



## TEACHERS' HOPE FOR SUCCESS AND THEIR SENSE OF CONTROL AND SELF-EFFICACY

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**Abstract:** The professional work of a teacher in social opinion is defined as a mission, an art or a vocation (Taraszkiewicz, 1998; Muszkieta, 2001; Lewowicki, 2007; Rudnicki et al., 2008; Day, 2008; Szempruch, 2013; Dróżka, 2017). The nature of the teacher's work includes not only knowledge and skills but also their own person, along with a specific professional experience and method of operation, as well as pedagogical optimism and hope for success. This belief means that, despite many obstacles and numerous problems, they are able to overcome difficulties by showing great willpower and the ability to find solutions. This is facilitated by their personal resources, in particular: the sense of control and self-efficacy. This issue has become the subject of this empirical research. The presented results show the role of the sense of control and self-efficacy of the surveyed primary school teachers in explaining their hopes for success. The conducted analyses showed a positive significant relationship between the variables studied. The growing sense of internal control and self-efficacy of the surveyed educators is accompanied by a growing level of their hope for success, especially the ability to find solutions.

### NADZIEJA NA SUKCES NAUCZYCIELI A ICH POCZUCIE KONTROLI I WŁASNEJ SKUTECZNOŚCI

**Słowa kluczowe:** nauczyciel, nadzieja na sukces, poczucie kontroli i poczucie skuteczności

**Streszczenie:** Praca zawodowa nauczyciela w opinii społecznej określana jest mianem misji, sztuki czy też powołania. Wymaga wysokich kompetencji profesjonalnych i szczególnych predyspozycji osobowych (Taraszkiewicz, 1998; Muszkieta, 2001; Lewowicki, 2007; Rudnicki i in., 2008; Day, 2008; Szempruch,

2013; Drózka, 2017). W charakter pracy nauczyciela wpisana jest nie tylko wiedza i umiejętności, ale także jego własna osoba, wraz z określonym doświadczeniem profesjonalnym i sposobem działania oraz optymizmem pedagogicznym i nadzieją na sukces. To przekonanie sprawia, że mimo wielu przeszkód i licznych problemów, jest on w stanie przezwyciężyć występujące trudności wykazując dużą siłę woli i umiejętności znajdowania rozwiązań. Sprzyjają temu jego zasoby osobiste, w tym zwłaszcza: poczuciu kontroli i poczucie własnej skuteczności. Problematyka ta stała się przedmiotem niniejszych badań empirycznych. Przedstawione wyniki ukazują rolę poczucia kontroli i własnej skuteczności badanych nauczycieli szkół podstawowych w wyjaśnieniu ich nadziei na sukces. Przeprowadzone analizy wykazały dodatni istotny związek między badanymi zmiennymi. Rosnącemu poczuciu kontroli wewnętrznej i własnej skuteczności badanych pedagogów towarzyszy rosnący poziom ich nadziei na sukces, a szczególnie umiejętność znajdowania rozwiązań.

## Introduction

Teachers are at the very heart of the educational process. As Christopher Day states, “The greater significance we attribute to education – understood as the transmission of cultural elements, strengthening social cohesion and justice, as well as training the workforce so crucial in modern technology-based economies – the greater role teachers play, as they are responsible for this education” (Day, 2004, p. 16). The social importance of the tasks fulfilled by teachers bestows upon their profession a unique social mission arising from the education of the younger generation. Engaging in this profession is not easy; it requires a great deal of effort and dedication. Among the teacher’s responsibilities, the primary one is to support the student’s development and provide them with appropriate conditions, taking into account their abilities and environmental conditions (Szempruch, 2001, p. 107). In addition to imparting knowledge and experience, teachers have an obligation to stimulate creative forces, enhance students’ abilities, develop and enrich their axiological system, shape attitudes and character, foster interests, and assist in the creation of vocational and life plans (Kirenko et al., 2011, pp. 7-8). Thus, teachers serve numerous functions: cognitive, caring and educative, skill-oriented, and existential. The latter two functions pertain to the meaning of life, the ability to learn independently, cope with problems, and evaluate the results of one’s activities (Sokołowska, 2007, p. 5). Consequently, teaching is a responsible job that requires autonomy, inventiveness, and the creation of one’s own methods of practice.

## Theoretical foundations of the study

As emphasized by Tadeusz Lewowicki, “The professional activity of a teacher is referred to as an art, highlighting its creative nature” (Lewowicki, 2007, p. 57). A crucial element of their effective work is hope, manifested through the strength of will in their daily teaching and educational activities, and the ability to find appropriate solutions. According to Kazimierz Obuchowski (2002), hope allows individuals “to maintain the ability for positive action in seemingly hopeless situations and helps transcend their own capabilities. [...] A person who holds onto hope may be afraid, but they do not give up positive action or perpetuate their misfortunes, thereby avoiding reinforcing their consequences” (p. 24).

Referring to Józef Koziński's concept, different components of hope can be characterized as follows:

1. The cognitive component revolves around the belief in achieving a significant goal in the future. The pedagogue's openness to the future, the ability to anticipate and assess the likelihood of achieving the set goal (fulfilling hope) play a crucial role. The cognitive structure also encompasses various thoughts, feelings, imaginations, and associations that may accompany the teacher in their work.
2. The emotional component confirms that the teacher's belief in achieving the goal is associated with the evaluation of the attractiveness of the desired outcome. This process involves both emotions and feelings, as well as passions. Positive emotions such as joy, satisfaction, and happiness usually dominate. However, negative emotions such as uncertainty, doubt, fear, anxiety, nervousness, sadness, or worry may also arise. According to Koziński, these negative emotions serve as signals that certain errors exist and corrective actions are necessary.
3. The temporal component indicates that hope is focused on the future, and past experiences should serve as lessons in setting goals and choosing means of action. Lessons from the past teach how to overcome barriers and resolve conflicts. On the other hand, the present moment can lead to conservative attitudes if a teacher is content with the current state and seeks to prolong it. In cases of discomfort, educators strive for change. Thus, in this perspective, the present moment plays a decisive role in future plans.

4. The affiliative component involves other people (students, parents, teachers, etc.), social institutions, organizations, or associations. They help evoke and develop belief in a favourable future, serve as defence against hopelessness, and also direct hope towards others.
5. The efficacy component serves a motivational function, directing efforts towards achieving significant outcomes, significantly influencing persistence, stimulating planning, and problem-solving (cf. Koziol, 2006, pp. 43-46).

According to Anna Matczak and Elżbieta Salata (2010), primary hope is a condition for the formation of hope for success, as it influences individual beliefs in the meaningfulness and ultimately positive nature of events. In this view, hope for success is the expectation of positive results from one's own actions based on the belief that one possesses the willpower and relevant competencies necessary for success. It acts as a driving force, especially in challenging moments when obstacles and doubts about achieving the desired goal arise, as it reduces fear and concerns related to task implementation (cf. Łaguna et al., 2005). Therefore, hope for success constitutes a significant resource for teachers' professional functioning, which can be reinforced by various factors, including their sense of control and self-efficacy.

The sense of control determines the teacher's subjectivity in shaping their own life and fulfilling their professional role in accordance with their plans and expectations, as well as adapting to changing socio-professional conditions (cf. Drwal, 1995). The locus of control refers to the natural tendency to attribute influence over events and the outcomes of one's actions to oneself or external factors. Thus, individuals characterized by an internal locus of control are convinced that they have an impact on events and results. Therefore:

- a. They will be more attentive to aspects that provide useful information for future behaviour.
- b. They will take actions to improve their environmental conditions.
- c. They will attach greater importance to their intellectual potential, skills, and achievements.
- d. They will be resilient against subtle attempts to exert pressure on them (cf. Domachowski et al., 1984).

On the other hand, individuals lacking the belief that they create their own reality function less effectively, attributing their failures to external obstacles. They are also unable to derive satisfaction from success, believing that it was merely a positive coincidence that led to their achievements (cf. Gliszczyńska, 1991, pp.

72-73). Conversely, the sense of self-efficacy allows individuals to predict events and have the conviction that they can behave in a certain way and achieve their intended goals. As A. Bańka writes, it is “the belief in a person’s ability to control events that concern them and belief in their ability to motivate themselves, mobilize their cognitive potential, and engage in appropriate behaviours necessary for the effective fulfilment of tasks” (2005, pp. 12-13). Therefore, the sense of self-efficacy triggers cognitive, motivational, affective, and selective processes. It is not synonymous with self-confidence, as its foundation lies in the ability to take action based on skills, effort, and persistence (cf. Łukasik, 2013, p. 25). They perceive difficult tasks as challenges to be embraced rather than situations to be feared. Failures, problems, and obstacles do not diminish their sense of self-efficacy because they believe they did not invest enough effort or lacked the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the challenge. They believe that these circumstances can be changed by improving their competencies and exerting more effort (cf. Kościelak, 2010, pp. 62-63). Individuals with low self-efficacy, on the other hand, exhibit low motivation for action, a lack of long-term goals, uncertainty in their actions and decision-making, poor self-awareness of their life situation, difficulties in coping with burdens and stress, generally display pessimism, and experience fear and apprehension in situations that require bold and decisive actions. They may also feel helplessness, sadness, and depression (cf. Łukasik, 2013, pp. 28-29).

## **Methodological assumptions of the conducted study**

The aim of the conducted research among primary school teachers was to determine the role of perceived control and self-efficacy in shaping hope for success in their professional work. The main research problem can be formulated as follows:

“Is there a relationship between teachers’ hope for success and their sense of control and self-efficacy, and if so, what is the nature of this relationship?”

To address this research problem, the following working hypothesis was proposed:

*There is a significant relationship between the hope for success of the teachers under investigation and their sense of control and self-efficacy. As the internal locus of control and self-efficacy of educators increase, the willpower and ability to find appropriate solutions in teaching and educational activities also increase* (Baka, 2005; Koziellecki, 2006; Kościelak, 2010; Łukasik, 2005; 2013).

According to the adopted research assumptions, the hope for success of the investigated teachers (dependent variable) was diagnosed by assessing its level and determining the intensity of two components: willpower and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, the level of these components was determined. Regarding perceived control and self-efficacy (independent variables), their intensity and overall level were established. Normative standards were used to determine the level of both the dependent and independent variables. Correlational statistics were employed to examine the relationships between the variables under investigation. Adequate statistical techniques, such as Pearson's chi-square test, Spearman's rank correlation test (R-Spearman), and the Mann-Whitney U test, were utilized for the analysis of the collected empirical data, considering the nature of the variables and the measurement scales employed.

The empirical data were collected in 2023 among 150 teachers employed in primary schools in Podlaskie Voivodeship. The sample was deliberately selected using a random sampling method. Standardized instruments with high psychometric qualities were utilized:

1. The Hope for Success Questionnaire (KNS) (Łaguna, Trzebiński, Zięba, 2005) consists of 12 statements, including eight diagnostic ones. It comprises four items related to beliefs about strong willpower, four items related to beliefs about problem-solving abilities, and four buffer items. The score obtained is the sum of points, indicating the overall level of hope for success. The possible score range is from 8 to 64 points, where higher scores indicate greater hope for success. Besides the overall score, the questionnaire also enables the measurement of two components of hope: problem-solving abilities and willpower. Results from both subscales can be analysed separately.
2. The Delta Control Perception Questionnaire is employed to assess beliefs regarding the ability to control one's own fate in everyday situations. The theoretical basis for this instrument lies in Rotter's Social Learning Theory. It comprises 24 statements, along with a lie scale, which the participants rate as true or false. A correct response according to the key is awarded one point. The maximum score for the Locus of Control (LOC) scale is 14 points, while for the Lie (KL) scale, it is 10 points. The keys are set in a way that a high score on the LOC scale indicates an external locus of control, and a high score on the Lie scale suggests a tendency to present oneself in an overly positive light. As high scores on the Locus of Control scale indicate an external locus of control, a positive correlation signifies

a positive relationship with external locus of control, while a negative correlation signifies an internal locus of control (Drwal, 1995).

3. The Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) is a 10-item tool that measures an individual's overall belief in their ability to cope with difficult situations and obstacles. Each item offers four response options: 1 – not at all true, 2 – hardly true, 3 – moderately true, and 4 – exactly true. The sum of all points provides an overall index of self-efficacy, ranging from 10 to 40 points. A higher score indicates a greater sense of self-efficacy. This scale allows for the determination of the level of self-efficacy perception.

Among the 150 surveyed teachers, women predominated, accounting for 76.7% of the sample. Men constituted a significantly smaller group of respondents, comprising 23.3% of the participants. The average age of the surveyed teachers was 44.9 years. Furthermore, the average length of service was 18.7 years. Hence, it can be concluded that these individuals possess significant life and professional experience. This is further supported by the level of professional advancement they have achieved. Over half of the educators (58.7%) hold the title of certified teacher, one-third (34.0%) are appointed teachers, and only a few (7.3%) are contractual teachers.

## Analysis of empirical data

When diagnosing the hope for success of the surveyed teachers (dependent variable), both the intensity of this variable and its components, namely willpower and problem-solving abilities, were assessed, and the levels of these variables were determined. The overall index of hope for success, after transformation into standardized units, is interpreted according to the properties characterizing the sten scale. Results ranging from 1 to 4 sten indicate low scores, results from 5 to 6 sten indicate average scores, and results from 7 to 10 sten indicate high scores. The intensity of the analysed variables is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Hope for success of the surveyed teachers and variables describing it (according to the sten scale).

Hope for success	M	Median	Standard deviation
Overall score	5.71	6.00	1.958
Ability to find solutions	6.34	6.00	1.893
Willpower	4.96	5.00	1.962

It appears that the overall index of hope for success among the surveyed teachers is situated at an average level on the sten scale ( $M=5.71$ ). This indicates that the respondents moderately expect positive outcomes from their actions in pursuing their life and professional goals. However, there is a higher intensity of the variable related to problem-solving abilities ( $M=6.34$ ) compared to the intensity of willpower ( $M=4.96$ ). Both variables, though, fall within the average range on the sten scale.

Further analysis (Table 2) reveals that half of the surveyed teachers (48.67%) exhibit an average level of hope for success in fulfilling educational tasks and facing new challenges. Among the respondents, one in four educators (28.0%) stands out with a high belief in their ability to achieve professional success in their teaching and educational work. On the other hand, more than one in five participants (23.33%) are sceptical and do not believe in the possibility of succeeding in their professional endeavours.

Table 2. Overall level of hope for success among the surveyed teachers.

Overall level of hope for success	Results	
	Number	Percent
Low	35	23.33
Average	73	48.67
High	42	28.00

*Analysing the problem-solving abilities* of the surveyed teachers (Table 3), it can be observed that almost half of the respondents (44.67%) are confident in their knowledge and intellectual competence, which enables them to effectively implement their plans and carry out educational tasks (cf. Łaguna et al., 2005, p. 7). More than one in three participants (39.33%) express moderate opinions regarding their ability to find optimal solutions, especially when faced with unpredictable teaching and educational situations. However, one in six respondents (16.00%) demonstrates a clear deficit in these skills.



Table 3. Level of ability to find solutions among the surveyed teachers (data in %).

Level of ability to find solutions among the surveyed individuals	Results	
	Number	Percent
Low	24	16.00
Average	59	39.33
High	67	44.67

*Analysing the willpower of the surveyed teachers* (Table 4), it can be observed that it has a relatively lesser influence on the overall level of hope for success among the teachers compared to problem-solving abilities.

Table 4. Level of willpower among the surveyed teachers (data in %).

Level of willpower among the surveyed individuals	Results	
	Number	Percent
Low	73	48.67
Average	47	31.33
High	30	20.00

It appears that half of the surveyed teachers (48.67%) exhibit a low level of willpower, indicating a limited belief in their own ability to achieve goals and fulfil their teaching and educational tasks. One in three respondents (31.33%) demonstrates an average level of energy for action. Only one in five educators (20.00%) shows determination to pursue their intentions and achieve significant success in working with students and school youth. Willpower will become particularly crucial in the face of their doubts, obstacles, and fatigue in dealing with teaching and educational problems and other limitations encountered in school functioning. The conducted statistical analyses indicate that the intensity of willpower among the surveyed teachers increases with age and professional experience. They become more consistent in pursuing set goals and better prepared for new tasks in the ever-changing educational landscape ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Further analyses aimed to determine the locus of control among the surveyed teachers. For this purpose, the “Delta” Questionnaire developed by Drwal was utilized. It allowed for a dichotomous division of teachers into those characterized by an internal or external locus of control. The overall index of control perception among the respondents is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Sense of control localization among the surveyed teachers.

Variable	Descriptive statistics		
	Mean average	Median	Standard deviation
Sense of control localization	4.87	5.00	2.286

The obtained data regarding the locus of control perception among the surveyed teachers, compared to the standardization groups, indicate that they are at the same level. Therefore, it can be concluded that the teachers included in the study perceive a causal relationship between their behaviour and its consequences.

The conducted analyses (Table 6) demonstrate that among the surveyed teachers, there is a slight prevalence of an external locus of control (54.00% of responses). These individuals do not perceive a connection between their actions and their outcomes. This perception of their role makes them externally driven, focusing their attention on external information, perceiving events as outcomes of fate, luck, or mere coincidence. This external locus of control discourages them from taking action, assuming responsibility for themselves, their personal development, and their students, and exhibiting initiative and independence in their teaching and educational work. On the other hand, the remaining group of surveyed teachers (46.00%) believes that they have an influence on the matters they are involved in. They are convinced that they are the architects of their own destiny, the creators of the educational reality in their school environment. They exhibit greater resistance to external pressure compared to others.

Table 6. Sense of control among the surveyed teachers (data in %)

Sense of control among the surveyed individuals	Results	
	Number	Percent
Internal	69	46.00
External	81	54.00

To assess the self-efficacy perception of the surveyed teachers, the Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (GSES) was employed. The scale consists of ten statements that form a single factor defining the self-efficacy perception (Juczyński, 2001, p. 97). The overall index of self-efficacy, after transformation into standardized units, is interpreted according to the properties characterizing the sten scale.

Based on the conducted research, the self-efficacy perception of the surveyed teachers was determined. The obtained data are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Sense of self-efficacy among the surveyed teachers

Variable	Descriptive statistics		
	Mean average	Median	Standard deviation
Sense of self-efficacy	6.46	6.00	1.740

The obtained results fall within the upper range of average scores, indicating that the surveyed teachers possess an average level of belief in their ability to motivate themselves, mobilize their cognitive potential, and engage in appropriate behaviours necessary for effective fulfilment of their teaching and educational tasks (Bańka, 2005, pp. 12-13).

Further analyses indicate that the group of surveyed teachers is diverse in terms of self-efficacy perception (Table 8).

Table 8. Level of self-efficacy among the surveyed teachers (data in %).

Level of self-efficacy	Results	
	Number	Percent
Low	12	8.00
Average	66	44.00
High	72	48.00

According to the obtained data, half of the surveyed teachers exhibit a high level of self-efficacy perception (48.00%). These individuals are fully confident that they can solve most of the problems related to their pedagogical work if they put in sufficient effort and show initiative. More than four out of ten teachers (44.0%) express moderate optimism and state that they are likely to meet new educational challenges because they possess the necessary knowledge, teaching skills, and significant professional experience. Only a few teachers (8.00%) may struggle with this, as they have experienced numerous failures in their previous work despite taking active measures. They are more pessimistic and have less belief in their success in working with children and school youth.

The conducted diagnosis of hope for success among the surveyed teachers (dependent variable) and their locus of control and self-efficacy perceptions

(independent variables) allows for the resolution of the main research problem and the verification of the working hypothesis. The obtained correlation results between hope for success and the perceived control of the respondents are presented in Table 9.

Table 9. Relationships between hope for success and sense of control among the surveyed teachers.

Hope for success	Locus of control			
	N	R Spearman	t(N-2)	p
Overall score of hope for success	150	-0.243	-3.043	<b>0.002</b>
Ability to find solutions	150	-0.250	-3.144	<b>0.002</b>
Willpower	150	-0.225	-2.808	<b>0.006</b>

The obtained data indicate a negative correlation between the overall score of hope for success among the surveyed teachers and its components, namely problem-solving abilities and willpower, with the perceived control. According to the measurement principles, higher scores in control perception indicate an external locus of control. It is found that higher levels of control perception are associated with lower overall scores of hope for success ( $R=-0.243$ ;  $p<0.002$ ). This means that individuals who are externally driven, focusing their attention on external information, and perceiving events as outcomes of fate or chance, exhibit lower hope for success compared to teachers with an internal locus of control, which signifies their self-belief and the perception of themselves as creators of the educational reality. It is also worth noting that higher scores in internal locus of control among the surveyed teachers correspond to higher problem-solving abilities ( $R=-0.250$ ;  $p<0.002$ ) and greater intensity of willpower, reflecting their determination to achieve set goals and fulfil undertaken tasks ( $R=-0.225$ ;  $p<0.006$ ).

Based on the Mann-Whitney U test, significant statistical differences were found in the scores of hope for success based on locus of control (two groups of teachers were compared: internal locus of control and external locus of control) (Table 10).

Table 10. Differences in hope for success scores among the surveyed teachers based on internal and external locus of control (comparison of groups).

Hope for success	Sense of the locus of control among the surveyed teachers						
	Sum of ranks Internal control	Sum of ranks External control	U	Z	p	N Internal control	N External control
Overall score of hope for success	5754.0	5571.0	2250.0	<b>2.051</b>	<b>0.036</b>	69	81
Ability to find solutions	5818.0	5507.0	2186.0	<b>2.293</b>	<b>0.012</b>	69	81
Willpower	5756.0	5569.0	2248.0	<b>2.059</b>	<b>0.036</b>	69	81

The obtained data indicate significant statistical differences between the surveyed teachers with internal and external locus of control, both in terms of the overall scores of hope for success ( $Z=2.051$ ;  $p<0.036$ ) and its individual components: problem-solving abilities ( $Z=2.293$ ;  $p<0.012$ ) and willpower ( $Z=2.059$ ;  $p<0.036$ ). It was found that teachers with an internal locus of control exhibit higher scores in all analysed dimensions of hope for success. These are the educators who believe that they are the creators of educational situations and that the outcomes of their work with students depend solely on their initiative, involvement, and effort.

Further analyses focus on verifying the assumed relationship between hope for success and self-efficacy perception among the surveyed teachers (Table 11).

Table 11. Relationship between hope for success of the surveyed teachers and their sense of self-efficacy.

Hope for success of the surveyed teachers	Sense of self-efficacy of the surveyed individuals			
	N valid	R Spearman	t(N-2)	P
Overall score of hope for success	150	0.548	7.974	<b>0.000</b>
Ability to find solutions	150	0.460	6.298	<b>0.000</b>
Willpower	150	0.531	7.629	<b>0.000</b>

Based on the obtained results, it can be concluded that there is a significant positive correlation between the self-efficacy perception of the surveyed teachers and their overall score of hope for success ( $R=0.548$ ;  $p<0.000$ ), as well

as its components: willpower ( $R=0.531$ ;  $p<0.000$ ) and problem-solving abilities ( $R=0.460$ ;  $p<0.000$ ). Therefore, as the self-efficacy perception of the surveyed teachers increases, their overall hope for success and success in their teaching and educational work, as well as the variables that describe it, such as problem-solving abilities and determination to achieve set goals and undertake actions, also increase.

## Conclusions

To summarize, the surveyed teachers generally exhibit an average level of hope for success. Moderate hope signifies a limited belief accompanying specific decision-making situations related to their teaching and educational work in the school environment and the fulfilment of specific professional tasks (cf. Łaguna, 2005, p. 8). Only slightly more than one-fourth of the teachers have a strong belief that they will succeed in their work with children and adolescents due to their professional competence and diligent effort in the current realities. A similar percentage of respondents display clear pessimism and lack belief in the possibility of professional success. It turns out that the surveyed teachers demonstrate a higher ability to find solutions than willpower, which denotes energy and determined pursuit of their set goals.

Teachers slightly more often perceive their achievements in work and personal life as outcomes of fate or luck rather than the result of their dedication and sacrifice. The majority of the respondents have an external locus of control, which leads to scepticism and a loss of subjectivity. On the other hand, educators with a high sense of control ascribe their work outcomes to themselves, have greater self-belief, and trust in their ability to act effectively. Additionally, they may be more accepting of higher decision-making risks (Goszczyńska, 1997). They also seem to be less threatened in social situations, displaying greater activity and independence (Krasowicz, Kurzyp-Wojnarska, 1990).

The obtained results indicate that the surveyed teachers possess a high level of self-efficacy, meaning that their educational efforts are capable of achieving the intended outcomes. This self-efficacy will also contribute to a positive attitude towards oneself and dealing with the realities in the educational space of the school, as well as a positive attitude towards students, allowing them to resist weaknesses in challenging moments (cf. Poprawa, 2001) and maintain a sense of agency in creating and implementing lesson plans and extracurricular activities.

As evidenced by the conducted analyses, a significant relationship exists between the sense of hope for success among the studied teachers, described through their ability to find solutions and willpower, and their sense of locus of control and self-efficacy. Stronger positive associations are observed between hope for success and self-efficacy compared to hope and locus of control. It has been established that teachers with an internal sense of control exhibit a greater hope for success in their educational and instructional work compared to individuals who believe that their work outcomes are a result of circumstances, luck, and chance. As the sense of self-efficacy among educators increases, there is a substantial belief in the possibility of achieving success in their work, particularly in terms of finding appropriate solutions and the accompanying determination to pursue the set goals. Thus, the proposed working hypothesis has been positively verified.

Based on the conducted research, negative consequences of the currently implemented changes in the education system can be observed, which restrict the teachers' agency in shaping educational programs and situations within the school environment. This is evidenced by the moderate conviction among teachers that significant professional success can currently be achieved in working with children and school-age youth when one does not believe that accomplishments will be the result of their own work and efforts, but merely a stroke of luck or mere chance. The only positive prospect for the future may lie in the high sense of efficacy among educators, which serves as evidence of their professional competence and accumulated professional experience.

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