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## **Job involvement and organizational burnout: a gender-sensitive approach in social work**

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**Abstract.** This study examined gender-specific predictors of job involvement among social workers by investigating the roles of burnout dimensions, perceived organizational support, and professional experience. A total of 138 participants (66.7% women, 33.3% men) completed validated self-report measures, including the Job Involvement Questionnaire, the Maslach Burnout Inventory–General Survey, and the Perceived Organizational Support Scale. Separate multiple regression analyses were conducted by gender. Results indicated that emotional exhaustion significantly and negatively predicted job involvement among men ( $\beta = -.57$ ,  $p = .001$ ), whereas experience ( $\beta = .45$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and cynicism ( $\beta = .29$ ,  $p = .042$ ) were significant positive predictors for women. Perceived organizational support and professional inefficacy were not significant predictors in either group. These findings highlight the necessity of gender-sensitive approaches in organizational interventions aimed at sustaining professional engagement in the social work sector.

**Keywords.** job involvement, gender differences, burnout, perceived organizational support, social workers

### **1. Introduction**

Job involvement, understood as the degree to which an individual psychologically identifies with their job and the importance of work in their self-concept (Kanungo, 1982), plays a critical role in the performance and well-being of professionals in emotionally demanding fields. Within social work, a profession characterized by high emotional labor, exposure to human suffering, and organizational pressures, job involvement is both a buffer and a vulnerability factor in relation to stress, burnout, and turnover intentions (Freund, 2005; Word & Park, 2009).

Social workers face a constellation of stressors that can compromise both their effectiveness and psychological health. The literature underscores the cumulative impact of organizational constraints, excessive caseloads, administrative burdens, and exposure to client trauma, all of which contribute to diminished job satisfaction and elevated burnout (Balloch,

Pahl, & McLean, 1998; Acker, 1999; Calitz, Roux, & Strydom, 2014). Burnout, as conceptualized by Maslach and colleagues, comprises three core components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization (or cynicism), and reduced professional efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 1996). This tripartite model has been validated in numerous studies on social workers, revealing high vulnerability to emotional exhaustion and a progressive erosion of work engagement (Lloyd, King, & Chenoweth, 2002; Koeske & Koeske, 1993).

The perception of organizational support—defined as the degree to which employees believe that their contributions are valued and their well-being is cared for by the organization—has emerged as a key predictor of both job involvement and burnout in social services (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). A supportive organizational climate can mitigate the impact of stressors and enhance job commitment, yet its protective function may be differentially experienced across demographic groups (Hamama, 2012; Lewandowski, 2003).

Among the most consistently explored demographic moderators of occupational stress is gender. Meta-analytic and empirical studies have shown that gender influences how burnout manifests and how professionals cope with organizational demands (Purvanova & Muros, 2010; Himle, Jayaratne, & Chess, 2013). Women, who comprise the majority of the social work profession, often report higher emotional exhaustion, whereas men may exhibit greater levels of cynicism or disengagement (Um & Harrison, 1998; Gómez-García, Alonso-Sangregorio, & Llamazares-Sánchez, 2020). Additionally, recent research suggests that gender moderates the relationship between job demands, organizational resources, and psychological outcomes, signaling the need for differentiated models of occupational health (Xie et al., 2021; Travis, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2016).

Against this backdrop, the present study investigates gender-specific pathways to job involvement among social workers, emphasizing how key predictors—namely burnout dimensions (exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy), perceived organizational support, and experience—relate differently to job involvement across male and female professionals. By applying separate regression models for each gender, we aim to uncover whether the psychological mechanisms underlying job involvement are shaped by gendered experiences within the organizational environment.

The research questions are:

- Does the impact of emotional exhaustion on job involvement differ by gender?
- Is perceived organizational support a stronger predictor of job involvement in male or female social workers?
- Do levels of professional inefficacy and cynicism contribute differently to job involvement based on gender?

Through this lens, the study contributes to a more nuanced understanding of occupational engagement in social work and provides evidence for gender-sensitive strategies to enhance workforce sustainability and psychological well-being.

## **2. Literature Review**

Job involvement refers to the degree to which an individual psychologically identifies with their job, perceives work as central to their self-concept, and finds intrinsic meaning in their work tasks (Kanungo, 1982). This concept is particularly relevant in the field of social work, where practitioners often invest considerable emotional and cognitive energy in service-oriented tasks. High levels of job involvement have been associated with organizational

commitment and reduced turnover intentions among social service employees (Freund, 2005; Word & Park, 2009). However, when job involvement is accompanied by poor organizational conditions or excessive demands, it may also render workers more susceptible to burnout (Kang, 2012).

Burnout is a psychological syndrome resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. The most widely accepted model, proposed by Maslach and colleagues, conceptualizes burnout as comprising three distinct but interrelated components: emotional exhaustion, cynicism (or depersonalization), and reduced professional efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 1996; Bresó, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2007). Emotional exhaustion reflects feelings of being emotionally drained by one's work; cynicism involves a distant or indifferent attitude toward the job; and inefficacy denotes a sense of reduced competence and productivity.

In the social work profession, these burnout dimensions manifest frequently due to the emotionally taxing nature of the work, role ambiguity, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and exposure to client trauma (Wilson, 2016; Koeske & Koeske, 1993; Carnes, 2023). Emotional exhaustion and cynicism are consistently linked to negative organizational outcomes such as absenteeism, disengagement, and high turnover (Bang & Reio, 2017; Zhang, Xie, & Zou, 2022). Inefficacy, although less studied historically, has recently received more attention as a critical indicator of professional detachment and a predictor of workplace deviance (Ghaffar, Butt, & Irshad, 2020).

Burnout also interacts with organizational and individual-level variables, such as perceived fairness, autonomy, and support networks (McFadden, Mallett, & Leiter, 2018). This complexity is particularly salient in child protection and healthcare settings, where burnout compromises both the well-being of the professional and the quality of care delivered (Travis, Lizano, & Mor Barak, 2016).

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is defined as employees' perception of how much the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). POS is grounded in organizational support theory, which posits that workers form general beliefs about the extent to which the organization supports them, and these perceptions strongly influence affective commitment, motivation, and psychological safety (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Kurtessis et al., 2015).

In the context of social work, POS plays a buffering role, attenuating the negative effects of burnout and enhancing job involvement, particularly when job demands are high (Lewandowski, 2003; Hamama, 2012). Empirical findings suggest that workers who perceive their organization as supportive report higher levels of satisfaction, reduced emotional exhaustion, and greater engagement with their tasks (Kang, 2012). Moreover, the presence or absence of organizational support can differentially affect employees based on their social identities, particularly gender (Foley, Hang-Yue, & Lui, 2005; Thompson, Bergeron, & Bolino, 2020).

Gender has been identified as a significant moderator in the experience of work-related stress, coping, and engagement. Numerous studies demonstrate that women and men differ in how they experience burnout, utilize social support, and derive meaning from their work (Greenglass, Burke, & Ondrack, 1990; Greenglass, 1991; Purvanova & Muros, 2010). Women are often more susceptible to emotional exhaustion, while men may score higher on dimensions like cynicism, suggesting divergent coping styles and expectations in the workplace (Romero-Martín, Elboj-Saso, & Íñiguez-Berrozpe, 2025; Gómez-García et al., 2020).

These differences are partially shaped by structural gender roles and the feminization of professions such as social work, where emotional labor is both expected and undervalued (Scourfield, 2006; Kulik, 2006). Studies also show that women tend to perceive and utilize

social support differently from men, often internalizing responsibility for emotional outcomes while receiving less institutional validation (Flaherty & Richman, 1989; Matud et al., 2003; Bellman et al., 2003). This may influence how POS is interpreted and whether it translates into sustained job involvement or emotional withdrawal.

Furthermore, gender differences extend to job involvement itself. While some research suggests that men tend to report higher involvement due to traditional role expectations and occupational structures, other findings highlight the increasing identification of women with their professional roles in caregiving domains (Lorence, 1987; Acker, 1999; Himle, Jayaratne, & Chess, 2013). These findings point to the need for a differentiated understanding of how job involvement is shaped by gendered experiences and organizational factors.

Despite the wealth of literature on burnout, POS, and gender in workplace psychology, few studies have integrated these variables into a comprehensive, gender-sensitive model of job involvement specific to the social work profession. Much of the existing work either treats gender as a control variable or fails to explore its moderating role in the relationship between stressors and job engagement (Travis et al., 2016; Xie et al., 2021). The current study addresses this gap by testing parallel models of job involvement for male and female social workers, examining whether the psychological predictors of involvement differ by gender.

Such an approach not only contributes to theory refinement in occupational health psychology but also offers practical insights into tailoring organizational interventions that are gender-responsive. In professions like social work, where burnout threatens both personnel retention and service quality, understanding gendered pathways to engagement is a critical step toward creating supportive, inclusive, and resilient workplaces.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Participants**

The present study employed a cross-sectional, correlational design to investigate the psychological predictors of job involvement among social workers, with a focus on gender differences in the patterns of association. The sample consisted of 138 practicing social workers employed in a range of public and non-profit organizations across various service sectors. Participants were recruited voluntarily through professional networks, institutional mailing lists, and online forums dedicated to social work professionals. The inclusion criteria required that participants were currently employed in the field and had at least one year of work experience.

Of the total participants, 92 identified as female (66.7%) and 46 as male (33.3%), reflecting the gender composition commonly reported in the profession. Participants' ages ranged from 21 to 66 years, with a mean age of 37.72 years ( $SD = 12.70$ ), indicating a diverse distribution in terms of career stage. In terms of professional experience, 43.5% of the sample had fewer than five years of experience, 26.1% had between five and ten years, 13% had between eleven and fifteen years, and 17.4% had more than fifteen years of experience in the field. These figures suggest that the sample was sufficiently heterogeneous to capture variations in experience and career-related psychological factors (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Demographic characteristics of the sample (N = 138)

| Variable          | Categories          | Frequency | Percent (%)   |
|-------------------|---------------------|-----------|---------------|
| <b>Gender</b>     | <b>Male</b>         | 46        | 33.3          |
|                   | <b>Female</b>       | 92        | 66.7          |
| <b>Experience</b> | <b>&lt;5 years</b>  | 60        | 43.5          |
|                   | <b>5–10 years</b>   | 36        | 26.1          |
|                   | <b>11–15 years</b>  | 18        | 13.0          |
|                   | <b>&gt;15 years</b> | 24        | 17.4          |
| <b>Age</b>        | <b>Mean (SD)</b>    | —         | 37.72 (12.70) |
|                   | <b>Range</b>        | —         | 21–66         |

Data were collected through an anonymous online survey. Participants were provided with an informed consent statement detailing the purpose of the study, their rights as participants, and assurances of anonymity and data confidentiality. They were informed that participation was voluntary, and they could withdraw at any point without any consequences. No personally identifying information was collected. The survey included demographic questions, followed by three standardized psychological instruments assessing job involvement, perceived organizational support, and burnout dimensions.

### 3.2 Instruments

Job involvement was measured using the Job Involvement Questionnaire (JIQ) developed by Kanungo (1982), a widely used instrument that captures the extent to which individuals identify psychologically with their job and derive meaning from it. The scale includes four items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with one item reverse-scored. Higher scores indicate greater job involvement. In the present study, the JIQ demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of .76.

Perceived organizational support was assessed using a 7-item version of the Perceived Organizational Support Scale originally developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (1986). The scale evaluates employees' beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions and is concerned about their well-being. Items were rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree), with reverse scoring applied to negatively worded items. The internal consistency of the scale was high in the current sample (Cronbach's alpha = .88), indicating strong reliability.

Burnout was evaluated using the Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS), a comprehensive measure developed by Schaufeli, Leiter, Maslach, and Jackson (1996). The MBI-GS includes three subscales: Emotional Exhaustion (5 items), Cynicism (6 items), and Professional Inefficacy (5 items). Items are rated on a 7-point frequency scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (daily), capturing the frequency with which respondents experience feelings related to burnout. Each subscale demonstrated good internal consistency in the current study: Emotional Exhaustion ( $\alpha = .85$ ), Cynicism ( $\alpha = .82$ ), and Professional Inefficacy ( $\alpha = .79$ ), consistent with previous findings in occupational health literature.

### 3.3 Procedure

The primary dependent variable in this study was job involvement. Independent variables included perceived organizational support, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, professional inefficacy, and years of professional experience. Gender served as the moderating variable, allowing for a comparative analysis of regression models across male and female subgroups. This design enabled the examination of whether the predictors of job involvement differed in strength or direction based on gender, thus contributing to a gender-sensitive understanding of psychological functioning in the social work profession.

### 3.4 Variables and Research Design

Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 26). Descriptive statistics were calculated for all variables, including means, standard deviations, and ranges. Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to examine bivariate associations among study variables. Subsequently, multiple linear regression analyses were conducted separately for the male and female subgroups. In each regression model, job involvement served as the criterion variable, while perceived organizational support, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, professional inefficacy, and experience were entered as predictors. This approach allowed for the assessment of gender-specific models and facilitated comparison of explained variance ( $R^2$ ), standardized beta weights, and the significance of predictors across the two gender groups.

This methodological strategy supports the primary aim of the study: to explore gendered pathways to job involvement by examining the relative influence of organizational and psychological variables. The separation of analyses by gender provides a nuanced perspective on the potential moderating role of gender in shaping social workers' professional engagement and well-being.

## 4. Results

Descriptive statistics were computed for all major study variables. The overall mean score for job involvement was 2.97 (SD = 0.56), indicating a moderate level of psychological engagement with work among the sample. Perceived organizational support was relatively high ( $M = 4.72$ ,  $SD = 1.20$ ), suggesting that most participants felt moderately supported by their institutions. Emotional exhaustion levels varied widely across participants ( $M = 10.92$ ,  $SD = 5.45$ ), with similar variation observed in cynicism ( $M = 9.95$ ,  $SD = 6.67$ ) and professional inefficacy ( $M = 7.16$ ,  $SD = 3.23$ ).

Pearson's correlation coefficients were calculated to explore the bivariate relationships among the variables. Job involvement was positively associated with age ( $r = .41$ ,  $p < .001$ ), experience ( $r = .30$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and perceived organizational support ( $r = .18$ ,  $p < .05$ ). It was negatively associated with emotional exhaustion ( $r = -.29$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and cynicism ( $r = -.19$ ,  $p < .05$ ), but not significantly related to professional inefficacy ( $r = -.10$ , ns). Emotional exhaustion and cynicism showed strong positive correlations with each other ( $r = .53$ ,  $p < .001$ ), as well as with professional inefficacy ( $r = .51-.55$ ,  $p < .001$ ), indicating overlap among burnout dimensions. Gender showed a small positive correlation with exhaustion ( $r = .23$ ,  $p < .01$ ), suggesting that emotional exhaustion was more prevalent among one gender group (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Pearson’s correlation matrix for study variables (N = 138)

| Variable                   | 1      | 2       | 3       | 4        | 5        | 6       | 7       | 8 |
|----------------------------|--------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------|---------|---|
| 1. Gender                  | —      |         |         |          |          |         |         |   |
| 2. Age                     | .004   | —       |         |          |          |         |         |   |
| 3. Experience              | .164   | .693*** | —       |          |          |         |         |   |
| 4. Job Involvement         | .017   | .406*** | .301*** | —        |          |         |         |   |
| 5. Perceived Org. Support  | .065   | -.079   | -.011   | .179*    | —        |         |         |   |
| 6. Emotional Exhaustion    | .225** | -.060   | -.005   | -.291*** | -.311*** | —       |         |   |
| 7. Cynicism                | -.039  | -.094   | -.137   | -.189*   | -.554*** | .527*** | —       |   |
| 8. Professional Inefficacy | .098   | -.084   | -.024   | -.101    | -.250**  | .512*** | .551*** | — |

\*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001

Descriptive statistics were also calculated separately by gender. While job involvement was nearly identical across groups (M = 2.96 for males; M = 2.98 for females), women reported higher levels of emotional exhaustion (M = 11.79) compared to men (M = 9.19). In contrast, men reported slightly higher levels of cynicism (M = 10.31 vs. M = 9.76) and slightly lower perceived organizational support. These descriptive differences warranted separate regression analyses by gender.

To examine gender-specific predictors of job involvement, two separate multiple regression analyses were conducted—one for male participants (n = 46) and one for female participants (n = 92). In both models, job involvement was the dependent variable, and the predictors were perceived organizational support, experience, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and professional inefficacy.

The regression model for male participants was statistically significant,  $F(5, 40) = 7.37$ ,  $p < .001$ , accounting for 48% of the variance in job involvement ( $R^2 = .48$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .41$ ). The most substantial predictor in this model was emotional exhaustion ( $\beta = -.569$ ,  $p = .001$ ), indicating that higher levels of emotional exhaustion were significantly associated with lower job involvement. None of the other predictors reached significance.

In contrast, the model for female participants explained a more modest proportion of variance in job involvement,  $R^2 = .22$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .17$ ,  $F(5, 86) = 4.75$ ,  $p = .001$ . In this group, years of experience emerged as the strongest predictor ( $\beta = .449$ ,  $p < .001$ ), followed by cynicism ( $\beta = .285$ ,  $p = .042$ ). Notably, emotional exhaustion was not a significant predictor for women in this model, suggesting different psychological pathways to job involvement based on gender.

**Table 2.** Multiple regression predicting job involvement by gender

| Predictor                  | B     | SE B | $\beta$ | t      | p    |
|----------------------------|-------|------|---------|--------|------|
| <b>Male Model (n = 46)</b> |       |      |         |        |      |
| Constant                   | 3.151 | .567 | —       | 5.555  | .000 |
| Experience                 | -.066 | .097 | -.102   | -0.683 | .498 |
| Perceived Org. Support     | .079  | .088 | .147    | 0.899  | .374 |



| Predictor                    | B     | SE B | $\beta$ | t      | p    |
|------------------------------|-------|------|---------|--------|------|
| Emotional Exhaustion         | -.065 | .017 | -.569   | -3.746 | .001 |
| Cynicism                     | -.028 | .020 | -.275   | -1.383 | .174 |
| Professional Inefficacy      | .066  | .042 | .262    | 1.578  | .122 |
| <b>Female Model (n = 92)</b> |       |      |         |        |      |
| Constant                     | 2.525 | .324 | —       | 7.794  | .000 |
| Experience                   | .188  | .042 | .449    | 4.504  | .000 |
| Perceived Org. Support       | .022  | .047 | .054    | 0.476  | .635 |
| Emotional Exhaustion         | -.018 | .012 | -.190   | -1.477 | .143 |
| Cynicism                     | .021  | .010 | .285    | 2.068  | .042 |
| Professional Inefficacy      | -.006 | .018 | -.042   | -0.322 | .748 |

Overall, the results indicate that while job involvement levels did not differ substantially between genders, the psychological and organizational predictors of job involvement varied significantly. For men, emotional exhaustion was the strongest negative predictor, suggesting that emotional depletion plays a central role in disengagement. In contrast, for women, experience was the dominant positive predictor, followed by cynicism, indicating that tenure and perceived meaning in work influence their level of involvement more than emotional fatigue. These gendered patterns highlight the need for tailored organizational strategies in managing employee engagement within the social work profession.

## 5. Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to explore gender-specific predictors of job involvement among social workers by examining how burnout dimensions, perceived organizational support, and work experience interact differently for male and female practitioners. The results indicate that gender significantly moderates the psychological mechanisms underlying job involvement, offering both theoretical insights and practical implications.

For male social workers, emotional exhaustion emerged as the strongest negative predictor of job involvement. This finding aligns with previous literature suggesting that men, while often reporting lower baseline levels of burnout, are particularly sensitive to the disengaging effects of emotional depletion when they occur (Purvanova & Muros, 2010; Himle, Jayaratne, & Chess, 2013). The significant inverse relationship between exhaustion and involvement reflects earlier models of stress-strain-outcome dynamics in social work (Koeske & Koeske, 1993; Um & Harrison, 1998), and mirrors patterns seen in healthcare studies where gender-specific vulnerabilities predict work withdrawal (Bondar et al., 2024; Butoi et al., 2025).

In contrast, for female social workers, job involvement was most strongly predicted by years of professional experience and by levels of cynicism. The positive contribution of experience may reflect a process of professional socialization and self-efficacy acquisition over time, which supports prior work showing that tenure is associated with job satisfaction and resilience in female-dominated professions (Romero-Martín, Elboj-Saso, & Íñiguez-Berrozpe, 2025; Balloch, Pahl, & McLean, 1998). However, the positive association between cynicism and involvement, while initially counterintuitive, may indicate a cognitive coping mechanism among experienced female workers—perhaps suggesting that detachment is used to preserve

emotional energy while maintaining engagement, as suggested in recent burnout literature (Bang & Reio, 2017; Zhang, Xie, & Zou, 2022).

Perceived organizational support (POS) was not a significant predictor of job involvement in either group, which contradicts much of the existing literature (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). One possible explanation for this divergence is that while POS remains important for emotional well-being, it may not directly translate into heightened job identification unless accompanied by meaningful autonomy and professional recognition (Lewandowski, 2003; McFadden, Mallett, & Leiter, 2018). Additionally, the subtle but gendered ways in which organizational support is perceived and internalized may obscure its direct impact (Foley, Hang-Yue, & Lui, 2005; Thompson, Bergeron, & Bolino, 2020).

From a theoretical standpoint, these findings support Kanungo's (1982) conceptualization of job involvement as a dynamic, psychologically embedded construct influenced by both internal and contextual variables. The study also reinforces the utility of multidimensional burnout models (Schaufeli et al., 1996; Bresó, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2007) in identifying differential predictors across demographic lines. Gender, in particular, appears to shape both the subjective experience of burnout and the coping strategies employed, consistent with Greenglass's (1991) gender-role perspective of occupational stress.

The practical implications of these results are significant. For organizational leaders in the social services, gender-sensitive strategies are essential. Male employees may benefit from targeted interventions aimed at reducing emotional exhaustion, including stress management programs and counseling services. For female employees, opportunities for professional development and acknowledgment of expertise gained through tenure may enhance job involvement and reduce the risks associated with cynicism. As recent studies in emergency services emphasize, burnout and stress-related growth can coexist, but only when organizational culture actively supports adaptation (Puticiu et al., 2024; Bondar et al., 2025).

Nonetheless, several limitations must be acknowledged. The cross-sectional nature of the study precludes causal inferences. The sample, although diverse in age and experience, was limited in size and predominantly female, reflecting typical demographic patterns in social work but potentially affecting generalizability. Furthermore, reliance on self-report measures may introduce social desirability or recall biases.

Future research should consider longitudinal designs to trace changes in job involvement and burnout trajectories over time, particularly as social workers progress through their careers. Qualitative studies could also deepen understanding of how men and women internalize job demands, organizational support, and professional identity. The integration of additional moderators such as organizational climate, team dynamics, and family-work conflict may yield more holistic insights into occupational well-being.

## **6. Conclusion**

The present study investigated gendered pathways to job involvement among social workers by examining the predictive roles of perceived organizational support, burnout dimensions, and professional experience. The findings illuminate distinct psychological mechanisms underlying job involvement across gender groups, offering nuanced insights into how occupational engagement is shaped in a highly demanding profession.

Specifically, emotional exhaustion emerged as a salient negative predictor of job involvement among male participants, underscoring the critical role of affective depletion in diminishing work-related engagement for men. Conversely, for female participants, years of professional experience and moderate levels of cynicism were positively associated with job

involvement. This suggests that, among women, prolonged exposure to the profession and adaptive distancing may function as mechanisms for maintaining psychological investment in their work roles.

In addressing the guiding research questions, the study provides empirical clarity regarding gender-specific dynamics in job involvement. Emotional exhaustion exhibited a differential impact based on gender, showing a strong negative association with job involvement among male participants, while remaining statistically non-significant among female participants. This suggests that men may be more vulnerable to the demotivating effects of emotional fatigue in their professional engagement. In contrast, perceived organizational support did not emerge as a significant predictor of job involvement for either gender, indicating that its influence may be indirect or dependent on other contextual or psychological variables. Interestingly, cynicism displayed a gender-specific effect, acting as a significant positive predictor of job involvement among women, which may reflect a complex interplay between disengagement and adaptive coping mechanisms in female employees. Professional inefficacy, however, was not found to significantly predict job involvement in either subgroup, suggesting limited explanatory power for this variable in the current model.

These results emphasize the importance of adopting gender-responsive frameworks in both occupational health psychology and organizational policy-making. Job involvement should be conceptualized not as a uniform or static construct, but as an emergent outcome of complex, dynamic interactions between individual emotional states, organizational conditions, and social identity variables such as gender.

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