

JOB COMMITMENT AND JOB SATISFACTION IN WOMEN AFFECTED BY DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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Purpose: According to official police statistics, in 2024, over 50000 women in Poland experienced domestic violence. Research shows that experiencing domestic violence increases the risk of mental health problems and can also impede social functioning, including professional functioning. In turn, professional consequences, such as increased absenteeism, fatigue, and the risk of making mistakes, can limit employee productivity and organizational performance. This influence may also apply to job commitment and job satisfaction, therefore the purpose of this article was to present the results of a study of the level of job commitment and the level of job satisfaction in a group of women affected by domestic violence. An additional aim was to analyze possible determinants (age, length of service, education) of the variables studied

Design/methodology/approach: The study included 82 women who reported experiencing domestic violence. All of the women were employed at the time of the study. The study was cross-sectional in nature. The study used the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ-SF) and a self-designed survey.

Findings: The results revealed an overall low level of job commitment and an average level of job satisfaction in the women surveyed. Among the dimensions of commitment, the lowest level was obtained by the respondents in terms of vigor. On the other hand, among the studied determinants (age, length of service, education), none of the factors proved statistically significant for commitment and job satisfaction.

Practical implications: The presented results of the study emphasize the importance of intervention activities in the work environment directed at the professional group of women who have experienced domestic violence. It is necessary to raise awareness of: the functioning of this group of women in the work environment, the proper organization of their working conditions and the possibilities of support. Managers should use this awareness to stimulate women's job commitment, especially in terms of vigor and dedication to work, as well as to positively influence their job satisfaction. Managers can use initiatives such as: providing access to training and professional workshops, ensuring flexible working hours, facilitating access to psychological support or psychoeducation regarding the problem.

Originality/value: The study fills a research gap that concerns analyzing the level of job commitment and job satisfaction exactly in the group of Polish working women who have experienced domestic violence.

Keywords: domestic violence, women, job commitment, job satisfaction.

Category of the paper: Research paper.

1. Introduction

Domestic violence is still a current problem in Poland and around the world. According to police statistics, the number of Polish women who experienced domestic violence in 2024 was 50638 (compared to male victims - 10559)¹. Importantly, this indicator only concerns disclosed cases, which suggests that this value is underestimated and the scale of the phenomenon may be disproportionately larger. The problem of domestic violence against women is associated with the unique suffering of each victim, which carries consequences for both mental and physical health (especially when the victim also experiences physical violence). Studies indicate that the prevalence rate of mental disorders among women who experience violence is estimated at 49% compared to 19% for women who have not experienced violence (Howard, Trevillion, Agnew-Davies, 2010). Among possible problems, mood disorders, anxiety disorders, suicide attempts, and addictions are detailed. According to a systematic review based on quantitative studies from 2012-2020 involving women's exposure to intimate partner violence, the most frequently reported mental health consequences were: depression (70% of all studies), PTSD (29%), and anxiety (17%) (White et al., 2024). However, domestic violence against women leads not only to individual consequences, but also to those that are significant in the social perspective, including significance for professional functioning. At this point, it is worth noting that women's participation in the Polish labor market is steadily increasing (Polish Economic Institute, 2023). Based on data from the Central Statistical Office, the professional activity rate of women of working age in the second quarter of 2024 was 78.1% (Biały et al., 2024). Women are increasingly occupying managerial positions, and the increase in the number of women with higher education in recent years has been faster than in the case of men (Polski Instytut Ekonomiczny [Polish Economic Institute], 2023). Thus, the quality of women's professional functioning in the labor market is also of significant economic and business importance. Meanwhile, the experience of domestic violence can clearly limit or impair women's labor force participation, which in a global perspective translates into not only costs incurred individually, but also huge losses in social terms.

The aim of this article is to present the results of the analysis of the level of job commitment and job satisfaction among Polish women affected by domestic violence, thus filling the existing research gap in this area. The aim also includes an analysis of selected possible determinants (age, work experience, education) of job commitment and job satisfaction. The analysis of the indicated variables in a group of women experiencing domestic violence can provide an important foundation for assistance activities aimed at women that can be undertaken in the work environment.

¹ Data based on a report on police actions taken against domestic violence concerning the “Blue Card” procedure. According to the data taken from <https://statystyka.policja.pl/st/wybrane-statystyki/przemoc-domowa/50867,Przemoc-domowa-dane-od-2023-roku.html>, May 19, 2024.

2. Research Background

Job commitment and job satisfaction are variables defining the employee's attitude towards work, which are conditioned by various influences. Both variables, although related, are different concepts. Job commitment is a multi-dimensional motivational concept associated with a certain level of activity, while job satisfaction, on the other hand, defines an employee's attitude associated with, among other things, the characteristics of the workplace, the individual characteristics of the employee, his relationship with the organization or the scope of work (Rich, Lepine, Crawford, 2010; Yeşilkaya, Yildiz, 2022).

There are many different concepts in the literature explaining the concept of job commitment (Christian, Garza, Slaughter, 2011; Schaufeli, Bakker, 2010; Shuck, Wollard, 2010). In this article, the understanding of job commitment proposed by Schaufeli and Bakker (2010) was adopted. Schaufeli et al. (2002) defined work engagement as a positive state of mind related to the work performed, which consists of three dimensions:

- vigor - defining a high level of energy and flexibility during work, as well as the effort involved in work and resistance to factors that hinder work,
- dedication - encompassing a sense of enthusiasm, inspiration and challenge related to the work performed, as well as beliefs about the importance and value of work,
- absorption - concerning concentration on the work performed, to such an extent that the employee does not feel the passage of time and has difficulty breaking away from his or her work.

Job satisfaction, on the other hand, can be explained in terms of a specific comparison between expectations regarding various aspects of work and the values that are actually obtained as a result of the work performed (Robak, 2013). According to the theory of work adjustment developed by Dawis and Lofquist (1984), job satisfaction results from the fit between the work environment system and the employee's needs. The better the employee's conditions fit the requirements of the work environment, the greater the fit (satisfactoriness), and the more the motivators and rewards offered by the work environment affect the realization of the employee's values and needs, the greater the job satisfaction. Thus, job satisfaction can be determined by assessing the extent to which a person's needs are met by the work environment. In addition, the theory emphasizes the impact of fit on employee productivity - employees are most productive when they are most satisfied, i.e. when their tasks are consistent with their personal values.

As mentioned, both variables are correlated with each other (Alarcon, Lyons, 2011, Crawford et al., 2010; Shahpouri, Namdari, Abedi, 2016; Simpson, 2009; Spence Laschinger, 2012), and some studies have directly confirmed that job commitment promotes job satisfaction (Giallonardo et al., 2010; Kamalanabhan, Prakashsai, 2009; Saks, 2006). However, it is also important to mention doubts and contradictions in this area: for example, Kalleberg and

Mastekaasa (2001) stated that previous research on the relationship between job satisfaction and commitment to the organization has not shown any consistent and easily reconcilable results. Nevertheless, job commitment and job satisfaction are considered as separate theoretical constructs, which is also confirmed by empirical analyses (Vandenberg, Lance, 1992). In this article, it was assumed that both variables will be examined in order to determine their exact level in the target group.

The literature describing the functioning of people experiencing violence emphasizes the destructive impact of violence on various aspects of labor activity. These are consequences that can include job performance and efficiency, lateness, absenteeism, presenteeism, accidents, mistakes at work, relationship problems with co-workers or superiors (Krzyżowska, 2024). The results of a survey conducted by the Australian Domestic Violence Rights and Entitlements Project with 3611 participants indicate that of the respondents who reported having experienced domestic violence, almost half confirmed that the experience affected their ability to work, 16% indicated feeling distracted, tired or unwell, 7% reported being late for work, while 10% of participants reported having to take time off due to domestic violence (McFerran, 2011). On this basis, it can be assumed that the experience of domestic violence has an impact on the quality of occupational functioning in the studied group of women. Which may, as a result, differentiate their level of job commitment and job satisfaction. Therefore, this article attempts to answer the following research question:

What is the level of job commitment and job satisfaction among working women who have experienced domestic violence?

Is there a relationship between: age, length of service, education and the level of job commitment and job satisfaction of working women who have experienced domestic violence?

The results of the analysis are intended to supplement the knowledge on the professional functioning of women experiencing violence and, at the same time, to provide a basis for practical guidelines on the measures supporting this group of women in the work environment.

3. Methodology of the research

3.1. Participants

The study was conducted among a group of women who received assistance from a center that helps victims of domestic violence, located in the Silesian province. The study was conducted in the period March-April 2025. The criterion of selection for the study was declaration of experience of domestic violence (psychological/physical/sexual/economic) while the person has been working for at least 3 years. Of the women who gave informed, written consent to the study, 82 returned a package of completed questionnaires (11 women did

not return the sheets, 6 did not complete all the sheets), aged 23 and 61 years ($M = 44,46$; $SD = 10,81$). Detailed characteristics of the study group are shown in Table 1.

Table 1.
Characteristics of the Study Group

		M	SD
Age (years)		44,46	10,81
Length of service (years)		19,82	10,12
		n	%
Education	higher	47	57,32
	secondary	23	28,05
	vocational	12	14,63
Type of violence experienced	mental	82	100
	physical	44	53,66
	sexual	16	19,51
	economic	15	18,29

3.2. Measures

The study used the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) by Schaufeli and Bakker, which is publicly available on the website of one of the authors, also in the Polish language version² (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2004). The questionnaire is based on the three-factor concept of commitment, thus creating three subscales: vigor, absorption, dedication. The subject refers to each statement on a 7-point Likert scale (from 0 - never to 6 - always (every day)). In this study, a 17-item version of the questionnaire was used (vigor - 6 statements, preoccupation - 6 statements, dedication to work - 5 statements), whose reliability coefficient (Cronbach's α) for the Polish version is .94 (Szabowska-Walaszczyk, Zawadzka, Wojtaś, 2011). The results of the study can be presented as averages by dividing the sum of the results in a given scale by the number of questions it includes (for the overall result: dividing the sum of all points by the number of all questions).

In turn, the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) by Weiss et al. (1967), adapted to Polish conditions by Borucki (Borucki, 1988), was used to study job satisfaction. The questionnaire is used to assess the level of satisfaction with various aspects of work; such as: the number of tasks performed, the ability to make decisions, the possibility of promotion. The person surveyed responds to the listed 20 questions (this study used a shorter - 20-item version of the questionnaire) by determining his/her level of satisfaction on a five-point scale (from 1 - very dissatisfied to 5 - very satisfied). The overall score is obtained by summing the ranks of answers assigned to each question. The higher the sum of points, the higher the level of satisfaction with the performed job. Internal consistency expressed by the Cronbach's alpha coefficient in studies using the original short version (MSQ-SF) ranged from 0.87 to 0.92 (Weiss et al., 1967). In addition, the study used a survey prepared by the author of this paper,

² https://www.wilmarschaufeli.nl/publications/Schaufeli/Test%20Manuals/Test_manual_UWES_English.pdf, 15.04.2025.

which takes into account the following data: age, length of service, education, type(s) of violence experienced (psychological/physical/sexual/economic).

3.3. Data analysis

The study was cross-sectional in nature. It included statistical analysis using the STATISTICA 13.3 program by Statsoft. In order to determine the levels of work engagement and job satisfaction in the study group, descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used. In order to analyze the relationship between age, length of service, education and the studied variables, a nonparametric test (non-fulfilled assumption of normal distribution) for independent groups (Kruskal-Wallis test) and Spearman's rank correlation were used. A statistical significance level of $p < 0.05$ was adopted.

4. Results

Table 2 and 3 show, respectively, the level of job commitment (subscale scores and overall score) and job satisfaction in the studied group of women.

Table 2.

Level of job commitment in studied group of women

Job commitment measured by the UWES scale	M	SD	level ³
vigor	1,85	1,20	very low
dedication	2,34	1,49	low
absorption	2,97	1,56	average
overall score	2,39	0,81	low

The overall score obtained by the women in the study in terms of job commitment can be interpreted according to the norms presented by the authors of the UWES questionnaire as low ($M = 2,39$, $SD = 0,81$). In terms of the components of commitment, vigor was found to be the lowest score ($M = 1,85$, $SD = 1,20$), dedication to work – low, while absorption in work – average.

Table 3.

Level of job satisfaction in studied group of women

Job satisfaction measured by the MSQ-SF questionnaire	M	SD
	74,32	15,87

³ According to the norm scores for the UWES-17 (Schaufeli, Bakker, 2004).

In terms of job satisfaction as measured by the MSQ-SF questionnaire, the women in the study scored ($M = 74.32$; $SD = 15.87$), which can be interpreted as an average score in relation to the norms presented in the tool's manual.

The following tables: 4, 5, 6 present an analysis of the level of job commitment (overall score and three dimensions) and job satisfaction depending on the variables characterizing the studied group (age, length of service, education).

Table 4.

The relationship between job commitment, job satisfaction and the age of the studied women

	Spearman's Rho	<i>p</i>
Job commitment		
vigor	-0,057	0,611
dedication	0,148	0,184
absorption	0,214	0,053
overall score	0,199	0,071
Job satisfaction	-0,971	0,333

p – level of significance.

Table 5.

The relationship between job commitment, job satisfaction and length of service of the studied women

	Spearman's Rho	<i>p</i>
Job commitment		
vigor	-0,024	0,828
dedication	-0,007	0,945
absorption	-0,070	0,527
overall score	-0,088	0,430
Job satisfaction	-0,213	0,055

p – level of significance.

Table 6.

Comparison of average values of job commitment and job satisfaction depending on the education of the studied women

	Education							
	higher		secondary		vocational			
Job commitment	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	H	p
vigor	1,71	1,15	1,84	1,32	2,40	1,14	2,787	0,248
dedication	2,29	1,56	2,21	1,33	2,80	1,61	1,442	0,486
absorption	3,04	1,52	2,83	1,69	2,93	1,62	0,578	0,749
overall score	2,35	0,81	2,30	0,85	2,70	0,80	1,736	0,419
Job satisfaction	76,25	20,66	72,69	23,78	69,83	23,31	0,491	0,782

H – Kruskal-Wallis statistical test, *p* – level of significance.

The results of the testing did not reveal any significant statistical relationships between the variables studied (job commitment and job satisfaction) and the age and length of service of the women studied ($p > 0.05$). It is worth noting, however, that in terms of the relationships between job commitment and age and between job satisfaction and length of service, the results were

close to statistical significance. There were also no differences in the scope of the studied variables between women with higher, secondary and vocational education ($p > 0.05$).

5. Discussion

To explain the results obtained in terms of the overall low level of commitment and the level of its individual dimensions, various causes should be considered. One of them is the influence of well-being on the job commitment of the women studied. Indeed, according to the model presented by Cook, engagement depends on four factors, one of which is the very well-being of the employee (Cook, 2008). Meanwhile, experiencing violence can lead to fatigue, frustration, low mood, and even depression (White et al., 2024). The aforementioned studies conducted by the Australian Domestic Violence Rights and Entitlements Project, as well as many other studies, confirm the relationship between domestic violence and the reported feelings of distraction, fatigue and poor well-being (Crowne et al., 2011; McFerran, 2011; Moe, Bell, 2004; Swanberg, Logan, Macke 2005). Fatigue, in particular, may play an important role, as the resulting physical limitations directly affect the ability and readiness to carry out professional duties, which may also be confirmed by the very low level of scores of the women studied on the vigor dimension. Increased absenteeism from work may also have a significant impact on the level of commitment of the surveyed women. A study from Sweden found that women who had experienced domestic violence were twice as likely to be absent from work compared to women who had not experienced violence (Hensing, Alexanderson, 2000). Violence is associated with a reduction in the number of hours or quarters worked (Meisel, Chandler, Rienzi, 2003), which may not only limit the time and effort invested in work, but also make it difficult to be available and flexible in the face of employer requirements. This is also an argument that can explain the lower level of the respondents in the dimension of dedication to work, because spending less time at work weakens identification with work and its values, thus affecting enthusiasm and willingness to take on professional challenges. The results of the study revealed that among the three dimensions of job commitment, the highest level was achieved by the study participants in the area of work absorption. This means that despite the limited energy invested in work and a reduced sense of enthusiasm, the women studied are able to focus on their work. Interestingly, some studies on victims of domestic violence indicate a higher risk of attention problems (Karakurt, Smith, Whiting, 2014). It seems, however, that the focus on work in the sense of a general concentration on activity treated as an important life resource in the case of this group of women has its own important significance. This is because absorption in work can, at least for a while, divert attention from the problems of private life, thereby bringing temporary mental relief from persistent thoughts about the home situation and experienced anxiety. It is also worth referring to the difference in the level

of job commitment and job satisfaction in the studied group of women. Although, as mentioned, these variables may positively correlate with each other, in this study the interpretation of the obtained results indicates a low level of general job commitment while the level of job satisfaction is average. As mentioned, despite the possible strong relationships, these variables are independent, described by some parameters. Mowday et al., (1979) indicate that job commitment is a more general construct and reflects the general emotional reaction to the workplace as a whole, while job satisfaction encompasses the reaction to work or to certain features of work. Importantly, job commitment develops more slowly than satisfaction. Therefore, these variables do not have to develop commensurately: it is therefore possible to have a high level of job satisfaction with a low level of commitment and vice versa (McPhee, Townsend, 1992). In conclusion, the difference in results can be stated to suggest that women are averagely satisfied with selected aspects/working conditions and that the nature of general experiences related to performing work is responsible for reduced activity, which reflects job commitment. However, it is worth noting that in order to know the exact relationships between the studied variables, along with the mechanisms that moderate these relationships, further detailed studies should be conducted. An interesting result was that there was no relationship between the possible determinants studied and the variables discussed. This suggests that in the studied group of women, job commitment and job satisfaction are not moderated by age, length of service, or education. Perhaps in this group of women completely different factors influence the variability of job commitment and job satisfaction levels, e.g. those related to the general psychophysical well-being of women – however, verification of this hypothesis requires further detailed research.

Conclusions

The few studies that exist in the literature confirm reduced commitment, motivation to work (AlBahsh, 2023; Munteanu, 2021), as well as job satisfaction (AlBahsh, 2023) in victims of domestic violence. However, there is still a lack of empirical data in this area, including data on the Polish population. To fill this gap, this article analyses the level of job commitment and job satisfaction in a group of Polish women who have experienced domestic violence. Selected possible determinants of the variables studied were also analyzed. The results obtained from the study indicate a general low level of job commitment and an average level of job satisfaction among the surveyed women. In terms of the dimensions of commitment, the level of vigor and dedication to work turned out to be low and very low, respectively, while the level of absorption in work turned out to be medium. In turn, among the possible determinants examined (age, length of service, education), none of the factors proved to be statistically significant for job commitment and job satisfaction.

The results obtained have a very important pragmatic significance, since, as proven in the literature, job commitment and job satisfaction significantly affect employee performance (Damayanti, Darmawan, 2025; Dinc, 2017; Tarmeño-Bernuy, Cosme-Silva, Rincón-Calvo, 2025). The work environment should therefore pay special attention to the studied group of professionals, creating opportunities for support during work time, and possibly outside of it. The work environment should therefore pay special attention to the studied group of professionals, creating opportunities for support during work time, and possibly outside of it. An extremely significant basic action should be to increase the awareness of employers and employees about the problem; including recognizing the symptoms accompanying victims of violence, possible forms of support and organizing cooperation in such a way that will take into account not only the limitations of this group of employees but also the resources and possibilities they have. It is also important for managers to try to stimulate the job commitment of these employees, emphasizing especially two dimensions of commitment - vigor and dedication. It is important that they skillfully adjust the demands of work effort to women's capabilities, and stimulate positive emotions about the meaning of work by creating inspiring professional challenges and arousing enthusiasm in connection with the performance of tasks. Managers can utilize various workplace initiatives that will provide women experiencing violence with a sense of security while simultaneously stimulating their motivation to work. Initiatives worth considering include:

- vocational training or workshops, as well as career counseling support,
- flexible working hours and, if possible, flexible forms of work,
- facilitating access to professional psychological support, including education on the mechanisms of violence, types of violence, ways to cope with it, social skills training, including assertiveness training, stress management training, and problem-solving,
- psychoeducation for all employees on identifying symptoms that may indicate abuse, as well as ways to help an employee experiencing violence.

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