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Driving forces: Understanding the intersection of passion and motivation on home visitor retention

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Driving forces: Understanding the intersection of passion and motivation on home visitor retention

by

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The student author, whose presentation of the scholarship herein was approved by the program of study committee, is solely responsible for the content of this dissertation. The Graduate College will ensure this dissertation is globally accessible and will not permit alterations after a degree is conferred.

Iowa State University

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DEDICATION

To my dad, the scientist, who taught me how to ask questions and my mom, the librarian, who taught me how to find the answers.

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"If there is any secret to this life I live, this is it: the sound of what cannot be seen sings within everything that can. And there is nothing more to it than that."

– Story People*, Nothing More*

With this project I set out to define and explain something unseen: passion. I would not be here without an incredible support system that nurtured my own passion and helped me make sure it could sing. I would like to thank my major professor and committee chair, Dr. Kere Hughes-Belding, for her unlimited capacity to brainstorm ideas, provide guidance, and foster the development and execution of this project. I would also like to thank my committee members, Dr. Carla Peterson, Dr. Gayle Luze, Dr. Ji-Young Choi, and Dr. Anne Foegen, for their guidance and support throughout the course of this research. In addition, I would like to thank Luke Huber for his critical research support, as well as friends, family, and colleagues who spent countless hours reviewing and discussing my ideas.

A special thank you is reserved for the home visitors and families with whom I started my career and the fiery passion they are responsible for sparking. Crystal, Becky, Dana, Jill, Chris, Lorene, and the rest of the Turtles hold a special place in my heart for their early mentorship and guidance. Thank you to Janet, PJ, Kelly, Kristy, and Marcus for giving me unlimited grace and understanding as I pursued this professional goal. And finally, I extend my appreciation to those who were willing to participate in my surveys and interviews. Without them, this dissertation would not have been possible and the stories that make them sing may have gone unheard.

ABSTRACT

Early childhood home visiting is a challenging profession that requires knowledge, skills, and passion for working with families experiencing multiple challenges. Research on workforce satisfaction and retention relies mostly on satisfaction data collected by current home visitors or supervisors of former employees. These studies have identified passion as a common intrinsic motivator for the work. This study was developed to better understand the phenomenon of passion, as well other motivators that aid in workforce retention. Drawing on social exchange theory, a phenomenological approach was used to understand the essence of the home visiting experience and the intersection of relevant motivations, including passion. This research used a conceptual framework that identified and characterized motivators as positive or negative, and intrinsic or extrinsic in nature. Interviews were conducted with current and former home visitors to gain first-hand understanding of this phenomenon.

Findings indicated that home visitor satisfaction was heavily influenced by a mixture of positive and negative motivators, intrinsic or extrinsic in nature. Results identified passion as a key intrinsic motivator that was influenced by other motivators in ways that impacted job satisfaction and ultimately retention in home visiting. These other motivators included structural supports (such as agency policies), benefits, and supervision, as well as intrinsic characteristics, such as hopefulness and mindset. This research uncovers some of the complexities in understanding passion as it intersects with other motivators to impact home visitor retention. Implications for supporting home visitor well-being and job satisfaction are discussed.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood home visiting (ECHV) in Iowa comprises over 100 evidence-based and promising practice programs that provide in-home support for an average of nearly 12,000 new and expecting parents per year (Iowa Family Support Network, 2019). Home Visitors (HVs) within these programs guide and support parents as they navigate new parenting roles and learn about key elements of their child's early development. ECHV is a complex field in which HVs must be knowledgeable about a variety of different topic areas ranging from child development to intimate partner violence to substance abuse or mental health issues. While professionals in the field are generally well educated, the multi-faceted demands of ECHV and the knowledge and skills required to be successful in the field pose a significant challenge to the overall successfulness of the workforce (Landsman, 2017). When compounded, the daily demands of the job often exacerbate other stressors that undermine overall job satisfaction. These stressors include low pay, high professional and emotional job demands, and funding instability—all of which contribute to an average turnover rate for HVs of just under 60% (Landsman, 2017). Importantly, these factors associated with turnover do not seem to be influenced by characteristics such as length of time an HV has been employed, educational background, or training. The workforce is experiencing turnover among all groupings and characteristics of HVs, so understanding the underlying motivations that influence satisfaction and result in decisions to remain in the field is of utmost importance.

A major factor in family success within ECHV is the length of time a family is enrolled in services (Avellar & Supplee, 2013; Daro, 2010; Duggan et al., 2018). Critical to family retention is the retention of staff, as families are often cited as exiting the program due to a transition in HV (Landsman, 2017). When considering high turnover rates for HVs, the key to

understanding (and ultimately decreasing) turnover rates may be to examine the reasons HVs join the field in the first place. Researchers commonly use an umbrella term of "satisfaction" when explaining the reason HVs enter the field and their subsequent retention (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). Within that discussion, satisfaction encompasses both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that drive HV decision making when entering the field (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al, 2020). Over 70% of Iowa HVs reported that the driving motivation to enter the field was the desire to help other people (Landsman, 2017). With a turnover rate of 60%, it is apparent that current investigations into satisfaction are not meeting the needs of the field to fully describe elements that retain staff (Landsman, 2017). If a motivation of helping people is truly driving satisfaction for 70% of HVs, a turnover rate of 60% seems exorbitantly out of place. Virtually no information is included to better understand what "helping people" means or how intrinsic motivators, such as passion, intersect with extrinsic motivators, such as agency structures and supports. Understanding this concept could help create a set of driving forces that keep HVs in the field. Therefore, detailed exploration must occur to capture intrinsic and extrinsic motivations of HVs to determine how those factors could increase satisfaction and contribute to a resilient and steady workforce.

Early Childhood Home Visitation

Early childhood home visitation (ECHV) is a tailored service delivery system for supporting families of young children who experience multiple challenges that are related to poor developmental outcomes and higher rates of child maltreatment (Avellar & Supplee, 2013; Daro, 2010). ECHV services are provided by trained professionals, typically educated in social work, early childhood, nursing, or related fields. Job titles include, but are not limited to, Parent Educator, Nurse Home Visitor, Family Support Professional, and Early Childhood Specialist.

For clarity, professionals providing services under the umbrella of ECHV will be referred to as Home Visitors (HVs).

Over the last decade, Iowa has seen an expansion in ECHV services under the authorization of section 511 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. § 711). This act authorized the Maternal Infant Early Childhood Home Visitation (MIECHV) program. Evidence-based programming was identified as a mechanism to serve at-risk communities within U.S. states, tribes, territories, and the District of Columbia (NHVRC, 2019). In Iowa, ECHV encompasses a wide variety of voluntary education, prevention, and early intervention programming in addition to MIECHV, which is funded by federal, state, and local appropriations (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020). The overarching purpose of ECHV in Iowa is to provide parents with the tools to succeed in raising healthy, thriving children from conception to kindergarten (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020). An estimated 183,000 families in Iowa are eligible for ECHV services, although funding and supports currently allow for services to reach approximately 12,000 families, or just under 7% of the total eligible population with a workforce of nearly 700 HVs (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020).

Facets of Early Childhood Home Visiting

ECHV in Iowa focuses on three key areas of family development: maternal and child health, school readiness, and building strong families (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020). Home visits traditionally take place through regular face-to-face meetings in the family's home. ECHV eligibility guidelines can vary by program, however common eligibility characteristics are identified as families with low income; pregnant women under the age of 21; families with a history of child abuse, substance abuse, or smokers in the home; families with children demonstrating low educational achievement; caregivers of a child with a disability; and/or families who have served or currently serve in the armed forces (MIECHV TACC, 2015). These

family characteristics are predictive of poorer outcomes in maternal and child health and wellbeing and are therefore targeted when determining ECHV eligibility (MIECHV TACC, 2015).

Improvement of maternal and child health outcomes requires Iowa ECHV programs to conduct screening and assessments for detecting maternal depression, monitor adherence to scheduled well-child visits, and connect families with health insurance for both primary caregivers and children (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020). In this role, HVs serve as an identification point for maternal and child health concerns as well as a navigational consultant for resources that specifically target those areas.

The Iowa Family Support Impact project (2020) details how HVs focus on assessment, identification, and facilitation of supports to address challenges in school readiness. Specifically, in Iowa, HVs are tasked with understanding and encouraging early literacy, talking with families about developmental concerns, screening for developmental delays, and referring to additional developmental services when needed. Furthermore, HVs in Iowa are committed to developing strong families by implementing prevention practices that mitigate child abuse and neglect. Using a tool called the Life Skills Progression instrument, HVs work to improve or maintain family functioning, improve or maintain social supports, and facilitate professional supports through referrals. Additional work in this area focuses on the reduction of emergency room visits for children enrolled in services as well as identification of interpersonal violence (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020).

These benchmarks and reporting areas are reflective of the three key areas of ECHV: maternal and child health, school readiness, and building strong families (Iowa Family Support Impact, 2020). Supporting these three key areas requires HVs to demonstrate a vast set of

competencies for high-quality services. In Iowa, HVs adhere to the National Family Support Competency Framework for Direct Service Professionals, which consists of 10 domains, 38 dimensions and 117 individual competencies (Clucas, 2018). While these competencies address practice skills needed to improve maternal and child health outcomes, support school readiness, and prevent child maltreatment, the specific knowledge, ability, and preparation required to meet all competencies is often perceived as overwhelming.

Early Childhood Home Visiting Workforce

In general, the ECHV workforce in Iowa is highly educated, due in large part to the multi-faceted demands of providing ECHV services and the hiring practices employed by many of the implementing agencies. In 2017, a statewide *Iowa Family Support Workforce Evaluation* (IFSW) was conducted by the University of Iowa, under the supervision of the Iowa Department of Public Health (Landsman, 2017). This study examined the general qualities and characteristics of HVs in Iowa. Similarly, *The National Home Visiting Career Trajectories Study* (NHVCT) was conducted in 2020 to understand the workforce and the challenges that arise for HVs (Sandstrom et al., 2020). Both studies included descriptive analysis of the education and preparation of HVs as an important indicator of staff retention. Iowa HVs were found to be highly educated and perceived themselves to be highly prepared for the work (Landsman, 2017). Nearly 73% of direct service HV respondents in both studies held a bachelor's degree or higher, indicating percentages at the state level are reflective of national norms and expectations (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). However, education alone does not appear to be a predictor of preparedness or success within the field when considering the highly educated nature of the revolving-door workforce (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020).

While identification of academic and competency-focused preparation seems like a logical focus for hiring purposes, understanding the complexities of HVs' perceived competence

and satisfaction in the work is critical to understanding retention. HV preparedness, confidence, and overall satisfaction all impact retention, however the interaction of those elements is not well understood. In the IFSW, researchers found that 75% of HVs felt competent in their current positions (Landsman, 2017). Specific competency areas such as knowledge of developmental delays and child maltreatment were overwhelmingly marked as "highly prepared" by HVs. (Landsman, 2017). Since content preparedness is often reported as high, there must be other explanations for such low retention rates in the field.

Research suggests that persons providing social-work services or in-home care feel empowered and prepared for the work but struggle with significant work-related stress and burnout (Dmytryshyn, Jack, Ballantyne, Wahoush, & MacMillan, 2015; Landsman, 2017; Mavridis, Harkness, Super, & Liu, 2019; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018). Large caseloads, complex client needs, and low support from agency administration and supervisors contribute to burnout (Landsman, 2017; Mavridis, Harkness, Super, & Liu, 2019; Mena & Bailey, 2007). These same factors decrease HV job satisfaction. A more focused understanding of the intrinsic or extrinsic motivators that HVs experience is imperative to understanding how those experiences shape satisfaction and retention.

Purpose of the Study

A supposition of this research project is that a specific intrinsic motivator, known as passion, buffers stressful work environments, resulting in improved satisfaction, workforce retention rates, and overall home visit quality. However, a major challenge to this supposition is that very little research exists providing contextual insight on how passion can be described, pinpointed, and fostered. This study will tap into the specific elements that characterize passion and other motivators that influence satisfaction, so that we can better understand interventions and supports that are needed to strengthen the home visiting workforce.

Significance of the Study

Utilizing mixed methods, both the IFSW and the NHVCT examined motivators and overall satisfaction of HVs in the field. Both studies indicated the primary motivator for working in the field is the desire to help families (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). This desire is characterized as passion, an intrinsic motivator. Additionally, both studies indicated that low pay and few opportunities for advancement led to greater dissatisfaction among HVs (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). The Home Visiting Applied Research Collaborative (HARC) found HVs reported that low parent engagement negatively affected their feelings of job efficacy and satisfaction and compromised their delivery of the curriculum and material (HARC, 2015). In this example, HVs that struggled with engagement of families felt less satisfied in their work. The desire to help, perceived opportunities for advancement, pay, and parent engagement contribute to the complexity of workforce retention in home visiting. These factors highlight the challenges in understanding how passion and other motivators might counteract certain workplace stressors and impact overall satisfaction.

The IFSW included a comprehensive work environment scale to determine which specific factors lead to greater satisfaction overall. HVs perceived lower organizational support, job security, and promotional opportunities when compared to supervisors and administrators (Landsman, 2017). However, when asked about the likelihood of staying in the same position, 51% of HVs and 52% of supervisors indicated they planned to be in the same position in five years (Landsman, 2017). While the IFSW did not explicitly connect HV satisfaction to retention, the implied retention rates suggest that the analysis of satisfaction may be an indicator of longevity in the field. Using a slightly different scale, NHVCT indicated that work environments, flexibility, and work-life balance were associated with an HV's intention to stay in the field for at least the next two years (Sandstrom et al., 2020). While the indicators are different, these data

do provide some contextual clues about specific elements of the job that may motivate and keep HVs in their positions longer. A very similar percentage of respondents (54%) from NHVCT indicated they planned to stay in the field, which again suggests alignment between the Iowa and national results.

Satisfaction is on a continuum and is influenced by both positive and negative motivators, which can be further separated into intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Throughout the literature, the terms "passion" and "motivation" are used interchangeably when describing reasons for entering, retaining, or leaving the home visit workforce. However, a distinction must be made to clarify that passion is a specific type of motivation. Passion is defined as a strong and compelling emotional component; a feeling or desire (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2020). Passion is a unique intrinsic motivator that may interact with other motivators in ways that either positively or negatively impact satisfaction. Motivation, as a general term, is defined as the incentive to act (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 2020). The current study proposes motivation can be positive or negative in nature and is influenced by specific intrinsic or extrinsic characteristics. Through an internal cost/benefit analysis, these characteristics shape each HV's perception of the motivator's significance on their overall satisfaction. Motivators, or incentives to act, are weighed as positive or negative and result in either retention or turnover. For example, HVs may be positively motivated by a passion for helping vulnerable families, but negatively motivated to act and facilitate change successfully due to factors such as burnout, structural and organizational barriers, or other motivators yet to be uncovered. The current study will examine the complexities of intrinsic motivators, such as passion, and extrinsic motivators to better understand the continuum of satisfaction and support retention. This information will aid in efforts to recruit and retain highly qualified HVs.

Various studies have identified "motivations" for HVs entering the field, but few separate motivations into intrinsic and extrinsic categories. The most common response to questions around motivation was the desire to "help families" (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). This response can be categorized as passion due to the emotional component of this motivator. However, this response is ambiguous at best, as individual perceptions of helping inevitably differ. Additionally, these studies used a web-based survey in which respondents typed a short-answer response, leaving the meaning of those responses up for interpretation. The usefulness of the response "helping families" is relatively low from a practice perspective, as it provides very little information or context about what it looks like to "help families." Further exploration into HV perceptions of family need and how that element is motivating, both intrinsically and extrinsically, can be used to foster satisfaction and generate goodness-of-fit between HVs and families. NHVCT (Sandstrom et al., 2020) included interviews that described motivation, but the results were still limited. For example, the study highlights responses where HVs discuss fulfilling their passion through their jobs, feeling rewarded by the work, and finding joy in the families they serve, but the study does not explore in any detail what those responses mean (Sandstrom et al., 2020). What does it mean to have passion for the work? What does it mean and look like to feel rewarded? What are the specific joys they find when working with families? What are the intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that influence job satisfaction? These questions are important in understanding retention of staff who work in difficult jobs, as they could help with initial recruitment. NHVCT only minimally discusses the need to refocus recruitment strategies to engage workers that are more likely to be retained, while IFSW doesn't mention it at all (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). A more intensive focus on passion and other motivators that drive satisfaction would be beneficial to better recruitment and retention efforts.

Theoretical Framework

Social exchange theory suggests that human behavior is motivated by a cost/benefit analysis in which individuals participate in relationships (or larger systems) when perceived rewards are greater than perceived losses (Burns, 1973). Within these relationships, individuals give something up in order to obtain something else. The process of exchanging something you value to obtain something else you find rewarding ultimately speaks to motivation and overall satisfaction within the relationship (Burns, 1973). Within home visitation, social exchanges can occur between HVs and the families they serve, as well as HVs and their agencies. For example, HVs overall satisfaction may be motivated positively or negatively through a cost/benefit analysis of their relationship with families. HVs give their time, knowledge, and skills (costs) to support the families, who in turn give HVs access to their family and a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment (rewards) when utilizing resources to achieve goals. Conversely, HVs who do not experience this type of reward from a family may indicate lower levels of satisfaction and greater perceived costs. This example can be expanded further to demonstrate a cost/benefit relationship between HVs and their employing agency. Extrinsic stressors, such as caseloads, pay, and other supports can be perceived as costs or benefits further motivating HVs in their decision making around retention.

Through the lens of social exchange theory, this research proposes that stressors in the workplace can be buffered by a mix of intrinsic and extrinsic motivators and that passion is of particular relevance to this work. All HVs face a great deal of job-related stressors; however, their perceptions and individual cost/benefit analysis of the work varies significantly as observed in HV retention rates. This research aims to understand the lived experiences of HVs and capture those motivators in a meaningful way.

Research Questions

This study used a phenomenological approach to better understand the lived experiences of HVs that contribute to generalizable trends in satisfaction which impact workforce retention. Interviews were conducted via a virtual meeting software for both current and former home visitors. The following research questions were addressed:

- What are the specific motivators for entering the field of home visitation?

- What motivators do home visitors find most important?

- How does passion intersect with other motivators?

- How does the interaction of passion and other motivators influence decisions around retention?

Rationale

A qualitative approach to analysis gleaned rich and meaningful data from HV experiences that speak to intrinsic and extrinsic motivators driving satisfaction and impacting retention. This study identified unique and subtle differences between intrinsic motivators, such as passion, and extrinsic motivators. The result of that exploration provided a clear picture of the motivators that drive satisfaction of HVs and keep them in their positions. By interviewing past and current HVs, this study dove into positive and negative experiences that influenced individual decisions around retention.

Subjectivity Statement

In my professional career, I am the Home Visitation Applied Research Coordinator for the state of Iowa, Department of Public Health. My professional role places me in direct contact with HVs and supervisors in the field, and in some instances elevates me to a consultant, advocate, and mentor to these individuals. Prior to my current position, I have been both an HV

and a supervisor of HVs within three different evidence-based home visiting program models. I have walked in the footsteps of my research participants, have lived experiences which speak to many of the same elements in this study, and have my own set of opinions and concerns about the field of home visiting. I bring skills to my research in the form of a work history that is rich with lived experiences and a specific set of values and guiding principles for the field, all of which guide my assumptions of the workforce and the families we serve. I entered the field accidentally, fresh out of college with an undergraduate degree in Family Services. I took the first job I was offered. I, too, just wanted to "help people" and had no concept of what that meant within the context of a real job. In fact, I didn't know much. I was inspired to join the field after reading a book by Jonathon Kozol (Amazing Grace, 1996). While my passion was sparked from the stories of real people, and my desire for work centered on bettering the lives of young children, my motivation to enter the field was in the form of a job offer that I desperately needed. I fell in love with home visitation as it gave me an avenue to experience the lives of families in the most intimate and unique ways. My motivation for the work shifted from an employment necessity to a deeply personal fulfillment as a change agent. The joy and depth of the work became my motivation, which stays with me to this day. I have worked with a mom as she navigated her first pregnancy at the age of 15. I went to the doctor's office with her for her first prenatal appointment and heard her baby's heartbeat for the first time with her. I cried with her. I celebrated with her. I worked with many moms who were welcoming their third or fourth babies, who were searching for guidance on developmental delays, or who just needed additional social support when parenting a new baby felt like the loneliest job in the world. My joy in the work I do stems from the experiences I have had with my families—experiences that research studies on home visiting have yet to encapsulate fully. My desires for this project are to speak truth to the

experiences of HVs which illuminate the passion and other motivators which guide their work. Through this, I hope to gain a deeper understanding of how those factors can be a beacon of light through which we can see a way toward greater fulfillment, satisfaction and retention among HVs. My hope is to put words to paper that reveal the joy that is home visiting.

CHAPTER 2.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this research informed the development of the design, as well as the presentation of the results and discussion. Qualitative research places emphasis on the importance of understanding lived experiences to contribute to an existing knowledge base. Many studies in ECHV focus on the quantitative measurement of workforce outcomes such as job satisfaction. This study aims to qualify lived experiences to paint a rich picture of the guiding motivators that drive satisfaction and retention within the ECHV workforce. Individual perceptions of the magnitude and importance of these motivators can impact retention of HVs. These motivators can be categorized as positive and negative, and further subcategorized into intrinsic or extrinsic motivators, as shown in Figure 1, which provides examples of motivators that have been identified in the current literature base. The conceptual framework provides a visual representation of the continuum of HV satisfaction, and the weight of negative or positive motivators that result in retention.

Positive Motivators (Rewards)
- Flexibility (extrinsic)
- Relationship building (extrinsic)
- A sense of rewarding work (intrinsic)
- A desire to help others/Passion (intrinsic)

Home Visitor Turnover

Home Visitor Satisfaction

Home Visitor Retention

- Low pay (extrinsic)
- On job stressors (extrinsic)
- Burnout (intrinsic)

Negative Motivators (Costs)
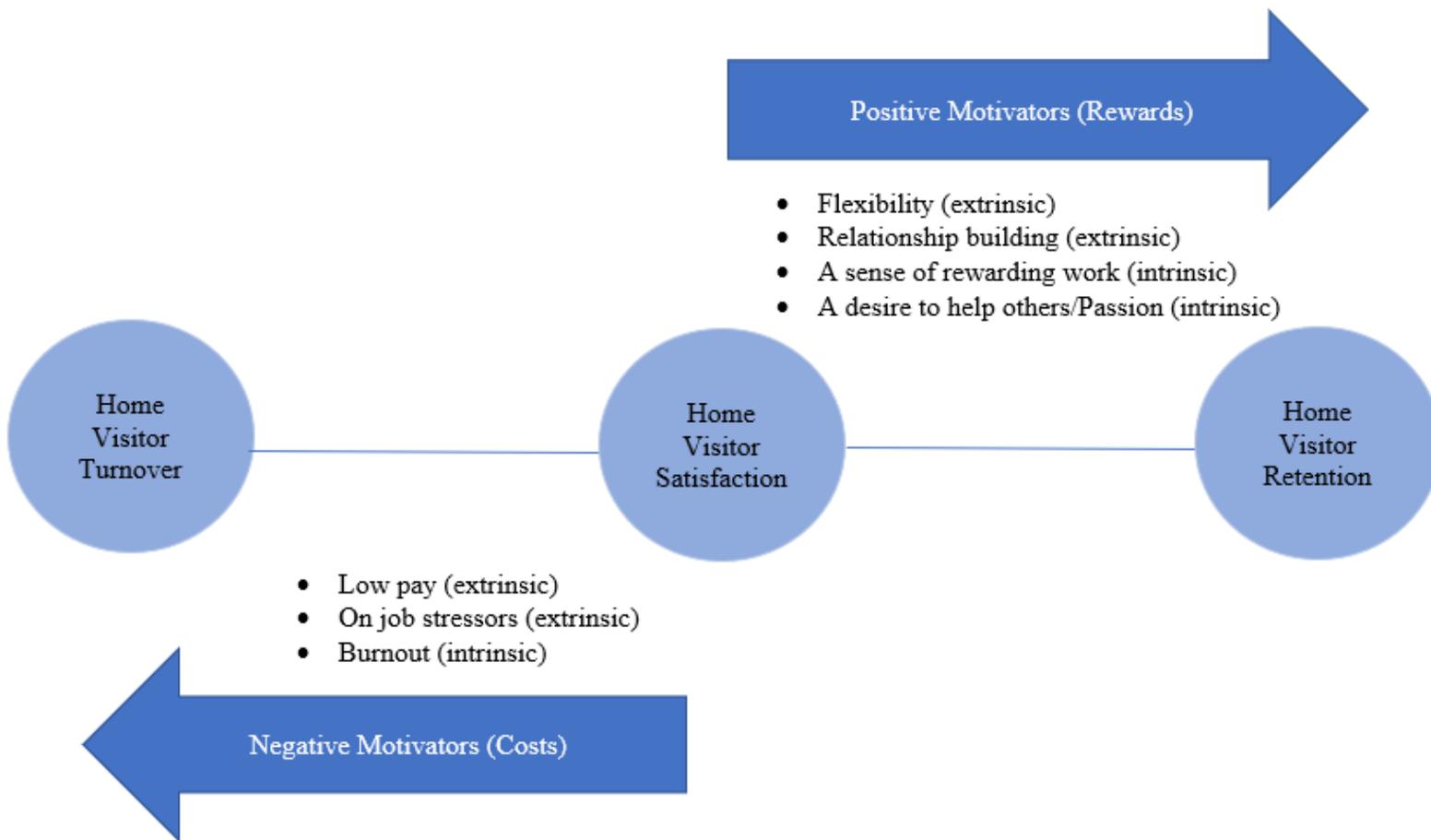
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Methodological and Theoretical Framework

Phenomenology is a method of qualitative research that places emphasis on lived experiences which result in generalizable trends, or phenomena (Maxwell, 2013; Miles, Huberman, Saldana, 2020). This method is crucial in extracting the essence of perceptions, senses, and knowledge of the participants to describe the elements of a particular phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). This approach is rooted in transcendentalism, or the concept of how we know something to be true, as it suggests that experiences are realities (Moustakas, 1994). Realities cannot exist without a conscious connection between something concrete and the individual perception of that thing (Maxwell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994). The current project relied heavily on participant perceptions of passion and other motivators that create realities and further explain the phenomenon of retention in the workforce. It was predicted that HVs' individual experiences contribute to their perception of positive and negative motivators, which influence satisfaction and ultimately result indecisions to stay in their position. While individual experiences may differ, the process of phenomenology extracts perceptions to articulate shared generalizable trends across experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Following the framework of social exchange theory, the perceptions of positive and negative motivators contribute to the reality and importance of the experiences responsible for HV retention. It is possible that perception of experiences are influenced by intrinsic motivators, such as passion, which can further articulate trends in the workforce to determine buffers or enhancements to other motivators. This can ultimately be used to strengthen the workforce and support retention.

Combining the methodological approach of phenomenology with a theoretical approach of social exchange theory facilitated the examination of the intersection between lived experiences and relationships with people and systems. Social exchange theory asserts that humans create social and emotional bonds or connections (intrinsic motivators) that influence

their decision making (Burns, 1973). Under this theory, humans make choices and sacrifices that are ultimately perceived as rewarding because the benefits outweigh the costs (Burns, 1973). HVs weigh positive and negative motivators to determine if the benefits of the work are greater than the perceived challenges. If the negative motivators outweigh positive motivators, social exchange theory would assert that HVs are less likely to stay in their position. Missing from the Conceptual Framework (Figure 1) is valuable information about the relative influence of motivators. Of specific focus is whether intrinsic motivators, such as passion, weigh more heavily on retention decision making than extrinsic motivators.

Satisfaction in Home Visiting

Prior HV satisfaction research indicates current HVs feel satisfied, happy, and empowered in their work (Dmytryshyn et al., 2015; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018). However, a persistent issue in the field centers around understanding workplace satisfaction and the connection to high rates of HV turnover (Landsman, 2017; Mavridis, Harkness, Super, & Liu, 2019; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018). The National Home Visiting Career Trajectories (NHVCT) study was conducted to identify common characteristics of the MIECHV workforce and better understand preparation for entering the field, challenges associated with the work, and necessary professional development opportunities (Sandstrom et al., 2020). Researchers used a mixed method approach to dive into questions around satisfaction and retention. At the heart of these questions, researchers were attempting to identify ways in which staff retention could be better supported. HVs reported high levels of satisfaction in some areas, such as relationship building, flexibility in work hours, and a general feeling of reward in the work, but lower satisfaction with elements such as benefits packages, salary, and promotional opportunities (Sandstrom et al., 2020).

A notable challenge in assessing HV satisfaction in relationship to retention is that former HVs are challenging to recruit for research participation. Current HVs are commonly asked to reflect on situations that may lead to their eventual turnover or reasons for leaving the field are captured through supervisor report (Begic, Weaver, & McDonald, 2019; Landsman, 2017; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018; Sandstrom et al., 2020). In the NHVCT, supervisors rated specific reasons for HV turnover on a Likert scale model with response options of "major reason," "minor reason," or "not a reason." While 51% of supervisors indicated low salary as a major reason for HVs leaving their positions, 26% indicated "burnout" and 18% indicated staff "desired different work." The use of the Likert scale to rate these individual areas was beneficial in categorizing leave patterns following the dissolution of an HV's employment. This information was less helpful in pinpointing the specific intrinsic or extrinsic motivators that drive satisfaction in a way that could be replicated and used within the field. This challenge is due largely to the fact that responses were reported by supervisors and not HVs. Further, of the 26% of HVs that reportedly left due to "burnout," no information is included on what specific motivators contributed to burnout (Sandstrom et al., 2020). Additional studies focus more heavily on elements of burnout, such as a secondary traumatic stress or chaotic work environments, but again rely heavily on current HV perspectives or supervisor report (Begic, Weaver, & McDonald, 2019; Landsman, 2017; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018). Scarce within the literature is the impact passion and other motivators play in building HV satisfaction and strengthening retention.

Using social exchange theory as a theoretical model to describe the phenomenon of retention assumes that HVs experience similar negative motivators. These negative motivators can manifest as generalized burnout and dissatisfaction with pay and are used to describe high

turnover rates (Begic, Weaver, & McDonald, 2019; Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020).

Importantly, families involved in ECHV have similar eligibility criteria (MIECHV TACC,

2015). While each family may have unique and individualized needs, underlying family stressors

and the overall purpose of enrollment within a program tend to be similar. This indicates that

each HV likely experiences similar situations with the families they serve. In stressful situations,

HVs weigh negative motivators against positive motivators. These positive motivators are

commonly cited as "passion" and "motivation" which are used interchangeably within home

visitation research (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). Understanding the intricacies of

positive motivators, both intrinsic (passion) and extrinsic in nature, and those of negative

motivators remains important in understanding how best to support HVs.

Passion

At its core, passion is a deep, emotional desire or interest (Merriam-Webster's Collegiate

Dictionary, 2020). Passion has also been defined as a strong pull towards a specific activity, in

which individuals gladly and enthusiastically contribute time and energy (Vellerand et al., 2003).

When capturing reasons why HVs enter or stay in the field, passion is commonly cited as a

positive driving force (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). With a high level of passion,

something about ECHV pulls in and keeps HVs in their positions. Unfortunately, most attempts

to dive into the element of passion within ECHV is thwarted by generalized and reductive

statements.

Within the Sandstrom et al. (2020) study, a supervisor of an ECHV program noted that

the reason for retention among their staff was "passion for the work that they do." Further, an

HV noted that after several years in the field they were "very passionate" about the work,

indicating "love" as a "main driving force." Yet another HV noted, "I love my clients…watching

how they grow and change," as a description of the passion retaining her in her position. These

responses at surface level suggest commitment and a driving motivator of passion for the work. Problematically, these responses do not provide contextual information that could be used in any beneficial way. When referenced, what does it mean to "love" the work and how can this be qualified in a way that tells a story of passion as a motivator? When HVs refer to "watching families grow and change" as their passion, what specific elements of family growth and change contribute to that feeling?

Specifics about workforce passion in ECHV are scarce. General information around passion in the workplace can inform the conceptualization of the role of passion within ECHV. Passion has been identified as an element that contributes to higher work investment and retention (Houlfort, Phillippe, Vallerand, & Menard, 2014). This is important in understanding passion as a motivator in HV retention, as passion may influence the investment in the work.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Motivation is typically intertwined with passion as a descriptive word to explain why HVs continue in their work (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). A necessary distinction for this research is that passion is a type of motivation. Passion is an example of an intrinsic motivator, as noted in both passion and HV satisfaction research, but there are other motivators that may be important in understanding workforce retention (Houlfort et al., 2014; Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020; Vallerand et al., 2003).

Motivation within ECHV can be categorized by intrinsic and extrinsic factors that affect HVs positively or negatively. Following social exchange theory, motivation serves as a catalyst of retention through the realization of either positive or negative motivators (Burns, 1973). While some factors have been identified as motivating to the ECHV workforce, it is generally unclear whether these are sparked intrinsically or extrinsically. For example, it has been noted that "rewarding work with families" is highly motivating to HVs (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al.,

2020). We do not know if the rewarding nature of the work is due to realized passion (intrinsic motivation) or success in achievement of goals (extrinsic motivation). Similarly, we do not know if the occurrence of burnout (a negative intrinsic motivator) is impacted by additional intrinsic or extrinsic motivators for the ECHV workforce. Without that level of detail, it is challenging to implement workforce supports to bolster satisfaction.

Burnout

While further wholistic investigation into motivation is necessary to better understand the workforce, it is important to discuss the elements of burnout that are commonly associated with lower retention. HV satisfaction research commonly cites a demanding work environment as a contributing factor to burnout and turnover (Begic, Weaver, & McDonald, 2019; Landman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020; West, Berlin, & Harden, 2018). One study focused on the relationships between job stress, satisfaction, and burnout, and found that for hospital employees there was a positive correlation between burnout and job stressors, suggesting that greater job stress is associated with greater feelings of burnout (Khalatbari, Ghorbanshiroudi, Firouzbakhsh, 2013). This is important for understanding negative motivators (such as burnout) and the relationship to retention, as it suggests additional motivators may buffer feelings of burnout. For example, an HV may have significant feelings of burnout, but manage to remain satisfied in the work due to intrinsic motivators such as passion, or other motivators such as social and supervisory supports, or even agency supports (Sandstrom et al., 2020).

Burnout Buffers and Positive Motivators

One aim of the current study was to gain a greater understanding of positive motivators that may buffer negative motivators, such as feelings of burnout. As indicated, HVs feel more satisfied when they can help families, build relationships with coworkers, experience flexibility, have a clear sense of autonomy, and also have significant agency supports (Landsman, 2017;

Sandstrom et al., 2020). However, the existing research is once again reductive and minimal in scope.

Relationships with Coworkers and Supervisors. HV relationships with coworkers and supervisors are continually highlighted as positive motivators (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). One study found that HVs within a Healthy Families America program reported less emotional exhaustion and burnout, and more satisfaction overall when the relationship with the supervisor was stronger (Mena & Bailey, 2007). Supervision processes tend to vary by program model, which also impacts the relationship between HVs and supervisors. Typically, within evidence-based program models, the minimum supervision frequency ranges from weekly to twice-monthly. However, only about 55% of Iowa HVs reported receiving supervision at that frequency (Landsman, 2017). In addition, only 49% of HVs categorized their supervision quality as "excellent," while more HVs categorized their supervision as "good" or "adequate" (Landsman, 2017). An assumption is that higher-quality supervision creates a healthier work atmosphere for HVs, however it should be noted that the elements of high-quality supervision and the specific characteristics of beneficial relationships have not been explored in connection to retention.

Role Clarity. Identified in both research on passion and satisfaction for HVs is a need for role clarity (Houlfort et al., 2014; Sandstrom et al., 2020). Due to the sensitive nature of the relationships between HVs and families, boundaries sometimes become blurred leading to unhealthy relationships. In this scenario, HVs become emotionally attached to the families they serve and can blur the boundaries of a family/professional relationship. An example which illustrates how this might happen in practice would be an HV that takes diapers to a family's home outside of work hours and the scope of their job description. Not only does this scenario

elicit a strong connection to passion that manifests as unhealthy, but it also speaks to a blurring of role clarity which impacts retention rates (Houlfort et al., 2014; Sandstrom et al., 2020).

Salary, Supports, and Agency Structures. An additional element well captured in the literature suggests specific agency structures and supports as necessary in facilitating retention. Most commonly cited as the reason HVs leave their positions is a salary that is simply too low (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al, 2020). An Iowa study indicated nearly 97% of full-time HVs earn less than $50,000 a year, while 47% earn less than $35,000 (Landsman, 2017). Almost 80% of Iowa HVs have raised a child and the average household is 3.2 persons (Landsman, 2017). Following federal income guidelines, a family of three with an income of $32,580 would be classified as 150% of the poverty level. This classification qualifies a family for energy assistance, weatherization, Women Infants and Children supplemental feeding program (WIC), Title V Maternal & Child Health Services, the National School Lunch program, low-income preschool tuition assistance, and supplemental health insurance for children (Early Childhood Iowa, 2020). Some HVs report being sole income generators and qualifying for many of the services they with which they work to connect ECHV families (Sandstrom et al., 2020). While general stressors of the job can feel overwhelming and ultimately push people out, it's easy to envision why an HV would leave their position solely when it places them in economic stress.

Summary

HVs face a variety of workplace stressors that are both intrinsic and extrinsic in nature. Buffers to stress and burnout, such as intrinsic motivators like passion, and extrinsic motivators like agency supports ultimately drive satisfaction. Research has focused on satisfaction as a predictor of retention but has not qualified and adequately explained specific motivators that contribute to retention. The current study takes a deeper dive into intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to tease out factors that may lead to or buffer against HVs leaving their jobs.

CHAPTER 3.   METHODS

Overview of Methodology

This study utilized a phenomenological approach to better understand the lived experiences of current and former HVs and uncover the motivators that drive workforce retention. Results are used to identify key elements that can be fostered to aid in retention efforts. The primary mode of data collection was through video conference interviews with current and former HVs.

Research Questions

The following research questions were developed to understand specific intrinsic and extrinsic motivations for entering the field, as well as the interaction of passion and other motivators that impact workforce retention:

- What are the specific motivators for entering the field of home visitation?

- What motivators do home visitors find most important?

- How does passion intersect with other motivators?

- How does the interaction of passion and other motivators influence decisions around retention?

Research Design

The research design and data collection plan targeted three to five current HVs and three to five former HVs with varying years of experience in home visitation, implementation of program model, and employing agency. The final participation numbers reflect five current HVs and three former HVs, which were determined as definitive when the results showed saturation in responses and clearly articulated the phenomenon. The variation of years of experience captured motivations of both newer and seasoned HVs. The term "program model" indicates the type of service HVs are providing to families. For this project, program models were nationally

recognized and "evidence-based," or they were determined "promising practice" by the State of Iowa. Participants were recruited through email using an IRB-approved recruitment message. Current HVs were accessed through the state-wide email listserv under the advisement of the Department of Public Health. These participants contacted a third-party representative with their intent to participate in the study and were screened for eligibility. The screening consisted of two questions, which addressed the total number of years they had been employed and a Likert scale (1-10) passion ranking. The objective for current HV interviews was to identify individuals that felt highly satisfied in their positions and to further articulate and demonstrate how passion and motivation may intersect and impact their retention. Following the screening procedures, current HVs were be invited to participate in interviews based on their passion response. Variation in the number of years they have been employed was considered so that participants represented a range of experiences. Former HVs were identified as potential participants through word-of-mouth from current supervisors and HVs. Former HVs were contacted via their personal emails and provided with the opportunity to participate in this study. As primary modes of data collection, participants completed a short survey, which included the passion scale, and an interview.

Participants

Final participants for this study were categorized into two groups: current HVs and former HVs. The approved recruitment message was distributed to 40 current HVs by the Department of Public Health. Five current HVs responded to the request to participate and all five were invited to complete interviews. Current HVs ranged in experience from four months to 14 years on the job. The models represented by the current HVs included Healthy Families America (2), Early Head Start (1), and Parents as Teachers (2). Participants came from four different agencies. Current HVs reported bachelor-level degrees in behavioral science, human

services, education, and child, adult, and family services. Current HVs range from 27 to 42 years of age, with an average age of 34. They reported an average passion level of 9.6.

Former HVs were recruited using word-of-mouth contact information with the same approved recruitment message. Six former HVs were identified and recruited, but only three agreed to participate and engage in an interview. Former HVs were employed in their positions from five to 14 years. They represented the same three program models as current HVs: Healthy Families America, Early Head Start, and Parents as Teachers. Former HVs reported bachelor-level degrees in family services, human services and psychology, and speech communication. One former HV reported an M.B.A. in addition to their B.A. Former HVs ranged from 37 to 40 years of age, with an average age of 38. They reported an average passion level of 8.3.

Data Collection

Interviews were the primary source of data collection. These were semi-structured following the protocol in Appendix A, which included planned question prompts aligned with each research question. This data collection approach provided opportunity to clarify responses to initial questions and integrate additional exploratory prompts. Interviews ranged from one hour and thirty minutes to three hours in length and covered each interview question in detail (Appendix A). Due to length, saturation, and detail provided in initial interviews, second interviews were not necessary.

In addition, brief survey responses were collected prior to the initial interview (Appendix B). This survey was used to better understand HV demographics and benefits information, and it explored potential connections between structural and organizational extrinsic motivators. Survey information included parenting status, the number of sick and personal leave days each year, salary, and access to healthcare. This information was collected by both state and national workforce studies, and these elements were identified as important factors in satisfaction and

retention (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et. al., 2020).

Analysis Plan

A phenomenological data analysis approach was used to group individual responses to interview questions thematically and determine similarities across experiences which speak to the essence of retention (Moustakas, 1994). This process, known as coding, included testing each theme to determine whether it contained enough information to sufficiently describe the essence of the phenomenon and if that information could be extracted as an individual code (Moustakas, 1994). Through this process, key factors in intrinsic and extrinsic motivation were identified that provide contextual data on why HVs are doing this work and how we can keep them in the field.

The data analysis plan for this study focused largely on the classification and thematic coding of the interview results. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to provide a written copy of the content. Using the transcription, interview responses were categorized into positive and negative motivators, in line with the conceptual framework (Figure 1). Responses that spoke to intrinsic or emotionally compelled motivation were coded as passion and categorized as either a buffer to negative motivation or an enhancement to positive motivation. A codebook was created which included a short narrative about the essence and meaning of each code, which was then shared with a second coder. Survey results were used to identify trends by age, length of time in home visitation, and program model. Additionally, specific elements of the benefits (such as the number of days off, salary, and access to healthcare) were used to determine links between extrinsic supports and motivation.

Ethical Considerations

Beyond the age of the HV, no personal identifying information was collected. However, as my professional role touches all home visiting programs in Iowa, I adhere to professional and ethical boundaries during recruitment and analysis of the results. I maintained clear and upfront

boundaries with my participants and emphasized that I conducted this project from the lens of a doctoral candidate, although my professional experience has been the driving force that motivates my research interests. I cannot truly separate my research and professional roles. However, by using a third-party to engage in initial screening to recruit current HVs, I was able to eliminate bias and potential perceived coercion in the recruitment process. Results are not reported in a way that connects the HV to a program model, funding stream, or agency. Further, I feel maintaining openness and honestly about both roles, in addition to utilizing a second coder and member-checking, allowed me to analyze the results with limited bias.

Trustworthiness and Rigor

As noted, the separation between my professional and research roles is somewhat blurred. However, maintaining clear boundaries while conducting this research under the premise of graduate work was key to obtaining the trust of participants as well as final readers of this study. While my experience does provide a personal perspective on motivation, satisfaction, and passion within the field, I entered into this research with an open mind, ready to analyze the results as objectively as possible. This study is rigorous in that it builds on previous work and incorporates contextual narratives that are missing from other studies looking at HV satisfaction. The results of the study are rigorous and trustworthy in nature because they are the lived experiences of the participants and are presented as such.

As the researcher, I independently conducted an initial coding of transcribed interviews and categorized themes. A second coder, familiar with home visitation and satisfaction literature, ensured that accurate and non-biased coding occurred during analysis. The second coder reviewed 25% of the interview transcripts and the provided codebook to ensure understanding and agreement of the phenomenon. The extraction of codes was similar between my coding and the second coder. Some elements, such as agency supports, were identified through second

coding as complex elements that needed more than one code. For example, a response specific to issues in agency supports could include a lack of supervisory support, HV autonomy, or training. These are coded separately and are reflected in the results and the discussion. Both initial coding and second coding were reviewed by both coders to ensure accuracy. Following second coding and mutual agreement of codes, a member-checking process further ensured accuracy of the results and interpretation. Participants provided confirmation that the essence of their interview had been properly captured, presented, and was true to their experience resulting in a result that is trustworthy and based on lived experiences of the participants.

CHAPTER 4.   RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of interviews and surveys that speak to the lived experiences of both current and former HVs. Each research question was designed to better understand the continuum of positive and negative motivators that influence satisfaction and ultimately lead to turnover or retention. As noted in the Conceptual Framework (Figure 1), positive and negative motivators can be either intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivators include responses of passion, while extrinsic motivators typically speak to structural supports or barriers that drive HV satisfaction. The individual interview responses were coded as intrinsic or extrinsic motivators following this conceptualization, and further grouped thematically to identify the essence of the phenomena. This approach provided an opportunity to understand aspects of passion that may buffer against negative motivators and support positive motivators, aiding in retention. Chapter 5 will further highlight connections and considerations for improving practice.

Participants were categorized into two groups: current HVs and former HVs (Table 1). Results are presented as consistent across groups (current and former HVs) or unique to groups. Consistent responses to each research question apply to both groups and are labeled as "Consistent HV Intrinsic Motivators" or "Consistent HV Extrinsic Motivators." Unique responses to groups are labeled with the respective group identifier (current or former HVs).

Table 1: Interview Participants

Current Home Visitors (all start with C)	Former Home Visitors (all start with F)
Courtney	Finley
Cameron	Faye

Caroline	Fiona
Claire	
Cassidy	

Research Question 1: What are the specific motivators for entering the field of home visitation?

Consistent HV Extrinsic Motivators

Educational Background and Preparation. Current and former visitors held bachelors degrees in a variety of different fields. These included, behavioral science, human services, speech communication, psychology, education, and child, adult, and family services. While each HV had a slightly different background, a clear and present theme for both groups was the uncertainty in career paths and goals following graduation. Both sets of HVs reported that they did not necessarily know what they wanted to do with their degree, but they held an interest in generally helping people. For example, "Finley" noted:

> I guess I didn't really know of a job called a home visitor or you know even [name of the program model] really, but something like home visiting was what I had pictured in my mind [as a job]. I maybe had pictured working more in a clinical environment or, you know, maybe not necessarily going into people's homes … but definitely working somehow with children … But honestly, I don't think I knew [of] a lot of positions geared specifically for [my degree] back then.

Personal Connections. Further, both groups reported knowing almost nothing about home visitation before accepting the position. Most HVs were "tapped" by supervisors or other agency personnel who identified the job for them and told them they would be a "good fit." A few HVs that worked in different positions within a home visiting agency reported a desire to

join the home visiting team upon learning about the job, but still reported a lack of information about the job prior to engaging with families. The hiring and onboarding process looked slightly different across experiences, as some HVs worked within the agency in different positions, and some HVs worked elsewhere but had connections with agency personnel in other ways. However, the experience of being tapped and notified of the position in a non-traditional way was a similar theme across responses. Only two respondents found the position through a traditional job advertisement.

HVs who knew of the position or were employed at a home visiting agency in a different role prior to becoming an HV had similar responses about their motivation for the work. "Courtney" reflected on her desire to join the home visitation team in her agency, saying, "I sat right across the hall from all the home visitors, and I got to see what they were doing and how much fun they had; they just seemed very fulfilled." Other HVs reported a desire to be part of an existing home visiting team after seeing "how much fun they had on home visits" and the "relationships they have with one another."

One-on-One Work Environment. Participants also reported a desire to work one-on-one with individuals and enjoyed the opportunity to connect with adults instead of solely focusing on children. After an HV position opened in the agency, Finley reported:

"I just personally enjoy the one-on-one interactions with both parents and children. I feel like that's kind of where I thrived [in my previous position] … I didn't feel like I was using my potential [there], so I wanted to be [a home visitor] just to see some of that personal growth from families, based on … the work that I was doing, so to speak. And just working one-on-one, that was kind of my goal."

Prior Life Experiences. Another consistent extrinsic motivator was that many HVs experienced some sort of trauma, poverty, or other family stressor in their own life that motivated them to make a difference for someone else. HVs brought a wide range of experiences to the job such as, interpretation skills, involvement with the foster system, being a teen parent themselves, or even being former participants in the program. While these experiences were specific, individualized, and were different across groups, HVs reported that the individual experiences that led them to this work were important. Therefore, prior life experiences were extracted as a phenomenological result. Courtney reflected,

"…I grew up in poverty, and I did not have great parents, and I went through the foster care system—and so with the families that I have, I understand [things] at that level. I mean I have that degree…but I think a lot of my [motivation] comes from real-life training."

Consistent HV Intrinsic Motivators

Passion. HVs reported several intrinsic motivators in their decision to enter the field. At the core of their intrinsic motivation is passion: the desire to help others and work with at-risk populations. "Faye" noted that her passion stemmed from feeling bad about the life experiences of some children, saying, "there are some amazing kiddos but they just have … really [challenging] home lives, and it's not their fault." She further noted, "they need all the help they can get." This type of response was sometimes reported as an extrinsic motivator such as lived experience with trauma, poverty, or other family stressors, but it was consistently reported as the core desire fueling their passion. When pressed to further describe their passion to help, HVs reported a desire to address trauma, empower families, and make a difference. HVs self-reported high levels of empathy, which was captured in their responses. Describing the desire to help, Finley reflected:

"I think I just always felt like I was a helper… if someone else looks lost, confused awkward, I will step in and be the awkward one so that they don't have to. I just have this innate feeling inside of me that I am there to help people, and I knew I didn't want to help necessarily in a medical field like a nurse or doctor. I knew that teaching as a teacher wasn't my calling either, so [I] was really drawn to family services—social work—just due to the fact that it kind of blended working with all ages, the parents, the children and kind of everything all-encompassing."

This theme of an internal desire to support and help others was consistent through all responses. "Cameron" simply stated, "if I was in this position, I hope that someone would help me in this way."

Perception of Being the Sole Source of Support. An additional intrinsic motivator was captured as the perception of being the only person supporting the families they served. "Caroline" shared that some of her families, "need to talk [to me] because I'm the only person [there for them]." HVs that worked specifically with parents of a dual language [child] also noted this as a consistent theme. "Fiona" reflected, "there were a lot of programs serving families, but not a lot of programs with bilingual staff. There was no other home visitation program that had a Spanish-speaking person on staff—so if not me, who?" This theme of feeling like the sole helper for families also emerged within additional research questions and will be more thoroughly addressed in the discussion.

Research Question 2: What motivators do home visitors find most important?

Consistent HV Extrinsic Motivators

HVs reported a laundry list of extrinsic motivators that had the capacity to be changed or strengthened through intentional agency or individual focus. Extrinsic motivators were coded as

negative or positive motivators, depending on whether the HV perceived them as helpful or harmful.

Family Participation and Compliance. As noted in the prior section, HVs reported the ability to work one-on-one with adults to be particularly motivating. This generally positive extrinsic motivator could quickly transition into a negative motivator based on the perception of family effort. Home visits were reported as transitioning from feeling "one-on-one" to "one-on-none." When this change occurred, it was an overwhelming negative motivator for HVs. "Claire" described negative family effort as a family that does not "comply." HV definitions of compliance center on consistent family participation, keeping visits, and family desire for the services. Fiona further explained that success in the program was defined as:

> "Families are engaged. We're seeing parents meeting their goals, we're seeing kids successfully transition to school and succeed in school—we're seeing less of a crisis mode. To me, that was the major success. [However,] to the funders, it was—we're hitting 40 visits a month…we're hitting all the benchmarks."

Agency or Supervisory Barriers. HV perception of noncompliance as a negative extrinsic motivator was further exacerbated by agency or supervisory structures that prohibited HVs from making decisions about the family's enrollment status without additional approvals. For example, several of the HVs from both groups reported having families on their caseloads that were inactive, unresponsive, or ill-suited to participate in services. However, they had almost no ability to "drop" or "close" families that were not participating in services, due to overwhelming pressure from administration to meet capacity expectations for the funder. Caroline stated simply, "our agency needs to meet capacity, so they won't close out families." She further noted the ability for a program model to "level" families at various service delivery

increments (e.g., weekly visits vs. bi-monthly visits) as critical in her ability to provide "quality" home visits and achieve family success in the program. Courtney (current HV) elaborated further, placing the onus on the supervisor, saying:

> "If you see, as a supervisor, that something is not going well—what are you going to do about it? … my home visit numbers look [terrible]. I feel like I'm wasting my time and that's a spot that somebody that really needs help could use. So I just think looking at it more closely—are we providing the best services or are we just keeping a family? ... Are we helping?"

This reported cycle of attempting to serve unresponsive or "noncompliant families" was coded as extrinsic in nature, but consistently led to unrealized passion. HVs reported that they were eager to help families and see change, which was coded as "passion" and indicated as the primary reason for which HVs entered the field. HVs further reported that extrinsic barriers like the inability to drop families prevented them from realizing that intrinsic passion motivator.

Paperwork and Caseload Considerations. Nearly all HVs reported paperwork and data entry as a challenge and negative motivator. However, the severity of the negative impact seems to be buffered by the perceived weight of the caseload each HV is working with. Current HVs had an average number of 13 families on their caseload, while former HVs had an average of 12. Current HVs consistently reported that their caseload was close to, if not entirely, ideal, while lamenting that the expected number of visits per month, set by both the model and the funder, was excessive.

Agency Benefits. Other reported extrinsic motivators centered around individual agency benefits and included pay, job security, and time off. All of these were identified by at least one

respondent as important motivators in satisfaction and retention decisions, however the importance of each was highly individualized.

      Pay. HV starting salaries ranged from $11.00/hour to $22.60/hour, or approximately $22,800/year to $47,000/year, respectively. Present salaries for current HVs ranged from $13.77/hour to $22.00/hour, or approximately $28,600/year to $45,700 a year. Previous studies have estimated that nearly 97% of HVs in Iowa earn less than $50,000 a year (Landsman, 2017), in line with the results of this study. While all HVs mentioned pay as a factor in driving their motivation for the work, each respondent had a different perception of whether or not the pay was adequate. For example, an HV that earned $16/hour praised that salary as the "highest paying job" they had ever had, while an HV making $22/hour reported the need to work three jobs to make ends meet. Caroline noted:

> "If I didn't have my husband, I couldn't do this job … I think [staff] could definitely be a lot more diverse [with better pay]. A lot of our workers are younger women who have a partner who can support them financially. If I had kids and was single, I wouldn't be able to do this job, and I think that's sad because I think that's the one type of person that could connect with families best."

Further, the lowest and highest salaries both come from former HVs, with all other HVs falling somewhere in the middle. Two HVs (one current and one former) mentioned a salary cap as a negative motivator, although one chose to stay with the agency, and one chose to leave. The former HV called it the "nail in the coffin," while the current HV referred to it as "frustrating," but manageable. Personal life factors were reported as influential on individual perceptions of the adequacy of HV pay.

Personal and Sick Leave. A consistent phenomenon positively driving retention was available time off. HVs that reported having access to self-defined "adequate" time off for both personal and sick leave were more likely to praise their organizational structure and identify leave as a positive motivator. Agencies that provided a mix of personal and sick leave to be used as the HV saw fit were also praised. Some HVs reported that they were able to use a collective pot of leave to extend beyond traditional personal and sick leave to address mental health or other individual needs. Courtney reported:

> "I've had a lot of jobs in my lifetime … and when I start feeling burnt out I would call in sick. [But this flexibility] gives us a feeling of—if you are struggling or you need a day off right now because you're just not right, you know, take it, it's ok. You don't have to lie and say you have a fever … It's really helpful and I hardly ever use [it]. But just knowing I don't have to lie and say I'm throwing up just to have a day off … it's really nice."

Relationships, Supervision, and Stress. Additional extrinsic motivators experienced by both current and former HVs centered around relationships with coworkers, supervision, and general stress. A few HVs mentioned family chaos and crisis as a negative extrinsic motivator. "Cassidy" had the experience of leaving the field once and coming back. While she started as an HV with a non-evidence-based, locally developed, universal home visiting program, the stress of transitioning to an evidence-based program model serving only "high-risk" families only was particularly challenging:

> "When I did leave, I had a whole bunch of families that were all very real risk and so you don't have that break of not necessarily being needed—or thrown into a crisis. Where before I had this balanced caseload of some at-risk and some families that truly just

wanted development information or really wanted to have their children ready for school.

… When my caseload was all at-risk, that was constantly putting out fires and so I didn't

really feel like I could get in there and do the things that I wanted to do."

Each of the HVs reported that relationships with coworkers could send them in a positive

or negative direction on the satisfaction continuum (Figure 1). The same was said about

supervisory relationships. Lastly, turnover of other staff was noted as a consistent stressor and

negative extrinsic motivator for all HVs. Additional context will be provided for these issues

through specific former HV extrinsic motivators.

Former HV Extrinsic Motivators

Agency or Supervisory Barriers. While former HVs experienced all motivators listed

above, a few specific extrinsic motivators were reported as unique to their experiences.

Caseload. Specifically, former HVs generally experienced less consensus about the ideal

number of families. One participant shared that at one point in her career she held almost 40

families on her caseload. A bi-lingual HV, she noted specific challenges around being the only

person available to provide services. For her, a higher caseload was described as "ideal,"

however she also noted that she would "make room, to the detriment of [her] own physical and

mental health…[she would] make room and make it happen." She was pushed by her agency to

reduce her caseload somewhere in the teens, which also felt overwhelming and frustrating. She

described it as "trying to pick which kid you want to keep." Another participant, Faye, held a

caseload of 15, and while she did not specify an issue with the size of her caseload, she did

mention that as a rural HV she was expected to build her caseload independently. In that

community, she had little support from partnering agencies, describing her role as "a little

island." She further notes:

"I had a really hard time recruiting … had a hard time having people take me seriously. I wasn't validated for what I was doing. I was educated, I was making a change in people's lives, and they [the community] thought I was a babysitter. … The community just wouldn't help me or support me to gain those families and so that was my biggest struggle."

Flexibility and Additional Work Duties. Caseload perceptions were reported as dependent upon other extrinsic motivators such as time and flexibility. Each of the former HVs reported significant additional work responsibilities on top of traditional home visitation, which were not reported by current HVs. Leading parenting groups and facilitating resource connections were identified as examples of additional responsibilities. These were reported as positive in nature because of the intrinsic joy it created for former HVs. These responsibilities typically added evening or weekend hours to a normal work schedule and allowed for flexibility within the traditional workday. However, the resulting flexibility was not always met with positive perceptions. With a caseload of nine, Finley reported she felt overwhelmed by her work with families due to requirements outside of her role as an HV. Circling back to issues in caseload, she felt she didn't "have time" to serve that number of families while also facilitating a large weekly parenting group, sharing it was all "too much." Similarly, Fiona shared that she had done the math:

"Most of us were just clocking out and kept working [to get everything done], which makes you bitter … We figured it out—with other committees and trainings and groups and things we were doing—we should have like 217 hours in the month. A full-time position is 168. So, what are we supposed to do with the other 50 hours? Where do we cram that?"

Each of the former HVs transitioned into new roles that reflect these types of responsibilities (group, individual, and resource facilitation) after leaving home visitation.

Relationships, Supervision, and Stress. While former HVs reported similar extrinsic motivators related to relationships, supervision, and stress, their experiences were perceived with greater emphasis. Coworker relationships in particular were reported as positive extrinsic motivators for former HVs. Two of the three former HVs reported that coworker relationships were the glue keeping them in their positions during the moments they felt most like leaving the field. The HV that did not specifically note co-worker relationships was the only HV within her service area. However, that HV did indicate the idea of having someone else there to "bounce ideas off of or vent with" would have been a positive motivator. This specific relationship, coworker to coworker, was reported and underscored repeatedly as critical to the ability to do home visitation work and feel satisfied. Finley noted that, "when you're in good company, it's helpful. When you can decompress with coworkers and hear that you're not alone, for me that was huge. It just helps to know that I am not the only one feeling this way."

However, stress within the coworker relationship was also identified as impactful on the decision to leave the field. Fiona noted particularly stressful relationships emerged when new staff would join the agency. Due to constraints with already scarce time, having to train new staff and build new relationships was noted as a challenge. She recalled a particularly stressful time when her agency onboarded several new staff at once:

> "When the new staff and supervisors started, we were expected to assist with onboarding and training them, which wasn't possible carrying the caseloads we were carrying at the time. It made us seem like jerks, but we barely had time to breathe as it was. Further, it

was a slap in the face because those of us with years of experience had all been passed over for those supervisory roles."

Supervisory relationships had similar importance as coworker relationships, however they required an additional level of perceived support and respect to be coded as positive motivators. Former HVs had particularly high expectations for the supervisory relationship. While all HVs reported that supervisory relationships can be negative or positive motivators, former HVs tended to linger on the topic of supervision. Fiona experienced several different supervisors and noted that the quality of the relationship ranged from very high to lacking. Faye noted having almost no supervision, save a monthly check-in, as she was the only staff member working in her service area. She felt as though she was often forgotten or an "afterthought."

Safety. A final difference in reported extrinsic motivation is the perception of safety. All of the former HVs commented on home visit safety as a negative motivator, while current HVs didn't mention safety at all. Finley described the issues in safety as a general "lack of preparedness that the agency gave us to be out and about by ourselves." She further noted concerns of "weapons either in the home or at the neighbors, drug deals, [and] drive-by shootings." She described going to a home visit that was recently involved in a drive-by shooting and sitting in front of the window that had been shot out. She notes, "at the time I didn't even think about it since my job [was] to go and do it. I think as I spend time away and reflect more, I notice more safety concerns." The other former HVs echoed safety concerns and condition of the homes as a negative extrinsic motivator. Faye stated she "never put [her] back to the door" and "always let someone know where [she] was," including providing them with a GPS location. Additionally, Fiona named one of the major safety concerns as "constantly getting sick [and being] exposed to the germs of [all] the families each month."

Consistent HV Intrinsic Motivators

  Passion. The interview questions which fell under RQ2 focused heavily on understanding intrinsic motivators, which were subsequently coded as "passion." Passion was reported as an important intrinsic motivator for all participants. However, articulating the specific elements that contribute to passion was challenging for HVs.

  Desire to Help. HVs marked their driving passion as the desire to help people. When pressed to describe what "helping people" meant to them, HVs reported facilitating positive outcomes was the most accurate way to define passion as a construct. Cassidy (current HV) shared that the joy of working with families comes from the "progress" they make and her role in facilitating. She notes, "I get excited [when they meet goals and make] progress. When they do accomplish something that they really [have been] working on and [I can] see how proud they are of themselves." Other HVs gave examples of helping and defined it as "giving ideas and maybe some resources," "guiding parents," and "informing parents." HVs reported a strong desire to facilitate and guide families in meeting their goals and achieving success in the program.

  Seeing Success in Programming. When asked what success in the program meant to the HV, many HVs reported similar things. Courtney noted, "I base my success with the families and my activities on how long [the visit is]…if I can just keep their interest a little bit longer than the time before, then I feel that is successful." She further added, "Just seeing the parents evolve, or seeing the kids pay more attention and follow directions a little better and just go with it. That feels successful to me." Cameron confirmed this definition and further highlighted success as an offshoot of helping:

    "I think there are a lot of things I wish we could do as workers, but the main purpose is to

    help the parent be successful in their own future so that they can be empowered to do

things by themselves…I think the purpose is that they learn how to be independent one day…and I can challenge them to try to do the things that they were fearful of doing…We are just like a tool, a support for them to reach out to more things [that are] out there."

Personal Characteristics. HVs also reported intrinsic personal characteristics, such as the natural ability to manage time and compartmentalize larger issues, as important motivators. Cameron called the ability to compartmentalize a "mental effort." She described arranging things in her mind so that she could help these families feel "well served." She further reported, "When I think about my families, I try to think positively that they will be good [until I can see them again], and I don't need to worry too much." HVs also noted the ability to compartmentalize during a visit as key to managing the ongoing stress of a family and allowing them to keep their passion at the forefront of their work. For example, Courtney shared that sometimes she has to tell herself to focus on the kids:

"Mom and dad might be crashing and burning—but that's not what I'm here for. I can help them if they want me to help them, but let's talk about these kids...that's what it is— I keep coming back for them."

Current HVs noted that although external factors, such as paperwork and family issues, can be negative motivators, they held an intrinsic passion for organization and fitting puzzle pieces together, which were important to their work. Caroline reflected that working on paperwork, data entry, and compliance was "kind of like a game," to her, and that "having everything done [was] just something in [her brain] that [was] exciting." These characteristics were reported as contributors to the HV's ability to facilitate successful engagement with families.

Hopefulness and Mindset. Additional intrinsic motivators were coded as hopefulness and mindset. Current HVs made statements that reflected hopefulness and positive mindset, while former HVs did not. Cassidy described her mindset in relation to a book she had read, called *Energy Bus,* by Jon Gordon (2007):

> "It's kind of … you get out what you put into it, so it's ultimately my choice. If I choose to be there and not make the movement that I want to make, or not make the money that I want to make, then that's still my choice to be there. So if I'm going to be there I'm going to make the best of it."

HV responses that were coded as hopefulness and mindset were extracted from statements where there was evidence of practiced empathy. Claire shared she had always felt like "a really empathetic person." Understanding poverty and other family stressors through the lens of empathy helped her build a positive mindset saying, "I can put myself into their shoes, I didn't come from much. … I was taught at some point – I don't remember how—but you always [should] find the positives even if you have a negative." Further, Cameron noted that finding ways to "think more positive is what helps [her] stay in this job." Hopefulness also included a positive attitude about the agency and the future of the work. Caroline noted, "I think this program can be so great. I think that [it] is great—but I think it can be so much better."

Former HV Intrinsic Motivators

Hopefulness and Mindset. While current HVs exhibited high levels of hopefulness, former HVs often had a more negative tone when describing families, which was coded as hopelessness and negative mindset. Labeling terms were used by former HVs instead of the "person-first" approach used by current HVs. For example, one former HV referred to a mom struggling with substance abuse dependency as an "addict." When hopefulness was reported, it

was short term. Faye shared that with one particularly challenging family, her push to keep going centered on the desire to "finish" and "see it to the end":

"I wanted to make sure I was always there in case something would change or she would have a change of heart or something...and I could lead her in the right direction. I definitely had feelings of hopelessness and failure, but I also know that she was making the choices. It wasn't on me."

In addition to challenges in mindset, one HV noted that her families could tell when she was feeling burnt out, saying, "they knew that I was so burnt out and so stressed…they would tell me I looked tired." She further noted that she knew she "wasn't doing her best," at that time and that it "really bothered" her.

High-Quality Work. All three former HVs emphasized the desire to produce "high-quality work" and "high-quality visits" as a construct fueling their passion. Former HVs discussed at length how their perceived quality of visits influenced their passion, and all of them mentioned the perception that they were "very good" at their jobs. Faye noted she "was passionate about it all and determined [that she] did what [she] could in the best [way] that she could," despite other challenges she faced. Finley made several references about "quality HVs" and noted differences between HV effort and family outcomes:

"Some of the HVs who maybe had many no-shows or family turnover rates—I felt like I did not have much of that. I took that as a personal success. Okay at least [the families] want me there and hopefully something in their brain is clicking."

Each of the former HVs noted that access to supplies and time to plan, debrief, complete paperwork, and process were all important components to home visit quality, in addition to the actual home visit. Finley shared that a holistic approach to quality home visits would let her

"brain 'finish it' before [moving] on to the next family." She further described the lack of resources within her agency as a hinderance to her ability to "feel like a professional," noting, "around you, you didn't have everything you needed [to complete a home visit]." Finley then noted, "we managed with what we had, but sometimes you felt like you could give more of yourself and your quality [if you had fewer families and more resources]."

Former HVs had different perceptions about what constitutes quality. Fiona noted holding awareness that she was part of a home visiting "dream team." Her perception of quality stemmed from serving a large number of families in a more limited capacity (e.g., twice-monthly to monthly vs. weekly home visits), and the ability to solve problems when resources did not exist. While she noted that her driving passion for home visiting was the ability to help people, she also noted that sometimes this meant a breach in personal and professional boundaries. One family had experienced an issue that was so severe, there were not resources readily available to support the parent in the moment. She recalls solving the problem "off the clock" and sharing with the family (and her supervisor), "well, I broke a couple of rules today, but I don't feel bad about it at all."

Fear. Another key intrinsic motivator that was mentioned by all former HVs and no current HVs was the concept of fear. Previously mentioned in the overview of RQ2 , it was noted that safety was a major extrinsic motivator for former HVs. For example, Faye shared a scenario with a family where she recalled feeling "so scared" for the child in the home. She notes, "I was really worried, scared, and didn't really know how to handle it." Faye told this story through tears and a shaky voice, although the incident happened over five years ago, demonstrating the impact of fear and possibly trauma. Finley and Fiona also had moments of fear, or reflections of fear after the fact, that they reported as important negative motivators.

Unrealized Passion. Former HVs noted building trust, feeling understood, and being appreciated were all important components in determining and explaining their level of passion. Each of them felt an internal desire to "not let people down." To fulfill this goal, HVs reported they were dependent on the choices and actions of others, which often did not occur. Unable to realize passion, one HV noted, "I guess when I look back on it, I can't really say that I was that joyful about [the work]."

Research Question 3: How does passion intersect with other motivators?
Consistent HV Extrinsic Motivators

HVs reported several extrinsic motivators that could boost their passion and improve their overall satisfaction for home visiting work. Some of these extrinsic motivators exist for all HVs.

Recognition and Admiration. HVs reported feeling most satisfied, feeling the most joy in their work, and feeling most passionate when their work was recognized. Central to building recognition and admiration was a strong supervisory relationship. Finley noted:

> "I feel like [my supervisor] did her best to support us and to understand us. She very much spoke up on our behalf and kind of applauded us when other people maybe didn't realize all the work we were doing. So I would say that was a big reason that I did overcome some of the stressors [I faced]—because at least she understood them as well as helped us [process through them]."

Quality of Supervision. HVs reported that having a supervisor who had been an HV themselves was especially important in their ability to trust, bond, and grow in a relationship with their supervisor. Fiona shared that her overall satisfaction was influenced by having a supervisor that had never been an HV and had never "done the work." Likewise, Claire 1reflected on leaving prior positions due to a lack of trust with her supervisor. She explains,

"That negative relationship experience kind of made me lose interest in the field completely." In her new position as an HV, she "can see the boundaries and see the respect" from her new supervisor, which renewed her motivation for the work.

A common theme across all HVs was that varying levels of supervisory support can be a positive or negative motivator impacting satisfaction. Courtney explained this further by sharing that unorganized or toxic leadership feels simply like trying to work in "a war zone." She emphasized the need for a positive work culture, full of "team players," and highlighted that leadership should be responsible for creating that atmosphere. She further cautioned that unstructured supervision can sometimes feel like "a gab session" which is not h0elpful in implementation of her work.

Working With Families That Want Services. Another extrinsic element that intersected with HV passion was working with families that wanted home visiting services. HVs reported in RQ2 that relationships with families were negatively motivating when families "weren't trying" or "no-showed" home visits. HVs reported that the ability to work with families that wanted services positively impacted their ability to successfully facilitate help. This was continually reported as critical to buffering negative motivators, as it refueled passion by making HVs feel more successful in their work. Claire described this phenomenon as something that "makes you feel good and keeps you coming back." She further added, "If all of your clients were making you feel defeated, you'd probably burn out pretty quick."

Learning by Doing. HVs reported that a critical element in developing passion that is specific to home visitation work was the ability to shadow home visits when newly hired, or ideally prior to hire. As noted previously, HVs did not fully understand the breadth of home visitation prior to accepting the position. Shadowing home visits was reported as a mechanism

that allowed HVs to experience issues firsthand, learn to problem solve, and practice facilitation skills. Caroline shared, "I think [home visiting is] just something that people don't understand…You think you understand pretty well—but definitely the real-life experience [in shadowing home visiting] is how you learn to interact with people."

Celebrating Wins. Celebrations with families were also noted as a critical extrinsic motivator intersecting with passion to buffer satisfaction. These celebrations were small in nature and centered around achievement of family goals but were important in renewing passion and continuing the more challenging work. HVs noted celebratory things like excitement over "a new skill for the child," "the parent enrolling in a new class," or even "a parent reflecting on last week's visit" as examples of extrinsic motivators buffering satisfaction. Courtney reflected that one of her biggest motivators was success with families, saying, "One of these days I'll be old and what are these kids going to grow up to be? I hope that I help make a positive impact in their lives."

Former HV Extrinsic Motivators

Faking It. Former HVs reported additional extrinsic motivators that influenced their levels of passion for the work, which served as negative motivators of their satisfaction. Negative experiences with families were reported as weighing more heavily on former HVs, which created a phenomenon former HVs call "faking it." Finley reflected on moments where she would return from a particularly challenging home visit, only to immediately start planning for another family's visit:

> "I would come back from a visit…feeling burnt out or stressed…and then go into the next visit with somewhat of an 'actress mode' to make sure that, you know, stress is left at the door and you are there giving all your effort to them. It's kind of like my body

almost just needs to take a break mentally, physically…. unless you have to prep for

another home visit! Then you just keep it going for a while."

These episodes of "faking it" were often related to stress former HVs felt with the work but were

also impacted by other extrinsic motivators such as supervisors or other agency staff. Fiona

recalls feeling burnt out and going through a period of "faking it" for nearly three years but

found comfort and support from her coworkers to keep her going. She reported, "we were in the

trenches together, and we knew what everyone was going through."

The Weight of Home Visiting. HVs reported the inability to be responsive to their own

families as a negative extrinsic motivator that they defined as the "weight of home visiting." All

but one HV across both groups reported parenting at least one child under the age of 18. Former

HVs reported an average of 2.3 children, while current HVs had an average of 4. However, the

weight of taking work home felt more unmanageable for all former HVs, while current HVs

mentioned it rarely, and in passing, if at all. Former HVs were more likely to report this as a

negative extrinsic motivator that they were not able to overcome. Finley recalled a moment

where she received a suicidal text from a parent when she was at home with her own family. She

immediately realized, "this isn't just a job, it's someone's life," and she wasn't able to fully give

herself to both her own family and the family she served in that moment. Faye experienced a

similar situation during her own pregnancy that coincided with the pregnancy of a family she

worked with. She described the boundaries as blurred and stressed the discomfort of comparing

both pregnancies. She "couldn't imagine" making the same choices as the parent she served, and

she struggled in overcoming the weight of that to deliver services that she felt were helpful.

Consistent HV Intrinsic Motivators

Love. To assess intrinsic motivators that intersected with passion, HVs were asked to

share experiences where they felt joy, passion, and a sense of being rewarded. One word

continued to surface during coding, which was "love." HVs reported a strong feeling of "love" for the work and for the families they served. The love they felt was noted as a buffer for negative experiences. HVs reported being able to manage difficult situations, for any period-of-time, due to that feeling of love. HVs were probed to explain "love." Overwhelmingly, HVs reported a strong internal desire to be the "only resource" for families, felt strongly they had a calling to "save people," and generally just felt good about themselves when doing the work.

Hopefulness and Mindset. The intrinsic feelings of hopefulness are again mentioned here, as a key reported element that drives passion and buffers external, negative motivators. As Cassidy shared that in the midst of a negative experience, "I just changed my mindset...So I guess that's what kept me going. I'm going to be here and choose joy, trying to make it a better place." Current HVs mentioned that the challenging nature of the work further fueled their passion, particularly when they were able to see successes. Courtney noted her desire to "leave things better than [she] found them," for families outweighed the negative motivators of the work. However, both sets of HVs commented on the intersection of insecurities and the desire to save people in relation to succumbing to negative motivators. This was documented through comments such as "what could I have done differently?" "if not me, who?" and "I just need to know that [the families] know that somebody [cares] about them."

Former HV Intrinsic Motivators

Being Valuable and Needed. Former HVs had similar responses of intrinsic motivators that intersected with passion. They also highlighted similar experiences that brought them joy and feelings of recognition. However, they reported two elements that intersected with passion in ways that current HVs did not: being valuable and being needed. As noted above, HVs generally like the feeling of being valuable and needed, but former HVs noted each of these concepts as a "desire and need." A key difference in the reported passion of current and former HVs is that

current HVs wanted and enjoyed the feeling of being the only person to help families, while former HVs referred to the same experience as a need.

Burnout. Each former HV reported a phenomenon known as burnout. Burnout was reported to be a feeling of no motivation and was impacted by extrinsic motivators, such as continued work with families that do not "try hard enough," and intrinsic motivators, such as the need to be valuable and needed. Faye reflected:

> "Those feelings of burnout come when you don't have enough support guidance, or when you're dealing with the same family that just keeps making the same mistake over and over and over. And you're thinking, 'Oh my god, what else can I do?' It's emotionally and physically and mentally exhausting to have to go to that family [and do a home visit]. I mean you almost feel sick because you don't know what else to do… That's really hard to go help families that you know are never going to change or get better. The mental and emotional burnout is very high in this field."

These feelings were also reported to stem from obstacles like the inability to help families in a way that felt like quality, general challenges in relationships with coworkers and supervisors, and a general feeling of being overwhelmed. As Courtney reflected, her ability to manage burnout was simply found in the ability to "remember why [she] was there" and "remove [herself] from the chaos of [the family's] life." She felt that this approach of tapping back into her passion allowed her to navigate through feelings of burnout. Former HVs reported more struggle in overcoming burnout and did not report the ability to tap back into elements of their passion.

Research Question 4: How does the intersection of passion and other motivators influence decisions around retention?

Current and former HVs reported differences between groups in how passion and other motivators influenced their decision to stay or leave their positions.

Current HV Extrinsic Motivators

  Job Mobility and Other Supports. When asked if there was ever a time that current HVs felt like leaving, the majority of participants reported half-heartedly looking for other jobs or opportunities within their current agency. Most reported that they wanted to stay in the field, but sometimes the stress of home visiting work felt overwhelming. Of the five current HVs, all but one saw themselves in a different position within the next 10 years, either as a supervisor of a home visiting program, or a similar line of work in a different agency. The HV that noted no change of employment plan within the next 10 years worked part time and reported control of her schedule and more opportunities to balance work and personal life. HVs most commonly reported a lack of support from their supervisor, a feeling of no mobility within their agency, and a general sense of breakdown in systems that care for families as extrinsic motivators that weigh in their decision to stay. These stressors resulted in the prevalence of the phrase, "if I'm not here, who's going to help these families."

  Self-Care Practices. Current HVs reported consistent engagement in self-care, such as practicing reflection and intentionality. Courtney noted "lighting some sage" and taking time to reflect as an opportunity to recharge. Further, current HVs reported feeling confident addressing stressors and facilitating goal achievement with families, which renewed passion and made them excited for the work. Some HVs mentioned structural agency supports as a necessity in their retention, while some HVs were not familiar with the resources available to them. Examples of this are assistance with continued school or professional development, incentive programs that provide additional direct pay to the HV based on data completion, and mental health consultation provided to HVs on-site.

Former HV Extrinsic Motivators

  Job Mobility and Other Supports. Experiences of feeling most like leaving when they felt a lack of support, issues in professional mobility, and a breakdown of systems were also the most common responses from former HVs that led to their decision to leave the field. While all HVs experienced these issues, former HVs specifically attribute these to their decision to leave. HVs reported looking for mobility within the field, opportunities to facilitate family success— often lacking access to appropriate resources—and supervisory supports to manage the everyday issues they face with families. HVs reported that when those needs went unmet, without the possibility of ever being met, they subsequently left the field. Additionally, support from agency administration played a role in decision making around retention. Fiona reflected on her decision to leave by saying "as long as they [management] listened to us, we stayed. As soon as we felt like we weren't being listened to, we left—or made a plan to leave."

  One HV further exemplified support and job mobility by sharing her experience of going back to school, with the intent of becoming a supervisor in her agency. As she described it, she had been "tapped" to take on a supervisory role, decided to go back to school "on her own dime," and when she finished, the agency decided to go a different direction with hiring. She pinpoints that moment—the loss of mobility and feeling no agency support—as the moment that finally pushed her out of the field. In addition, the issue of pay once again surfaced. This HV reflected:

   "When I was in school, one of the things we talked about was employee retention. If you don't do raises—how many people will stay? This percentage will stay, and this percentage will go. I would be interested to see a study if you have a caseload. Because there is a completely different set of loyalties and that feeling of responsibility with you have a caseload of people."

Other former HVs reported the weight of deciding to stay or leave was equally influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. One HV noted, "I'm not just leaving work at my desk for someone else to pick up—I'm leaving families that adore me and I adore them."

Former HVs also identified additional responsibilities that they felt were critical in their decision to leave. These included feeling like they were given additional families or paperwork responsibilities because they were "good at their jobs." This led to frustration with other home visiting or agency staff, as it was reported to feel like good work habits were being taken advantage of when others could slack off with no consequence.

Current HV Intrinsic Motivators

Empathy, Meaning, and Hopefulness. Current HVs reported three reoccurring intrinsic motivators that contributed to their passion and ultimately influenced their decision to stay in the field. These intrinsic motivators were empathy, finding meaning in the work, and a feeling of hopefulness, which were discussed in RQ2-3. HVs that stayed in the field reported feeling highly empathetic and hopeful towards the families they served. Even when challenges arose, they reported the ability to find the positives of the experience through the passion they held for the work. As Caroline put it, "I know I'm doing something good and meaningful." This was further echoed by Courtney who said:

> "I want to help parents find their way. We don't have to keep raising generations of traumatized children who are broken and become addicts or users. We can talk about what's going on and try to find a way to fix it and make sure that these kids are making it in the world. I don't [always] know how to get there, but that's what I feel passionate about."

Former HV Intrinsic Motivators

    Unrealized Passions. While former HVs also reported and exhibited empathy, their responses more frequently coded as hopelessness as they reported feeling that some families don't want or can't receive adequate support. Former HVs felt more frustration with inadequate systems than with the families themselves. One HV shared her frustration in systems by saying, "I know there were times when I should have called CPS, but I didn't do it because I knew that a family having a messy house was less dangerous than the whole family being [deported]." She further lamented that getting other systems involved felt like a risk as she wondered if "somebody else would have the same level of care for the family" as she did.

    Balancing the Mental Weight of Home Visitation. Former HVs repeatedly commented on the mental weight of home visitation. They desired to feel appreciated for their work and reported looking for respect within the workplace. They reported the inability to buffer the weight of the challenges—either from a lack of support, resources, or underlying passion—was responsible for their eventual turnover. Finley reflected, "It just became harder [for me] to balance that mental weight of home visiting. … It's probably not true for everyone because it depends on the type of HV that you are, but for those of us who were really invested, you just cannot shut it off." She then added:

    "I do believe home visiting is amazing, and I believe, what it stands for and what it does—I know that it personally helps families immensely. I think that as a whole…people who are doing home visiting, they just need more support—time, finances would be amazing—but just that feeling of being understood. I think that to wear that many hats, of nurse, teacher, social worker, taxi driver—all of those things— for someone doing it well, it is exhausting. And so I think the biggest thing I wish for people is to feel supported, feel understood, and feel appreciated."

CHAPTER 5.   DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the Results

HV satisfaction is influenced by a mixture of positive and negative motivators that can be categorized as intrinsic or extrinsic in nature. The original hypothesis for this study was that passion is a key intrinsic motivator that drives satisfaction and intersects with other motivators resulting in overall job satisfaction and retention. Research questions were developed to guide the interview process to better understand the essence of home visitor motivations. The results of this study supported passion as a key intrinsic motivator that contributed to satisfaction. In addition, results of this study illuminated other intrinsic motivators that intersected with passion to negatively impact satisfaction and retention. For HVs in the current study, passion was characterized as the desire to help families but was often undermined by a lack of resources available to adequately support families. This resulted in the inability for passion to be realized and negatively impacted retention. The results of this study provide contextual information about intrinsic and extrinsic motivators that inform and update the conceptual framework (Figure 2) and increase our understanding of the mechanisms associated with retention in the home visiting workforce.

Positive Motivators (Rewards)

- Ability to realize passions (extrinsic)
- Engagement of families (extrinsic)
- Positive relationships with families, coworkers, and/or supervisor (extrinsic)
- Harmonious passion (intrinsic)
- A desire to help others (intrinsic)
- Hopefulness and mindset (intrinsic)

Home Visitor Turnover

Home Visitor Satisfaction

Home Visitor Retention

- Lack of engagement from families (extrinsic)
- Poor relationships with families, coworkers, and/or supervisor (extrinsic)
- Agency structures that prohibit decision making and mobility (extrinsic)
- Poor time management (intrinsic)
- Perceptions of safety concerns and fear (intrinsic)
- Burnout (intrinsic)
- Obsessive passion (intrinsic)

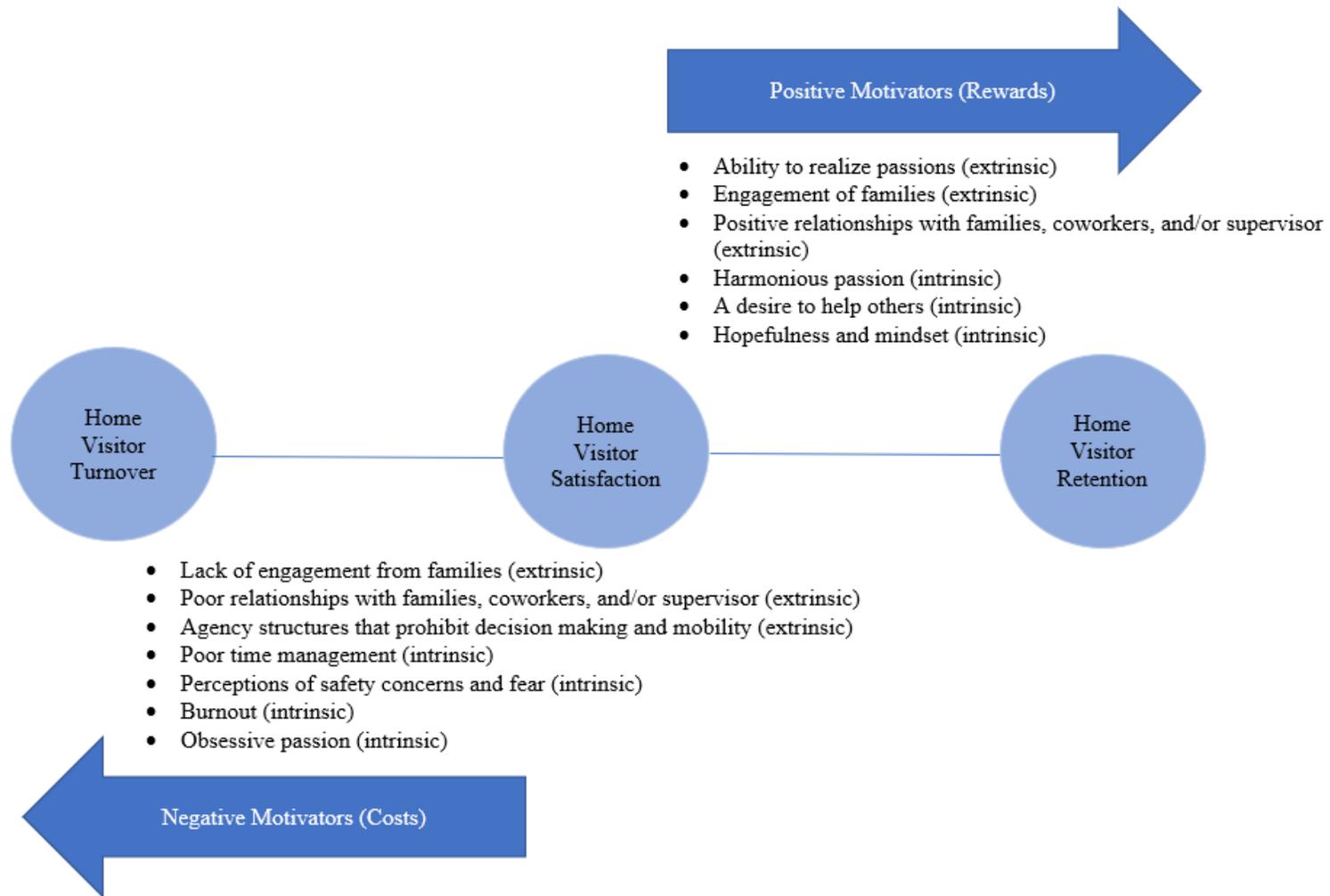**Negative Motivators (Costs)**

Figure 2: New Conceptual Framework

Defining Passion

The goal of this study was to determine the role of passion as a buffering agent to overall satisfaction and retention of HVs. Passion was reported as instrumental in decisions to join the field and an important motivator to keep going. HVs initially reported the desire to help people was at the core of their passion, which is consistent with both state and national analysis of motivation to enter the field (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). Additional motivators are critical in understanding how passion is realized. HVs reported that being the only person, or at minimum a consistent person that families could rely upon, was a driving motivator for entering the field. HVs shared that the underlying desire to help was fueled by their ability to facilitate positive outcomes. For example, HVs reported feeling good about themselves and their work when families took their advice and direction to achieve their goals. This created an environment where the ability to realize their passion was dependent upon the actions of families. Importantly, all HVs defined positive outcomes similarly with a focus on the individuality of family needs and the incremental goal of making things better after each visit.

Harmonious Passion. An interesting result of this study was that it provides additional evidence of the duality of passion, which has been characterized as either harmonious or obsessive (Houlfort et al., 2014; Vallerand et al., 2003). Harmonious passion is accompanied by a flexible investment in the work (Houlfort et al., 2014; Vallerand et al., 2003). In this example, individuals are excited by the work, enjoy doing it, but also have considerable flexibility in the amount of time and energy they put towards completing the work (Houlfort et al., 2014; Vallerand et al., 2003). Flexibility here pertains to the ability to integrate personal ownership into the outcome of the work product and the amount of time that is invested into the work (Houlfort et al., 2014; Vallerand et al., 2003).

This study captured moments of harmonious passion for current HVs when they articulated situations where passion was realized by the ability to facilitate goals, progress, and family outcomes. HVs also reported harmonious passion through a more positive work/life balance when they were able to implement tighter boundaries around their work and personal lives. For example, current HVs reported the ability to compartmentalize challenging situations with families at work, which allowed them to be present and joyful with their own families. Further, current HVs reported flexibility in visit planning as a key motivator that enhanced their satisfaction. This is in line with the experience of harmonious passion, as HVs enthusiastically plan, implement, and make decisions around the content of their visits.

Obsessive Passion. Conversely, obsessive passion has been characterized as individuals that genuinely love their jobs but find themselves defining their worth by the work that they do (Houlfort et al., 2014; Vallerand et al., 2003). For example, a HV in this study shared an experience where she engaged with a family outside of the scope of her work. When confronted with a family in crisis and inadequate resources to connect the family with, she felt no choice but to independently manage the situation outside of business hours. She reported that her choice fueled her passion because she was able to facilitate a positive outcome, but it simultaneously overburdened her personally and ethically. In similar examples, former HVs reported that a breach in boundaries blurred the lines between their personal and professional lives and made it harder to separate the two. While passionate, the level of burden they carried contributed to burnout and lower motivation overall, which is consistent with research in this area (Houlfort et al., 2014).

This type of passion is important for better understanding the ECHV workforce, so that we can identify and manage manifestations of passion that match expectations of the work.

Interestingly, both current and former HVs reported "love" for their work and for the families they served. However, the "love" they experienced manifested in different ways that were unique between groups. Former HVs more frequently reported on a phenomenon they described as the "weight of home visiting." Former HVs experienced a more obsessive form of passion, where they reported taking work home, the desire and need to be the only person that could help a family solve problems, and the tendency to blur boundaries between personal and work life more frequently. Obsessive passion overwhelmingly resulted in the inability for former HVs to successfully achieve the goal of helping families, which was the underlying passion for both groups. Due the nature of their passion, former HVs were more critical about the quality of their home visits, the effort that families put into services, and they experienced higher levels of emotional stress. This ties back to the discussion of role clarity identified in the literature review. When obsessive passion is in play, role clarity and enmeshment with the family occur and negatively impact retention rates (Houlfort et al., 2014; Sandstrom et al., 2020). Providing clear expectations, facilitating opportunities for HVs to practice flexibility and ownership, as well as additional extrinsic supports could help supervisors identify issues in obsessive passion and mitigate the negative impacts.

Burnout Buffers and Positive Motivators

  Coworker Relationships. A key finding from this study further corroborates research on the importance of coworker relationships (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al., 2020). In prior studies, coworker relationships have been tied together with supervisory relationships. While both are important, it is necessary to highlight a key extrinsic motivator of this study which was identified as strong coworker relationships. Both current and former HVs reported that relationships with coworkers could assist in processing challenging situations with families and gave them a general sense of not feeling alone in the work. Special attention should be paid to

fostering strong relationships between HVs working at the same agency, as it was identified as a key factor in retention and a strong buffer to generalized feelings of burnout.

Supervisory Relationships. Critical to retention of HVs is a strong, high-quality relationship with a supervisor. Research suggests that clinical supervision (discussion of caseload, strategies to address issues with families, and discussion of other topics that are important to the supervisee) is an effective method of lowering instances of burnout (Edwards, et al, 2006). As previously noted, HVs report less emotional exhaustion and burnout when the relationship with their supervisor is strong (Mena & Bailey, 2007). However, a consistent response from both current and former HVs in this study was indifference or frustration with the supervisory relationship. While HVs reported "getting along" with their supervisor, they noted that supervision was not overly helpful to them in processing family issues and obtaining necessary resources to do their work. The reported lack of quality in supervision is consistent with previous research, which indicated only 49% of HVs experience "excellent" supervision (Landsman, 2017).

A few key areas were identified in this study that could be targeted in strengthening supervision. Notably, HVs felt more connected to supervisors who had been HVs themselves. There was a strong desire from HVs to feel understood and supported by the supervisor, which was repeatedly noted as a challenge when supervisors had not experienced the work of home visitation first-hand. Having a supervisor that understands home visitation reduced feelings of being overwhelmed, helped process boundary issues, and provided effective support to the HVs. In addition to feeling supported, it was important for former HVs to feel respected and recognized for their work.

Further, HVs were looking for constructive opportunities to process challenges. HVs in this study often felt that supervision was more of an informal update or "gab session" that did not result in structured planning to support the work they did with families. These results indicated a crucial need for supervisory training. Relationship motivators can be positive or negative and are dependent on other individuals (i.e., supervisors). However, if targeted effectively they can boost passion in a way that buffers other negative motivators.

Agency Structures and Supports. Research has focused heavily on salary as a major contributor to HV retention (Landsman, 2017; Sandstrom et al, 2020). An interesting finding of this study was that salary was a general motivator, but it was not an apparent buffer to negative motivators such as burnout and obsessive passion. Interestingly, both studies that mentioned salary as a key component to retention gathered data based on the perception of the supervisor, as they were unable to connect with actual former HVs. A strength of the current study is that it shares results directly from former HVs, who did not consistently report salary as a key motivator in their retention. While pay was reported as important, home visitor responses about the adequacy of pay were inconsistent. In this study, pay did not seem to be an important buffer nor was it a central contributor to leaving the field.

The critical tipping point of HVs' decision to stay in the field seems to center around the ability to manage burnout and realize passion through implementation of the work. In addition to harmonious passion, additional buffers to burnout were commonly associated with relationships and specific extrinsic agency structures and supports that were unrelated to salary. Examples of extrinsic agency supports that contributed to higher levels of satisfaction were policies around personal and sick leave. Policies that allowed HVs to be responsive to their own health and well-being, or that of their personal family, were commonly discussed when weighing decisions to

stay in their position. Further, agency structures, such as supervision, that value the input and direction of the HV were also cited as important to retention. Many HVs reported a lack of control or input when it came to decisions around exiting families from services. Due to agency constraints, perceptions of capacity compliance, and a lack of high-quality supervision, HVs reported overwhelming frustration in their ability to realize their passions and see successes with families they served. Therefore, it is important to reevaluate policies and structures to ensure families are receiving services that can be successful, which in turn will support the passions and motivations for HVs.

Hopefulness and Mindset. The nature of the work, enrollment, and risk patterns of families are similar throughout the models for both current and former HVs. However, perceptions of the environment, the family, and their risk patterns are noticeably different between groups. This study found hopefulness and positive mindset as important intrinsic motivators that fuel passion and satisfaction. Current HVs discussed their families with more hopefulness and saw clear paths to success and goal achievement. Even when family situations seemed challenging, they were able to tap back into their underlying passion, reframe their mindset, and continue to serve families without experiencing high levels of burnout. Hopefulness and positive mindset appear to contribute to resiliency in current HVs.

Conversely, former HVs reported hopelessness and a more negative mindset. This was largely explained through experiences of fear and safety concerns in their work, despite serving the same family population as current HVs. These perceptions of safety resulted in negative intrinsic motivations and turnover for former HVs. Former HVs also experienced challenges in reframing their mindset about the families they served when things did not go as planned. For example, former HVs commonly reported feeling as though certain families on their caseload

would never achieve success no matter how hard the HV tried to help them. Once this mindset was activated, former HVs had a harder time buffering other negative motivators.

Hopefulness and mindset seem to play an important role in HV motivation. This result is consistent with research in the area of "Hope Theory," which describes hope as motivation that allows one to see and achieve a clear path to meeting goals (Snyder, 2002). Counts et al. (2017) implemented a targeted training approach through curricula called Lemonade for Life and measured hope in home visitors pre and post training. Results from this study indicated that home visitors feel high level of hope for their own lives, but less hope about the future of the families they serve. This idea is known as a "hope contagion" and the results from this study were described as a "disconnect between home visitors' self-hope and the ability to spread hope (Counts et al., 2017). This suggests that hopefulness and mindset are important motivators for retention, but also impact the services that are provided to families. Further research and strategies for supporting home visitors in developing hope and positive mindset is warranted.

<div align="center">**Recommendations**</div>

Intentionality in Supervision

Supervisors play a pivotal role in supporting positive motivators that influence satisfaction and drive retention. Although conceptually it may seem challenging for supervisors to support intrinsic motivators, they have a key opportunity to support HV passion in real and vital ways. As mentioned previously, a unique aspect of this study was the identification of extrinsic motivators that support intrinsic passion. Each of these extrinsic motivators can be addressed through high-quality supervision and agency supports. The following recommendations are provided for supervision:

- **Identify harmonious and obsessive passion in home visitors early.** Having a better understanding of passion and how it manifests in the work that HVs

conduct is essential to providing extrinsic supports that meet their needs. For example, an HV that is exhibiting signs of obsessive passion (e.g., inability to separate work and home life, blurring boundaries, etc.) may need additional opportunities for processing feelings and challenges associated with the inability to meet the needs of a family in a way that feels like quality. HVs with higher levels of obsessive passion may need more prep time for their visits, fewer families as they learn to address boundaries in constructive ways, and assistance finding resources that help reduce the burden of "saving families."

- **Build respect, recognition and other practices that fuel passion into supervision and agency culture.** This study indicated HVs have a critical desire to feel appreciated and understood in the work that they do. However, perception and importance of respect and recognition vary by individual. Implementing regular practices that boost recognition and demonstrate respect is associated with greater retention. Supervisors must identify which practices for building respect and recognition are most valued by their HVs and implement these strategies accordingly.

- **Utilize and promote services that address mental health supports for home visitors.** HVs, particularly ones that experience more burnout and more obsessive passion, may need services beyond the capability of current supervisory practices. Specifically, HVs may benefit from mental health consultation to help process feelings and reframe mindsets about their work and the families they serve. While many of the HVs in this study had access to mental health consultation within their agency, only a couple reported a full understanding of this resource. In

addition, reflective supervision utilized in the infant mental health field can support HVs by giving them a safe space to work through feelings, be acknowledged and "return to the work even in the face of unsolvable problems and an unknowable outcome" (Simpson, Robinson, & Brown, 2018, p. 483). Reflective supervision is grounded in principles described by Tomlin, Weatherston, and Pavkov (2014) and is specifically designed to address many of the negative motivators identified in this study.

Intentionality in Policy Building

While supervisors have a unique opportunity to address issues in HV burnout and retention, responsibility should also be placed on funders and agency administration to strengthen and support home visitation practices and policies that retain staff. Recommendations to funders and agency administration are as follows:

- **Identify and provide more educational opportunities to prospective home visitors.** As noted in the results, HVs have essentially no idea what they are getting themselves into when they decide to become HVs. Even when they have experiences of working in other positions in the same agency that provides home visitation, they do not understand the breadth of the work until they do it themselves. Further, even with six different bachelor-level degrees reported within this study, none of the HVs felt educationally prepared for the work of home visitation. It is critical to provide comprehensive educational support, both at the preservice level and through targeted training opportunities. It is important to remember that shadowing home visits was reported as an extrinsic motivator that can fuel levels of passion. Preservice curricula specific to home visiting are limited and only a few courses across the country focus specifically on home

visiting (Walsh et al., 2021). However, shadowing real home visits through practicum, internships, hiring experiences or even high school partnerships may be especially helpful in sparking passion early or redirecting those not suited for home visitation. These opportunities to learn about the work, practice skills, and reflect with intention help HVs feel empowered to facilitate change with families.

- **Provide more training to supervisors.** Opportunities to grow and reflect upon supervision strategies and best practices are often limited to model-specific training or can be sparsely found through online training hubs targeted towards home visitation. There is a need for continued and focused training to better assist supervisors in connecting with HVs and supporting positive motivation. This training should focus on the basics of relationship building, team building, facilitation of difficult conversations, and reflective supervision practices.

- **Recruit home visitors to become supervisors.** HVs are more satisfied with supervisors that have experience doing home visiting work firsthand. Practical experience is valued over educational experience and is also harder to teach. Therefore, practical experience should be prioritized during hiring decisions, as it leads to greater satisfaction and retention of HV staff. This particular recommendation can positively influence career pathways in home visiting.

- **Invest in mental health services for home visitors.** HVs report a wide variety of challenges they face with families that impact their personal mental health and well-being. Policies should support mental health consultation, reflective supervision, facilitate opportunities for paid time off without question, and provide HVs with tools to promote a sense of safety and security.

Implications for Future Research

Additional research is needed to better understand how supervisors can implement strategies which build experiences HVs perceive as positive motivators and prevent experiences HVs perceive as negative motivators. Understanding strategies supervisors can utilize to create more positive experiences will allow them to strategically build harmonious passion for their HVs. This research should also focus on targeted ways that supervisors can build respect, recognition, and other practices that fuel passion.

Further, research should target how hopefulness and positive mindset can be cultivated to strengthen passion and retention. Very little research exists on hopefulness and mindset within ECHV or other social service professions. However, research on Hope Theory (Snyder, 2002), and the use of Lemonade for Life to measure hope contagion (Counts et al., 2017) in conjunction with the current study focused on hope and mindfulness as a factor of HV retention provide a framework for future studies on this topic.

Conclusion

HV satisfaction and resulting retention can be positively or negatively impacted by specific intrinsic and extrinsic motivators. Following social exchange theory, HVs weigh these motivators through the lens of perceived costs and rewards. On the continuum of satisfaction, there is an opportunity to strengthen positive motivators that lead to retention, while buffering negative motivators that result in turnover. Building capacity to strengthen relationships with coworkers, facilitate high-quality supervision, and address problematic agency structures and supports is a critical next step in strengthening retention in the home visiting workforce. Further, this study uniquely identified the role of passion and the importance of hopefulness and positive mindset in providing role clarity. This research illuminated some of the complexities in understanding passion as it intersects with other motivators. Taken together, these motivators,

positive and negative, intrinsic and extrinsic, drive home visiting workforce retention ultimately

impacting the health and well-being of the families they serve.

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Home Visitor Interview Protocol

Title of Study: Driving Forces: Understanding the Intersection of Passion and Motivation
on Home Visitor Retention

Researcher: Anne Plagge, M.A.

The following questions will be used as a guide for each interview for current home

visitors:

- Research Question 1: What are the specific motivations for entering the field of home

  visitation?

  o   Tell me how you became involved with home visiting.

  o   What did you know about home visiting before becoming a home visitor?

  o   How did your education prepare you for the work you do as a home visitor?

  o   What experiences motivated you to join the field?

- Research Questions 2: What factors do home visitors find most motivating in their

  decision to stay or leave the field?

  o   Tell me about a time you felt challenged or overwhelmed in your job.

  o   What keeps you going when work feels challenging or overwhelming?

  o   What are the top five stressors you face in your work?

  o   How do you overcome or manage those five stressors?

  o   How do those stressors impact your long-term goals within home visitation?

  o   What experiences have been most impactful in your decision to remain in

     your role as a home visitor?

- o What role (if any) does supervision play in supporting your motivation for the work?

- Research Question 3: How does passion influence (buffer or enhance) negative and positive motivation drivers?

  - o What is the most motivating element of your job? Why?

  - o Tell me about a time you felt most passionate in your work.

  - o Tell me about a time you felt rewarded in your work.

  - o Tell me about a time when you felt joy in your work.

  - o Tell me about a time you've felt burnout (if applicable). What helped you overcome feelings of burnout?

- How does the combination of passion and motivation influence retention?

  - o What skills do you utilize most frequently in your job? Are those skills you enjoy using or practicing? Are there additional skills you would like to use more frequently?

  - o What supports do you feel are most necessary in your work?

  - o Tell me about a time when you felt most satisfied in your work as a home visitor.

  - o Tell me about a time when you felt most dissatisfied in your work as a home visitor.

  - o Tell me about a time when you felt most satisfied with the families you work with.

  - o Tell me about a time when you felt most dissatisfied with the families you work with.

  - o What are your professional goals for the next five years? 10 years?

o   Has there ever been a time when you felt like leaving the field? Why or why not?

▪   If yes, what factors influenced your decision to stay?

The following questions will be used as a guide for each interview of former Home Visiting staff:

- Research Question 1: What are the specific motivations for entering the field of home visitation?

  o   Tell me how you became involved with home visiting.

  o   What did you know about home visiting before becoming a home visitor?

  o   How did your education prepare you for the work you do as a home visitor?

  o   What experiences motivated you to join the field?

- Research Questions 2: What factors do home visitors find most motivating in their decision to stay or leave the field?

  o   Tell me about a time you felt challenged or overwhelmed as a home visitor.

  o   Were you able to keep going for any period of time when work felt challenging or overwhelming? If no, why not? If yes, what kept you going?

  o   What are the top five stressors you faced as a home visitor?

  o   How did you overcome or manage those five stressors? Which of those stressors (if any) influenced your decision to leave the field?

  o   How do those stressors impact your long-term goals within home visitation?

  o   What role (if any) did supervision play in supporting your motivation for the work?

- Research Question 3: How does passion influence (buffer or enhance) negative and positive motivation drivers?

- What was the most motivating element of your job as a home visitor? Why?

- Tell me about a time you felt most passionate in your work as a home visitor.

- Tell me about a time your felt passionate in your current role.

- Tell me about a time you felt rewarded in your work as a home visitor.

- Tell me about a time you felt rewarded in your current role.

- Tell me about a time when you felt joy in your work as a home visitor.

- Tell me about a time when you felt joy in your current role.

- Tell me about a time you've felt burnout (if applicable). What (if anything) helped you overcome feelings of burnout?

- How does the combination of passion and motivation influence retention?

  - What skills did you utilize most frequently in your job as a home visitor? Are those skills you enjoy using or practicing? Are there additional skills you would like to use more frequently? What skills do you use most frequently in your current position?

  - What supports do you feel are most necessary in a job?

  - Tell me about a time when you felt most satisfied in your work as a home visitor.

  - Tell me about a time when you felt most dissatisfied in your work as a home visitor.

  - Tell me about a time when you felt most satisfied with the families you worked with.

  - Tell me about a time when you felt most dissatisfied with the families you worked with.

  - What are your professional goals for the next five years? 10 years?

- o Tell me about your decision to leave the field. How did you make choices and what factors did you weigh when making your choice?

Home Visitor Participation Survey

Title of Study: Driving Forces: Understanding the Intersection of Passion and Motivation on Home Visitor Retention

Researcher: Anne Plagge, M.A.

To support your interview data, I am collecting survey responses to better understand home visitor demographics as well as benefits information by agency (if available and applicable). I will use this information to analyze the benefits that are offered to explore potential connections between structural and organizational motivators. This benefits information will include the number of sick and personal leave days each year, salary, and access to healthcare.

1. **On a scale of one to ten, how passionate do you feel about your work:**

   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

2. **How many years have you been (or were you) employed as a home visitor?**
3. **What is your age?**
4. **What is your highest level of degree or experience?**
5. **What program model do/did you provide?**
6. **Are you a parent of a child under the age of 18?**
7. **How many sick leave days do/did you receive as a home visitor annually?**
8. **How many personal leave days do/did you receive as a home visitor annually?**
9. **What was your starting salary?**
10. **What was your ending (or current) salary?**
11. **Do/did you have access to health care benefits?**
12. **Are there other important benefits you receive(d) through your work as a home visitor?**

For further information about the study, contact Anne Plagge (641-777-2179, astein@iastate.edu) or Kere Hughes-Belding (515-294-8441, kereh@iastate.edu).

APPENDIX C.   IRB EXEMPTION LETTER

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Ethics
Vice President for Research
2420 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
Ames, Iowa 50014
515 294-4566

Date: 10/28/2020

To: Anne Plagge   Kere Hughes-Belding

From: Office of Research Ethics

Title: Driving Forces: Understanding the Intersection of Passion and Motivation on Home Visitor Retention

IRB ID: 20-431

Submission Type: Initial Submission   **Exemption Date:** 10/28/2020

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from most requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.104 or 21 CFR 56.104 because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

2018 - 2 (iii): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) when the information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a LIMITED IRB REVIEW to [determine there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain confidentiality of the data].

The determination of exemption means that:

- You do not need to submit an application for continuing review. Instead, you will receive a request for a brief status update every three years. The status update is intended to verify that the study is still ongoing.

- You must carry out the research as described in the IRB application. Review by IRB staff is required prior to implementing modifications that may change the exempt status of the research. In general, review is required for any *modifications to the research procedures* (e.g., method of data collection, nature or scope of information to be collected, nature or duration of behavioral interventions, use of deception, etc.), any change in *privacy or confidentiality protections*, modifications that result in the *inclusion of participants from vulnerable populations*, removing plans for informing participants about the study, any *change that may increase the risk or discomfort to participants, and/or* any change such that the revised procedures do not fall into one or more of the regulatory exemption categories. The purpose of review is to determine if the project still meets the federal criteria for exemption.

- All *changes to key personnel* must receive prior approval.

IRB 07/2020

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office of Research Ethics
Vice President for Research
2420 Lincoln Way, Suite 202
Ames, Iowa 50014
515 294-4566

Date:	10/28/2020	
To:	Anne Plagge	Kere Hughes-Belding
From:	Office of Research Ethics	
Title:	Driving Forces: Understanding the Intersection of Passion and Motivation on Home Visitor Retention	
IRB ID:	20-431	
Submission Type:	Initial Submission	**Exemption Date:** 10/28/2020

The project referenced above has been declared exempt from most requirements of the human subject protections regulations as described in 45 CFR 46.104 or 21 CFR 56.104 because it meets the following federal requirements for exemption:

2018 - 2 (iii): Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) when the information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a LIMITED IRB REVIEW to [determine there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain confidentiality of the data].

The determination of exemption means that:

- You do not need to submit an application for continuing review. Instead, you will receive a request for a brief status update every three years. The status update is intended to verify that the study is still ongoing.

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IRB 07/2020