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JOB DISCRIMINATION AGAINST INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between holding a disability certificate and job discrimination. The motivation for conducting this research is to identify a research gap relating to the insufficient recognition of the issue of dysfunction in human resource management, namely, the discrimination of individuals with disabilities by employers. This paper presents the results of a survey conducted on a sample of 148 people. The results of the nonparametric significance tests are discussed. Contrary to the subjective feelings of the surveyed population, the study found that, in selected areas, both the degree and character of a disability significantly correlate with job discrimination by employers.

Keywords: discrimination, dysfunction in human resource management, individuals with disabilities, statistical analysis.

1. INTRODUCTION

In scientific research, disability as a social issue is considered from various, often contrasting, perspectives (Parchomiuk, 2019). One of these is the idea of “*empowerment*”, which emerged as a consequence of the social understanding of disability (Kildal, 2019; Macdonald et al., 2022). As noted by Mikolajczyk-Lerman (2013), the evolution of sociological approaches to disability has transitioned from a charity-based model to a human rights-based model. The fundamental elements of the rights-based concept are entitlements and responsibility. In the biopsychosocial concept, disability is a much more complex, dynamic, and time-varying process. In this model, the key factor is the extent to which individuals with disabilities are included in societal participation. Disability is treated as a dynamic process of interaction between the individual and the environment. It is emphasized that every person may experience disability at different periods of their life. Thus, in a given cultural context, disability requires integration (Titchkosky, 2023). Adopting this social perspective promotes an activating approach, highlighting the importance of participation and support for self-sufficiency (Rymsza, 2013). In the 21st century, disability has become a subject of public debate and has acquired a political dimension. The activism of the disability community has resulted in the formation and development of the social construction of disability (Barnes, 1991). In scientific research,

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much attention is devoted to the issues of support and activation of individuals with disabilities (Gąciarz, 2014). In the literature on the subject, issues related to inclusion, integration, and discrimination of individuals with disabilities are often raised (Giermanowska, Zakrzewska-Manterys et al., 2015). Some studies (Niedzielski, 2014) have noted the prevalence of negative attitudes in the process of hiring individuals with disabilities. This raises the question of current direction of the phenomenon of discrimination against individuals with disabilities. In the study, the decision was made to focus on the issue of dysfunction in the human resources management sphere, which is the discrimination of individuals with disabilities by employers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the social life of individuals with disabilities, normalization is crucial, which involves maintaining and developing norms and behaviours that are as consistent as possible with the cultural norms of the environment. Individuals with disabilities are now playing a role in shaping decisions regarding social policy, actively contributing to its development. Frequently, these individuals face social exclusion, encountering rejection, disregard, ridicule, or deliberate neglect by those who are fully able-bodied (Lorenti et al., 2020). Such behaviours of able-bodied people cause a distortion of social interactions. Social stigma is the process of stigmatizing an individual or a group due to some depreciated attribute or characteristic (Goffman, 2005; Kayama et al., 2019).

The word “discrimination” in encyclopaedic terms is explained as “unfair treatment or persecution of individuals or social groups based on their origin, ethnicity, race, religion, nationality or class” (Doroszewski, 1962). The Polish Labor Code details the definition of direct and indirect discrimination (Article 18 § 4 of the Labor Code). Direct discrimination is a case of an employer making decisions against specific employees using legally prohibited criteria. Direct discrimination exists when an employee, for one or more specific reasons (such as disability, gender or age), has been, is or could be treated less favourably than other employees in a comparable situation (Article 183a § 3 of the Labor Code).

Indirect discrimination exists when, as a result of the employer's actions, there are unfavourable disparities in:

- establishment or termination of the employment relationship,
- conditions of employment, promotion and access to training to improve professional qualifications,
- proceedings against all or a significant number of employees belonging to a group distinguished on the basis of one or more grounds deemed discriminatory (Article 183a § 4 of the Labor Code).

The open labour market provides a place where the attention of business executives is focused on making a profit and increasing company revenues. It is not surprising, therefore, that for a free-market economy, the demand for considering principles of morality or social justice is challenging to implement (Choi, Storr, 2023). Employers aim to select a strong, educated workforce that, through their work and dedication, contributes to the company's revenue growth (Kim et al., 2019). The opinions of employees with disabilities are mostly positive in terms of their employment and work (Niedzielski, 2014). The sole observable constraint was the smaller number of job opportunities in the open market. Understanding the needs and experiences of people individuals with disabilities is crucial. In society, this group is seen as disadvantaged. There are also studies indicating that individuals with disabilities suffer from wage discrimination (Jolly, Wagner, 2023; Balo, 2023).

According to Article 94(2b) of the Labor Code, it is the employer's duty to prevent discrimination in employment. Employer involvement in social issues, although not a component of the goods offered by companies, is an encouraging factor for purchasing decisions (Kiliańska, Pajęcki, 2022). There are a number of changes in consumers attitudes that relate to responsibility in general (Czajkowska, Ingaldi, 2023), therefore the elimination of any dysfunctions in human resource management can have an image-related dimension and thus contribute to improving the performance of companies.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The motivation for conducting the research was to identify a research gap related to the insufficient recognition of the issue of dysfunction in human resource management, namely, the discrimination of individuals with disabilities by employers.

The purpose of the study was to identify the relationship between possessing a disability certificate and job discrimination by employers.

Regarding the research objective, 4 research hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is discrimination against individuals with disabilities at work.

H2: Discrimination is influenced by the degree of disability.

H3: Discrimination is influenced by the disability symbol.

H4: Possession of certain characteristics conditions the experience of discrimination.

To verify the validity of the research hypotheses, a primary survey was conducted. The study was conducted using a survey questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of personal data questions and proper questions, to which respondents responded on a five-point Likert scale. The research sample was deliberately selected, and the criterion of purposefulness was the possession of a disability degree certificate. A total of 148 individuals with disabilities participated in the survey. The survey was sent to respondents via a discussion forum dedicated to individuals with disabilities. A verification of the disability certificate held was made by asking for the disability symbol from the official certificate. The structure of the research sample is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Structure of the research sample

	<i>N</i>	%		<i>N</i>	%
Gender			Net earnings		
Women	101	68.2%	Less than PLN 2,780	40	27.0%
Men	47	31.8%	PLN 2,780 – 3,500	47	31.8%
Place of residence			PLN 3600 – 5350	35	23.6%
Village	32	21.6%	More than PLN 5,350	26	17.6%
City with a population of up to 50,000	16	10.8%	Degree of disability		
City with a population from 50,000 to 150,000	17	11.5%	Slight	15	10.1%
City with a population from 150,000 to 500,000	41	27.7%	Moderate	97	65.6%
City with a population of more than 500,000	42	28.4%	Severe	36	24.3%
Education			Disability symbol		
Primary	1	0.7%	Neurological and motor	62	41.9%
Vocational	9	6.1%	Visual	20	13.5%
High school	28	18.9%	Speech and hearing	34	23.0%
Higher	110	74.3%	Other	32	21.6%

Source: own study.

A nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used to compare the average level of the dependent variable between the two independent groups of observations. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used to compare the average level of the dependent variable between more than two independent groups of observations. A χ^2 Test was used to examine the relationship between the two variables measured on the qualitative scale. For each test, a statistically significant result of $p < 0.05$ was determined.

4. PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1. Are individuals with disabilities discriminated against by employers?

A questionnaire was used to determine the level of assessment of discrimination against individuals with disabilities in the workplace by employers, with respondents rating their agreement with statements on a Likert scale of 1–5, where 1 – definitely not, 2 – rather not, 3 – hard to say, 4 – rather yes, 5 – definitely yes. The scale assessed discrimination in terms of conditions during the job interview, conditions of employment and salary, being overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications or important professional projects, worse treatment after presenting a disability certificate, and lack of workplace accommodation. The overall discrimination assessment index was calculated as the average rating from all six items on the questionnaire.

Descriptive statistics for assessing discrimination in the workplace are shown in Table 2. Overall, respondents rated workplace discrimination at 2.14 points with a deviation of ± 0.98 points, and half of them rated workplace discrimination at a maximum of 2 points. In the study group, individuals with disabilities did not perceive a high level of discrimination, and a significant portion of respondents scale rated the level of discrimination for individual items on the questionnaire at 1 point, indicating a lack of agreement with statements regarding discrimination in the workplace by employers. Based on the obtained result, H1 should be rejected

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for assessing discrimination in the workplace

	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Me</i>
The job interview was arranged under conditions that made it impossible for me to attend	1	5	1.92	1.30	1
My employment and salary conditions are worse than that of other employees	1	5	2.38	1.32	2
I am overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications	1	5	2.15	1.31	2
The employer started treating me worse since I presented the disability certificate	1	5	1.88	1.25	1
Lack of workplace accommodation	1	5	2.29	1.34	2
My participation in important company projects is overlooked	1	5	2.20	1.34	2
Overall assessment of discrimination	1	5	2.14	0.98	2

Min – minimum, *Max* – maximum, *M* – mean, *SD* – standard deviation, *Me* – median.

Source: own study.

Most often, the respondents admitted that their employment and salary conditions are worse than those of other employees ($M = 2.38$ points), they reported lack of workplace accommodation ($M = 2.29$ points), and that their participation in important company

projects is overlooked ($M = 2.20$ points). Less frequently, respondents admitted that they were overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications ($M = 2.15$ points), the job interview was arranged under conditions that made it impossible for them to attend it ($M = 1.92$ points) and the employer started treating them worse since they presented a disability certificate ($M = 1.88$ points).

4.2. Is discrimination influenced by the degree of disability?

The aim of the study was, among other things, to determine the relationship between the assessment of discrimination in the workplace and the degree of disability of the people surveyed, H2: Discrimination is influenced by the degree of disability. For this purpose, Kruskal-Wallis test analysis was performed, the results of which are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Relationship between the assessment of discrimination in the workplace and the degree of disability

	Mild			Moderate			Severe			χ^2	p	η^2
	$M \pm SD$	Me	$Rank$	$M \pm SD$	Me	$Rank$	$M \pm SD$	Me	$Rank$			
Inconvenient job interview conditions	1.29 ± 0.61	1	52.82	2.02 ± 1.33	1	72.61	1.91 ± 1.38	1	68.13	3.82	0.148	0.01
Worse employment and salary conditions	1.73 ± 0.96	1	53.47	2.51 ± 1.33	3	77.04	2.31 ± 1.37	2	70.41	4.61	0.100	0.02
Being overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications	1.53 ± 0.92	1	53.10	2.27 ± 1.29	2	76.87	2.09 ± 1.46	1	67.16	5.47	0.065	0.02
Worse treatment after presenting disability certificate	1.4 ± 0.74	1	59.50	2.11 ± 1.3	2	81.06	1.44 ± 1.11	1	56.19	13.19**	0.001	0.08
Lack of workplace accommodation	1.93 ± 1.14	1.5	60.11	2.31 ± 1.32	2	70.81	2.4 ± 1.46	2	71.87	1.04	0.594	0.01
Lack of participation in important company projects	1.4 ± 0.74	1	45.57	2.34 ± 1.34	2	73.49	2.21 ± 1.45	2	67.71	7.11*	0.029	0.04
Overall assessment of discrimination	1.53 ± 0.59	1.5	46.63	2.27 ± 1.01	2	80.29	2.05 ± 0.93	1.9	70.51	8.49*	0.014	0.04

M – mean, SD – standard deviation, Me – median, $Rank$ – mean rank, χ^2 – Chi-square statistic, η^2 – magnitude of differences, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: Own study.

Based on the results of testing, it can be concluded that the degree of disability was statistically significantly correlated with the overall discrimination score $\chi^2 = 8.49$; $p < 0.05$; $\eta^2 = 0.04$. Detailed analyses with Mann-Whitney U tests showed that individuals with mild disabilities rated workplace discrimination lower than those with moderate $Z = 2.78$; $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.26$ and severe disabilities $Z = 1.96$; $p < 0.05$; $r = 0.27$.

There was also a statistically significant relationship between the degree of disability and the rating of worse treatment upon presentation of a disability certificate $\chi^2 = 13.19$; $p < 0.01$; $\eta^2 = 0.08$. Individuals with moderate disabilities rated higher that the employer began treating them worse after they presented a disability certificate compared to

individuals with mild $Z = 2.05$; $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.19$ and severe disabilities $Z = 3.25$; $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.28$.

The degree of disability also affected the rating of being overlooked for important company projects $\chi^2 = 7.11$; $p < 0.05$; $\eta^2 = 0.04$. The analysis showed that individuals with a mild degree of disability rated discrimination in terms of not participating in important company projects lower $Z = 2.69$; $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.26$ than those with severe disabilities $Z = 1.89$; $p = 0.059$; $r = 0.27$ (result at the statistical trend threshold). These relationships were moderately strong. The data obtained allow partial confirmation of H2.

Additionally, the responses of the surveyed individuals regarding discrimination in the workplace were divided based on the median into no discrimination (up to the median value) and the occurrence of discrimination (above the median). Then, the relationship between the occurrence of discrimination in the workplace and the degree of disability was examined using Pearson's χ^2 tests. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Relationship between the occurrence of discrimination in the workplace and the degree of disability

		Mild	Moderate	Severe	χ^2	p	V
Inconvenient job interview conditions	No	11 (78.6%)	49 (54.4%)	21 (61.8%)	3.08	0.214	0.15
	Yes	3 (21.4%)	41 (45.6%)	13 (38.2%)			
Worse employment and salary conditions	No	12 (80%)	46 (48.4%)	20 (57.1%)	5.41	0.067	0.19
	Yes	3 (20%)	49 (51.6%)	15 (42.9%)			
Being overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications	No	13 (86.7%)	58 (62.4%)	23 (65.7%)	3.39	0.184	0.15
	Yes	2 (13.3%)	35 (37.6%)	12 (34.3%)			
Worse treatment after presenting disability certificate	No	11 (73.3%)	45 (46.9%)	28 (82.4%)	14.60**	0.021	0.32
	Yes	4 (26.7%)	51 (53.1%)	6 (17.6%)			
Lack of adaptation of the workstation to the needs	No	10 (71.4%)	54 (60%)	19 (54.3%)	1.23	0.541	0.09
	Yes	4 (28.6%)	36 (40%)	16 (45.7%)			
Lack of participation in important company projects	No	13 (86.7%)	50 (48.9%)	23 (67.6%)	5.35	0.069	0.20
	Yes	2 (13.3%)	38 (37.2%)	11 (32.4%)			
Overall assessment of discrimination	No	12 (80%)	49 (52.8%)	25 (69.4%)	7.15*	0.028	0.22
	Yes	3 (20%)	48 (51.7%)	11 (30.6%)			

χ^2 – Chi-square statistic, η^2 – magnitude of differences, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: Own study.

The results of these analyses showed a statistically significant relationship between the degree of disability and the assessment of discrimination in the workplace by employers $\chi^2 = 7.15$; $p < 0.05$; $V = 0.22$. Overall, 20% of individuals with mild disabilities, 51.7% of individuals with moderate disabilities and 30.6% of individuals with severe disabilities experienced discrimination in the workplace. This relationship was moderately strong. Furthermore, a relationship was detailed between the degree of disability and the assessment of worse treatment after presenting the disability certificate $\chi^2 = 14.60$; $p < 0.01$; $V = 0.32$. Worse treatment after presenting the disability certificate was noted by 26.7% of those with mild disabilities, 53.1% of those with moderate disabilities and 17.6% of those with severe disabilities. This relationship was moderately strong.

4.3. Is discrimination influenced by the degree of disability?

The study also aimed to verify whether there was a relationship between the assessment of workplace discrimination and the disability symbol, H3: Discrimination is influenced by the disability symbol.

For this purpose, testing was performed, and the results are shown in Table 5. There was no statistically significant relationship between disability symbol and the assessment of discrimination in the workplace by employers. However, a statistically significant relationship was demonstrated between the disability symbol and the assessment that the job interview was arranged under conditions that made it impossible for the respondents to attend it $\chi^2 = 17.30$; $p < 0.01$; $\eta^2 = 0.10$. Individuals with speech and hearing impairments most frequently encountered unfavourable conditions during job interviews. The relationship between the type of disability and the assessment that the job interview was arranged under conditions that made it impossible for the respondents to attend it was moderately strong. Mann-Whitney U-test analyses showed statistically significant differences between those with speech and hearing impairments and those with neurological and movement disabilities $Z = 3.92$; $p < 0.001$; $r = 0.41$, vision impairments $Z = 1.92$; $p = 0.055$; $r = 0.26$ and other disabilities $Z = 2.70$; $p < 0.01$; $r = 0.34$. The results obtained allow only partial confirmation of hypothesis 3.

Table 5. The relationship between the occurrence of workplace discrimination and the disability symbol

	Neurological and motor			Eyes			Speech and hearing			Other			χ^2	p	η^2
	M $\pm SD$	Me	Rank	M $\pm SD$	Me	Rank	M $\pm SD$	Me	Rank	M $\pm SD$	Me	Rank			
Inconvenient job interview conditions	1.56 ± 1.07	1	59.33	1.89 ± 1.1	2	73.00	2.7 ± 1.47	3	90.53	1.76 ± 1.33	1	63.26	17.30 **	0.001	0.10
Worse employment and salary conditions	2.15 ± 1.28	2	65.58	2.35 ± 1.14	2.5	73.88	2.7 ± 1.36	3	82.92	2.52 ± 1.43	2	76.47	4.29	0.231	0.01
Being overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications	1.87 ± 1.15	1	64.21	2.16 ± 1.46	1	70.08	2.59 ± 1.43	2.5	85.11	2.23 ± 1.3	2	75.33	6.30	0.098	0.02

Table 5 (cont.). The relationship between the occurrence of workplace discrimination and the disability symbol

	Neurological and motor			Eyes			Speech and hearing			Other			χ^2	<i>p</i>	η^2
	<i>M</i> $\pm SD$	<i>Me</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>M</i> $\pm SD$	<i>Me</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>M</i> $\pm SD$	<i>Me</i>	<i>Rank</i>	<i>M</i> $\pm SD$	<i>Me</i>	<i>Rank</i>			
Worse treatment after presenting disability certificates	1.85 ± 1.26	1	72.45	1.4 ± 0.88	1	57.05	2.12 ± 1.34	1.5	80.15	2 ± 1.29	1	76.52	5.13	0.163	0.01
Lack of workplace accommodation	2.27 ± 1.36	2	69.02	2.53 ± 1.35	2	77.76	2.13 ± 1.36	1.5	64.17	2.38 ± 1.29	2	73.34	1.76	0.624	0.01
Lack of participation in important company projects	2.16 ± 1.39	2	66.91	2.3 ± 1.26	2	73.53	2.14 ± 1.36	2	66.72	2.3 ± 1.34	2	72.23	0.80	0.850	0.02
Overall assessment of discrimination	1.98 ± 0.96	1.83	67.02	2.1 ± 0.74	2	77.08	2.41 ± 1.15	2.42	83.09	2.21 ± 0.94	1.92	78.27	3.60	0.308	0.00

M – mean, *SD* – standard deviation, *Me* – median, *Rank* – mean rank, χ^2 – Chi-square statistic, η^2 – magnitude of differences, **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.01

Source: Own study.

Table 6 shows the results of analyses using Pearson's χ^2 tests for the effect of respondents' disability symbol on their experience of workplace discrimination by their employer. The results were mostly found to be statistically insignificant $p > 0.05$. However, a statistically significant relationship was demonstrated between the disability symbol and the assessment that the job interview was arranged under conditions that made it impossible for the respondents to attend it $\chi^2 = 15.14$; $p < 0.01$; $V = 0.33$.

Table 6. Relationship between the occurrence of workplace discrimination and the disability symbol

		Neurological and motor	Eyes	Speech and hearing	Other	χ^2	<i>p</i>	<i>V</i>
Inconvenient job interview conditions	No	41 (71.9%)	9 (47.4%)	11 (33.3%)	20 (69%)	15.14 **	0.002	0.33
	Yes	16 (28.1%)	10 (52.6%)	22 (66.7%)	9 (31%)			
Worse employment and salary conditions	No	40 (65.6%)	10 (50%)	12 (36.4%)	16 (51.6%)	7.61	0.055	0.23
	Yes	21 (34.4%)	10 (50%)	21 (63.6%)	15 (48.4%)			

Table 6 (cont.). Relationship between the occurrence of workplace discrimination and the disability symbol

		Neurological and motor	Eyes	Speech and hearing	Other	χ^2	<i>p</i>	<i>V</i>
Being overlooked for training to improve professional qualifications	No	47 (75.8%)	12 (63.2%)	16 (50%)	19 (63.3%)	6.44	0.092	0.21
	Yes	15 (24.2%)	7 (36.8%)	16 (50%)	11 (36.7%)			
Worse treatment after presenting disability certificate	No	34 (56.7%)	16 (80%)	17 (50%)	17 (54.8%)	5.04	0.169	0.19
	Yes	26 (43.3%)	4 (20%)	17 (50%)	14 (45.2%)			
Lack of workplace accommodation	No	36 (61%)	11 (57.9%)	20 (62.5%)	16 (55.2%)	0.42	0.936	0.05
	Yes	23 (39%)	8 (42.1%)	12 (37.5%)	13 (44.8%)			
Lack of participation in important company projects	No	39 (67.2%)	12 (60%)	18 (62.1%)	17 (56.7%)	1.05	0.790	0.09
	Yes	19 (32.8%)	8 (40%)	11 (37.9%)	13 (43.3%)			
Overall assessment of discrimination	No	42 (67.7%)	11 (55%)	16 (47.1%)	17 (53.1%)	4.48	0.215	0.17
	Yes	20 (32.3%)	9 (45%)	18 (52.9%)	15 (46.9%)			

χ^2 – Chi-square statistic, *V* – Cramer's V coefficient, **p* < 0.05, ***p* < 0.01

Source: Own study.

Individuals with speech and hearing disabilities, in 66.7% of cases, reported inconvenient conditions for job interviews, and this opinion was shared by 52.6% of individuals with visual impairments, 28.1% of individuals with non-neurological and mobility disabilities, and 31% of individuals with other disabilities. This relationship was moderately strong.

4.4. Is discrimination influenced by the characteristics of respondents?

Additionally, an examination was conducted on how the experience of discrimination in the workplace be influenced by certain characteristics of individuals with disabilities, H4: Possession of certain characteristics conditions the experience of discrimination.

For this purpose, a series of analyses with Pearson's χ^2 tests were performed, and the results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Relationship between experiencing discrimination at work and the characteristics of respondents

		Discrimination		χ^2	<i>p</i>	<i>V</i>
		No	Yes			
Gender	Women	56 (55.4%)	45 (44.6%)	0.93	0.336	0.08
	Men	30 (63.8%)	17 (36.2%)			
Place of residence	Village	21 (65.6%)	11 (34.4%)	8.43	0.077	0.24
	City with a population of up to 50,000	4 (25%)	12 (75%)			
	City with a population from 50,000 to 150,000.	11 (64.7%)	6 (35.3%)			
	City with a population from 150,000 to 500,000	25 (61%)	16 (39%)			
	City with a population of more than 500,000	25 (59.5%)	17 (40.5%)			
Education	Vocational	8 (80%)	2 (20%)	4.81	0.090	0.18
	Moderate	12 (42.9%)	16 (57.1%)			
	Higher	66 (60%)	44 (40%)			
Net earnings	Less than PLN 2,780	19 (47.5%)	21 (52.5%)	8.42*	0.038	0.24
	PLN 2,780 – 3,599	23 (48.9%)	24 (51.1%)			
	PLN 3600 – 5350	25 (71.4%)	10 (28.6%)			
	More than PLN 5,350	19 (73.1%)	7 (26.9%)			
Do you work in a managerial position?	No	71 (55.9%)	56 (44.1%)	1.78	0.182	0.11
	Yes	15 (71.4%)	6 (28.6%)			

χ^2 – Chi-square statistic, *V* – Cramer's V coefficient

Source: Own study.

A statistically significant relationship between experiencing discrimination in the workplace and salary level $\chi^2 = 8.42$; $p < 0.05$; $V = 0.24$ has been demonstrated. Individuals earning up to PLN 2,780 PLN (52.5%) or between PLN 2,780 – 3,599 (51.1%) experience workplace discrimination more frequently, while those earning between PLN 3,600 – 5,350 (28.6%) and above 5,350 PLN (26.9%) experience it less often. However, no correlation was found between workplace discrimination and gender, place of residence, education, and working in a managerial position. Thus, the results obtained allow only partial confirmation of hypothesis 4.

5. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to identify the existence of human resource management dysfunction in the form of job discrimination against individuals with disabilities. In the context of a labour shortage, any resource that can generate benefits for the national economy should be valued.

The research results have shown that the majority of individuals with disabilities experience little discrimination in the workplace. This suggests that positive changes have

occurred in Polish society over the past decades, influencing the social acceptance of disability. Unfortunately, there is still a correlation between the experience of discrimination and the degree or symbol of disability. Individuals with moderate disabilities feel the most discriminated against in the workplace. They also declare that employers started treating them worse after presenting a disability certificate. Among the types of disabilities, only those with speech and hearing impairments faced discrimination, most often in the form of inconvenient conditions of the job interview. Discrimination in these areas can lead to occupational segregation of employees by industry and occupation, and thus promote further pathologies in human resource management. Hiring individuals with disabilities basing not on their education, but on segregation by degree or disability symbol, can lead to a significant disparity in earnings in relation to earning potential.

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