

## RESEARCHER PROFILE

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**HORIZON EUROPE TOPIC(S) OF INTEREST:**

**HORIZON-CL2-2022-TRANSFORMATIONS-01-10: Socio-economic effects of ageing societies**

### CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD CALL TOPIC

I was the first researcher in Israel to study the issue of aging phenomena in populations with Intellectual Disability (ID). I study the signs of aging, the onset of decline in relation to etiology, level of ID and residence. I developed intervention programs designed to improve cognitive, emotional and behavioral functioning (MISC and CAB).

I also deal with social aspects of aging. I found that participation in stimulating, cognitive leisure activities contributes to the level of cognitive functioning in both adults with ID and those with typical development.

## PROFILE BRIEF

I am the head of new MA Program in Intellectual Disability (ID) offered by the School of Education, at Bar-Ilan University, Ramat-Gan, Israel, which opened at the beginning of the 2010-2011 academic year. This program is based on the *Normalization* (Wolfensberger, 1977, 2003), *Quality of Life* (Schalock, 2000) and *Center Person* (Mounts, 2000) approaches and is guided by the vision that all individuals with disabilities will be valued members of their communities and society. Individuals with intellectual disability at all levels should be able to experience meaningful participation in all aspects of life.

In the Special Education Department I teach undergraduate (seminar: Issues in Adolescents and Adulthood of Individuals with Disability), and graduate courses (Compensation Mechanisms of Adults with Disability; seminars on Learning throughout the Lifespan among Individuals with Disability, and Etiologies of ID – Educational and Neurological Innovations).

I am also hold the Lois Alberto Machado Research Chair on Cognitive Modifiability and Human Development. Within this framework, I initiated the **Empowerment – Ozmot Project: Three stages of inclusion in the academic world of students with ID**. This innovative project is the first in Israel in which students with ID study for a BA degree. The three stages consist of: Stage 1- The Separate Model: Adapted Academic Courses Only for Adults with ID; Stage 2- Mixed/Hybrid Model of Adapted-Enrichment: Research Seminar with Typical Peers; and Stage 3- Fully Inclusive Studies Model with support. All the activities in the Empowerment - Ozmot project are theoretical and empirical based.

### Main Research Interests

- A. Cognitive Trajectories and Cognitive Modifiability in a population with ID, including Aging.** I was among the first researcher in Israel to study the unique area of aging phenomena among persons with developmental disabilities. My studies contribute to the field of ID by emphasizing the contribution of chronological age to the cognitive ability of individuals with ID beyond their mental age. Based on my research in the field of ID, I formulated the holistic Compensation Age Theory (CAT) framework (Lifshitz-Vahav, 2015). The proposed CAT framework supports the view that all human beings, even older people with ID, are capable of change and growth under appropriate environmental conditions and with continuous systematic intervention.
- B. Emotional intelligence and related issues in individuals with ID-** I published research on affection and the emotional life of adults with ID (Lifshitz & Katz, 2009; Lifshitz & Malka-Tzemach, 2019, in Lifshitz, 2020) and on the emotional-psychological reasons for adults with ID to remain single (Lifshitz, 2020; Lifshitz, Haguel, & Fridel, 2015), which indicated equal performance of individuals with ID compared to those with typical development.
- C. Inclusion of students with ID in higher academic education:** Scientific criteria of eligibility, achievements and strategies.

## RELEVANT PUBLICATIONS

1. **Lifshitz, H.** (2001). Aging phenomena among people with mental retardation in community residence in Israel. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 36(1), 30-41.
2. **Lifshitz, H.** (2002). Later Life Planning Program – A pre-test assessment in Israel. *Journal of Gerontology Social Work*, 37(3-4), 87-103.
3. **Lifshitz, H.** (2002). Attitudes toward aging in adult and elderly people with intellectual disability. *Educational Gerontology*, 28, 745-759.
4. **Lifshitz, H. & Merrick, Y.** (2004). Aging among persons with intellectual disability in Israel in relation to type of residence, age, and etiology. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 25(2), 193-205.
5. **Lifshitz, H., Merrick, J., & Morad, M.** (2008). Health Status and ADL functioning of older persons with intellectual disability: Community residence versus residential care centers. *Research in Developmental Disabilities*, 29, 301-315.
6. **Lifshitz, H. & Klein, P., S.** (2011). Mediation between staff–elderly persons with intellectual disability with Alzheimer disease as a means of enhancing their daily functioning – a case study. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities*, 46, 1,106 -116.
7. **Lifshitz-Vahav, H., Shrira, A., & Bodner E.** (2016). The Reciprocal Relationship between Participation in Leisure Activities and Cognitive Functioning: The Moderating Effect of Literacy. *Aging and Mental Health*, 8, 1-8.
8. **Lifshitz, B., H., Bustan, N., & Shintzer – Meirovitz, S.** (2020). Intelligence Trajectories in Adolescents and Adults with Down Syndrome: Cognitively Stimulating Leisure Activities Mitigate Health and ADL Problems. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities*, 1-16, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jar.12813>.
9. **Book publication: Lifshitz, H.** (2020). *Growth and Development in Adulthood in Persons with Intellectual Disability: New Frontiers in Theory, Research, and Intervention*. USA, Springer

## BAR ILAN UNIVERSITY PROFILE

Established in 1955, Bar Ilan University (BIU) is currently one of Israel's largest universities with a total undergraduate and graduate student enrollment of 19,000. With more than 1,600 senior and junior faculty members, BIU has achieved an international reputation for academic and research excellence, especially, but not limited to the fields of artificial intelligence, renewable energy, bio-medicine, brain sciences, cancer, cyber security, cognitive sciences, environment, quantum technologies, medicine, archaeology, nanotechnology and advanced materials.

Building on our past and current successes in FP6, FP7, H2020 and ERC projects, BIU is committed to strengthening its research and innovation infrastructure and supporting multidisciplinary innovative research initiatives with its 55 research centers and 60 endowed chairs. In addition, the Bar Ilan Center for Smart Cities is recognized by the EU SMART SPECIALISATION PLATFORM as a Digital Innovation Hub.