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## Sense of efficacy in the workplace and teachers’ sense of life

### Poczucie skuteczności w miejscu pracy a sens życia nauczycieli

#### Abstract

**Introduction.** Self-efficacy is an important component of a teacher’s job performance. Reduced self-efficacy can have a negative impact on a teacher’s effectiveness in the workplace, but it also affects the teacher’s cognitive-emotional or social functioning outside of work. It is associated with many negative consequences, including a reduced sense of meaning in life, or burnout.

**Aim.** The aim of this article is to show the differences between gender and seniority in the predictors of teachers’ self-efficacy and sense of life.

**Materials and methods.** The research was conducted via the Internet using the Sense of Life (MLQ), the Test of Sense of Self-Efficacy (TPS), and a questionnaire. The sample group consisted of 283 teachers (90% female) with a mean age of  $M = 48.92$  years,  $SD = 9.66$  years.

**Results.** The data obtained indicate that only in the group of female teachers a higher level of general sense of life is conditioned by the variables of the sense of efficacy. Statistically significant positive relationships between sense of life and sense of efficacy were confirmed. Sense of meaning correlated positively with teachers’ sense of efficacy. In a summary regression model including seniority as a moderator significantly predicts the level of sense of meaning in life, explaining 18% of the variance in this variable.

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**Conclusion.** Sense of life and self-efficacy interact. Furthermore, sense of life and self-efficacy have higher predictive power in the female group.

**Keywords:** sense of life, self-efficacy, teacher tenure, gender, school.

### Abstrakt

**Wprowadzenie.** Poczucie własnej skuteczności jest ważnym elementem pracy nauczyciela. Obniżone poczucie skuteczności może mieć negatywny wpływ na efektywność nauczyciela w miejscu pracy oraz oddziaływać na jego funkcjonowanie poznawczo-emocjonalne czy społeczne poza pracą. Wiąże się to z wieloma negatywnymi konsekwencjami, w tym obniżeniem poczucia sensu życia czy wypaleniem zawodowym.

**Cel.** Celem artykułu jest ukazanie różnic między płcią i stażem pracy w zakresie predyktorów poczucia własnej skuteczności a sensu życia nauczycieli.

**Materiały i metody.** Badania były prowadzone za pośrednictwem Internetu przy użyciu *Sensu Życia (MLQ)*, *Testu Poczucia Skuteczności (TPS)* oraz ankiety. Grupa osób badanych składała się z 283 nauczycieli (90% kobiet), wśród których średnia wieku wynosiła  $M = 48,92$ ,  $SD = 9,66$ .

**Wyniki.** Dane, jakie uzyskano, wskazują, że jedynie w grupie kobiet-nauczycieli większy poziom ogólnego sensu życia warunkowany jest przez zmienne poczucia skuteczności. Potwierdzono istotne statystycznie dodatnie związki między sensem życia a poczuciem skuteczności. Poczucie sensu pozytywnie korelowało z poczuciem skuteczności nauczycieli. W podsumowującym modelu regresji zawierającym staż pracy jako moderator istotnie przewiduje poziom poczucia sensu w życiu, wyjaśniając 18% wariancji tej zmiennej.

**Wnioski.** Sens życia i poczucie własnej skuteczności oddziałują na siebie. Mają ponadto większą moc predykcyjną w grupie kobiet.

**Słowa kluczowe:** sens życia, poczucie skuteczności, staż pracy nauczyciela, płeć, szkoła.

## Self-efficacy

Albert Bandura (1977) wrote that self-efficacy is an individual's belief in his or her ability to do the necessary behaviours and obtain certain achievements. According to the researcher, self-efficacy can be related to the conviction of being able to exercise control over the internal –one's motivation or behaviour – and the external, such as the social environment. Mutually, these two circles can overlap and influence each other. According to A. Bandura (1997), self-efficacy consists of performance, experience, verbal persuasion, and mental and emotional states. All of these influence an individual's behaviour. As Zygfryd Juczyński (2000, p. 14) noted, "self-efficacy expresses a subjective belief that is constituted by various personal and situational elements". A. Bandura's classic theory refers to the equation: reaction – consequence. A sense of efficacy is therefore an individual's conviction that behaviour is possible despite the adversities/obstacles encountered (Schwarzer, Fuchs, 1996; Bussey, Bandura, 1999; Gaś, 2002).

Daniel Goleman (1999) referred to self-efficacy as an individual's conviction about the effectiveness of one's efforts, which does not refer to an adequate assessment of one's abilities, but to a belief that a person is capable of doing something. In other words, a person should believe in his or her abilities and not just focus on having them. From this assumption, it can be concluded that a teacher who has confidence in his or her abilities is better able to deal with educational or professional problems. As Ralf Schwarzer and Suhair Hallum (2008) pointed out, an individual with a high level of self-efficacy sets higher goals for him or herself, his or her actions are more precisely planned and consistently executed. People with low self-efficacy tend to have a negative view of their future and, therefore, of their development. Furthermore, the results of the same study reveal that there is a relationship between generalised self-efficacy and teachers' sense of efficacy (Schwarzer, Hallum, 2008). This is confirmed by other studies highlighting the association of a high sense of efficacy with teacher effectiveness in the area of parenting or teaching achievement (Mahler, Großschedl, & Harms, 2018). Perceived self-efficacy is also a significant variable affecting teacher burnout (Sarıçam, Sakız, 2014). The higher one's level of self-efficacy, the more likely a teacher is not to experience burnout syndrome. Higher levels of self-efficacy are also important for student classroom outcomes (Mahler, Großschedl, & Harms, 2018). Joanna Wierzejska (2018) noted that every pedagogical activity, by definition, conducts itself towards certain goals. In these activities, the researcher included being a role model, mentor, and coach for students.

### **Meaning in life (Meaningful life)**

The subject of the meaning in life should not be overlooked by educators, because the meaning felt by an individual motivates the person and is beneficial to him or her. According to Norbert Piłkuła, a person who has a sense of meaning in his or her life "wants to be responsible for something, wants to realise values" (Piłkuła, 2019, p. 345). In the context of the work of an educator and tutor, these words seem to have even more significance, as an educator should approach each of his or her activities responsibly and present values to children. The meaning in life can be connected to the way an individual perceives and understands its importance in his or her life or the degree to which he or she feels that life has meaning (Schnell, 2021).

Teachers in their work are burdened with a large amount of responsibilities and at the same time face a sense of being undervalued by society, which does not foster positive work motivation (Demirkasimoglu, 2015). Consequently, this can cause a teacher to lack a sense of purpose. As Geert Kelchtermans (2017) writes, demands and unfavourable working conditions can reduce an individual's well-being and quality

of life. Research by Bruno Figueired Damásio et al. (2013) shows that teachers have moderate to high levels of perceived meaning in life, although more than 18% of them received a negative score, which shows a lack of meaning. In addition, respondents who received high scores also showed higher quality of life and well-being. B. F. Damásio et al. (2013) indicate that teachers' sense of meaning in their work can affect the whole aspect of their lives and improve their level of satisfaction with it. Among teachers, a sense of meaning is one of the basic components in the process of resilience (Platsidou, Daniilidou, 2021). Furthermore, the search for meaning can moderate the relationship between resilience and meaning.

As Viktor Frankl (1978) wrote, the meaning in life is the state in which a person obtains satisfaction from purposeful and value-oriented activities. In this researcher's conception, meaning can be discovered through:

- creative action or creative work,
- experiencing something or a relationship with others,
- enduring suffering (Frankl, 1984).

Based on the above definition of meaning, Maria Czerepaniak-Walczak (1997) emphasised the important role of reflection in the work of contemporary teachers. Nowadays, people are becoming increasingly lost, and lonely and may manifest difficulties in establishing and maintaining relationships with others. These difficulties strongly affect a person and his/her whole life, giving doubt to his/her existence in the modern world. The negative states that a person feels often have an inhibiting effect on him/her, through a lowering of aspirations, a lack of persistence in pursuing a goal or developing his/her abilities. The consequence of this can be a feeling of meaninglessness and aimlessness in life. On the other hand, positive attitudes, feeling positive emotions or a sense of social belonging are considered predictors of a sense of meaning in life (Hicks, King, 2009, Madalińska-Michalak, 2016). M. Czerepaniak-Walczak (1997) noted that fulfilling the role entrusted to teachers is associated with their success.

## **Materials and methods**

### ***Research question and hypothesis***

The study aimed to assess differences between gender and job seniority in the predictors of teachers' self-efficacy and sense of life. It was hypothesised that self-efficacy is positively correlated with indicators of teachers' sense in life and that the correlations are stronger in the female group. It was also hypothesised that gender and length of tenure are significant predictors of self-efficacy and that they moderate the relationship

between self-efficacy and sense of life. It was also hypothesised that teachers with more seniority have low self-efficacy and a lower sense of meaning in life.

### ***Respondents and research procedure***

The research was conducted in June 2021. Teachers completed an online psychological toolkit using the Google Forms application. Before the study began, they obtained consent to participate and were provided with instructions for the study, including a web address for the study. The sample consisted of 283 primary and secondary school teachers. There were 254 females (90%) and 29 males (10%) participating in the study. The gender disproportion of the sample is a characteristic part of the surveyed group. According to data presented by the Central Statistical Office (GUS) in 2021 (*Oświata i wychowanie...*, 2021), the majority of teachers in Poland are women (approximately 82%). The age of those surveyed ranged from 26–70 years ( $M = 48.92$ ;  $SD = 9.66$ ). The study was voluntary, anonymous and free of charge.

### ***Research tools***

The Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ) is a 10-item questionnaire that was designed by Michael F. Steger et al. in 2006 (in a Polish adaptation by Kossakowska, Kwiatek, & Stefaniak, 2013). This tool assesses the overall level of meaning in life and two of its dimensions: the presence of meaning in life, MLQ-Presence, MLQ-P, and the search for meaning in life, MLQ-Search, MLQ-S. The scale is self-reported, with responses given on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = absolutely not true, 5 = absolutely true). The reliability of the tool is high; in the present study, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was 0.87 for the MLQ-P subscale and 0.815 for the MLQ-S.

The Sense of Efficacy Test (TPS) is a 17-item questionnaire that was devised by Mariola Chomczyńska-Rubacha and Krzysztof Rubacha (2013). The tool assesses the general level of sense of efficacy and two types of dispositions: cognitive-action dispositions (which are formed by the ability to transfer goals into action programmes, internal controllability, and resilience to frustration and stress) and motivational dispositions (ability to delay gratification, self-confidence, developmental motivation, persistence in action, and sense of agency). The scale is self-reported, with responses given on a 4-point Likert scale (1 = definitely no, 4 = definitely yes). The reliability of the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  tool ranges from 0.87 to 0.89 for individual items.

The study was conducted by the Declaration of Helsinki regarding research on studies in humans and was approved by the Ethical Committee of the Pedagogical University of Krakow (Komisja Etyczna Uniwersytetu Pedagogicznego w Krakowie).

### ***Statistical analysis***

To answer the research questions, statistical analyses were carried out using the IBM SPSS Statistics 28. With this statistical package, an analysis of basic descriptive statistics was conducted, as well as the Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Mann-Whitney U test, and Pearson's  $r$  correlation analysis. The statistical significance level was considered to be  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

## **Results**

### ***Association between meaning in life and sense of agency factors according to gender***

To test whether the presence of meaning in life and the search for meaning in life are related to the variables comprising a sense of agency, Pearson's  $r$  correlation analysis was performed. The analysis was carried out separately for women (Table 1) and men (Table 2).

Table 1

*Association between meaning in life and factors of sense of agency in a group of women*

	Variable	Meaning in life (overall score)	Presence of meaning in life	Searching for meaning in life
Ability to delay gratification	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.20	0.06	0.22
	statistical significance	0.001	0.355	<0.001
Ability to transfer goals into an action programme	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.30	0.31	0.20
	statistical significance	<0.001	<0.001	0.001
Self-confidence	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.33	0.13	0.35
	statistical significance	<0.001	0.037	<0.001
Resilience to frustration and stress	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.07	-0.16	0.20
	statistical significance	0.238	0.009	0.002
Persistence in action	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.16	0.11	0.14
	statistical significance	0.010	0.090	0.025
Self-efficacy	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.03	-0.03	0.06
	statistical significance	0.628	0.655	0.371
Development motivation	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.19	0.15	0.15
	statistical significance	0.003	0.021	0.015
Internal controllability	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.23	0.19	0.18
	statistical significance	<0.001	0.002	0.005

Source: Author's own study.

The analysis in the women's group revealed a statistically significant and positive relationship between meaning in life in general and the ability to delay gratification, the ability to transfer goals into an action programme, self-confidence, persistence in

action, developmental motivation, and internal controllability. This means that the more the interviewed women could delay gratification and the more they believed in their strengths, the more they were persistent in action. The more internal controllability they had shown and the more developmentally motivated they were, the greater the level of overall meaning in life they enjoyed. Associations with the ability to transfer goals into an action programme and self-confidence were moderately strong, while the rest of the associations were weak.

The presence of meaning in life was positively related to the ability to transfer goals into an action programme (moderately strong association), self-confidence, developmental motivation, and internal controllability (weak association). The presence of meaning in life, on the other hand, was negatively and weakly related to frustration and stress resilience. This indicates that the more resilient the respondents were to frustration and stress, the less sense of meaning in life they felt.

Searching for meaning in life, on the other hand, was positively associated with all components of a sense of agency except personal efficacy. These associations were weak apart from the association of the search for meaning in life with self-confidence, which was moderately strong.

Table 2

*Association between meaning in life and factors of sense of agency in a group of men*

Variable		Meaning in life (overall score)	Presence of meaning in life	Searching for meaning in life
Ability to delay gratification	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.12	-0.24	0.03
	statistical significance	0.532	0.198	0.857
Ability to transfer goals into an action programme	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.03	0.28	-0.26
	statistical significance	0.864	0.133	0.160
Self-confidence	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.13	-0.17	0.30
	statistical significance	0.503	0.356	0.104
Resilience to frustration and stress	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.02	-0.03	0.05
	statistical significance	0.927	0.859	0.795
Persistence in action	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.16	-0.02	0.22
	statistical significance	0.407	0.918	0.241
Self-efficacy	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.20	-0.24	-0.06
	statistical significance	0.300	0.194	0.736
Development motivation	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.10	-0.11	0.22
	statistical significance	0.595	0.563	0.246
Internal controllability	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.28	-0.30	-0.14
	statistical significance	0.131	0.111	0.474

Source: Author's own study.

There were no statistically significant correlations in the male group.

***The impact of sense of efficacy on sense of meaning in life with gender and job seniority as moderators***

In the next stage of the analysis, to test the hypothesis of the effect of a sense of efficacy and gender on a sense of meaning in life (Table 3) and sense of efficacy and job seniority on a sense of meaning in life (Table 4), two regression analyses with an interaction component were conducted. The variables “job seniority” and “sense of agency” were centred. Women in the gender variable were coded as 1, while men were coded as 2. Detailed results of the analysis with non-standardized regression coefficients are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

*The regression model predicts a sense of meaning in life based on a sense of efficacy, gender and their interaction component*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
(constant)	50.97	1.88	27.18	<0.001			
A sense of efficacy	0.65	0.23	2.84	0.048	0.09	9.48	<0.001
Gender	-3.66	1.63	-2.24	0.026			
Gender x sense of efficacy	-0.33	0.20	-1.69	0.092			

Source: Author’s own study.

The model proved to be a significant match to the data and explains 9% of the variance in the dependent variable.

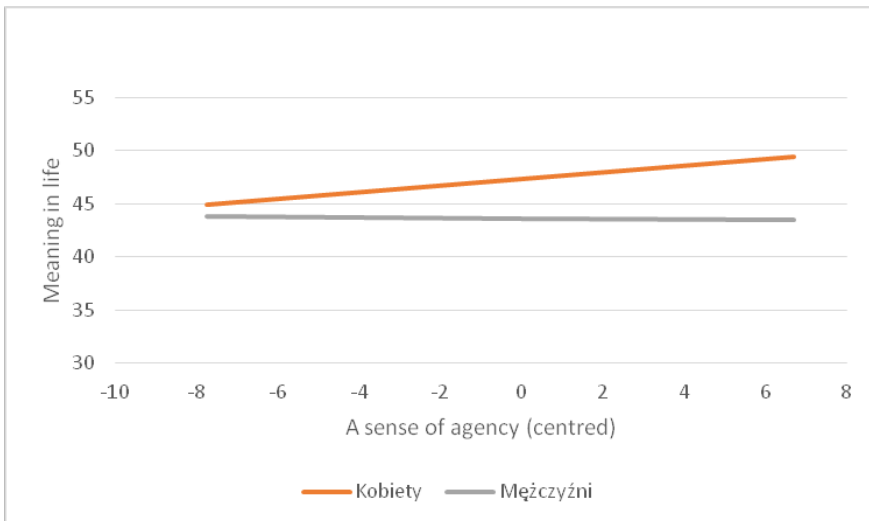


Figure 1. The interaction effect of sense of agency and gender on meaning in life. Note: K-women, M-men. Source: Author’s own study.



The analysis indicated the significance of the interaction effect at the level of statistical tendency ( $0.10 > p > 0.05$ ). The interaction effect of gender and sense of efficacy consists in the fact that in the group of women, as a sense of efficacy increases, a sense of meaning in life also increases (Beta = 0.31,  $p < 0.001$ ), while no such connection was noted for men (Beta = 0.312;  $p = 0.908$ ). This effect is illustrated in Figure 1.

Table 4

*The regression model predicts a sense of meaning in life based on a sense of efficacy and job seniority and their interaction component*

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	<i>p</i>
(constant)	46.99	0.58	97.68	<0.001			
A sense of efficacy	0.28	0.59	4.72	<0.001	0.18	20.13	<0.001
Gender	0.27	0.44	6.08	<0.001			
Gender x sense of efficacy	0.01	0.01	1.80	0.073			

Source: Author's own study.

The analysis revealed that the model tested, including job seniority as a moderator, significantly predicts the level of sense of meaning in life. The model explains 18% of the variance in this variable.

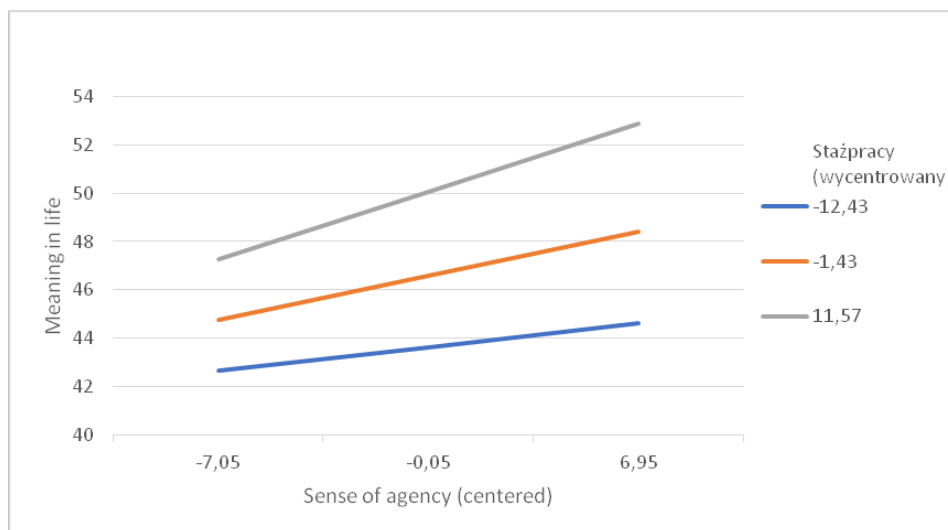


Figure 2. The interaction effect of sense of agency and seniority on meaning in life. Note: Staż pracy (wycentrowany) – job seniority (centred). Source: Author's own study.

A significant predictor at the level of the statistical tendency of this dependent variable proved to be the interaction component of seniority and sense of efficacy. The effect consisted of the fact that for low job seniority scores (12.43 below average), sense of efficacy did not predict meaning in life ( $p = 0.160$ ), while for medium and high scores (1.43 below average and 11.57 above average, respectively), the level of meaning in life could be predicted based on sense of efficacy. The standardized Beta coefficient for medium scores was 0.26, and for high scores was 0.40. This demonstrates that as a sense of agency increased, the level of meaning in life also increased (Figure 2).

***Variation in the intensity of meaning in life and sense of agency between men and women***

Then, a Mann-Whitney U-test was performed to test whether gender differentiates the intensity of meaning in life and sense of agency factors (Table 5).

Table 5

*Comparison of averages for levels of intensity of meaning in life and sense of agency between men and women*

Dependent variable	Women ( $n = 252$ )			Men ( $n = 30$ )			Z	p	$\eta^2$
	average rank	M	Me	average rank	M	Me			
Meaning in life (overall score)	145.41	4.10	4.00	108.63	4.33	5.00	-2.34	0.019	0.02
Presence of meaning in life	143.73	8.43	8.00	122.78	8.20	8.00	-1.34	0.181	<0.01
Search for meaning in life	145.23	3.90	4.00	110.15	4.03	4.00	-2.23	0.026	0.02
Ability to delay gratification	139.81	5.04	5.00	155.73	4.23	4.00	-1.03	0.302	<0.01
Ability to transfer goals into an action programme	142.79	4.59	5.00	130.65	4.40	4.50	-0.78	0.435	<0.01
Self-confidence	140.51	4.09	4.00	149.78	3.83	4.00	-0.61	0.545	<0.01
Resilience to frustration and stress	145.41	4.99	5.00	108.65	5.07	5.00	-2.37	0.018	0.02
Persistence in action	142.49	4.98	5.00	133.22	5.13	5.00	-0.60	0.546	<0.01
Sense of agency	142.82	47.34	47.00	130.45	43.67	42.50	-0.81	0.415	<0.01
Developmental motivation	140.63	25.20	26.00	148.80	24.17	26.00	-0.53	0.594	<0.01
Internal controllability	140.33	22.14	22.00	151.32	19.50	20.00	-0.73	0.468	<0.01

Source: Author's own study.

The analysis found statistically significant differences in sense in life (total score) and search for meaning in life. It turned out that women had a higher degree of both a sense of meaning in life and the search for it. The effect sizes for these differences appear small. In addition, women have significantly higher resistance to frustration and stress than men. The effect size for this difference is also small.

#### *Association between seniority and meaning in life and sense of agency*

In the last analysis, Pearson's *r* correlation analysis was conducted to verify whether seniority is correlated with meaning in life and sense of agency (Table 6).

Table 6

#### *Association between seniority and meaning in life and sense of agency*

Variable	Seniority in school (years)	
Meaning in life (overall score)	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	<b>0.31</b>
	statistical significance	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Presence of meaning in life	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	<b>0.23</b>
	statistical significance	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Search for meaning in life	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	<b>0.26</b>
	statistical significance	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Ability to delay gratification	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	<b>-0.14</b>
	statistical significance	<b>0.016</b>
Ability to transfer goals into an action programme	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.05
	statistical significance	0.447
Self-confidence	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.09
	statistical significance	0.129
Resilience to frustration and stress	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.12
	statistical significance	0.055
Persistence in action	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.02
	statistical significance	0.743
Sense of agency	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.08
	statistical significance	0.205
Developmental motivation	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	0.01
	statistical significance	0.841
Internal controllability	<i>Pearson correlation</i>	-0.04
	statistical significance	0.538

Source: Author's own study.

The analysis showed that seniority is statistically significant and positively associated with the overall score of meaning in life, the presence of meaning in life and the search for meaning in life. These findings demonstrate that with increasing seniority, the presence and search for meaning in life also increases. The ability to delay gratification, on the other hand, was negatively associated with seniority. That is, the longer the respondents had job seniority, the more they delayed gratification. The association with the overall score of meaning in life was moderate, and the other associations were found to be weak.

### **Limitations**

The study was an exploratory one, so the results should be regarded as a prelude to further research in this area, taking into account variables that may affect the overall results of a sense of life and sense of agency. Limitations of the present study can be sought in the size of the study sample, especially the male sample. The results do not allow generalizing the findings to the sample of teachers surveyed. The data collected in the study were self-reported, which may be related to reducing the occurrence of phenomena unacceptable to the teacher. How the survey was conducted — online surveys — may have resulted in an undiversified group of respondents, and this may have biased the results. Another limitation was the lack of control for the level of variables measured before the COVID-19 pandemic, and this could have been important in the case of the level of sense of life at work in the teachers surveyed. Finally, the aims of the study did not allow for the control of variables that may be relevant to the results, such as teachers' professional status or burnout. Thus, future research should take these factors into account.

### **Discussion**

Many pieces of research indicate the problem of a lack of meaning in life and a sense of efficacy in teachers' work and the negative impact they have on their work (Platsidou, Daniilidou, 2021; Wierzejska, 2018; Gaś, 2002). Based on the study, it was found that the higher the sense of meaning in life, the higher the sense of efficacy in the study group. The supposition is following studies proving that a lack of meaning in life can be the cause of professional failure, and thus a lack of a sense of agency at work (Hillier et al., 2005; Vanhove et al., 2016), motivation to work (de Klerk, Boshoff, van Wyk, 2006), or self-confidence (Li, 2018). In addition, many

studies have shown that a sense of meaning in life is associated with the ability to delay gratification, transform goals into an action programme, self-confidence, persistence in action, developmental motivation, and internal controllability (Frankl, 2014; García-Alandete, 2015; Li, 2018). Lack of meaning in life increases isolation and reduces motivation to work (Ostovar-Nameghi, Sheikahmadi, 2016; Ortega-Jiménez et al., 2021), which affects the lack of a sense of agency. This can become the cause of many negative consequences in the individual's professional life and physical condition. The authors of the cited studies indicate that the symptoms associated with a lack of satisfaction with the profession, i.e. isolationist attitude, addiction or burnout, negatively affect the individual in terms of his behaviour towards the world.

The main aim of the study was to see if there were differences between gender and job seniority on predictors of self-efficacy and teachers' sense of life. The study complemented previous literature by showing a relationship between a sense of life and self-efficacy separately for men and women (Zhang, Tang, & Yong, 2022). They found that higher levels of sense of meaning in life were associated with higher rates of self-efficacy. In the group of female teachers, these associations were stronger. In the group of male teachers, no significant correlation coefficients were found. This means that the higher the sense of efficacy in the women's group, the higher they enjoyed an overall sense of meaning in life. This result is consistent with the finding that gender-related differences exist in most variables (Zhang, Tang, & Yong, 2022).

Many previous studies show that lower levels of satisfaction and meaning are observed among male teachers (Taş, İskender, 2017). One possible explanation is that in men, other variables condition a sense of meaning in life with a sense of effectiveness at work. In addition, teachers' gender and seniority significantly predicted sense of life and sense of efficacy, and moderated the relationship between sense of life and sense of efficacy. Hierarchical regression analyses confirmed differences in the predictors of sense of life and sense of efficacy for female teachers and male teachers along with their seniority. The results suggest that sense of efficacy has greater predictive power in the female group than in the male group. They also show that seniority is significantly associated with the overall score of meaning in life, the presence of meaning in life and the search for it. That is, the higher the seniority, the higher the presence and search for meaning in life.

## **Conclusion**

Research has confirmed that all kinds of strategies to help and prevent the loss of a sense of efficacy should also be focused on minimizing teachers' lack of sense. There is a connection between high levels of perceived stress, declines in optimal performance, and quality of work life with one's social environment, which indicates the need for intervention at the organizational level (Hillier et al., 2005). Organizational environments need to pay attention to the risk of losing a sense of meaning in teachers' work, which can affect their effectiveness and well-being. Prevention activities should be implemented at the school. Similarly, any measures used to prevent addiction should be teacher-centred and consistently followed by school management. It is important to implement in schools at the organizational level community groups, i.e., PLCs (professional learning communities), in which teachers will experience comprehensive professional support, which can become a protective factor in the loss of a sense of effectiveness, and thus meaning. Also important is constructive mentoring, about supporting and monitoring the work, not just evaluating teachers.

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