

Opinion Article

The 2022 Israeli Welfare Services for People with Disabilities Bill: A Historical and Value-based Perspective

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In this opinion piece, I evaluate the 2022 Israeli Welfare Services for People with Disabilities Bill from a historical and value-based perspective. I present the welfare state's historical ambivalence towards people with disabilities, often resulting in their social rights coming at the expense of their civic and political rights. Next, I present the social model of disability and its reconceptualization of independence and autonomy, which provides us with criteria for examining the new bill and its current and future alignment with the aspirations of the disability movement.

Keywords: people with disabilities, independence, social model of disability, welfare services

Opinion Article

The 2022 Israeli Welfare Services for People with Disabilities Bill: A Realistic View

Odelia Fitoussi

Israeli delegate, UN Committee of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – CRPD

This opinion piece attempts to review the gaps that exist between the Welfare Services for People with Disabilities Bill of June 2022 and the position of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from the point of view of Odelia Fitoussi, a member of the UN Experts Committee of the CRPD. This article deals with the gaps between the exclusion of persons with certain types of disabilities from this law and the obligation to deinstitutionalize all persons, regardless of their type of disability. It also discusses the difficulty in exercising the rights themselves.

Keywords: rights, CRPD Convention, deinstitutionalization, welfare, disability

“My Body Calls Me”: Narratives of Israeli Women Recovering from Breast Cancer

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Background: Although breast cancer is one of the most common forms of cancer, and there is a vast literature concerning its deleterious effects on body image and quality of life, there has been little research on body experiences of recovering patients.

Aims: To determine the body's role in coping narratives of recovering breast cancer patients.

Methods: In this narrative study, data obtained in 12 semi-structured, in-depth interviews of recovering patients post-IBP were analyzed by ideal type and content and form coding.

Main findings: Three models of “body-disease” narratives emerged: a disease-story that disregarded the body-story, a double story - disease-story and body-story that appeared separately, and an embodied-disease story. The models spanned a scale such that breakdown of one model was expressed in the development of another.

Conclusion and practical implications: Our findings regarding the tension between the body's objectification and the body's recognition of the knowledge it contains as critical components of the breast-cancer-coping process are discussed via both medical-social and feminist-critical discourses. Our study points to the body as a key identity component that is impaired in the disease. We suggest that perceptive listening by caregivers to the described body experiences embedding the disease may help breast cancer patients achieve an optimal recovery.

Keywords: breast cancer, body objectification, integrative body psychotherapy, feminist critical discourse, medical discourse, social-gender discourse

Arab-Palestinian Mothers Living in Poverty in Israel and Their Daughters Who Work While Attending School: The Impact on Education

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Background: Paid work among adolescent girls living in poverty impacts their ability to complete their high school education. The link between the paid work of school girls and the intergenerational transmission of beliefs and attitudes toward marriage, education, and work has hitherto been unexamined among Arab-Palestinian families living in Israel, limiting the knowledge of its relevance to mothers and daughters' ability to cope with the demands of both work and school.

Aims: This study examines from a class perspective three dimensions for understanding how mothers living in poverty and their daughters who work while at school cope with the educational system and the cultural structure to make certain that the girls complete high school. These dimensions are the ethno-national-cultural context, the mothers' efforts to ensure their daughters' success in school, and the girls' struggle to establish an alternative value criterion for themselves as working students.

Methods: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 20 Arab-Palestinian mother/ daughter dyads living in poverty.

Findings: Applying a class perspective reveals two parallel processes taking place in mothers and their daughters: 1) the rejection of benevolent sexism while accumulating emotional capital through schooling; 2) the deflection of the shame of poverty among girls by their attaining higher education and contributing to the family livelihood.

Implications: This research contributes to an understanding of the emotional resilience of Arab-Palestinian high school adolescent girls in Israel in the context of their right to complete their studies. It provides knowledge and resources to work with families in poverty.

Keywords: poverty, education, paid work, emotional capital, emotional politics, benevolent sexism

Children in the Shadow of Intimate Partner Violence: How Do Mothers Describe the Harm to Their Children?

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Background: Research has documented that exposure of children to intimate partner violence (IPV) has negative consequences for their development. For the most part, the conceptual approach in research and the institutional approach to the children perceive them either as witnesses exposed to violence, or as its secondary victims.

Aims: The current study aims to reveal the implications of children's exposure to IPV from the mother's perspective, during the marital relationship and after separation of the parents.

Method: We conducted qualitative research that included in-depth interviews with 32 mothers who were survivors of IPV. Inductive thematic analysis revealed how mothers perceive their children's exposure to IPV during and after the end of the marital relationship, and their children's vulnerability over time.

Main findings: The findings describe the long-term negative effects on health and behavior as well as attachment relationships with parents, of children living in the shadow of IPV. In addition, the findings reveal the various ways in which fathers continue their violent behaviors, using the children and their institutionalized rights as means of continuing to control the mothers.

Conclusions: The study shows that IPV is not limited to the boundaries of the marital relationship, but expands to the children's space with significant consequences. It reinforces the importance of adopting the concept of "Child Victims of IPV" and understanding the phenomenon as a traumatic event for them.

Implications for practice and / or policy: The study reinforces the need to adopt a policy that acknowledges the children living in the shadow of IPV as direct victims. Intervention methods that address the needs of children and mothers must be adopted and resources directed towards their rehabilitation.

Keywords: Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), children exposed to IPV, trauma, attachment

Practice Wisdom: From a "Circle of Chairs" to a Phone Conference: Group Therapy Following the Outbreak of COVID-19

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Background: In February 2020, the outbreak of the global coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) in Israel resulted in a significant health crisis, challenging the adaptive ability of both caregivers and patients exposed to this shared threat.

Aims: The aim of the article is to describe an unexpected transition of an empowerment-oriented therapy group from a physical face-to-face setting to a telephone conference call format, following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic.

Method: The stages of the transition are described along with a review of the theoretical aspects of group therapy which were affected by the transition. The implications of the change of the original therapeutic setting to teletherapy and the potential application to other online interventions are detailed.

Main findings: The Covid-19 lockdown enforced adaptation of the group therapy setting from face-to-face to teletherapy meetings. The difficulties encountered in the group therapy process motivated us to undertake an ongoing analysis of the unique interventions during the transition phase and the new teletherapy group format. We also explored the implications of maintaining the therapeutic continuity and the roles of the therapists.

Conclusions and implications for practice: Group teletherapy by phone is assembled from the private spaces in which each participant is present, and the therapist's task is to merge them into a shared virtual group space. "Dynamic management" as a means of maintaining the framework of group therapy becomes a therapeutic intervention concept in itself. Efforts to rehabilitate the beneficent object of group therapy - "the collective" - may strengthen continuity and adaptability, especially when the threat is shared by the therapists and patients.

Keywords: Covid-19, group therapy, teletherapy, dynamic management, empowerment-oriented social action groups