

Calling at Work – Important Predictor of Job Satisfaction in University Teachers

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POVZETEK: V raziskavi sva proučevali povezanost občutka poslanstva pri delu, psihološkega kapitala in poslanstva pri delu z delovnim zadovoljstvom na vzorcu visokošolskih učiteljev in asistentov. Raziskave kažejo, da je zadovoljstvo zaposlenih eden izmed pomembnih napovednikov uspešnosti organizacij, tudi vzgojno-izobraževalnih. Visokošolski učitelji in sodelavci so redko proučevana skupina, ki pa ima pomemben vpliv na kakovost visokošolskega izobraževanja. Namen raziskave je bil proučiti, kako posamezni notranji pozitivno-psihološki viri visokošolskih učiteljev (občutek poslanstva pri delu, pozitivni psihološki kapital in delovni zanos) prispevajo k njihovemu delovnemu zadovoljstvu. Na vzorcu 142 visokošolskih učiteljev in sodelavcev različnih habilitacijskih nazivov (od asistentov do rednih profesorjev) sva ugotovili, da se vse proučevane spremenljivke statistično pomembno pozitivno povezujejo z delovnim zadovoljstvom. Izmed vseh spremenljivk pa se je izkazal kot najpomembnejši napovednik delovnega zadovoljstva občutek poslanstva pri delu.

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ABSTRACT: We examined the relationship between the sense of calling at work, psychological capital, work flow and job satisfaction among university teachers. Job satisfaction influences organizational quality and leads to positive organizational outcomes in educational institutions. In Slovenia, research on the university population is rare, so we wanted to study some characteristics of a specific population of university teachers. We wanted to investigate how some internal psychological resources (a calling at work, positive psychological capital and work flow) can contribute to the job satisfaction of university teachers. The sample consisted of 142 university teachers of different affiliations, namely 91 women and 51 men from the University of Ljubljana, the largest university in Slovenia. All internal psychological resources were significantly related to the job satisfaction of university teachers, with the sense of calling being the most important predictor.

1 Introduction

When observing a trend in the research studies on teachers, there is an interesting finding that the number of studies decreases as we move up the educational vertical (Habe & Tement, 2016b). University teachers are rarely studied as a specific research population, although the nature of their work is specific and consists of several work tasks. According to Oshagbemi (2000), their main tasks are teaching, research, administration and management, while, according to Aškerc (2014), they are scientific research, teaching, and professional work. Another interesting observation is that research on university teachers focuses mainly on competencies and less on the core characteristics that define excellent teachers. Attention in educational research has been focused mainly on

cognitive outcomes, especially on academic achievement (Rutter & Maughan, 2002). On the other hand, Toker (2011) listed several research studies by other authors on the job satisfaction of academic staff. However, internal positive psychological resources, such as the sense of calling, psychological capital and work flow, have rarely been studied in a university population.

Our research topic falls into the field of positive psychology, where research studies are organized into three main areas: positive emotions, positive traits and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). The first area focuses on the well-being and positive emotions of individuals, the second on the promotion and development of positive personality traits (e.g. character strengths), and the third on organizations that facilitate positive emotions and strive to develop positive traits (Huebner et al., 2009). Universities or other tertiary educational institutions should become positive organizations in which positive emotions of students and employees can be stimulated or enabled, and positive personality traits can be systematically or spontaneously encouraged and developed. The first step towards this goal is the scientific investigation of factors that contribute to the well-being of students and staff in higher education, apart from being mainly focused on academic achievement or other cognitive outcomes. Psychosocial factors, which are rooted in the core personality characteristics, play an important role in the quality of education even at the tertiary educational level (Pekljaj & Pečjak, 2015). Higher education institutions in which the management understands the importance of human capital management are also more successful and more sought-after by students (Starč, 2015).

Our main research objective was to investigate some positive psychological concepts which, according to previous research studies, contribute significantly to work efficiency and job satisfaction (e.g. Verbrugge, 2015) and lead to a better quality of the educational process (Klaver & Ganzevoort, 2015).

Positive organizational behaviour in the educational context

Through the lens of positive psychology, researchers investigate factors that contribute to the well-being of people in different environments. Adults often spend more than a third of their days at work, so it is an important question of how to develop positive organizational behaviour (POB) that can reduce stress and lead to a perceived subjective well-being of employees (Luthans & Youssef, 2009). The aim of Luthans (2002), who first described the concept of positive organizational behaviour, was to shift the focus of research from the study of negative factors, such as stress and the dysfunctional behaviour of employees, towards the optimal functioning of an individual in an organization. POB is defined as “the study and application of positively oriented human resource strengths and psychological capacities that can be measured, developed and effectively managed for performance improvement in today’s workplace” (Luthans, 2002, p. 59).

Universities are organizations with a specific organizational structure and particular characteristics. University teachers are pedagogical staff who teach at universities (e.g. teaching assistants, assistant professors, associate professors and professors, lecturers, lectors, instructors, etc.). They represent a population that is rarely studied from the

perspective of the working environment and its influence on their well-being. As mentioned above, they work on different tasks. They can also be important role models for future professionals in various fields, such as teachers, engineers, lawyers, doctors, scientists, economists, social workers, humanists, politicians, etc.

Positive psychological capital

Luthans, Youssef & Avolio (2007) identified four constructs that are linked together in the concept of positive psychological capital (PsyCap): self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience. Psychological capital represents a positive psychological developmental state which is characterized by an individual who

- takes on challenging tasks in order to achieve success (self-efficacy),
- has positive expectations of his or her success in the present and future (optimism),
- is committed to his or her goals and finds new ways to achieve them in case of obstacles (hope), and
- is able to effectively manage problems and unpleasant conditions in order to achieve success (resilience) (Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2015).

Even if psychological capital is relatively stable over time, it has a high potential for change, i.e. it can be developed under the right conditions. It is related to a specific area (Avey, 2014), which means that a person can be optimistic about being successful in his or her personal life, but not to the same extent in his or her professional life.

The psychological capital has also been examined in the educational context. Research shows that it plays an important role in maintaining teachers' motivation to work and is an important predictor of work engagement (Schoor, 2015). It has a positive influence on teachers' job satisfaction and their commitment to the organization (Youssef & Luthans, 2007), on performance quality (Ganotice et al., 2015; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007), and is positively related to teachers' psychological well-being (Ganotice et al., 2015).

Less research can be found on university employees. In a study by Shen et al. (2014), PsyCap was negatively associated with depressive symptoms and partially mediated the link between occupational stress and depressive symptoms. Aftab, Rashid & Asghar Ali Shah (2018) investigated the interaction between personality (extraversion and conscientiousness) and organizational citizenship behaviour. Zehra & Husain (2015) found that the spiritual values of university employees (teachers and non-lecturers) were positively related to PsyCap. In a study by Jun, Hanpo, Ruiyang & Jinyan (2017) PsyCap was negatively associated with job burnout among university teachers. Heng, Ming, Zou, Li & Castaño (2020) found a moderating role of PsyCap between the teaching vs. research conflict among university teachers and job burnout. Youngzhan (2018) reported that the PsyCap of university teachers positively predicted their sense of meaning in life and well-being. In summary, some studies focus on a relationship between PsyCap and the negative aspects of work (e.g. burnout, depression), and fewer on the positive internal resources (e.g. meaning of life, values).

Work flow

Flow is a mental state of operation in which a person is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement and success in the process of an activity (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002). In the organizational environment, Bakker (2005) defines work flow as a short-term peak experience at work characterized by absorption, work and intrinsic work motivation. Absorption refers to a total concentration and immersion in the activity; work enjoyment indicates a very positive judgement of the quality of working life; and intrinsic motivation refers to the need to perform a particular job-related activity with the aim of experiencing inherent pleasure and satisfaction in the activity (Bakker, 2005; Deci & Ryan, 1985).

In a study of teachers, Bakker (2005) found that work flow in music teachers correlated positively with work flow in their students. Furthermore, in a study of secondary school teachers, Salanova et al. (2006) found reciprocal relationships between personal resources (e.g. self-efficacy beliefs), organizational resources (including social support, climate and clear goals), and work-related flow.

In a sample of Slovenian university teachers, optimism, variety and autonomy were the most important predictors of the work flow, with autonomy being the most important predictor for all dimensions of the work flow (absorption, work and inner motivation) (Habe & Tement, 2016a). The authors suggested that university teachers should consider how they could increase their own autonomy and job variety. Taking into account the control variables (gender, academic rank and age), women and teachers with higher academic ranks experienced greater absorption and intrinsic work motivation.

Teachers' calling at work

Teachers often report that they feel a calling at work (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012; Dinham & Scott, 2000; Gradišek, Pečjak, Rijavec & Jurčec, 2020). Such teachers feel that their work contributes to their personal fulfilment and that their work has a positive effect on others – on their students or on society in general (Bellah et al., 2008; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Wrzesniewski, 2003; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Some find their personal contribution to society more important than the material benefits of their work; teaching makes these teachers happy and is one of the key areas in their lives. Therefore, they are willing to take on some additional responsibilities and tasks (Lobene & Meade, 2013; Serow, 1994; Wrzesniewski, 2003; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). Research shows many positive aspects of the perception of teaching as a calling, such as commitment to students and energetic, enthusiastic teaching (Buskist, Benson & Sikorski, 2005); the awareness of having a positive influence on students (Day, Sammons, Stobart, Kington & Gu, 2007); and a greater focus on student's well-being (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012). Such teachers have high expectations of their professional role and set themselves high work goals. They strive for improvement (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012). Research shows that teachers with a sense of calling are more satisfied with life and work (Wrzesniewski et al., 1997); work more efficiently (Serow, 1994); are more committed to their organization and less inclined to change jobs (Lobene & Meade, 2013); and have a positive attitude towards work (Willemse & Deacon, 2015).

Aims of the study

Previous research suggests that positive psychological capital, work flow and a sense of calling at work correlate positively with several positive outcomes in different workplaces and in different working populations. For example, positive psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007; Youssef & Luthans, 2007) and work flow (Bishay, 1996; Demerouti, 2006; Habe & Tement, 2016a; Weis & Cropanzano, 1996) are positively associated with job satisfaction and with the perception of work as a calling (Gradišek, 2014; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Lobene & Meade, 2013; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997).

Job satisfaction represents a subjective evaluation of one's own life in the work domain (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). It comprises the perception of one's own working environment and an interpretation of the working conditions (Johnson & Johnson, 2000). Among other things, job satisfaction is positively linked to work efficiency and negatively linked to the propensity to change jobs (Lobene & Meade, 2013), and thus represents an important aspect of one's own perception of work. University teachers play an important role in achieving the goals of a higher education institution (Capelleras, 2005). Since job satisfaction is related to performance, organizational productivity and other positive outcomes, employee satisfaction should be a desirable attribute in higher education institutions.

The aim of the present study is therefore to

- investigate the relationship between the sense of calling at work, positive psychological capital and work flow, and
- examine the relationship of these three variables to job satisfaction in a sample of university teachers.

2 Method

Participants

The participants in the study were 142 university teachers (91 female and 51 male) employed at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The age range was 24–66 years ($M = 47.27$). Table 1 shows the structure of the sample in terms of academic titles.

Table 1. Structure of the sample according to academic title

<i>Academic title</i>	<i>%</i>
Assistant professor	25
Full professor	24
Associate professor	22
Teaching assistant	11
Teaching assistant with a PhD	10
Other (lector, lecturer, etc.)	8

Instruments

Participants filled-in the following instruments:

- The Psychological Capital Questionnaire (PCQ; Luthans, Avolio, Avey & Norman, 2007; translation into Slovenian language by Smole, 2015), which consists of 24 items, grouped in 4 scales: hope, efficacy, resiliency, and optimism. We used a 5-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree), although the authors used a 6-point response scale.
- The Work-Related Flow Inventory (WOLF; Bakker, 2008; translation into Slovenian by Habe & Tement, 2016a). There are 12 items in the inventory that are rated on a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = often).
- The Work-Life Questionnaire (WLQ; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997; translated into Slovenian for the purpose of this study). The questionnaire can be used either in the form of a scenario in which the participants assess the correspondence with the description of work as a job, a career and a calling; or in a 10-item set in which 7 items measure the perception of work as a job or a calling (these items usually load on one job/calling factor), and a career (3 items). In the present study, only 7 items were used to measure the perception of work as a calling. We used a 5-point response scale (1 = not at all like me; 5 = completely like me).
- Job satisfaction was measured with the adapted version of the widely used Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS; Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin, 1985) for the work domain (Gradišek, 2014). There were 5 items, rated on a 5-point scale (1 = totally disagree, 5 = totally agree).
- Perceived work efficiency was assessed with one item: "How efficient do you perceive yourself at work?" on a 10-point scale (1 = inefficient, 10 = efficient).

Procedure

The data was collected in June 2018 in the form of an on-line survey. Contact persons at the faculties of the University of Ljubljana were asked to forward the online survey by e-mail to their university teachers. The participants received an invitation letter with a link to the questionnaire via their faculty e-mail address. Participation in the study was anonymous and voluntary. The data were analysed in the statistics programme IBM SPSS 22.

3 Results

University teachers reported the presence of a sense of calling at work ($M = 3.74$), as well as psychological capital and flow, with all means being above average (around $M = 3.70$). This means that they recognize their internal resources in their work. Their job satisfaction is slightly lower compared to other variables, but still above average ($M = 3.41$). They perceive their work efficiency as very high ($M = 8.06$).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics

	<i>N</i>	<i>Min</i>	<i>Max</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Calling	142	2.00	5.00	3.74	0.53
Efficiency (PsyCap)	142	1.50	5.00	3.78	0.62
Hope (PsyCap)	142	2.00	5.00	3.76	0.58
Resilience (PsyCap)	142	2.33	5.00	3.79	0.46
Optimism (PsyCap)	142	2.17	4.83	3.69	0.54
Flow	142	1.83	4.67	3.67	0.49
Job satisfaction	142	1.00	4.80	3.41	0.67
Work efficiency	142	3.00	10.0	8.06	1.18

Table 2 shows the correlations between the measured variables. The age of the participants correlated positively with the self-reported work efficiency and with the work flow. The PsyCap scales correlated with each other, with the highest correlation between resilience and optimism ($r = 0.600$) and the lowest between efficiency and resilience ($r = 0.461$). Calling correlated positively with all variables except age; the highest with flow ($r = 0.623$) and the lowest with resilience ($r = 0.193$). Flow correlated with all variables; the lowest correlation was with age ($r = 0.207$). Job satisfaction also correlated with all measured variables except age.

Overall, calling, psychological capital scales and flow correlated significantly with job satisfaction and self-perceived work efficiency.

Table 3. Pearson's correlations between measured variables

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>
1 Age		0.180*	0.225	0.091	0.082	0.034	0.165	0.041	0.207*
2 Work efficiency			0.585**	0.464**	0.420**	0.335**	0.478**	0.586**	0.472**
3 Efficiency (PsyCap)				0.489**	0.461**	0.463**	0.411**	0.382**	0.410**
4 Hope (PsyCap)					0.563**	0.590**	0.286**	0.454**	0.424**
5 Resilience (PsyCap)						0.600**	0.193*	0.434**	0.337**
6 Optimism (PsyCap)							0.277**	0.467**	0.380**
7 Calling								0.468**	0.623**
8 Job satisfaction									0.487**
9 Flow									

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

To investigate the extent to which calling, psychological capital and flow contribute to job satisfaction, we conducted a hierarchical multiple regression analysis. In the first step we added gender and age as demographic variables; in the second step we added psychological capital (four psychological capital scales – efficiency, hope, resilience and optimism); and in the third step we added calling and flow (Table 3).

Table 4. Results of a hierarchical multiple regression

<i>Step</i>		<i>R</i> ²	<i>Job satisfaction</i>	<i>B</i>
1	Demography	0.004	Gender	–0.047
			Age	0.036
2	Psyscap	0.297***	Gender	–0.053
			Age	–0.027
			Efficiency (PsyCap)	0.114
			Hope (PsyCap)	0.193*
			Resilience (PsyCap)	0.149
			Optimism (PsyCap)	0.214
3	Calling And Flow	0.406***	Gender	–0.036
			Age	–0.071
			Efficiency (PsyCap)	0.002
			Hope (PsyCap)	0.129
			Resilience (PsyCap)	0.166
			Optimism (PsyCap)	0.159
			Calling	0.257**
			Flow	0.166

The psychological capital explained 30% of the variance in the job satisfaction of university teachers. After adding calling and flow as independent variables in step 3, a further 11 % of the variance in job satisfaction was explained. This was a significant contribution ($F(2,133) = 12.21, p < 0.001$). Overall, all variables (psychological capital, calling and flow) explained 41 % of the variance in job satisfaction. However, calling was the only significant predictor in the third model, which means that the perception of work as a calling contributes more to the job satisfaction of university teachers than psychological capital or flow.

4 Discussion

In the present study, we investigated the relationship between some internal resources of university teachers – positive psychological capital, work flow and the sense of calling at work – and their relationship to job satisfaction.

In line with previous research (e.g. Luthans et al., 2007; Luthans, Youssef & Avolio, 2007), the scales of positive psychological capital (efficacy, resilience, hope and optimism) in our sample of university teachers were positively related to job satisfaction and to self-reported work efficiency. University institutions are labour-intensive and their effectiveness often depends on their staff (Toker, 2011), so job satisfaction is an important organizational characteristic of university institutions. An important feature of psychological capital is that it can be fostered and developed; therefore, it could be used as an intervention variable to achieve higher job satisfaction among university teachers.

The work flow is another important factor in job satisfaction. Interestingly, in our sample of university teachers, the work flow increases with age. Absorption, work enjoyment and intrinsic work motivation are key elements of the work flow (Bakker, 2005); therefore, we can speculate that university teachers enjoy their work more with age, are more motivated, and more absorbed in their work. Their competence in research and (hopefully) teaching also increases with age. An interesting research finding in higher education is a positive relationship between the work flow of music teachers and the work flow of their students (Bakker, 2005). It would be interesting to investigate whether such a relationship also exists in other areas of research. However, one could speculate that the flow of a university teacher during teaching contributes to the intrinsic motivation, absorption and enjoyment of students in their studies, at least in the classes of teachers with a higher work flow.

Teachers' perception of teaching as a calling brings several positive benefits (e.g. Bellah et al., 2008; Gradišek, 2014; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Wrzesniewski, 2003; Wrzesniewski et al., 1997). To the best of our knowledge, teaching as a calling in higher education has not yet been investigated in a sample of university teachers. Therefore, it is an important finding that university teachers, when they perceive their work as a calling, report higher job satisfaction and higher self-perceived work efficiency.

Moreover, of the several internal positive psychological resources studied in our research (calling, work flow and positive psychological capital scales – efficacy, hope, optimism, resilience), the sense of calling at work has contributed most to the job satisfaction of university teachers. The positive outcomes of teachers' perception of teaching as a calling include feeling the joy of teaching, setting high professional goals, effective teaching, and showing enthusiasm in a classroom (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012; Buskist, Benson & Sikorski, 2005; Lobene & Meade, 2013). In addition, teachers with the sense of calling are aware that through their work they have an important influence on their students (Bellah et al., 2008; Day et al., 2007; Hall & Chandler, 2005; Wrzesniewski, 2003) and contribute to the well-being of their students (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012). According to our study, we can expect these characteristics to apply to university teachers who consider teaching an important part of their work. In this way, university teachers who perceive their work as a calling, can positively influence future generations of students of different disciplines. We believe that the sense of calling is particularly important for university teachers who teach students whose future professions will be closely linked to working with others, e.g. future teachers, counsellors, nurses, doctors, as they are important role models for their students. Research shows that future teachers in Slovenia and Croatia choose the pedagogical profession mainly on the basis of psychological factors (e.g. a student's personality and interests) (Devjak, Devjak & Polak,

2014) and are intrinsically motivated for taking up the teaching profession (Skupnjak, Tot & Pahić, 2018). Students “put their needs, interests and desires for pedagogical profession in the forefront” and find that “working with people, youth and children affects their personal development and their development” (Devjak, Devjak & Polak, 2014, p. 17). Skupnjak, Tot & Pahić (2018, p. 160) stated that “the most important factors in choosing the teaching profession were those reflecting intrinsic motivation, such as working with students, autonomy at work, and interest in the profession”. Important elements of the sense of calling can be recognized in these findings. Therefore, it is meaningful to start to intentionally foster a sense of calling among future teachers during their studies. But the sense of calling is also important for those who teach at other universities, e.g. technical ones, at least because of the positive effects it has on the students’ well-being, their willingness and enthusiasm to learn, and its positive contribution to the personal development of students, regardless of their future profession. Therefore, fostering the emotional intelligence of university teachers could also bring positive benefits for students. Čotar Konrad & Kukanja Gabrijelčič (2014) stressed the important role of emotional intelligence in the professional development of teachers; they stated that “emotional intelligence is a prerequisite for high-quality performance in the educational field” (Čotar Konrad & Kukanja Gabrijelčič, 2014, p. 13) – in our opinion, this is also true of higher education. However, in the context of research and teaching in higher education, research activity is often perceived as more important, while “the pedagogical work and within it the pedagogical training and qualifications of the individual are in a subordinate position” (Aškerc, 2014, p. 177). If the perception of the work of university teachers as a calling is a desirable attribute due to the positive outcomes mentioned above, appropriate attention should be paid to the pedagogical training and qualifications of university teachers.

Some limitations of the study must be acknowledged. The sample was not representative and all participants work at the same university. We contacted other Slovenian universities, but received a low response rate. In future studies it would be interesting to investigate other variables that might contribute to the job satisfaction of university teachers, such as perceived meaning at work, values, or family-work balance; and to investigate how internal psychological resources of university teachers influence their students – the teacher-student relationship, student well-being, motivation to study, and academic performance.

Dr. Polona Gradišek, dr. Katarina Habe

Poklicno poslanstvo – pomemben napovednik zadovoljstva pri delu visokošolskih učiteljev

Visokošolski učitelji in sodelavci (v nadaljevanju: visokošolski učitelji) so redko proučevana skupina, kljub temu da imajo pomemben vpliv na cele generacije študentov, njihovo delo pa je ključno za doseganje kakovosti visokega šolstva. Izhajajoč iz ugotovitev predhodnih raziskav, ki kažejo, da delovno zadovoljstvo pomembno vpliva na organizacijsko kakovost, sva želeli avtorici proučiti nekatere pozitivno-psihološke

konstrukte, kot so občutek poslanstva pri delu, pozitivni psihološki kapital in delovni zanos ter proučiti, kako prispevajo k delovnemu zadovoljstvu visokošolskih učiteljev.

V raziskavi izhajava iz perspektive pozitivne psihologije, v okviru katere raziskovalci proučujemo dejavnike, ki prispevajo k dobremu, izpolnjujočemu življenju, pri čemer se osredotočamo na pozitivna čustva, pozitivne lastnosti in pozitivne institucije, ki omogočajo doživljanje pozitivnih čustev in razvijanje pozitivnih lastnosti (Seligman in Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Posebno področje znotraj pozitivne psihologije, ki sega na področje psihologije dela in organizacije, predstavlja t.i. pozitivno organizacijsko vedenje, ki se usmerja na proučevanje pozitivnih dejavnikov v organizacijah oz. na delovnem mestu. S tem konceptom je Luthans (2002), njegov utemeljitelj, želel preusmeriti raziskovalno pozornost z negativnih dejavnikov, kot sta stres na delovnem mestu in odklonsko vedenje zaposlenih, v smer optimalnega delovanja posameznika v organizaciji. V okviru pozitivnega organizacijskega vedenja so Luthans, Youssef in Avolio (2007) identificirali štiri konstrukte, ki so jih združili v nadredni koncept pozitivnega psihološkega kapitala: samoučinkovitost, optimizem, upanje in rezilientnost. Pozitivni psihološki kapital predstavlja pozitivno psihološko razvojno stanje, za katerega je značilno, da se je posameznik pripravljen lotiti zahtevnih nalog in si prizadeva za svoj uspeh (samoučinkovitost); da goji pozitivna pričakovanja do svojega uspeha (optimizem); da vztraja pri doseganju ciljev in v primeru ovir uspešno najde nove poti za doseganje istega cilja (upanje) ter da se učinkovito spoprijema s težavami (rezilientnost). Psihološki kapital lahko preko učenja spodbujamo in tudi spreminjamo, čeprav je relativno stabilen v času.

Zanos je stanje, v katerem je posameznik popolnoma zatopljen v aktivnost in ob tem doživlja občutke energije, vključenosti in uspeha pri aktivnosti (Csikszentmihalyi, 2002), delovni zanos pa je kratkotrajno vrhunsko doživetje na delovnem mestu, za katerega so značilni zatopljenost, zadovoljstvo pri delu in notranja delovna motivacija (Bakker, 2005). V eni od raziskav so ugotovili, da se zanos glasbenih učiteljev povezuje z zanosom, ki ga doživljajo njihovi učenci (Bakker, 2005). V slovenski raziskavi pa sta K. Habe in S. Tement (2016a) ugotovili, da so delovni zanos visokošolskih učiteljev najboljše napovedovali optimizem, raznolikost delovnih nalog in avtonomija ter da obstaja interaktivni učinek optimizma in raznolikosti dela pri napovedovanju zadovoljstva pri delu in notranje motivacije.

Pomemben vidik učiteljevega doživljanja dela je občutek poslanstva pri delu. Številne raziskave kažejo na pozitivne koristi doživljanja občutka poslanstva pri učiteljih – ti učitelji občutijo, da jih delo izpolnjuje, da s svojim delom pozitivno vplivajo na druge (na svoje učence in na širšo družbo), pripravljeni so vlagati več truda in časa v delo, so predani študentom, energični in entuziastični, pomembno jim je dobro počutje učencev (npr. Bullough in Hall-Kenyon, 2012; Hall in Chandler, 2005; Lobene in Meade, 2013). Učitelji, ki pri svojem delu občutijo poslanstvo, so bolj zadovoljni z življenjem in pri delu (Wrzesniewski idr., 1997).

Raziskave kažejo, da se pozitivni psihološki kapital, delovni zanos in občutek poslanstva pri delu pozitivno povezujejo s številnimi pozitivnimi izidi na različnih delovnih mestih in v različnih delovnih populacijah. Tako se na primer pozitivni kapital (Luthans idr., 2007; Youssef in Luthans, 2007) in delovni zanos (Bishay, 1996; Demerouti, 2006; Habe in Tement, 2016a; Weis in Cropanzano, 1996) povezujeta z delovnim zadovoljstvom in z doživljanjem poslanstva pri delu (Gradišek, 2014; Hall in Chandler, 2005;

Lobene in Meade, 2013; Wrzesniewski idr., 1997). Delovno zadovoljstvo predstavlja subjektivno oceno posameznikovega življenja, ki je povezano z njegovim delom (Diener idr., 1999) in predstavlja pomemben vidik dela, saj se povezuje z delovno učinkovitostjo, produktivnostjo organizacije, manj željami po menjavi delovnega mesta in drugimi pozitivnimi vidiki dela. Visokošolski učitelji pomembno prispevajo k doseganju ciljev visokošolskih zavodov, zato je pomembno, da so pri svojem delu zadovoljni.

Cilj pričujoče raziskave je bil proučiti povezanost med doživljanjem občutka poslanstva pri delu, pozitivnim psihološkim kapitalom in delovnim zanosom ter ugotoviti, kako se te tri spremenljivke povezujejo z delovnim zadovoljstvom visokošolskih učiteljev. V raziskavi je sodelovalo 142 visokošolskih učiteljev in sodelavcev (91 žensk in 51 moških), zaposlenih na Univerzi v Ljubljani, starih med 24 in 66 let. V vzorcu je bilo največ docentov (25%), sledili so redni profesorji (24%) in docenti (22%), nato še asistenti (11%), asistenti z doktoratom (10%) in drugi (npr. lektorji, višji predavatelji; 8%). Udeleženci so izpolnili vprašalnik psihološkega kapitala (Luthans idr., 2007), vprašalnik delovnega zanosu (Bakker, 2008), vprašalnik o doživljanju poslanstva pri delu (Wrzesniewski idr., 1997), vprašalnik delovnega zadovoljstva (Diener idr., 1985; Gradišek, 2014) in ocenili svojo zaznano delovno učinkovitost. Zbiranje podatkov je potekalo junija 2018 v obliki spletne ankete.

Rezultati so pokazali, da visokošolski učitelji v precejšnji meri doživljajo občutek poslanstva pri delu in delovni zanos ter imajo izražen pozitiven psihološki kapital. Delovno zadovoljstvo ocenjujejo nekoliko nad povprečjem, svojo delovno učinkovitost pa zaznavajo kot visoko.

Z delovnim zadovoljstvom in z zaznano delovno učinkovitostjo so se pozitivno povezovali občutek poslanstva pri delu, vse lestvice pozitivnega psihološkega kapitala in delovni zanos. Starost udeležencev se je pozitivno povezovala z zaznano delovno učinkovitostjo in delovnim zanosom. Občutek poslanstva pri delu se je pozitivno povezoval z vsemi proučevanimi spremenljivkami (razen s starostjo), najvišje z delovnim zanosom in najnižje z rezilientnostjo. Tudi delovni zanos se je povezoval z vsemi spremenljivkami, najnižje s starostjo in najvišje s poslanstvom.

Za boljše razumevanje odnosa med proučevanimi spremenljivkami smo izvedli hierarhično multiplo analizo. V prvem koraku smo vključili spol in starost kot demografski spremenljivki, v drugem koraku smo vključili psihološki kapital (štiri lestvice psihološkega kapitala) in v tretjem koraku občutek poslanstva in delovni zanos. Psihološki kapital je pojasnil 30 % variance delovnega zadovoljstva visokošolskih učiteljev iz našega vzorca. Ko smo dodali še poslanstvo in zanos, smo pojasnili dodatnih 11 % variance delovnega zadovoljstva, kar je predstavljalo statistično pomemben doprinos. Proučevane spremenljivke so torej skupno pojasnile kar 41 % variance delovnega zadovoljstva. Kot najpomembnejši napovednik pa se je izkazal občutek poslanstva pri delu, kar pomeni, da k delovnemu zadovoljstvu visokošolskih učiteljev prispeva pomembneje kot psihološki kapital ali delovni zanos.

Skladno z ugotovitvami predhodnih raziskav so se tudi v naši raziskavi lestvice pozitivnega psihološkega kapitala (samoučinkovitost, rezilientnost, upanje in optimizem) pozitivno povezovala z delovnim zadovoljstvom visokošolskih učiteljev in z njihovo samo-oceno delovne učinkovitosti. Pomemben vidik pozitivnega psihološkega kapitala je ta, da ga lahko spodbujamo in razvijamo, zato bi ga lahko smiselno uporabili kot in-

tervencijsko spremenljivko pri doseganju delovnega zadovoljstva pedagoških delavcev v visokošolskih ustanovah. Njihovo delovno zadovoljstvo je namreč pomemben organizacijski vidik, saj učinkovitost visokošolskih ustanov pogosto temelji na delu njihovih zaposlenih.

Tudi delovni zanos je pomemben dejavnik, ki prispeva k delovnemu zadovoljstvu. V našem vzorcu se je zanos pozitivno povezoval s starostjo, kar kaže na to, da visokošolski učitelji s starostjo vse bolj uživajo pri svojem delu, so bolj notranje motivirani in zatopljeni v delo. Zanimivo bi bilo proučiti, kako zanos univerzitetnih učiteljev vpliva na njihove študente – ali gre za pozitivno povezanost, kot je bila ugotovljena v raziskavi Bakkerja (2005) pri učiteljih glasbe. Predvidevava, da lahko delovni zanos visokošolskih učiteljev med poučevanjem pomembno vpliva na notranjo motivacijo njihovih študentov, na njihovo uživanje med pedagoškim procesom; predvsem pri tistih učiteljih, ki med poučevanjem izkazujejo visok delovni zanos.

Visokošolski učitelji, ki so sodelovali v raziskavi, so poročali o precejšnji izraženoosti občutka poslanstva pri delu, ki prinaša številne pozitivne koristi za učitelje, za druge in za kakovost dela. Do sedaj nisva zasledili raziskave, ki bi proučevala doživljanje poslanstva med visokošolskimi učitelji, zato je pomembna ugotovitev, da občutek poslanstva pomembno prispeva k delovnemu zadovoljstvu visokošolskih učiteljev in k njihovi samo-zaznani delovni učinkovitosti. Izmed vseh v tej raziskavi proučevanih spremenljivk je ravno občutek poslanstva najpomembnejše napovedoval delovno zadovoljstvo. Glede na ugotovitve te in predhodnih raziskav sklepamo, da za visokošolske učitelje in sodelavce, ki doživljajo poslanstvo pri svojem delu, velja, da občutijo veselje ob poučevanju, so motivirani in si postavljajo visoke delovne cilje, so učinkoviti pri svojem delu in se zavedajo svojega pomembnega vpliva na blagostanje študentov in tudi na njihove učne dosežke. Avtorici izpostavljava, kako pomemben vpliv imajo visokošolski učitelji na študente različnih študijskih programov. Meniva, da je izrazit občutek poslanstva pri delu še posebej pomemben za tiste visokošolske učitelje, ki poučujejo študente, ki bodo delali neposredno z ljudmi, npr. učitelji, zdravniki, medicinsko osebje, pravniki, svetovalci ... Prav tako pa je občutek poslanstva pomemben tudi pri visokošolskih učiteljih drugih disciplin, saj lahko pomembno vplivajo na počutje študentov, na njihovo psihično blagostanje, na njihovo pripravljenost za učenje, navdušenje nad študijskim področjem in na njihov osebni razvoj. Visokošolski učitelji vplivajo na študente predvsem preko poučevanja, čeprav njihovo delo obsega tudi raziskovalno in strokovno delo, zato se nama zdi ključnega pomena, da visokošolski učitelji ne dojemajo poučevanja kot manj pomembnega vidika njihovega dela ter da poskušajo pri sebi razvijati in negovati občutek poslanstva pri delu.

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*Polona Gradišek, PhD (1986), Assistant at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana.
Address: Reboljeva ulica 6, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia; Telephone: (+386) 031 869 666
E-mail: polona.gradisek@pef.uni-lj.si*

*Katarina Habe, PhD (1973), Assistant Professor at the Academy of Music, University of Ljubljana.
Address: Jelovškova 81, 1234 Mengeš, Slovenia; Telephone: (+386) 041 275 488
E-mail: katarina.habe@ag.uni-lj.si*