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## **“Like an axe above your head”: Drug criminalization policy and male offenders’ experiences in institutional addiction treatment**

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Gali Alperstein<sup>1</sup>

This article examines drug addiction treatment policies for men involved in the Israeli criminal justice system, focusing on gender perceptions, social stigma, and drug criminalization impacts on treatment processes and outcomes. The study draws on interviews with eight men in institutional addiction treatment programs operated by the Ministry of Social Welfare and eight social workers employed in the same facilities, alongside analysis of policy documents. Using institutional ethnography methodology, the study identifies three central themes: drugs as a response to emotional needs; power relations in treatment settings; and gendered approaches affecting client experiences. The findings reveal that treatment facilities, despite assisting intentions, may entrench clients’ marginal positioning. The perception of drug users as criminals lacking self-control justifies continuous supervision mechanisms within treatment settings. Simultaneously, traditional gender perceptions hinder men from expressing vulnerability, exposing trauma, and revealing diverse masculine identities. The integrated analysis of interviews and policy documents offers a glance at the official policy and on its actual implementation in practice. The research emphasizes the need for a holistic approach in addiction treatment recognizing intersecting effects of class, gender, criminalization, and trauma, as well as the importance of implementing a gender-sensitive therapeutic model enabling expression of diverse forms of masculinity.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Gender, Bar-Ilan University

## Flexible work arrangement for pregnant women and mothers after maternity leave

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Neta Cohen<sup>2</sup>, Michal Gross<sup>3</sup> and Aviv Kidron<sup>4</sup>

Flexible work arrangements (FWAs) have received considerable research attention, however, they have rarely been empirically studied in the context of pregnant women and new mothers during the first year after the end of maternity leave. This study addresses this research gap from the perspective of employee-organizational relations (EOR) theory and examines the effect of various factors that may facilitate or hinder the implementation of FWAs for women during these periods of increased conflict between work and family. This study was the first to examine the mediating effect of flexibility stigma and managers' attitudes toward FWAs on the relationship between ideal employee culture and the implementation of FWAs and employee performance evaluations. The study also aimed to determine whether there is a gender difference in the effects of mediation on the implementation of FWAs and performance appraisal of pregnant and post-partum employees, compared to all employees using FWAs. Data were collected through two online surveys, two weeks apart, completed by 374 managers who supervised pregnant or post-maternity leave female employees and whose organizations allowed FWAs. The findings confirmed the mediation hypotheses and provided an in-depth understanding of how organizational culture and managers' attitudes affect the likelihood that these women are offered FWAs, and of the lower performance evaluations they receive compared to all employees who use FWAs. From a practical perspective, the findings support the recommendation that organizations modify organizational culture to encourage improved

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<sup>2</sup> Department of Economics and Management, the Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

<sup>3</sup> Department of Human Services, Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

<sup>4</sup> Max Stern Yezreel Valley College

managerial attitudes toward FWAs for these female employees and to standardize performance evaluations of all employees using FWAs, in order to override discriminatory outcomes that negatively impact pregnant and post-maternity leave workers and their career options. The findings also support the call to establish a legal right to flexible employment for women during these life stages.

## **Between autonomy, safety, and dignity: When an older person with dementia refuses evacuation during war**

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Michael (Mickey) Schindler<sup>5</sup> and Sagit Lev<sup>6</sup>

The article addresses the ethical dilemma faced by substitute decision-makers, such as guardians and lasting powers of attorney, and professionals when an individual with dementia refuses to evacuate their home, located in a danger zone during wartime. This dilemma requires balancing respect for the person's autonomy with the need to protect their well-being and safety.

To address this dilemma, the article proposes a decision-making model based on the Israeli Legal Capacity and Guardianship Law (Amendment 18) and the ethical principles it embodies: autonomy, dignity, and utilitarian considerations. The model focuses on four main dimensions: assessing the decision-making capacity of the person with dementia; reviewing advance directives previously

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<sup>5</sup> Faculty of Social Work, Ashkelon Academic College

<sup>6</sup> School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University

issued by the individual regarding evacuation during war or security escalation; considering the person's wishes, feelings, and aspirations regarding evacuation; and weighing utilitarian considerations.

The current model adds to the existing literature, which addresses the ethical and professional dilemmas related to relocating people with dementia from their homes in high-risk situations. It does so in two ways. First, it examines this issue in the specific context of war, characterized by immediate external danger, limited accessibility, lack of available services, and constraints in assessing the individual's wishes and feelings. Second, it expands the interpretation of the right to dignity to include respecting the wishes and feelings of people with dementia who lack decision-making capacity in this context.

Given negative societal perceptions toward people with dementia and the risk of reinforcing paternalistic attitudes during wartime, the proposed model provides a practical tool for balanced decision-making, applicable both in wartime and in general or personal emergency situations.

## Perceived social harm as a mediator between child's disability type and negative impact on parents' marital quality

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Alicia Greenbank<sup>7</sup> and Gaby Kashy Rosenbaum<sup>8</sup>

The present study examined parental perceptions of the impact of raising a disabled child on social integration and marital quality. The sample comprised 309 married parents of children with diverse disabilities who completed the Family Impact Questionnaire (FIQ). Consistent with the research hypotheses, parents of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or emotional-behavioral and mental health disorders reported significantly higher levels of perceived social harm compared to parents of children with other disabilities. In contrast, parents of children with specific learning disabilities (SLD) or attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) reported significantly lower levels of social distress. Regression analyses indicated that perceived social harm was a robust and significant positive predictor of marital strain. Furthermore, a negative association was found between parental age and perceived social harm, suggesting that older parents may experience lower levels of social vulnerability. Path analysis revealed that perceived social harm served as a central mediator between child disability type and marital strain, particularly among parents of children with ASD or emotional-behavioral disorders. In contrast, among parents of children with SLD or ADHD, only partial mediation was observed, as disability type also exerted a direct positive association with marital strain. These findings contribute to

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<sup>7</sup> Department of Special Education, Givat Washington College of Education

<sup>8</sup> Department of Social Sciences, Ashkelon Academic College

both theoretical understanding and clinical practice by clarifying the distinct social and emotional challenges associated with different types of disability. The study highlights the importance of developing tailored psychosocial interventions that address the specific systemic needs of families and promote parental well-being.

## **Experiences and perceptions of community and place among Haredi families evacuated during the “Iron Swords” war**

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Rina Buskila<sup>9</sup>, Edith Blit-Cohen<sup>9</sup> and Mimi Ajzenstadt<sup>9</sup>

This study explores the experiences of Haredi families forced to evacuate their homes during “Iron Swords” war, focusing on the unique challenges they faced due to their religious and communal lifestyle. The study seeks to examine how Haredi families coped with the disruption of their established communal structure, and what private or communal resources were available to them. The research was conducted using a qualitative approach. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were held with fifteen mothers of children who, together with their families, were evacuated from their homes in the south and north of the country during the war for a period of at least one month.

The findings highlighted the crucial role the community plays in the daily lives of Haredi families, providing not only functional support but also a sense of belonging and identity. The sudden disruption of this communal structure caused significant challenges on the personal, familial, and communal levels.

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<sup>9</sup> School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University of Jerusalem

This research expands the body of knowledge on communities in crisis regarding situations of evacuation and internal displacement, while addressing the unique characteristics of Haredi society and the specific implications for individuals and families facing displacement. In doing so, the research also contributes to the growing body of knowledge concerning Haredi society

## **From the margins to the response: The Mental Crisis Intervention Team Law as a policy to promote equality and social justice — Opinion article**

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Evgeny Knaifel<sup>10</sup>

This opinion paper focuses on the Mental Crisis Intervention Team Law (2023), which aims to establish a nationwide, professional, and 24/7 accessible response system for mental health crises. Using an intersectional lens, I argue that effective implementation of this law is not merely clinical intervention for enhancing continuity of care, but also a social policy for reducing mental health disparities between privileged and disadvantaged groups in Israeli society. This opinion is based on critical analysis of the four key domains where inequality in crisis intervention is evident: 1) the lack of adequate public mental health services and the reliance on private care, which remains financially, geographically, and culturally inaccessible to many citizens; 2) police involvement which increases violence risks, especially for minorities; 3) high psychiatric hospitalization rates among immigrants, reflecting social exclusion; and 4) the burden on family caregivers — mainly women — who are often exposed to violence by individuals in mental health crisis.

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<sup>10</sup> Faculty of Social Work, Ashkelon Academic College

Through a review of findings highlighting the relationship between intersecting stigma, structural barriers and mental health disparities, I demonstrate how the implementation of the new law can contribute to social change and ensure an equitable and accessible care for diverse groups in Israeli society.

## **On artificial intelligence and the human heart: Can the AI revolution contribute to or harm social work and its clients? — Opinion article**

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Guy Grimland<sup>11</sup> and Shlomit Weiss-Dagan<sup>11</sup>

Israel's welfare system is facing a dual crisis: a dramatic increase in demand for services alongside a severe shortage of professional workforce, both of which have been further intensified by the "Iron Swords" war. At the same time, artificial intelligence (AI) technologies are rapidly entering the social domain, presenting social work with significant opportunities as well as serious ethical challenges. This article examines how the benefits of AI, such as increased efficiency and improved risk identification can be harnessed while minimizing the dangers of dehumanization and the erosion of professional judgment.

The analysis is conducted across three interrelated levels: the social worker level (reducing bureaucratic burden versus the risk of diminished professional discretion), the organizational level (data-driven management versus algorithmic bias), and the service-user level (enhanced accessibility versus the risk of alienation). The authors propose a framework for responsible AI implementation in Israel, offering policy recommendations for regulators

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<sup>11</sup> School of Social Work, Bar-Ilan University

and organizational leaders, including the revision of ethical codes, the institutionalization of an Ethics of Care within regulation, a shift toward a Social Return on Investment (SROI) economic model, and strict adherence to the Human-in-the-Loop principle. These measures aim to ensure that technology strengthens rather than replaces the core values of the social work profession.