. But you are underpaid, underappreciated, and it is hard work that overrides the good feelings you have about the job."*

Positive Intrinsic Motivators.

Positive intrinsic motivators currently experienced or motivators that would benefit the work place if they were experienced was another theme that was identified through the analysis of the interviews by the researcher. Several topics emerged during the analysis of the data including, staff to client relationship, reward, company based incentives, reflection during high intensity moments, and job satisfaction.

Staff to client relationship. A majority of those interviewed mentioned the clients and their interactions with them as something they look forward to on a daily basis. One participant stated, *"I can say seeing some of my favorite clients (...)"* while another participant commented on their excitement in watching their client's progress saying, *"Oh my gosh seeing (...)! Doing their skills with them, seeing them grow. That's it, that's the only thing I look forward to. I love that they are always happy to see me no matter what."* One supervisor commented on their collaboration between clients and staff saying, *"(...) daily interactions with the participants (...) positive interactions and support for job coaches (...)"* Another supervisor commented on their morning routine saying, *"(...) I look forward to greeting the clients in the morning, saying hi, seeing them and how excited they are most of the time."* Lastly, one staff stated, *"I look forward*

to seeing (…), I look forward to seeing the staff, and I look forward to trying to share my positive

attitude (…)"

Reward. When asked why participants felt individuals with college degrees entered the

field of adults with disabilities participants had many positive intrinsic comments including one

staff who stated, *"Because it's challenging, rewarding, and kind of cool."* One supervisor

commented on desire and pay stating, *"Genuine interest in the field, desire to help people (…)*

their desire to help people overrides their desire to be fairly compensated (…)" Another

participant reflecting on their experience in the field remarked, *"I think it's the joy of helping*

somebody who can't help themselves. It's rewarding. (…) It's rewarding and it's nice to feel

wanted by someone else." Lastly, another individual referred to the issue of money saying,

"Passion? Compassion. (…) When you work with people with disabilities it's obviously not the

money it's the way you feel and the relationships you create with the individuals."

Company based incentives. When asked what benefits companies could offer staff in

the absence of higher wages, participants remarked upon a few intrinsic motivators that seem

reasonable for companies to offer. One supervisor commented on the likelihood of personal

items being destroyed due to violence or bodily fluids saying, *"(…) clothing allowance because*

your clothes get destroyed there." Two participants commented on the benefits of working in a

day program setting saying, *"(…) we get free popcorn on Fridays (…) an incentive is the hours,*

having holidays off" and *"(…) well it's a benefit that they are Monday through Friday and no*

holidays and no weekends. No mandatory overtime." One supervisor commented on the need

for companies to be flexible and fair to staff saying, *"(…) being flexible, as far as staff getting*

the time off they need (…) Companies need to recognize that providing for staff is as important

as providing for the clients." Lastly, one supervisor remarked upon two motivators currently missing for the majority of staff in the field, *"Breaks, (...) debriefing (...)"*

        Reflection during high intensity moments. Another exciting find was what positive intrinsic motivation has on some of the participants during stressful moments at work. Some participants stated that they were able to reflect on the rewarding parts of their job during high moments of stress. One staff stated, *"Absolutely. (...)If it was bad enough I would quit."* A supervisor commented on the positive feedback and interactions saying, *"I think about positive interactions and today I received an email from staff saying I was an awesome coordinator. That keeps me there"* and *"It's one of those things where you create a special bond with them like family even though you're not supposed to do that. That's a reason people stay as long as they do because they care about the people."*

        Job satisfaction. Lastly, when asked to rate their positions on a scale of 1-10, a few participants rated their positions over a 5. Two participants rated their positions at a 6 saying, *"I'd probably say like a 6. I'm still happy"* and *"(...) I'd say a 6. The pros of staying outweigh the cons typically (...)"* Two participants rated their positions in the 7 range noting, *"(...) 7. I don't hate it but I'm not in love with it right now. This is the best job I've had. I am legitimately happy with what I'm doing and where I'm headed currently"* and *"7.5 (...) Things seem to be getting better (...)"* Lastly, one individual remarked, *"9. (...) My satisfaction is working with (...) and knowing I can plant a seed and make a little bit of difference when I have them with me."*

Results

Nine interviews were completed, four of the participants were supervisors and five of the participants were front line staff. There were several differences and similarities between responses in the front line staff and the supervisor interviews. Participant responses were also compared to pertinent pieces of the literature review including the sections on the role of supervisors, extrinsic motivators, intrinsic motivators, and staff retention. Given the participant number (nine), qualitative comparisons were performed.

Staff and Supervisor Comparison.

Participant differences. There were several key differences between staff and supervisors responses to several questions. For example, as a whole participants working in the supervisor capacity were more likely to say they entered the field in order to put their college degree to use in helping people. On the flip side individuals working in the front line staff capacity were more likely to state they entered the field based on a friend's referral. Another difference between staff and supervisors is that out of those who responded that they plan to stay in the field in the next 1-2 years only supervisors stated they plan to be moving up in their agency during this time.

Another difference in responses from staff and supervisors was in their reflections on times where they felt they weren't paid enough to do their job. Staff was more likely to answer they felt this way during violent situations with clients and when completing medical needs they deemed to be nursing activities. Supervisors were more likely to state staffing issues (such as lack of staff) and the level of paperwork.

Lastly, staff and supervisors gave different ratings when asked to rate their employment experience in the field of adults with supervisors. Staff was more likely to answer with a 0-5 rating and supervisors were more likely to answer with a 6-10 rating.

Participant similarities. There were also several key similarities between staff and supervisors responses to the interview questions. For example, staff and supervisors were equally likely to respond that they did not look forward to anything during their work day and were equally likely to state they looked forward to their interactions with their clients. Staff and supervisors were also equally likely to site better wages and fringe benefits as something they would like to change about their job. Staff and supervisors were also equally likely to state they'd change something about their supervisors or upper management (such as upper management needing better organization and assertion skills, progressive thinking and more understanding/support for staff, better communication, fair policies, and better hiring policies).

Another similarity was that a majority of participants stated that in the next 1-2 years they would be employed somewhere out of the field of adults with disabilities. Also, staff and supervisors were both equally likely to comment on the ease of finding a position as a factor in why people without a degree enter the field of adults with disabilities. Likewise, staff and supervisors agreed that in the absence of higher wages agencies could offer bonuses, health benefits, and better PTO policies. Relatedly, staff and supervisors gave similar answers to what they felt would be fair wages for staff and supervisors (they were equally likely to give ranges from $14 an hour to $60 an hour).

Lastly, staff and supervisors were alike in their answers about situations in which their supervisors positively and negatively influenced their work. All participants gave more negative responses to this question than positive.

Literature Review Comparison.

      Impact of supervisor to staff relationship. According to multiple sources in the literature review supervisors can play a direct role in staff burnout. Several of the participants in the study reflected negative work motivation that was directly related to their experiences with their supervisors. Several participants gave similar reasons for the negative influence that the literature review cited including; not being supportive of their staff, making situations more difficult than necessary, and creating poor work-site conditions (Cherniss, 1988, Seltzer and Numerof, 1998, Dierendonck, Borrill, Haynes, & Stride, 2004). Several participants commented on behaviors or attitudes their supervisors have that are low in consideration and low in structure (i.e. unsympathetic after a violent outburst, not supportive of staff concerns, and not providing clear goals or tasks for their staff to do with clients).

      Another study (Cherniss, 1988) found those supervisors who spent more time planning, organizing, and advocating for staff increased staff retention. Two participants directly commented on their supervisor's inability to plan and organize for their clients and that this inability negatively impacted their work motivation (feelings of if they don't care then why should I care). However, it is interesting to note that these two individuals have been employed in their position for several years and both stated they were not interested in moving to a new job.

      Extrinsic motivation. Participants made several comments on the lack of extrinsic motivation in their current or former positions. According to one study (Ewalt, 1991) women are constantly on the lookout for better paid positions, advancement, and promotions. This was indirectly commented on in the participant interviews by several participants who commented on how easy it is to move from company to company based on the availability of openings.

Participants stated, *"(…) it's an easy field to get into, easy to get hired (…)"* and *"If they are not happy with one agency they can move on to the next because there is most likely an opening"* and *"It's a quick job. (…) It's an easy job to get hired into."*

Also, when asked about a time the participant felt they weren't paid enough to do their job, one participant who worked alone in a group home commented on the same idea as Bradley & Sutherland (1995) did, that working alone can increase psychological distress. The participant stated, *"I was responsible for 4 people's lives by myself for 10 hours at a time. If they were all sick I had to deal with it alone. If there was a tornado I had to try and keep them all safe by myself. If something happened to them I was liable and could lose my job."*

Intrinsic motivation. One concept that was surprisingly missing from participants answers was what intrinsic motivators moved them to apply for a job in the field initially and what intrinsic motivators are keeping them in the field now (if they are still employed there). On the surface it appears that work in day programs, group homes, or schools should be intrinsic in nature, yet most participant's responses were lacking mention of intrinsic qualities. Several participants noted their reasons for entering the field as referrals from friends or the closest thing they could do with their college degree (psychology). One person cited intrinsic motivation stating, *"(…) I love being around the population and I love doing it."*

According to two different studies cited in the literature review (Kreps, 1997, Benabou & Tirole, 2003), jobs high in intrinsic value are more enjoyable. Some results of this study were supportive; as 5 out of the 9 participants rated their current or past employment as a 6 or higher.

Staff retention. According to the literature review there are values, motivators, and incentives companies can provide their employees that would keep them employed longer. One study (Ginn & Sandell, 1997) found that family friendly policies will help retain staff (especially

female staff). One supervisor commented the need for family friendly policies saying, *"(...)*

there could be a daycare option. (....) That's a part of the reason we don't have staff show up,

because their daycare closed or their kids are sick."

Additionally, one study (Biron & Boon, 2013) found that employees were more apt to

dislike their position if they felt their work contributions were treated unfairly. The perception of

unfairness could stem from observations of other staff not working as hard to employees feeling

that they are not being fairly compensated for their work.   One question asked in the interview

was directly related to moments where the participants felt they were not paid enough to do their

jobs. Three out of the nine participants commented on abusive situations in which they were

hurt. Three other participants explained nursing duties, procedures, and medical charting they

were trained to do commenting on how they aren't compensated to do the work and were not

really qualified to do it either. Two other participants commented on the continual short staffing

battle.

Summary. There were several interesting similarities and differences between supervisor

and staff responses and the overall comparison to key sections in the literature review. Responses

from the participants and information found in the literature review hold several implications for

social work practice and for future research.

Discussion

Implications for social work practice intrinsic incentives. In the absence of increased state funding there are intrinsic and extrinsic incentives social workers and others employed in the field of adults with disabilities can do to decrease staff turnover to improve services for adults with disabilities. First of all, to foster a sense of team work (intrinsic motivation), even in agencies where staff typically work alone, individuals employed in a supervisory or management role can help nurture staff relationships with other staff and supervisors by hosting social events. Considering the majority of the participants stated one of the things they looked forward to doing every day was interacting with clients another way companies can inexpensively enhance intrinsic motivation is to promote staff and client relationships by hosting special events such as holiday parties or picnics where employees and clients are invited.

According to participant answers having open communication between staff and upper management would be a valuable intrinsic incentive. Often there is a divide between upper management to lower management to staff. Agencies could increase intrinsic motivation for staff and lower level management by having more of an open door policy and by providing support and understanding for lower management and staff during difficult client situations. One simple way to show support and understanding for staff is after a violent situation with clients. Often times it's the front staff (who are the least paid and tend to have less experience and education compared to people in management) who respond to violent situations. When the situation has been handled supervisors or upper management can provide a sense of debriefing for the staff where they'd be able to express their feelings about the situation without reprisals.

Also, little rewards (that don't have to be monetary in value) appear to go a long way. According to participant answers small things like free popcorn or treats once a week, a simple

"thank you" for their hard work and effort, two paid 15 minute breaks a day, and the ability for

the company to be flexible with schedules can make a big impact on staff retention.

Lastly, agencies can help promote intrinsic motivation by having fair and flexible PTO

policies. In general participants understood the idea that only a certain amount of people could

have off on a certain day but many cited what they believed to be unfair PTO policies such as

having to maintain a large bank of hours they couldn't use and not being allowed a day off due to

short staffing (which is a perpetual problem in the field and not the fault of the staff requesting

the day off). Agencies can help increase intrinsic motivation by being as fair and flexible with

allowing staff time off as possible, even if it means that occasionally supervisors or upper

management has to work in the direct care staff role.

Implications for social work practice extrinsic incentives. In the absence of increased

funding there are still extrinsic motivators or incentives companies can promote to help decrease

staff turnover. The main complaint regarding extrinsic motivation is the feelings of current

wages not matching the skill level needed to complete the job. When wages are based off of

funding it's understandable that wages have remained stagnant for years, however, agencies

should do all they can to give competitive wages and annual raises (even if the raise is a small

amount).

Also, many participants stated their agency they work for has a yearly or quarterly bonus

program but that these bonuses can be hard to get due to loop holes in the policies. Policies

regarding bonuses should be clear and not impossible to get (the feeling of never being able to

get a financial bonus can have a negative impact on an employee's desire to stay at a company).

Many individuals also cited health insurance (poor quality) as a reason for leaving the

field of adults with disabilities. With the rising cost of health insurance and decreases, stagnant,

or minimal increases in funding to the field there isn't much that can be done to increase health

insurance benefits at this time.

Lastly, supervisors and upper management can help foster extrinsic motivation by being a

positive leader. The general idea being if supervisors and upper management act as though they

aren't paid enough to do their work than staff will feel the same about the work they are doing.

Simple actions such as organizing and preparing client skills or goals, having a "leader"

mentality, having an awareness of what's going on with the clients and staff and helping handle

the violent situations, and writing the programs and teaching staff how to implement them are

behaviors supervisors and upper management can display that would help increase extrinsic

motivation in the work place.

Implications for policy. Federal and state funding and policies need to be addressed and

changed, not only for the betterment of the employees but for the individuals with disabilities as

well. Increasing funding for group homes and day programs would help retain staff (due to

increased wages) which helps clients and families with care continuity. Individuals with

disabilities who attend or need services through an agency often have goals, programs, high

medical needs, and sometimes high behavioral needs. All of which can and are dismissed when

there are staffing shortages, forgotten with the revolution of new staff, or not done correctly due

to lack of proper training.

Also, decreases in staff turnover will in effect save companies and the state money as less

of the allocated funds will go towards hiring and training new staff. The high volume of money

companies lose in hiring new staff that quit in less than a year could be better spent elsewhere

such as programming needs for the clients and bonuses, wages, or benefits for the staff. Also, if

the seepage of money on staff orientation and training were drastically reduced increases on

current staff receiving extra training or attending classes (which in turn would better services for adults with disabilities) could be increased.

Implications for research. Further research needs to be completed to get a bigger picture on how intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and incentives affect people working in the field of adults with disabilities. Additional research should include a larger participant base (through interviews or surveys) and a larger geographical area (such as looking at rural areas and if the smaller pool of employment options affects staff retention in the field of adults with disabilities). Also, further studies could be done with individuals employed in different capacities than the ones who agreed to participate in this study. This study included direct care staff and supervisors from day programs and group homes.

Further studies could also look at the intrinsic and extrinsic incentives for those employed in upper management positions and case managers. Future research on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for people employed in the field of adults with disabilities could include surveys instead of interviews (therefore involving more participants) and could use methods other than the Snow Ball Technique (which may have a bias for participants referring fellow co-workers who have similar thoughts and feelings regarding the topic).

Strengths and Limitations. There are multiple strengths to this study including; the different perspectives of staff and supervisors regarding intrinsic and extrinsic motivators, the different perspectives of group home and day program employees, and a different assessment of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators in the literature review as some of the data there comes from a business model (instead of a social service model). Limitations to this study are the amount of people interviewed (four supervisors and five staff, if time were not a factor 8-10 from each group would have given a more in depth look into the feelings and thoughts behind the issue)

and the people being asked to interview were only from the Rochester, Minnesota (Olmsted

County) area, therefore, not representing a large geographical area.

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Appendix A

Intrinsic Motivators for People Serving Adults with Disabilities

INFORMATION AND CONSENT FORM

Introduction:

You are invited to participate in a research study investigating what the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are that help job retention in the field of adults with disabilities. This study is being conducted by Rebecca Nixon, a graduate student at St. Catherine University under the supervision of Rajean Moone, a faculty member in the Department of Social Work. You were selected as a possible participant in this research because you are either currently employed or recently employed in the field of adults with disabilities. Please read this form and ask questions before you agree to be in the study.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to determine what intrinsic motivators companies can promote to keep people employed longer in the field of adults with disabilities. Approximately 10 people are expected to participate in this research.

Procedures:

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to participate in one in-person interview with one researcher. The interview will be audiotaped. This interview will take approximately one hour to complete.

Risks and Benefits of being in the study:

The study does not have any direct risks to the participant.

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this research.

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained in connection with this research study that can be identified with you will be disclosed only with your permission; your results will be kept confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. No one from the day program or group home facility will know your comments and thoughts on this matter (all identifying information will be removed from your comments) and no direct information will be released to your place of business.

I will keep the research results in a locked file cabinet in my home office and only I and my advisor will have access to the records while I work on this project. I will finish analyzing the data by June 1st, 2016. I will then destroy all original reports and identifying information that can be linked back to you. Only I will have access to the audio tape and when it is not being used for transcription it will be locked in the filing cabinet in my office. The audio tape will be destroyed by June 1st, 2016.

Voluntary nature of the study:

Participation in this research study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with St. Catherine University in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to stop at any time without affecting this relationship.

New Information:

If during course of this research study I learn about new findings that might influence your willingness to continue participating in the study, I will inform you of these findings.

Contacts and questions:

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me, Rebecca Nixon, at 507-316-2060. You may ask questions now, or if you have any additional questions later, the faculty advisor, (Rajean Moone, 651-235-0346), will be happy to answer them. If you have other questions or concerns regarding the study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you may also contact Dr. John Schmitt, Chair of the St. Catherine University Institutional Review Board, at (651) 690-7739 or jsschmitt@stkate.edu.

You may keep a copy of this form for your records.

Statement of Consent:

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you have read this information and your questions have been answered. Even after signing this form, please know that you may withdraw from the study.

_____

I consent to participate in the study and be audio-recorded.

_____

Signature of Participant   Date

_____

Signature of Researcher   Date

Appendix B

Interview

1. What is your name and occupation?

2. Can you describe your background working with adults with disabilities?

3. What motivated you to seek employment with a program that supports adults with disabilities?

4. When you go into work each day, what things do you look forward to do?

5. What would you change about your job if you could?

6. Where do you see yourself related to a job in the next 1-2 years?

7. What do you think motivates people with a college degree to seek employment supporting adults with disabilities?

8. What do you think motivates people without a college degree to seek employment supporting adults with disabilities?

9. If you could hire the ideal person who works with disabilities, what would their prior experience or education be like?

10. Can you tell me a time you felt a place of employment did not offer an extrinsic reinforcement for you or someone else that would have persuaded that person to stay employed? (Definition of extrinsic reinforcement provided)

11. It is commonly stated by employees that they "do not get paid enough" to do the work. Can you give me an example of a time when you felt this way?

12. In the absence of higher wages, what benefits do you feel companies can offer staff in this field as an incentive to stay employed?

13. In that moment where you felt you weren't "paid enough" to do your job, were you able to think about the rewarding moments of your job you explained earlier? Was that of a value to you in that moment of stress?

14. If money was no issue, what do you think is a fair wage for direct care staff and supervisors?

15. Can you describe a time when your supervisor positively or negatively influenced your work motivation.

16. On a scale of 1-10 (1 being low and 10 being high) how do you rate your satisfaction of your job and why?

Table 1

Participant Characteristics

Participant	Sex	Education	Years in field	Supervisor status	Wages > $15/hour	Still in the field
1	F	4 year degree	5 years	Y	Y	Y
2	F	4 year degree	Over 10 years	Y	Y	N
3	F	4 year degree	15.5 years	Y	Y	Y
4	F	Some college	Over 10 years	N	Y	Y
5	F	Some college	17 years	N	Y	Y
6	F	Some college	Going on 2 years	N	N	Y
7	F	Some college	4 years	N	N	N
8	F	Some college	5 years	N	N	N
9	M	4 year degree	5 years	Y	Y	N