The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training, Self-Efficacy, and Work Task Motivation on Meaningful Work for K–12 Public Education Teachers

Alicia M. Kahrs

Department of Community Care and Counseling, Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University

2024

The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training, Self-Efficacy, and Work Task Motivation on Meaningful Work for K–12 Public Education Teachers

Alicia M. Kahrs

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

School of Behavioral Sciences

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA

2024

Approved by:

Shannon P. Warden, Ph. D., Committee Chair

Stacey C. Lilley, degree, Ph. D., Committee Member

Abstract

Over the past decade, schools have increasingly adopted trauma-informed practices (TIP) due to research confirming the negative impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and trauma on children and youth. This study explored how trauma-informed training affects teachers' experiences of meaningful work. The study is based on the theoretical frameworks of Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (SDT) and Bandura's self-efficacy theory, as well as Rosso et al.'s (2010) research on meaningful work. The research used a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent group posttest-only design to measure the impact of trauma-informed training on teachers' sense of meaningful work. Additionally, this study examined the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and work motivation for meaningful work. The study used three instruments to survey teachers: the Teacher's Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), the Work Tasks and Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), and the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI).

Keywords: trauma-informed practices, teacher training, adverse childhood experiences, meaningful work, self-efficacy

Dedication

To Michael – In every step of this journey, you have been my anchor. Your encouragement has been my motivation and your belief in my capabilities has fueled my perseverance. Thank you for being a patient and understanding listening ear, absorbing the weight of the challenges along the way, and transforming them into shared victories. During my moments of self-doubt, you stood steadfast by my side and continued to cheer me on. I am grateful for the sacrifices you made so that I could reach this milestone. Thank you for your selflessness and for willingly taking on extra responsibilities so that I could dedicate the necessary time to this process. This achievement is not just mine; it is a reflection of our shared commitment to one another and the depth of our partnership. You are the reason why my life is meaningful. I love you.

To Educators – The passion that I have for providing a safe educational space for all students stems from the safe spaces that were provided to me by my teachers. To my fellow educators: allow me to express my gratitude on behalf of all the students who may not have told you this before - you make a difference. May you find meaning in every aspect of your work and know how essential you are to your students' lives.

Acknowledgments

I am grateful to both my chair, Dr. Shannon P. Warden, and my reader, Dr. Stacey C. Lilley. They have been an incredible source of encouragement throughout this journey. I was extremely anxious about the dissertation process, but in my very first meeting with Dr. Warden she was able to provide the reassurance that I needed and alleviate my anxiety. She has consistently provided me with affirmation and support throughout this entire process. Dr. Lilley's passion and excitement for learning and academia has encouraged my own desire for lifelong learning. I have appreciated her feedback and advice. Dr. Warden and Dr. Lilley are incredible examples of strong women who, without their prayers, advice, and consistent support, I would not have achieved this milestone.

For my grandmother, although she is no longer on this Earth, she has been with me throughout this entire journey. It was in the hardest and darkest moments that I could hear her telling me how much she believed in me. Those words have lived within my heart for my entire life, and I would not be where I am today without them. Nanny, I hope I have made you proud.

I have been "pressed on every side" during this three-year journey, but with the unwavering support and love of my closest family and friends, I have been able to succeed. To my family, best friends, and closest colleagues: I want to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the times you asked me how I was doing and provided the exact word of encouragement I needed for the moment. I am forever grateful to all of you.

If I had the chance to travel back in time, I would tell my younger self that despite feeling quiet, anxious, and insecure, she possesses a strength and intelligence that surpasses her own perceptions. I would encourage her to have unwavering faith in herself and to never give up on pursuing her dreams. I would tell her that her journey, though different from what she had hoped,

will ultimately shape her into a more empathetic, resilient, and compassionate person and she will become exactly who she was meant to be.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Abbreviations

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

American Psychiatric Association (APA)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN)

Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE)

Self-Determination Theory (SDT)

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

Trauma-Informed Care (TIC)

Trauma-Informed Practices (TIP)

Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI)

Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST)

Chapter One: Introduction

Overview

The aim of this research was to demonstrate the importance of trauma-informed training for K–12 public school teachers in finding meaning in their work. The researcher investigated the connection between self-efficacy, work task motivation, meaningful work, and hours of training in trauma-informed practices (TIP) for teachers. This chapter provides a brief overview of the historical context and theoretical frameworks that underpin the study, outlining its purpose and problem. The significance of the study and its research questions are also discussed. Finally, this chapter concludes with a list of key definitions and a summary.

Background

The study on adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) conducted by Felitti et al. (1998) provided a new perspective on the lasting impacts of early childhood adversity and changed how trauma is understood and addressed in public-serving organizations and institutions. Its findings revealed a connection between early childhood adversity and negative outcomes in adulthood, such as chronic and infectious diseases, mental health challenges, alcohol and drug abuse, unintended pregnancy, and lower education attainment (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023). In the original ACE study, approximately two-thirds of the 17,000 adult participants reported having experienced at least one ACE. The study's major findings indicated that higher numbers of ACE exposures are associated with more negative outcomes. While the original ACEs included 10 forms of adversity, subsequent research has broadened the scope to encompass community violence, homelessness, and bullying (Cronholm et al., 2015). According to the 2016 National Survey of Children's Health, 45% of US children have experienced at least one ACE before the age of 17, with the most common ACEs being poverty and parental

separation or divorce (Sacks & Murphey, 2018). Additional ACE studies have been conducted since the work of Felitti et al. (1998), confirming the connection between childhood adversity and negative outcomes later in life. These studies have provided more knowledge on the impact of ACEs on the stress response system and childhood development (Cross et al., 2017).

Experiencing chronic stress during childhood can harm the development of the body's stress response system and neurobiological systems during the sensitive early stages of life (Hambrick et al., 2019). If a child constantly lives in fear of actual or threatened harm, their stress response system can be activated continuously, leading to elevated levels of cortisol production. This biological response can negatively impact neurological development, affecting executive functioning and emotion regulation (Cross et al., 2017). Executive function includes working memory, mental flexibility, and self-control. The brain relies on working memory to briefly keep and manipulate information, while mental flexibility enables us to adapt our attention to different situations and rules. Self-control helps us prioritize and avoid impulsive reactions, while emotion regulation is the ability to process and respond appropriately to an emotional experience. Executive function and emotion regulation are critical to a successful school experience, as children are regularly exposed to situations in which these skills are required to function effectively in the school setting. Exposure to trauma and adversity during childhood is also associated with adverse school outcomes, such as lower academic performance, higher absenteeism rates, and poor social interactions with peers (Bellis et al., 2018; McChesney et al., 2015).

The educational system plays a substantial role in the lives of children and adolescents, with schools serving as a primary source of support for those who have endured traumatic experiences. Classroom teachers bear significant responsibility for providing such assistance,

including prevention, early intervention, and intensive care. However, this obligation can also result in teachers experiencing compassion fatigue, burnout, and secondary traumatic stress. Implementing TIP in schools can benefit students and staff by providing educators with a more comprehensive understanding of the impact of secondary traumatic stress on their well-being. Additionally, trauma-informed training can equip teachers with effective coping mechanisms and enable them to address their emotional needs. School staff must be well trained in trauma-informed care (TIC) to adequately support students in this regard. Studies have shown that having a reliable adult throughout childhood can reduce the negative effects of adversity on mental and physical health in adulthood (Bellis et al., 2018; Sacks & Murphey, 2018).

Historical Context

When schools first began addressing trauma-related needs, they targeted students with specific disorders like posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression (Rossen, 2020). The diagnosis of PTSD was first introduced in the third edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, or DSM-3 for short (American Psychiatric Association, 1980). The DSM-5 later moved PTSD from the anxiety disorders category to the newly created "Trauma and Stressor-related Disorders" category, requiring exposure to a traumatic event as a diagnostic criterion (APA, 2013). In addition, the DSM-5 clarified trauma as the direct experience, witnessing, or learning of "actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence" happening to a family member or close friend (APA, 2013, p. 301). Providing appropriate interventions for students with this diagnosis within the school setting can be resource-intensive. More recently, schools have shifted from offering intensive services to only a select group of students to providing a range of services to all students along a continuum from prevention to intensive intervention.

This approach became more common after the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was signed into law in 2015, requiring schools to adopt a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) to address both academic and behavioral needs (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). Congress created the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) in 2000 to improve care for children and families who have experienced trauma (2023). The NCTSN has since trained over 2 million professionals and established over 10,000 partnerships to incorporate trauma-informed care into all child-serving systems, including education. In 2014, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) released a guidance document outlining a framework for organizations to adopt a TIC approach. The SAMHSA document presents a set of principles to guide policies and procedures and outlines essential components for integrating a trauma-informed approach into an organization's systems and structures.

Theoretical Framework

To better understand the impact of trauma-informed training on a teacher's experience of meaningful work, this study drew from self-determination theory by Deci and Ryan (1985), self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1977), and the theoretical model of meaningful work proposed by Rosso et al. (2010). These theories provide a framework for understanding how teachers can find meaning in their work, especially when working with students affected by trauma and ACEs. The components of autonomy, intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and contribution to a greater purpose are all important factors in creating meaning in one's work. This study examined the notion that by utilizing TIP, teachers can experience a more meaningful work experience.

Self-determination theory states that fulfilling the three basic psychological needs of competence, relatedness, and autonomy in the workplace leads to higher levels of intrinsic motivation, improved work performance, and increased overall well-being (Deci et al., 2017).

Autonomously motivated employees are likelier to experience job satisfaction, which can contribute to a greater sense of meaning at work. Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy suggests that an individual's belief in their ability to achieve a specific task with an expected outcome is influenced by various sources. Those with high self-efficacy tend to exhibit more confidence in work-related tasks and perseverance when learning new tasks. Cultivating meaningful work is easier when one has confidence in one's abilities. According to the theoretical model proposed by Rosso et al. (2010), work that holds meaning stems from the knowledge that one's actions serve a greater purpose. Educators who have undergone training in TIP possess a more comprehensive understanding of how their work directly benefits their students; such insight can foster a sense of fulfillment and purpose in their teacher roles.

Problem Statement

While extensive research exists on the meaning of work in a variety of occupations, little research has been done on meaningful work for teachers working with trauma-affected students (Brunzell et al., 2018; Steger et al., 2012). In a study conducted with Australian teachers working with students affected by trauma, Brunzell et al. (2018) aimed to understand how these teachers found meaning in their work and identified effective pedagogical practices and workplace well-being as critical factors that increased their sense of meaning. The findings of their study suggest that teachers should use trauma-informed teaching practices to help students affected by trauma and improve their own well-being in the workplace, leading to a more meaningful work experience. Anderson et al. (2022) suggest that further research be conducted to "examine how meaning is made and sustained for teachers working in trauma-affected schools" (p. 175). This study investigated the argument that being trained in TIP and using trauma-informed pedagogical practices will result in more meaningful work for teachers.

Research on the meaning of work in teaching has explored the correlation between meaningful work and teacher resilience, job design, collegiality, and calling orientation (Fouché et al., 2017; Van Wingerden & Poell, 2019). Nonetheless, these studies have not factored in any trauma-informed training that the participants may have received, and thus have not addressed the questions under examination in this study. Teachers who complete trauma-informed training better understand trauma and improve their perceptions of trauma-affected students (Chudzik et al., 2022). This positive shift in attitude is linked to lower levels of stress for teachers and better relationships with their students (Bilbrey et al., 2022; Minne & Gorelik, 2021). However, whether this training also leads to more meaningful work for teachers needs further investigation. The problem is whether receiving training in TIP to shape one's pedagogical practices and better understand the impact of trauma on students facilitates more meaningful work for teachers.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how the number of hours of professional development in TIP affects a teacher's perception of meaningful work. This study included K–12 public school full-time classroom teachers from one school district in a county in Southeast Tennessee who have received varying amounts of training in TIP, ranging from no training to 21 or more hours. Using the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) questionnaire, the researcher sought to examine whether a positive correlation exists between the number of hours of training received and the teachers' sense of meaningful work. The study's independent variable was the number of hours of trauma-informed professional development a teacher receives, while the dependent variable was the teacher's reported experience of meaningful work, as measured by the WAMI. Using the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) and the Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), this study also explored how a teacher's self-efficacy and work

motivation contribute to a meaningful work experience, thereby adding to the existing body of research on teacher self-efficacy.

Significance of the Study

This quantitative study examined the relationship between the number of hours of professional development received in TIP by teachers and their perceptions of meaningful work as K–12 public school classroom teachers.

Both-Nwabuwe et al. (2017) reviewed over 70 articles on meaningful work, revealing 14 different definitions of the term. After conducting their research, the authors identified four distinct categories that define what meaningful work entails: purpose, constituents, fit, and fulfillment of specific needs. Although most of the definitions identified in their study seemed highly influenced by the work of Rosso et al. (2010), the authors concluded that the current literature demonstrates no one accepted definition of meaningful work. As a result, they created their own definition to encapsulate the four categories that emerged from their literature review: "the subjective experience of existential significance resulting from the fit between the individual and work" (p. 7).

In support of the research conducted by Rosso et al. (2010), Turner and Thielking (2019) report that teachers find meaning in work through multiple sources, including making a positive impact on students' lives, improving pedagogical practices, supporting students' learning in the classroom, and forming quality relationships with students and colleagues. Prioritizing and focusing on the aspects of their jobs where teachers find the most meaning rather than the other demands placed on them (i.e., administrative tasks, curriculum, and data analysis) helps them maintain a positive perspective. Finding meaning in work contributes to an individual's well-being. Supporting teachers in identifying the sources of meaning in their work can increase their

work motivation, support calling orientation, and contribute to their overall well-being (Turner & Thielking, 2019).

While it is not uncommon for teachers to report feeling stressed in their jobs, the COVID-19 pandemic increased the demands placed on them, resulting in even higher levels of stress and turnover rates compared to before the pandemic (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2023). The pandemic also had a significant and negative impact on the well-being of students. Specifically, students have experienced adverse effects on socialization, emotional regulation, behavior, and mental health (Schwartz et al., 2021). These findings underscore the importance of prioritizing support and resources for students, such as using TIP in the school setting. This study aimed to show how TIP can contribute to a teacher's work in schools; by being trained in such practices, teachers can perceive their work as more meaningful.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a difference in the meaningful work experience of this sample of K–12 public school teachers based on the number of hours of trauma-informed training they have received?

RQ2: Are self-efficacy and work task motivation predictors of positive, meaningful work for the K–12 public school teachers in this sample?

Definitions

The following terms appear throughout this study, accompanied by their definitions:

1. Adverse childhood experiences – Exposure to emotional, physical, or sexual abuse, as well as household dysfunction between the ages of birth and 18 years of age (Felitti et al., 1998).

2. Autonomy – The ability to initiate and regulate one's own actions independently (also referred to as self-determination; Deci et al., 1991).
3. Competence – The ability to achieve both external and internal goals and to be effective in taking the necessary actions to achieve them (Deci et al., 1991).
4. Extrinsic motivation – Engaging in an activity, behavior, or choice for a reason other than personal interest. Doing so often involves feeling obligated to participate rather than having a genuine desire (Deci & Ryan, 1985).
5. Intrinsic motivation – Engaging in an activity, behavior, or choice because it brings personal enjoyment and satisfaction and is driven by one's natural desire for competence and autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 1985).
6. Meaningful work – Work that holds a positive and significant value for an individual (Rosso et al., 2010).
7. Multi-tiered system of support – A comprehensive and differentiated support system utilized by schools to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, and social/emotional needs of their students (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018).
8. Relatedness – The ability to form strong and fulfilling relationships with people in one's social circle (Deci et al., 1991).
9. Self-efficacy – One's confidence in the ability to perform necessary behaviors to achieve specific goals (Bandura, 1977).
10. Trauma – Exposure to an extremely distressful event and/or actual or threatened death resulting in physical, emotional, and/or psychological harm (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

11. Trauma-informed care/practices – The implementation of policies, procedures, and practices that aim to create a supportive environment that protects individuals who have experienced trauma and prevents re-traumatization (SAMHSA, 2014).

Summary

This study aimed to expand the existing research on trauma-informed practices in educational settings. It sought to provide greater insight into how training teachers in TIP can result in a more meaningful work experience. While previous studies have investigated how individuals find meaning in their work across various occupations, limited research has explored this concept in relation to trauma-informed practices. This study therefore aimed to determine whether providing training in TIP enhances a teacher's self-efficacy and motivation toward work tasks, ultimately promoting a more meaningful work experience. The focus was on a group of K–12 public school teachers who had undergone training in trauma-informed care to better understand the relationship between self-efficacy, work task motivation, and meaningful work.

Understanding an individual's need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, along with their level of self-efficacy, is crucial to their ability to find meaning in their work. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977) provide the foundation for this. An organization that has adopted a trauma-informed approach is based on principles that encourage collaboration, interdependency, empowerment, and support (SAMHSA, 2014). For teachers who have a significant responsibility to support students affected by ACEs and trauma, finding their work meaningful is essential. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between training in TIP and teachers' level of self-efficacy, work task motivation, and meaningful work experience.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Overview

This chapter provides an overview of the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study. It discusses the contributions of Deci and Ryan's self-determination theory (SDT), Bandura's self-efficacy theory, and Rosso et al.'s (2010) theoretical framework for meaningful work. These are examined in relation to the concept of TIP in schools, teacher self-efficacy, work task motivation, and meaningful work. The connections between recent research and literature on trauma and its impact on students, teachers, and the school environment are also explored. Furthermore, important terms are defined and analyzed in relation to a trauma-informed school environment.

Theoretical Framework

The pursuit to examine the significance that training in TIP can have on a teacher's ability to find meaning in their work is based on the theoretical framework of self-determination theory as presented by Deci and Ryan (1985) and self-efficacy theory as presented by Bandura (1977). These theories are directly connected to the source of meaning in work and the systems by which meaning is created. Rosso et al. (2010) reviewed various sources to determine how people perceive work and how it becomes more meaningful. They defined meaningful work as something that holds positive and significant value for individuals. Their research also explored the relationship between meaningful work, personal motivations, and self-efficacy. Rosso et al. (2010) identified motivation as a source of meaning, and self-efficacy as a means by which work meaning is made. Based on the principles of Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT, motivation can be a source of meaning in work when one feels that one's work matters and is significant. According to SDT, making choices and behaviors based on an individual's interests or passion exemplifies

intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000). When one's own intrinsically motivated choices and behaviors at work produce a positive impact, this motivation becomes a source of meaning for work. Self-efficacy is one's belief in their ability to achieve an intended outcome (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy works to produce meaningful work when an individual exercises agency over their decisions, leading to an experience of competency and a resulting positive impact (Rosso et al., 2010).

Self-determination theory provides a basis for understanding human motivation and what drives an individual's choices and behaviors (Deci & Ryan, 1985). Deci and Ryan (1991) proposed in their theory that motivation is reliant upon the fulfillment of three basic needs: "the needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy (self-determination)" (p. 327). The focus in SDT is not so much on the cause of intrinsic motivation but rather on the attributes of environments that either facilitate or hinder fulfilling these needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Herein lies the connection to self-efficacy: one's source of motivation dictates their choices and behaviors. Individuals are likelier to act when they believe in their ability to achieve a successful outcome, which is determined by their efficacy expectations (Bandura, 1977). Efficacy expectations play an important part in one's decision-making process and in how much effort one will expend in any situation. The concepts of human motivation and one's sense of self-efficacy are woven into what makes work meaningful for an individual.

These theories provide the support and foundation for investigating the sources of meaningful work and the mechanisms by which work is made meaningful for teachers working in trauma-sensitive schools. Ideally, a school that has created a culture defined by the principles of trauma-informed care (TIC) should foster an environment that can facilitate meeting a teacher's three basic needs, as proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985). Additionally, if a teacher's

competence needs are met, their efficacy expectations for implementing TIP should be strengthened.

Self-Determination Theory

According to Ryan and Deci (2000), an individual's well-being and psychological growth depend on fulfilling their needs for competence, relatedness, and autonomy. Competence is an individual's capability to accomplish a task with their given resources. Supportive environments include growth opportunities and provide high-quality feedback to promote competence (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Relatedness is defined as a connection to others and a sense of belonging; it is fostered within environments that include collaboration and mutuality and is hampered when lacking these elements (Ryan & Deci, 2020). Autonomy is defined by self-governed choices and behaviors. Autonomy is demonstrated when one engages in experiences of personal interest and value and is thwarted by experiences that are controlled externally via reward or punishment (Ryan & Deci, 2020). According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA; 2014), TIC is based on the principles of "safety, trustworthiness, transparency, peer support, collaboration, empowerment, voice and choice, and cultural, historical, and gender issues" (p. 10). By following these principles, schools can establish an environment that is considered safe, welcoming, and accommodating to the basic psychological needs (i.e., competence, relatedness, and self-determination) of their teachers and students.

The Motivation Continuum

Motivation exists on a continuum based on an individual's perceived locus of causality, ranging from external (i.e., rewards and punishments) to internal (i.e., personal interest; Ryan & Deci, 2020). Within this continuum, four types of externally motivated regulations depend on the degree of self-determination and how it is internalized and integrated within oneself (Deci et al.,

1991; Stupnisky et al., 2018). A value that one considers constitutes internalization, but it is deemed integrated when it is assimilated into one's sense of self (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

The furthest from self-determination is external regulation, whereby an individual engages in behavior because of an external reward or punishment. There is no internalization or integration into oneself in external regulation, and the resulting behaviors are controlled. In introjected regulation, an individual may internalize a demand, rule, or expectation but may not identify with it as a part of themselves (i.e., no integration). In this case, the individual will likely behave out of compliance, which does not exemplify self-determination, but rather controlled behavior. Unlike introjected regulation, identified regulation occurs when an individual identifies with an external contingency, resulting in behaviors based on choice and autonomy. Although still extrinsically motivated, these regulated behaviors resemble self-determination more closely than control. Integrated regulation results when an extrinsic motivation has been fully internalized and integrated into oneself; the behaviors resulting from this regulatory style fully represent the individual's ideals, values, and beliefs. When competence, relatedness, and autonomy are unfulfilled, this will result in responses based on external motivation, whereas responses based on self-determined forms of motivation result from these needs being met (Stupnisky et al., 2018).

Deci et al. (1991) proposed that humans are motivated to internalize and integrate uninteresting activities within themselves to function within their environments, and the degree to which an individual can do this successfully is a direct result of the environment. On the motivation continuum, this is known as "integrated regulation," and it most closely resembles intrinsic motivation, as both share an internal locus of causality (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 72). This is important because increased intrinsic motivation increases work satisfaction (Bukhari et al.,

2021; Stupnisky et al., 2018). When educators opt to incorporate TIP into their pedagogical approach out of personal interest, they are demonstrating self-determination and fulfilling their psychological needs. However, in cases where personal interest is not the driving force, integrated regulation serves as the next-best form of motivation. Although external factors influence it, integrated regulation still stems from an internal source. As such, it is essential to provide teachers with high-quality professional development and consistent support to facilitate the internalization and integration of trauma-informed concepts and practices within the classroom setting.

Self-Efficacy Theory

Self-efficacy is critical to teaching because it can directly impact a teacher's effectiveness (Poulou et al, 2019). Bandura (1977) presented a theory of self-efficacy to explain why individuals may avoid or engage in certain behaviors. In his theory, Bandura (1977) explained that an individual's self-efficacy is born out of cognitive change and experiences over time. A person's self-efficacy is determined by their confidence in their ability to achieve a specific outcome. It is important not only to understand the actions needed for a desired outcome but also to believe in one's ability to achieve it. This belief in oneself can have a strong impact on whether someone will attempt to handle a situation. According to Bandura (1977), an individual's belief in their ability to handle a situation impacts their willingness to try. Teachers have many demands placed on them, such as effectively instructing students, managing the classroom, meeting educational requirements, and interacting professionally with others. If teachers lack confidence in their ability to perform these tasks successfully (i.e., low self-efficacy), it could negatively impact their ability to achieve positive outcomes.

A teacher who is held responsible for being able to identify and possibly respond to the trauma-related needs of their students without being provided support may have a lowered sense of self-efficacy. A school grounded in the principles of TIC would likely sustain a culture of collaboration, mutuality, trust, and collegiality. Trauma-informed teachers may have higher "efficacy expectations" than non-trauma-informed teachers, leading to greater intrinsic motivation and, ultimately, more meaningful work (Bandura, 1977, p. 193).

Related Literature

This study aimed to explore how trauma-informed schools can create an environment that promotes meaningful work for teachers. Drawing from SDT and self-efficacy theory, this study investigated how a trauma-informed school can foster "self-efficacy, self-esteem, purpose, belongingness, transcendence, and cultural and interpersonal sensemaking" (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 108). Despite extensive research on the meaning of work in various occupations, little research has been done on meaningful work specifically for teachers in trauma-informed schools (Blustein et al., 2022; Brunzell et al., 2018).

Trauma's Impact on Students in Schools

Childhood adversity and trauma can lead to prolonged stress exposure, which can have a negative impact on the body's stress response system. What is meant to be a short-term adaptive response can become detrimental, leading to negative psychological, physiological, and neurological outcomes (Larkin et al., 2014). Exposure to chronic adversity and toxic stress during childhood can negatively affect brain development, particularly in areas that are crucial for more complex functions such as emotion regulation, memory, and executive functioning (Perry & Hambrick, 2008).

Most of an individual's brain develops within the first five years of their life. Children who experience chronic and toxic stress, as well as developmental traumas, may have less developed brains in these areas. This, in turn, may contribute to poor decision-making, risk-taking behaviors, lack of social skills, and other areas that are critical to a child's success in the school setting (Perry & Hambrick, 2008; Williams, 2020). Childhood adversity and trauma are prevalent among children and adolescents and have become a "public health crisis" that can no longer be ignored, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). The effects of trauma on neurological development impacts students in the school setting in their academic success, behavior, social interactions, and attendance (Bellis et al., 2018; McChesney et al., 2015).

McChesney et al. (2015) surveyed over 6,000 adolescents to investigate the types and number of traumas they had experienced and whether they had sought treatment through mental health services. The researchers classified the adolescents into four groups based on the types of trauma exposure and frequency. The majority (over 80%) of participants fell into the “non-sexual risk” or “low risk” categories, with the remaining participants classified in either the “high risk” or “sexual assault risk” categories. The adolescents in all groups except “low risk” reported receiving mental health services through school via either attending a classroom for behavioral and emotional problems or being seen by a school counselor. This study and others show the importance of schools providing mental health services to students and for school staff to be aware of trauma (Bellis et al., 2018).

In their systematic review of research between 1999 and 2015, Perfect et al. (2016) noted the lack of school-based research examining the educational outcomes of students affected by trauma. Since their systematic review, additional studies have been published demonstrating the

educational impacts of trauma on students. For example, children who have suffered abuse and ill treatment demonstrate less school readiness, poorer language acquisition skills, and poor self-regulation and coping skills (Bell et al., 2018; Holmes et al., 2018; Morton, 2018). Exposure to ACEs increases a student's risk of behavioral challenges, chronic absenteeism, and poor academic performance (Blodgett & Lanigan, 2018; McGuire & Jackson, 2018; Stempel et al., 2017). Students spend a significant amount of time in their school communities, and these findings support the need for school employees to be knowledgeable about recognizing the effect that trauma can have on students' school-related outcomes. Schools have the potential to play an essential role in the prevention and intervention of students' trauma (Liang et al., 2020).

Impact of Student Trauma on Teacher Well-Being

Teacher Stress and Burnout

Like other helping professions, the rewards of teaching are experienced when the direct impact of one's efforts is witnessed in the success and accomplishments of students. However, along with the rewards come the stressors of teaching, which include**,** but are not limited to**,** classroom management, lesson development and preparation, professional development requirements, before and after school duties, and engaging with parents and community members. As a result of meeting the demands of their job, it is common for teachers to report feeling stressed and burned out (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Additionally, teachers bear witness to the stress that their students are experiencing and must often bear the burden together with their students, especially when they have developed a strong relationship with them (Alisic, 2012).

Teachers have reported feeling inadequately equipped to respond to their students' traumatic stress, physical aggression, challenging behaviors, and social and emotional challenges (Berger et al., 2021; Luthar & Mendes, 2020). Teachers exposed to the stress and trauma of their

students can lead to their own increased stress levels. Unfortunately, teachers may not realize that their reports of sickness, exhaustion, fatigue, frustration, and anxiety are symptoms of burnout and compassion fatigue (Brunzell et al., 2018; Luthar & Mendes, 2020). When teachers suffer from these symptoms, with or without realizing their implications, they experience less motivation, a lowered sense of self-efficacy, and find their work less meaningful (Brunzell et al., 2018).

According to Loomis and Panlilio (2022), it remains unclear whether a teacher's stress level affects their perception of their students' behavior or if the behavior of students directly impacts their stress level. However, when teachers feel that their interventions and strategies are unsuccessful in preventing or improving a student's behavior, it can cause them to feel less competent, which is closely linked to self-efficacy. Competence is crucial in enhancing one's perceived value in tasks, roles, or relationships. A decrease in competence may lead individuals to question their worth or contribution, which can undermine their motivation to invest time and effort in those areas. As per the SDT and self-efficacy theories (Bandura, 1977; Deci & Ryan, 1985), a lack of motivation and competence could contribute to a less meaningful work experience. Ultimately, feeling inadequate or undervalued can drain motivation and reduce the desire to engage in activities where competence is lacking.

Trauma-informed schools that emphasize collaboration and mutuality tend to take a team-based approach when responding to students' trauma-related behaviors (SAMHSA, 2014). Responding to a student's trauma-related needs can be burdensome for a teacher on their own, but being a part of a trauma-informed team can provide accountability and partnership, resulting in lower levels of stress and an increased sense of self-efficacy (Loomis & Panlilio, 2022). In this

way, collaborating with a team can be an effective trauma-informed strategy to mitigate the stress and burnout that teachers experience.

Effective Coping Mechanisms

Teachers can use coping mechanisms to manage stress and burnout from working with trauma-affected students. Forming robust relationships with their colleagues and students and their ability to self-regulate are two effective coping mechanisms for teachers (Brunzell et al., 2018; Luthar & Mendes, 2020). Teachers' ability to use such coping mechanisms has been shown to increase the meaningfulness of their work, resulting in their increased personal well-being. When teachers struggle to regulate themselves when their students are dysregulated, their ability to find meaning in their work is at risk. However, when teachers can successfully self-regulate and model self-regulation for their distressed students, they perceive their work as meaningful (Brunzell et al., 2018).

To support the coping mechanism of self-regulation, it is crucial for educators to prioritize self-care. This can be accomplished by participating in activities such as exercise, mindfulness, pursuing personal interests, spending quality time with loved ones, and setting healthy boundaries. These self-care techniques can help prevent burnout and support teachers in maintaining their own well-being, which ultimately contributes to their ability to handle stressful situations successfully. Along with self-care, establishing strong and supportive relationships is also a helpful coping mechanism that teachers can use to prevent stress and burnout. Creating safe and supportive environments that are characterized by empathy, mutuality, and respect fosters trusting relationships with both colleagues and students. Working with fellow colleagues to address student needs can help leverage the expertise of various stakeholders, making additional resources and support available to both teachers and their students.

In a study conducted by Herman et al. (2018), 97% of teachers reported experiencing an elevated level of stress in their jobs, regardless of their coping, burnout, and efficacy levels. Despite reporting elevated levels of occupational stress, teachers showing effective coping skills, higher self-efficacy, and low levels of burnout were better adjusted. Blitz and Mulcahy (2017) found comparable results, where teachers, despite high stress levels, reported high levels of confidence in their capacity to meet their students' social and emotional needs. The implications of these studies suggest that schools need to provide teachers with training and tools to increase their coping mechanisms.

Adopting a Trauma-Informed Approach in Schools

The current research on ACEs and trauma and their repercussions for students in the school setting has engendered school districts to examine their current policies and practices regarding teaching, student discipline, and professional development (Crosby, 2015). Schools recognize that they must provide the knowledge and competencies that educators need to successfully recognize and address the needs of their trauma-affected students. Many schools across the world have responded to the impact of ACEs and trauma in schools by adopting TIP (Thomas et al., 2019).

Guiding Principles for a Trauma-Informed Approach

An organization that has adopted TIC is guided by a certain set of principles that become fundamental to the policies and practices of that organization. Schools that are trauma-informed would be no exception to this standard. In 2014, the SAMHSA put forth six key principles for applying TIC. These principles encompass the importance of "safety, trustworthiness and transparency, peer support, collaboration and mutuality, empowerment, voice and choice, as well as cultural, historical, and gender" considerations (p. 10). These principles govern how

individuals within trauma-informed organizations operate within their respective roles. These principles can dictate how a school engages with students and families, creates policies and procedures, supports faculty and staff members, and establishes a safe environment. Adopting these principles provokes a cultural and climatic shift within the organization and a shift of perspective in the individuals who are a part of that organization (Dorado et al., 2016).

This shift in perspective is defined by the four assumptions one must make when caring for and working with individuals affected by trauma. First, one must realize that trauma is no respecter of people and has a wide-reaching effect. In a study by Benjet et al. (2016), over 70% of the participants reported being exposed to at least one traumatic event, with over 30% reporting exposure to four or more. Second, one must be able to recognize the various manifestations of trauma in individuals. Third, one must be able to respond to the needs that result from trauma exposure in an appropriate manner. Fourth, those supporting traumatized individuals must refrain from utilizing practices that would cause re-traumatization (SAMHSA, 2014).

Avery et al. (2021) conducted a study examining the trauma-responsive program Reframing Learning and Teaching Environments (ReLATE), developed around the previously mentioned trauma-informed assumptions. The ReLATE program aims to train school staff in trauma to increase their knowledge and understanding of the topic and to better understand its prevalence and impact on individuals. Trauma-informed programs such as ReLATE seek to create safe school environments for all individuals and adopt policies and procedures that lead to adjusted practices to avoid re-traumatization and encourage appropriate responses to trauma-affected individuals (Avery et al., 2021). School staff must shift their perspectives on students affected by childhood adversity and trauma; rather than seeing students as a behavior problem or

labeling them as defiant or disobedient, it is important to recognize their externalizing and internalizing behaviors as symptoms and expressions of their trauma and to address them appropriately (Douglass et al., 2021). In alignment with the guidelines provided by SAMHSA (2014), teaching teachers how to recognize trauma in their students and helping them understand how it is expressed through their behaviors increases their ability to recognize when their students may be experiencing stress or dysregulation. Instead of seeing these behaviors as disruptive or defiant, teachers can understand the root cause and respond with trauma-informed strategies (Anderson et al., 2022). Without this change in perspective, punishments such as suspension and expulsion can disproportionately lead to negative student outcomes (Dorado et al., 2016). Trauma-informed schools do not seek to identify and single out individuals affected by trauma and apply interventions. Rather, they assume that all individuals may be affected by trauma exposure and seek to create an environment that fosters safety, support, and resilience. A trauma-informed school thus benefits all stakeholders, not just students affected by trauma (Loomis & Panlilio, 2022; Parker et al., 2020).

Trauma-Informed Interventions in Schools

Trauma-informed interventions for students can support them in building resilience and serve as protective factors. This is especially important in early childhood and elementary school settings where children's development is still fluid and malleable (Holmes et al., 2018). Trauma-informed schools can also support parents and families by educating them on how experiences of childhood adversity and trauma can impede a student's school attendance, leading to poor academic outcomes and a greater dropout risk (Stempel et al., 2017). Wassink - de Stigter et al. (2022) conducted a scoping review in which they found that factors seen as barriers or facilitators of TIP within schools depended upon their presence or absence. In other words, when

a factor such as support from school leadership is present, it facilitates TIP, but when it is lacking, it becomes a barrier. In their review, Wassink - de Stigter (2022) confirmed five major factors emerging from the literature that play an important role in successfully implementing TIP in schools: planning for implementation, professional development, support from leadership, stakeholder engagement, and school staff buy-in. Of those five factors, the focal point of this study is to investigate trauma-informed professional development for teachers and its impact on meaningfulness in work.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Trauma refers to "exposure to actual or threatened death, serious injury, or sexual violence" (American Psychiatric Association, 2013, p. 271). However, according to SAMHSA (2014), not all traumatic events are experienced the same by individuals. In a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS), various interventions are provided at varying levels of intensity to accommodate each student's needs (Phifer & Hull, 2016). MTSS is a three-tiered, triangular method for addressing students' academic and behavioral needs within schools (Dorado et al., 2016). Schools often utilize this approach to determine which students could benefit the most from the most intensive interventions. Schools utilize several types of universal screeners and assessment measures to identify which types of support students will most benefit from. A universal screener is administered to every student in the school and is intended to flag students who indicate that further assessment may prove beneficial. Those students who fall into this category can then be given further school-based assessments, such as the Behavior Rating Scale for Children (BASC), to identify more specific areas of need for intervention (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). The results of these assessments will inform the decision-making process when

determining which interventions are most appropriate for a student, whether universal or targeted and intensive.

The bottom of the triangle represents Tier 1, including universal support for all students. The middle of the triangle represents Tier 2, which includes additional support for students needing more than what is provided within Tier 1. Lastly, the top of the triangle represents Tier 3, which includes the most intensive and targeted support for students who have shown evidence that they could benefit from more than what is offered within Tiers 1 and 2. Within each tier of support lies three components: assessment, intervention, and support for staff (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). Support that may be included in Tier 1 would be psychoeducation for all students on coping with stress and utilizing self-regulation tools, such as breathing and grounding exercises. Social-emotional learning (SEL) programs are also utilized in schools as a Tier 1 intervention for all students. These programs provide explicit instruction to students on social and emotional learning, promoting resiliency, coping, self-regulation, and relationship skills (Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018). Schools may also provide calming spaces for all students in classrooms where they can take breaks when they feel dysregulated. When students need more support than is universally available, they may receive Tier 2 support. This level of support goes beyond what is offered in Tier 1 and can include specific skill-building interventions targeting the identified needs of that student. Tier 3 includes specific, intensive, targeted interventions for identified students. This can include school-based therapeutic services, one-on-one support with a school counselor, and collaboration with outside mental health service providers (Avery et al., 2021; Bartlett et al., 2016; Chafouleas et al., 2016; Dorado et al., 2016).

Consideration must also be given to the faculty and staff providing student interventions. A universal intervention for faculty and staff involves providing professional development,

support from school leadership, and collaboration with colleagues. More intensive staff support would include specialized training in trauma response, such as providing psychological first aid (PFA) to students who have recently experienced a crisis. Even more intensive staff support may include a system for referral to outside mental health service providers (McIntyre et al., 2019; Reinbergs & Fefer, 2018).

Professional Development for Teachers

A fundamental element for the success of TIP in schools is providing training to faculty and staff. Training provision is the starting point in making the cultural shift toward TIC, and it is essential in aiding school faculty and staff to understand the effects of trauma and how they can respond to it in their classrooms. The topic of trauma can be clinical, so it is important to adapt such training to the audience of educators, making it applicable to the educational setting (Champine et al., 2022). This can present a challenge, but it is essential to support educators in shifting perspectives on how they view their students affected by trauma and childhood adversity. Providing this awareness and knowledge can support teachers in seeing how their work contributes to the greater good, potentially fostering a sense of meaning in their work.

A shift in perspective is critical for a teacher when working with trauma-affected students. Greater awareness and understanding of the root cause of their students' behaviors, rather than seeing them as a personal affront or insult, are key (Anderson et al., 2022; Douglass et al., 2021). Teaching teachers about trauma and how it affects an individual's mental and physical health can also provide insight into why they observe certain behaviors in their students. Helping teachers understand what trauma looks like and how it manifests itself in their students, and then providing them with the tools and skills to respond appropriately, can empower teachers and support their self-efficacy (Kim et al., 2021). Providing training in TIC is consistent with the

guidance provided by SAMHSA (2014), which states that educating staff is a key component of what it means to be a trauma-informed organization.

When school staff have undertaken professional development on trauma, it will often result in a better understanding of the root cause of student behaviors, leading to a shift in how school leaders and teachers approach their disciplinary practices. Instead of utilizing punishments such as isolation, suspension, or expulsion, school staff learn more effective and appropriate ways of managing student behavior (Dorado et al., 2016). One approach that schools take to do so, as mentioned earlier, is the use of an MTSS system. Whereas exclusionary discipline practices are more reactive to student behavior, MTSS adopts an approach that is focused on prevention and early intervention. Dorado et al. (2016) investigated a school using one such MTSS program. They found that after only one year of implementation, there was a 32% decrease in student behavior incidents; this decrease reached 87% after five years. In this way, teaching school staff to identify how trauma is expressed through behavior increases their ability to recognize when students may be experiencing stress or dysregulation. Rather than seeing these behaviors as defiance, educators can better understand the root cause and respond with trauma-informed strategies accordingly (Anderson et al., 2022).

Knowing and understanding more about trauma can also benefit the teachers themselves. Trauma-informed training will often prompt self-reflection and examination into how one's experiences with childhood adversity and possible trauma exposure have impacted their lives, promoting greater empathy for others (Champine et al., 2022; Douglass et al., 2021). Learning about trauma's impact on an individual will often increase self-awareness. This often leads to recognizing the need for self-care, effective coping mechanisms, and sound personal and professional relationships (Douglass et al., 2021). Training provided continuously and supported

by leadership and collaboration will often increase a teacher's confidence in their capacity to implement TIC strategies (Kim et al., 2021). These positive professional development and training outcomes indicate that working in a trauma-informed school has the potential to cultivate meaningful work for teachers.

Numerous studies have examined the outcomes of professional development on teachers' attitudes and perceptions toward TIP (Baker et al., 2016). Many have indicated that participants receiving this type of training show an improvement in trauma-informed attitudes following their training experiences, specifically in their understanding of and response to trauma (Avery et al., 2021; Minne & Gorelik, 2021; Robertson et al., 2021). Research has also demonstrated that when teachers have more positive attitudes toward TIC, their confidence in themselves to utilize TIP increases (Brown et al., 2020; Liang et al., 2020). Minne and Gorelik (2021) report that a positive outlook on TIC is influenced by professional development and can result in lower levels of perceived stress for teachers. What is not clear in the research (and, therefore, the focus of this study) is whether more professional development in TIC results in more meaningful work for teachers.

Obstacles to Trauma-Informed Interventions in Schools

Becoming a trauma-informed school begins with the training of its teachers and staff, but when training is lacking, of low quality, or not followed up with continuous and consistent support, it can present a barrier to the successful execution of TIP (Wassink - de Stigter et al., 2022). Additionally, an absence of support from school leadership, inadequate resources for implementation, or a lack of clarity about the teacher's responsibility in trauma prevention and intervention can all function as barriers to becoming a trauma-informed school (Brown et al., 2020). Teachers have a significant responsibility to address their students' social and emotional

needs. However, inadequate resources can hinder their efforts, decreasing their perceived sense of meaningful work (Brunzell et al., 2018). According to the teachers, high-quality professional development on trauma is not enough to boost their confidence in implementing TIP in the classroom. They also require support, communication, and collaboration from leadership (Baweja et al., 2016; Bilbrey et al., 2022). The guidance, encouragement, and support of school leadership have a direct impact on how responsive school staff are to implementing TIP (Avery et al., 2021; Chudzik et al., 2022; McIntyre et al., 2019). A work environment characterized by positive relationships and collaboration contributes to one's sense of belonging (i.e., relatedness). When leaders encourage this culture, individuals may derive more meaning from their work (Schnell et al., 2013).

According to Unick et al. (2019), when implementing TIC in human service organizations, the overall characteristics of the organization have a greater impact on the effectiveness of the implementation than the individual staff members. This means that to successfully implement TIC in schools, it must be done at the system level and involve all members of the school, not just the classroom teachers. Repeated training, support from leadership, and additional support staff for students are consistent requests among teachers working in trauma-informed schools (Berger et al., 2021; Blitz & Mulcahy, 2017; Luthar & Mendes, 2020).

Finding Meaning in Work

This study addressed a research gap in TIP in schools by investigating whether the amount of time spent in professional development in TIC contributes to a teacher's sense of meaningful work. Teachers are on the frontlines and are primarily responsible for the implementation of TIC interventions with students. When teachers lack the motivation to use TIP

or are not confident in their ability to do so effectively, they may find their work less meaningful (Bandura, 1977). Research indicates that people derive greater meaning from their work when it serves a larger purpose and is valuable to others, referred to as a calling orientation (Schnell et al., 2013; Turner & Thielking, 2019). For teachers with a calling orientation, a sense of meaning could be derived from being able to successfully manage their classroom and teaching practices (autonomy), address students' behavioral, social, and emotional needs (competence), and build positive relationships (relatedness; Brunzell et al., 2018; Douglass et al., 2021).

Based on their extensive review of the existing research on the various sources and mechanisms of meaningful work, Rosso et al. (2010) present a model outlining four pathways through which work is most meaningful. As shown in Figure 1, their research led to the creation of a quadrant consisting of two dimensions. The y-axis is the dimension portraying the continuum between a human's desire for agency and connection, and the x-axis is the dimension portraying the continuum between actions directed toward oneself and those directed toward others. At the intersection of these axes is the creation of four quadrants, or pathways: "individuation (self-agency), contribution (other-agency), self-connection (self-communion), and unification (other-communion)" (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 115). The concept of individuation pertains to establishing and appreciating oneself through purposeful actions. Conversely, contribution entails actions that serve a meaningful purpose beyond one's personal interests. Self-connection relates to actions aligned with one's self-image, while unification pertains to actions that foster harmony with others or principles (Rosso et al., 2010).

Figure 1

A Theoretical Framework for Meaningful Work Proposed by Rosso et al. (2010)

Image removed to comply with copyright

Note. This figure shows the four pathways to meaningful work proposed by Rosso et al. (2010).

The model proposed by Rosso et al. (2010) emphasizes the integrative nature of meaning-making in work, unlike much of the existing research on the topic. According to the model, meaningfulness is not solely derived from an individual's perceptions or sense of self, or solely from their relationships and interactions with others. Rather, it comes from the combination of actions that are based on both self-interest and the desire to connect with others. An individual's motivations for their actions are influenced by their sense of agency (feeling in control) and communion (connecting with others). These motivations play a significant role, regardless of whether the individual is acting for themselves or for others. The principles of Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT - autonomy, competence, and relatedness - as well as the important role of self-efficacy, are woven throughout the theoretical framework of meaningful work proposed by Rosso et al. (2010).

Self-Efficacy and Motivation in Meaningful Work

If employees find their work less meaningful, they may lack the confidence to fulfill their responsibilities and complete tasks, resulting in decreased work engagement (Searle & Parker, 2013). When people feel that their work is meaningful and contributes to a greater purpose, it boosts their confidence in their abilities and enhances their sense of purpose in their job (Schnell et al., 2013). Research shows that teachers' belief in their abilities is connected to higher-quality instruction, improved student engagement and academic performance, effective classroom

management, and overall teacher satisfaction and well-being (Burić & Kim, 2020; Poulou et al., 2019; Zee & Koomen, 2016). The Attitudes Related to Trauma-Informed Care (ARTIC) instrument assesses service providers' attitudes towards TIC (Baker et al., 2016). This instrument includes eight subscales representing the most important components of a supportive or unsupportive attitude toward TIP. One of the eight subscales measures self-efficacy at work, defined as the ability to meet the demands of working with traumatized individuals (Baker et al., 2016). Kim et al. (2021) used the ARTIC-35 ED to assess attitudes towards TIC, including the self-efficacy subscale. Their findings revealed that teachers who received two years of training had higher self-efficacy scores than those who received one year of training or no training at all.

A study conducted by Chudzik et al. in 2022 explored the views and opinions of early childhood educators on TIP using the ARTIC scale. Those who scored lower on the self-efficacy subscale of the ARTIC also reported receiving less training on trauma, inadequate support from school leadership to implement TIP, and limited collaboration with their colleagues. Conversely, those who scored higher on the self-efficacy subscale reported receiving significant training on trauma and feeling supported by their leadership and colleagues. These findings suggest that an optimistic outlook toward TIP and schools providing ongoing training and support can enhance one's sense of self-efficacy in a trauma-informed work environment. This study examines whether trauma-informed training can lead to higher reports of self-efficacy among teachers and offer them greater meaning in their work.

Meaningful Work and Teacher Well-Being

If teachers do not find their work meaningful, they are likely to suffer from stress and burnout (Fouché et al., 2017). When student behavior is difficult to manage, resources and tools are scarce, collaboration with fellow colleagues is lacking, and support from leadership is scant,

teachers can experience emotional exhaustion, burnout, and stress, leading to less satisfaction with their work (Aldrup et al., 2018; Douglass et al., 2021). Trauma-informed schools prioritize providing training, resources, support, and collaboration to school staff in implementing TIP. In such schools, the well-being of teachers is paramount and is a fundamental component of TIC principles (Douglass et al., 2021). Trauma-informed schools that incorporate student interventions and emphasize teachers' well-being may facilitate more meaningful work for those teachers (Loomis & Felt, 2021).

A study conducted by Luthar and Mendes (2020) on teachers in trauma-informed schools revealed that while the teachers recognized the importance of providing additional support for their students' well-being, they did not express any need for support for themselves despite experiencing stress, compassion fatigue, and vicarious trauma symptoms. Teachers hold a significant responsibility for implementing student interventions in trauma-informed schools. However, it is also important to prioritize educators' well-being to prevent them from taking on a caregiving role without addressing their social, emotional, and mental health needs. While research shows that trauma-informed interventions positively affect students, evidence is lacking on whether having more knowledge of and employing TIP in schools provides a fulfilling work experience for teachers (Brunzell et al., 2018). In their research, Avery et al. (2021) suggest that future studies should explore how trauma-responsive schools affect educators' well-being and job satisfaction.

Meaningful Work in Trauma-Informed Schools

Work environments characterized by belongingness, support, and purpose lead to more meaningful work and higher work engagement for their employees (Fouché et al., 2017). When organizations focus on the well-being of others and consider how their efforts positively impact

other people, meaningful work is cultivated (Schnell et al., 2013). Creating a trauma-informed environment can help teachers cope better, believe in themselves more, and experience less burnout. According to Herman et al. (2018), establishing positive and nurturing school environments is crucial for students' and teachers' well-being. This study explored how trauma-informed schools can create environments that cultivate meaningful work for teachers through the provision of training in TIC.

Meaningful work has been found to have a positive association with beneficence and autonomy (Martela et al., 2021). These two qualities can help individuals connect with themselves and contribute to the well-being of others, leading to a greater sense of purpose (Rosso et al., 2010). When such qualities are fostered in a school environment that is guided by trauma-informed principles, it can be argued that it will cultivate a greater sense of meaning in work for teachers (Douglass et al., 2021; SAMHSA, 2014).

Summary

Over the past decade, public service agencies and organizations have increasingly adopted TIP due to research highlighting the impact of ACEs and trauma on individuals (SAMHSA, 2014). Schools are essential in preventing and addressing ACEs and trauma as they are a powerful support system for students (Liang et al., 2020). Teachers are crucial in implementing TIP in schools and determining whether they successfully provide TIC (Brunzell et al., 2018; Luthar & Mendes, 2020). While research has shown that trauma-informed schools can positively impact students, it is not well understood whether they contribute to meaningful work environments for teachers (Brunzell et al., 2018). Studies on motivation and self-efficacy highlight the significance of fulfilling teachers' psychological needs to establish a meaningful workplace (Bandura, 1977; Deci & Ryan, 1985). In addition, recent studies have highlighted the

strong link between teachers' self-efficacy, well-being, and achieving positive results for students (Poulou et al., 2019; Zee & Koomen, 2016). Anderson et al. (2022) and Avery et al. (2021) suggest future research in this area to gain insight into the effects of trauma-informed schools on job satisfaction and meaningful work for teachers.

Teachers may experience negative effects on their motivation and self-efficacy due to exposure to their students' trauma, but receiving training in TIC can help mitigate these risks and support teachers. While extensive research has been conducted on the relationship between self-efficacy, motivation, and student outcomes, the correlation between meaningful work in a trauma-informed school and these factors has not been adequately explored (Brunzell et al., 2018; Loomis & Felt, 2021; Zee & Koomen, 2016). The current research is limited and primarily concentrates on the effects of trauma-informed schools on student outcomes. However, additional research is necessary to fully understand how these schools benefit the teachers responsible for implementing these principles and practices (Anderson et al., 2022; Baker et al., 2016; Berger et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2020). In response, the research questions asked in this study examined whether teachers who receive more training in TIC have higher levels of self-efficacy, work task motivation, and meaningful work compared to those who have less training in TIC.

Chapter Three: Methods

Overview

This chapter elucidates the methodology employed in this study, which is quantitative in nature. The design underlying this study is discussed, and a rationale is provided, along with the research questions and hypotheses that have been tested. An explanation of the participants, procedures, and instrument measures utilized is also included. A comprehensive description of the data analysis section is provided, which specifies the variables under investigation, the statistical procedures involved, and validity considerations.

Design

This study aimed to examine the impact of the number of hours of trauma-informed professional development on a teacher's meaningful work experience. Additionally, it aimed to investigate whether a teacher's belief in themselves (self-efficacy) and their motivation to complete work tasks (work task motivation) have a positive impact on their experience of finding their work meaningful. As such, this study utilized a quasi-experimental, nonequivalent group design. This design was appropriate because the participants were not randomly assigned to their groups, and the researcher had no control over the intervention (i.e., the professional development the teachers received; Heppner et al., 2015; Jhangiani et al., 2019). This design was deemed appropriate to add to the current body of research and to address a gap in the literature examining meaningful work (dependent variable) in teachers who have received professional development in TIP (independent variable; Blustein et al., 2022; Brunzell et al., 2018). A simple linear regression statistical test was used to assess the differences between the levels of the independent variables (i.e., varying amounts of professional development received by teachers)

on the dependent variable of meaningful work, as measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI).

Additionally, correlational research was employed to assess the degree of association between self-efficacy, work task motivation, and meaningful work (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). A correlation statistical test, multiple regression, was conducted to determine whether any positive association exists between self-efficacy and motivation (independent variables) and meaningful work (dependent variable). This statistical test served to examine the proposed hypothesis that self-efficacy and motivation have a significant positive association with meaningful work among teachers.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a difference in the meaningful work experience of this sample of K–12 public school teachers based on the amount of trauma-informed training they have received?

RQ2: Are self-efficacy and work task motivation predictors of positive, meaningful work for the K–12 public school teachers in this sample?

Hypotheses

H1: The K–12 public school teachers in this sample who have received more trauma-informed training will report higher levels of meaningful work, as measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) assessment.

H2: Self-efficacy and work task motivation will be positively associated with a meaningful work experience in this sample of K–12 public school teachers, as measured by the Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), the Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), and the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) assessment.

Participants and Setting

A convenience sample of K–12 public school teachers working in a school district comprised of one high school, one middle school, and seven elementary schools located in a county in Southeast Tennessee was used for this study, and data was collected from the participants in the month of September of the 2023–24 school year. The participants were not compensated in any way for their participation in this study. To be included in the final data analysis, participants must have been employed full-time by the school district study site, holding an active teaching license in the state of Tennessee, working in kindergarten through 12th grade, and having completed at least one full year of teaching. Participants also needed to demonstrate their ability to provide their consent to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

Each participant completed a demographic questionnaire indicating the following: gender, race/ethnicity, highest level of education, years of full-time teaching experience, and current grade-level band being taught. It is important to note that years of teaching experience and level of education have been linked to teacher self-efficacy (Orakcı et al., 2023). Additionally, the demographics survey was where participants could indicate how many hours of trauma-informed training they had received in each of the following categories: district-provided professional development, school-provided professional development, conferences, online and/or in-person courses, or self-taught methods (i.e., books, articles, video, etc.).

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) developed the Teacher's Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) to measure a teacher's sense of self-efficacy in three areas: instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement (Appendix B). After conducting three separate

studies on the development of the TSES, Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) concluded that the final assessment would measure self-efficacy via three factors: "efficacy for instructional strategies, efficacy for classroom management, and efficacy for student engagement" (p. 800). The TSES has two versions, with the longer version containing 24 items and the shorter version containing 12 items. Each item is measured on a nine-point Likert scale. For example, one item in the efficacy for classroom management subscale states, "How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom," and the respondent will answer on a scale of 1 (nothing) to 9 (a great deal; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, p. 800). The highest possible score on the long version of the TSES was 216 points, and the highest possible score on the short version was 108 points. The results can be analyzed by examining the overall composite score and/or by each subscale, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) Subscales and Item Numbers

Subscale	Item Numbers
Efficacy in Student Engagement (SE)	2, 4, 7, 11
Efficacy in Instructional Strategies (IS)	5, 9, 10, 12
Efficacy in Classroom Management (CM)	1, 3, 6, 8

Note. This table displays the three subscales and their corresponding TSES item numbers.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2001) conducted three separate studies to measure the reliability and validity of the TSES. In the third study, participants responded to the TSES items in addition to items on four additional measures examining self-efficacy. The results indicated that both the long-form (24 items) and the short-form (12 items) TSES could be relied upon to measure the construct of self-efficacy. As the authors stated, "The reliability for the 24-item

scale was 0.94 and for the 12-item scale was 0.90" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, p. 801). The assessments measuring construct validity indicated "positive correlations with other measures of personal teaching efficacy to provide evidence for construct validity" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001, p. 801). These findings solidified the reliability and validity of the TSES instrument. The TSES instrument has been used to measure teachers' self-efficacy in several peer-reviewed studies (Hui et al., 2016; Orakcı et al., 2023; Poulou et al., 2019; Shahzad & Naureen, 2017; Yoo, 2016). The researcher was granted permission from the developers of the TSES to use this instrument in this study (Appendix I).

The Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers

Fernet et al. (2008) developed the Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST) to measure five types of motivation (i.e., intrinsic motivation, identified regulation, introjected regulation, external regulation, and amotivation) based on Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT in six different task areas: "class preparation, teaching, evaluation of students, class management, administrative tasks, and complementary tasks" (Fernet et al., 2008, p. 274; Appendix C). Fernet et al. (2008) conducted a pilot study that led to the identification of six main teaching tasks, and then a main study that led to the development of the items and confirmed the validity of the assessment. For each task, the respondent answers the question "Why are you engaged in the following task?" before responding to each of the 15 items on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (does not correspond at all) to 7 (corresponds completely; p. 261). Example items included "Because it is pleasant to carry out" (intrinsic motivation) and "Because it is important for me to carry out this task" (identified regulation; Fernet et al., 2008, p. 277). According to Fernet et al. (2008), the results of their studies "provide good support for the psychometric properties of the WTMST" (p. 274).

The WTMST has been used in studies grounded in SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985) examining the relationship between teachers' sense of self-efficacy and work motivation (Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2018; Tekin, 2016). Fernet et al. (2008) recognize that the length of the full assessment can be time-consuming; therefore, they clarify that the WTMST is flexible in its use and can be shortened depending on the needs of the researcher. For example, the researcher may only want participants to answer the 15 items for two of the work tasks (rather than all six work tasks). In this study, the researcher administered the WTMST and assessed four of the six work tasks (teaching, evaluation of students, administrative tasks, and complementary tasks), giving a total of 60 items. The rationale for choosing these four categories was that they were most aligned with the focus of this study in measuring the motivation of teachers who work in trauma-informed schools. The researcher was granted permission from the developers of the WTMST to use the instrument in this study (Appendix J).

Motivation can be classified on a self-determination continuum, which helps to predict the outcomes of each type (Deci, 1985). Psychological well-being is directly related to self-determination. Therefore, it is believed that self-determined motivation types, namely intrinsic motivation and identified regulation, are likelier to result in positive outcomes at work compared to less self-determined motivation types, such as introjected regulation, external regulation, and amotivation (Deci, 1985). The research conducted by Fernet et al. (2008) to develop and assess the validity of the WTMST has demonstrated that more self-determined forms of motivation are more stable than less self-determined forms of motivation and should be evaluated with specific work-related tasks.

The Work and Meaning Inventory

Steger et al. (2012) developed the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) to measure the experience of meaningful work based on Rosso et al.'s (2010) proposed theoretical framework (Appendix D). This assessment measures meaningful work in three categories: "positive meaning in work, work as a means of making meaning, and the desire to positively contribute to the greater good" (Steger et al., 2012, p. 5). The assessment is composed of 10 total items that are measured on a five-point Likert scale. For example, one item states, "I know my work makes a positive difference in the world," and the respondent answers on a scale of 1 (absolutely untrue) to 5 (absolutely true; Steger et al., 2012, p. 9). The highest possible score on this assessment was 50 points. The results can be analyzed by examining the overall composite score and/or by each subscale, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) Subscales and Item Numbers

Subscale	Item Numbers
Positive Meaning (PM)	1, 4, 5, 8
Meaning-Making through Work (MM)	2, 7, 9
Greater Good Motivation (GG)	3, 6, 10

Note. This table displays the three subscales and their corresponding WAMI item numbers.

Steger et al. (2012) examined the validity and reliability of this instrument in its development, and its psychometric properties have since been found to be reliable in other peer-reviewed studies (Magnano et al., 2019; Paola et al., 2022; Steger et al., 2013; Vignoli et al., 2020). As Steger et al. (2012) state, "Subscale scores were internally consistent in the total sample (N = 370), with α coefficients of .89, .82, and .83 for PM, MM through Work, and GG, respectively. The total MW scale internal consistency was high (α = .93)" (p. 8).

In the development of this instrument, Steger et al. (2012) hypothesized that more meaningful work would be positively associated with intrinsic motivation. This hypothesis was supported, thus providing the rationale for the use of this instrument in this study. The WAMI instrument is publicly accessible and can be used in research when appropriate credit is given to the developers.

Procedures

The researcher began by requesting permission to use the TSES (Appendix I) and the WTMST (Appendix J) instruments from their corresponding developers. The researcher then sought permission from the school district's Chief of Staff to conduct research and recruit teacher participants from each of the system's nine schools (Appendices E and F). After the district granted permission, the researcher completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) application to request permission from the Liberty University IRB to conduct this study (Appendix K). The researcher used G*Power software (Faul et al., 2007) to conduct an *a priori* power analysis for the statistical procedures used in this study. For simple linear regression, the total sample size needed to confirm Cohen's (1988) medium effect R^2 of 0.13 at a power of 0.8 and a significance level of $\boldsymbol{\alpha} = 0.05$ was 55 participants. For multiple regression analysis, the total sample size needed to confirm Cohen's (1988) medium effect f^2 of 0.15 at a power of 0.8 and a significance level of $\boldsymbol{\alpha} = 0.05$ was 68 participants. To ensure that a sufficient sample size was collected, the researcher set a goal to collect data from a minimum of 100 participants. To recruit the participants, the researcher sent an email to the principal of each school (Appendix L) requesting that they send the participant recruitment letter (Appendix G) to the full-time certified teaching staff within their building. It was requested that the email be sent to potential participants on September 11, 2023, with a follow-up email sent on September 18, 2023. A final

reminder was sent as a text message on September 20, 2023 to all full-time certified teaching staff using the school district's communication software system. The window for the survey closed on September 29, 2023. The researcher transferred the anonymous responses from the Google Form survey to a Google Sheet to be reviewed for any missing or incomplete data. The researcher then reviewed the data set to determine whether any participants did not meet the inclusion criteria. Four of the participants were removed from the data set because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Two of the participants indicated that they did not have an active teaching license in the state of Tennessee, and two others indicated that they taught Pre-K.

The researcher used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (version 29) (SPSS v. 29) statistical software to complete the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses of the data set. A simple linear regression was run to test hypothesis one, and a multiple linear regression was run to test hypothesis two. The researcher then utilized the results of the analyses to report the findings, draw conclusions, and discuss the limitations, implications, and recommendations for future research. Finally, a report showing the results of the study was provided to the school district at their request.

Data Analysis

The independent variable under investigation in the first hypothesis is continuous and is defined by the number of hours of trauma-informed training a teacher has received. The independent variables under investigation in the second hypothesis, self-efficacy and work task motivation, are continuous and are defined by the scores on the Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy scale (TSES) and the Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), respectively. The dependent variable in both hypotheses in this study is continuous and is the measure of a

teacher's experience of meaningful work, as defined by their scores on the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI).

The first hypothesis was tested using a simple linear regression statistical procedure. This study aimed to investigate whether the values of the dependent variable (i.e., meaningful work) are based on the values of the independent variable (i.e., the number of hours of trauma-informed training). A simple linear regression test is utilized to model the relationship between two continuous variables (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Cohen's (1988) coefficient (R^2) was the effect size used to measure the statistical significance of the findings at a medium level of 0.15 (Kotrlik & Williams, 2003).

The second hypothesis was tested using the multiple regression analysis statistical procedure. In addition to the effects of trauma-informed training on meaningful work, this study also aimed to determine whether an association was present between the combination of self-efficacy and work task motivation and meaningful work in teachers. In this case, self-efficacy and motivation were the independent variables, and meaningful work was the dependent variable. A multiple regression analysis is a correlational statistical procedure that examines the effect of multiple independent variables on one dependent variable (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019). Cohen's R^2 was the effect size used to measure the statistical significance of the findings at a medium level of 0.13 (Kotrlik & Williams, 2003). The researcher also conducted descriptive statistics and assumption testing for each of the variables and the demographic information (Creswell & Guetterman, 2019).

According to Heppner et al. (2015), this study meets the description of a descriptive field study due to the non-randomization of participants, the lack of manipulation of the variables by the researcher, and its real-world setting. This type of study is characterized by high external

validity due to the participants being taken from a real-world population of interest and low internal validity because the variables are not being manipulated (Heppner et al., 2015). A possible threat to the external validity of this study would be an inadequate sample size directly impacting the power and effect size (Heppner et al., 2015).

Chapter Four: Findings

Overview

The aim of this quantitative study was to explore the relationships between meaningful work, self-efficacy, and work task motivation in K–12 public education teachers. The study investigated whether receiving professional development in trauma-informed practices contributes to a more meaningful work experience for teachers. Additionally, the study examined whether self-reported levels of self-efficacy and work task motivation were positive predictors of a meaningful work experience. This chapter outlines the research questions and hypotheses posed in this study. It also includes descriptive statistics to define and describe the population under study and the results of the simple and multiple regression analyses.

Research Questions

RQ1: Is there a difference in the meaningful work experience of this sample of K–12 public school teachers based on the amount of trauma-informed training they have received?

RQ2: Are self-efficacy and work task motivation predictors of positive, meaningful work for the K–12 public school teachers in this sample?

Null Hypotheses

$H_0$1: The number of hours of trauma-informed training received by the K–12 public school teachers in this sample does not significantly predict meaningful work, as measured by the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) assessment.

$H_0$2: Self-efficacy and work task motivation do not significantly predict meaningful work experience in this sample of K–12 public school teachers, as measured by the Teachers' Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES), the Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), and the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) assessment.

Descriptive Statistics

Demographics

A total of 81 responses from public school teacher participants teaching in kindergarten through 12th grade were received from the survey. Four participants' responses were removed from the final data set because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. There were no missing values in the final data set. After the data were reviewed for missing values and inclusion criteria, a total of 77 responses from public school teacher participants teaching in kindergarten through 12th grade were analyzed. Of the 77 analyzed responses, 87.0% were female, 11.7% were male, and 1.3% chose not to reveal their gender identity. Most participants were White/Caucasian (90.9%), with 1.3% Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.3% Black, 1.3% Hispanic, 3.9% Multiracial/Mixed Race, and 1.3% identifying as Other. Most participants held a master's degree (61.0%), with 1.3% having some college, 26.0% holding a bachelor's degree, and 11.7% holding a doctorate or other type of professional degree. Close to half of the participants reported having 10 to 19 years of experience (44.1%), with 6.5% reporting one to four years, 20.8% reporting five to nine years, 27.3% reporting 20 to 29 years, and 1.3% of participants reporting 30 or more years of teaching experience. Approximately three-quarters of the participants teach in grades kindergarten through 5th grade (72.7%), with 13.0% teaching in grades 6 through 8, and 14.3% teaching in grades 9 through 12. Most of the participant sample was female, white or Caucasian, with a master's level education, 10 to 19 years of teaching experience, and teaching in grades kindergarten through 5th grade. Table 3 provides a detailed summary of the demographic information reported by the study participants.

Table 3

Summary of Demographic Information for Participants

Demographic Characteristic	N	%
Gender		
Female	67	87.0%
Male	9	11.7%
Prefer not to say	1	1.3%
Ethnicity		
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	1.3%
Black/African American	1	1.3%
Hispanic/Latinx	1	1.3%
Multiracial/Mixed race	3	3.9%
Other	1	1.3%
White/Caucasian	70	90.9%
Level of Education		
Some college or trade school	1	1.3%
Bachelor's degree	20	26.0%
Master's degree	47	61.0%
Doctorate or professional degree	9	11.7%
Years of Experience		
1–4 years	5	6.5%
5–9 years	16	20.8%
10–19 years	34	44.2%
20–29 years	21	27.3%
30 years or more	1	1.3%
Teaching Grade Band		
K–5	56	72.7%
6–8	10	13.0%
9–12	11	14.3%

Variables

In this study, meaningful work was assessed using the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI) measurement tool. The descriptive statistics for the WAMI revealed an overall mean score of 40.44 (SD = 4.581). The WAMI consists of three subscales: positive meaning (PM), greater good motivations (GG), and meaning making through work (MM). Positive meaning

refers to the extent to which individuals perceive their work as having personal significance or purpose. The PM subscale results showed an overall mean score of 17.77 (SD = 2.158). Greater good motivations reflect how one sees work as positively impacting others or society. The GG subscale results showed an overall mean score of 13.61 (SD = 1.858). Meaning-making through work reflects how deeply people invest in their work, which can be a source of personal fulfillment and meaning. The MM subscale results showed an overall mean score of 12.13 (SD = 2.061). Table 4 provides a summary of the WAMI descriptive statistics results.

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI)

Assessment	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
WAMI Composite	77	27	48	40.44	4.581
PM Subscale	77	10	20	17.77	2.158
GG Subscale	77	7	15	13.61	1.858
MM Subscale	77	6	15	12.13	2.061

Note. WAMI = Work and Meaning Inventory, PM = positive meaning subscale, GG = greater good subscale, MM = meaning-making subscale.

This study utilized the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) measurement tool to measure the participants' levels of self-reported self-efficacy. The descriptive statistics for the TSES revealed an overall mean score of 86.44 (SD = 10.452). The TSES consists of three subscales: student engagement (SE), instructional strategies (IS), and classroom management (CM). The SE subscale results showed an overall mean score of 27.70 (SD = 4.149), the IS subscale results showed an overall mean score of 30.34 (SD = 3.648), and the CM subscale results showed an overall mean score of 28.40 (SD = 4.240). Table 5 provides a summary of the TSES descriptive statistics results.

Table 5

Descriptive Statistics for the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)

Assessment	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
TSES	77	54	107	86.44	10.452
SE	77	14	36	27.70	4.149
IS	77	19	36	30.34	3.648
CM	77	17	36	28.40	4.240

Note. TSES = Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale, SE = student engagement subscale, IS = instructional strategies subscale, CM = classroom management subscale.

This study utilized the Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST) to measure the participants' self-reported motivation toward four specific work-related tasks: teaching students, evaluating students, competing administrative tasks, and completing complementary tasks. The descriptive statistics for the WTMST were examined to include an overall score for each of the four teaching tasks (i.e., teaching students, evaluating students, administrative tasks, and complementary tasks), an overall score for the intrinsic motivation items, an overall score for the extrinsic motivation items, an overall score for the amotivation items, and an overall composite score for the WTMST. The teaching task resulted in an overall mean score of 64.44 (SD = 11.718), the evaluation task resulted in an overall mean score of 58.70 (SD = 12.566), the administrative task resulted in an overall mean score of 58.77 (SD = 11.684), and the complementary task resulted in an overall mean score of 57.69 (SD = 10.702). The items representing intrinsic motivation resulted in an overall mean score of 115.01 (SD = 23.335), the items representing extrinsic motivation resulted in an overall mean score of 91.83 (SD = 13.657), and the items representing amotivation resulted in an overall mean score of 32.75 (SD = 13.657). The overall composite score for the WTMST revealed a mean score of 239.60 (SD = 38.735). Table 6 summarizes these WTMST descriptive statistics.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics for the Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST)

Assessment	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teaching Tasks	77	35	91	64.44	11.718
Evaluating Tasks	77	15	85	58.70	12.566
Administrative Tasks	77	35	90	58.77	11.684
Complementary Tasks	77	34	90	57.69	10.702
Intrinsic Motivation	77	66	157	115.01	23.335
Extrinsic Motivation	77	41	163	91.83	28.915
Amotivation	77	12	72	32.75	13.657
WTMST Composite	77	167	352	239.60	38.735

Note. WTMST = Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers.

Data Screening and Assumption Testing

This study utilized a simple linear regression and a multiple linear regression to test the hypotheses under investigation. For a valid interpretation of the results, certain assumptions must be met (Laerd Statistics, 2015). These assumptions include linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, multicollinearity, and the presence of any outliers that may skew the results of the statistical tests. To ensure that these requirements were met for each of the variables under investigation, the researcher consulted with a statistician and conducted data screening and assumption testing using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (version 29) (SPSS v. 29).

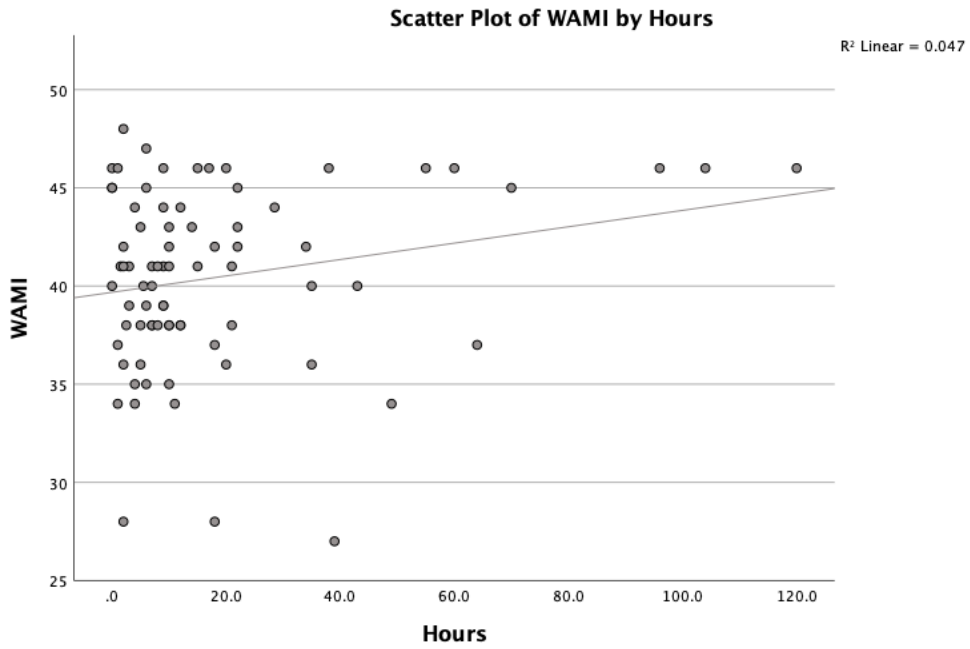
Hypothesis One

A linear regression was run to understand the effect of hours of training in trauma-informed practices on meaningful work as measured by the WAMI. To assess linearity, a

scatterplot of the WAMI results against hours of training in trauma-informed practices with a superimposed regression line was plotted. Visual inspection of the scatter plot indicated a linear relationship between the variables (see Figure 2). Visual inspection of the scatter plot and histogram indicated homoscedasticity and normality of the residuals (see Figures 3 and 4). SPSS version 29 did not indicate the presence of outliers in the data.

Figure 2

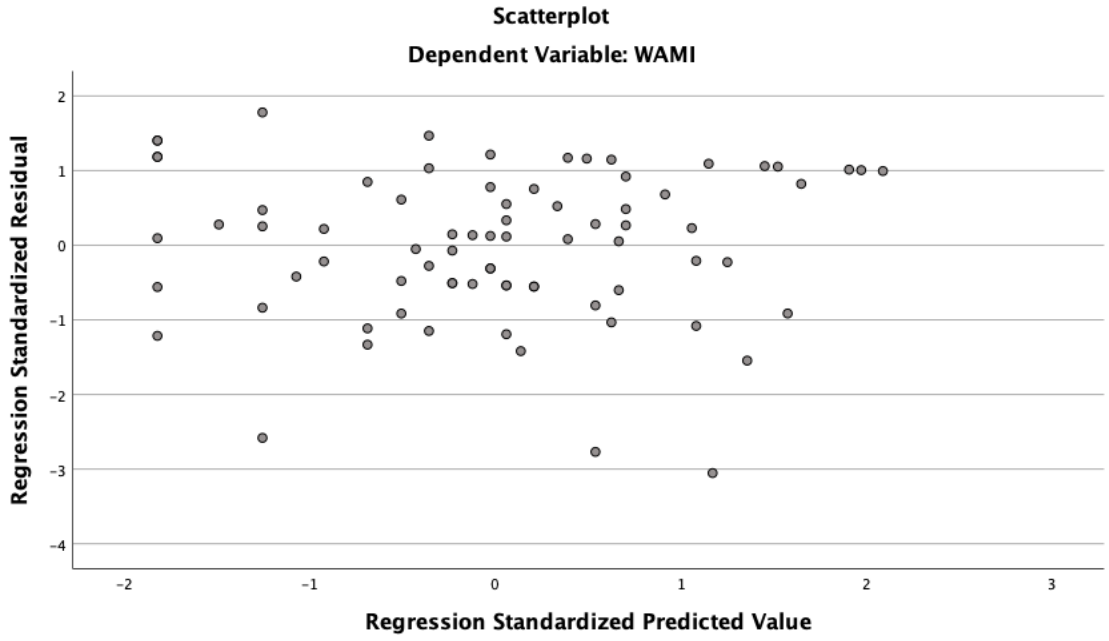
Scatterplot for Simple Linear Regression for Linearity Assumption Test



Note. A scatterplot of WAMI against the number of hours of training in TIP shows linearity.

Figure 3

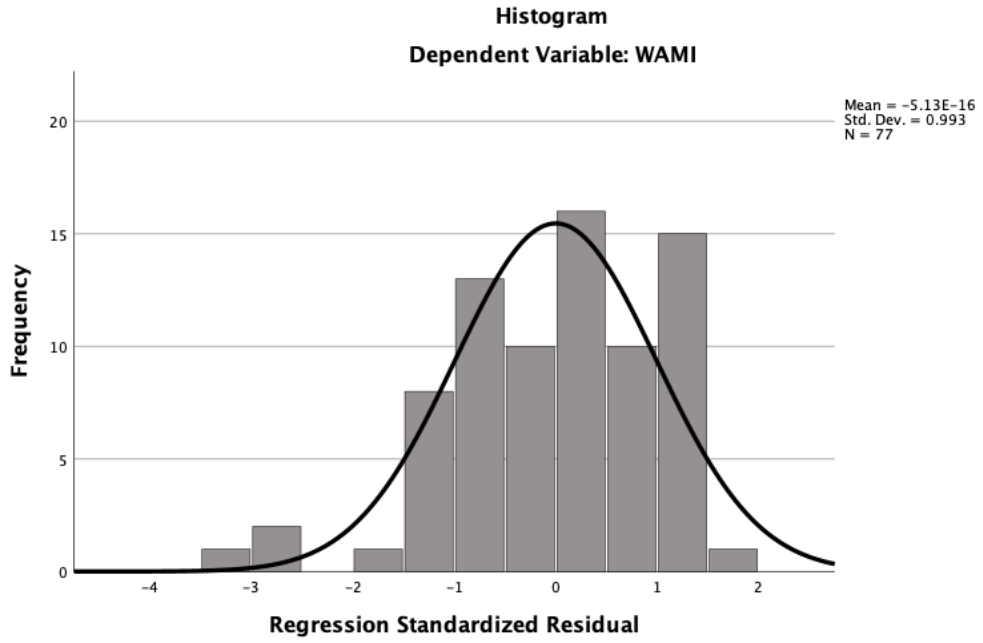
Scatterplot for Simple Linear Regression for Homoscedasticity Assumption Test



Note: Scatterplot of WAMI against number of hours of training in TIP shows homoscedasticity.

Figure 4

Histogram for Simple Linear Regression for Normality Assumption Test



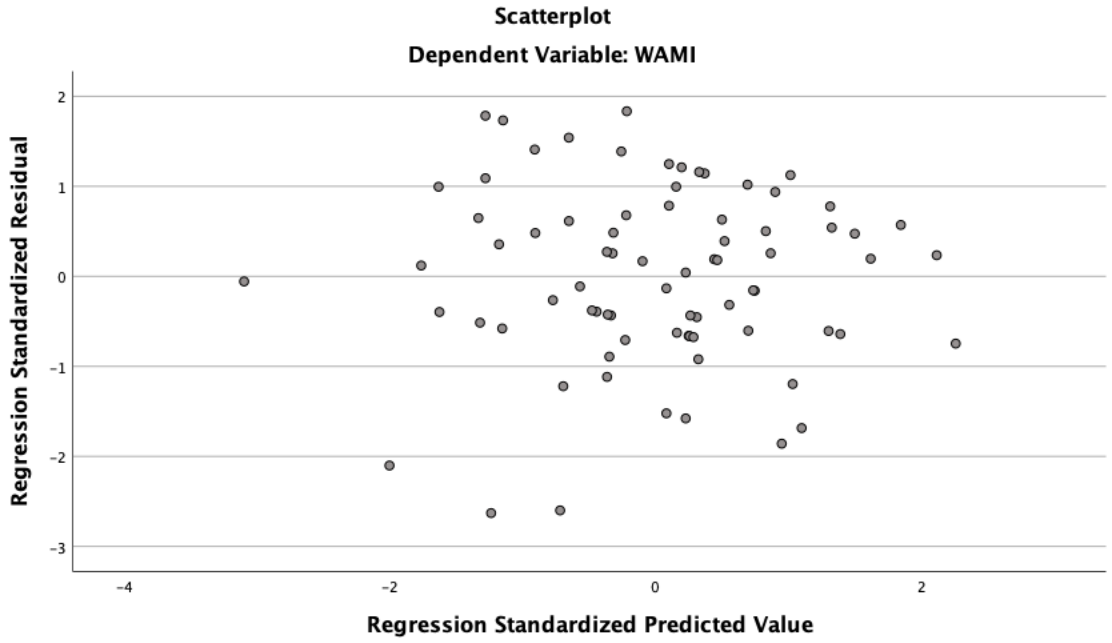
Note: The Q-Q plot of WAMI against hours of training in TIP shows normality.

Hypothesis Two

A multiple regression was run to predict meaningful work, as measured by the WAMI from the TSES and WTMST. Linearity was found as assessed by partial regression plots and a plot of studentized residuals against the predicted values. Homoscedasticity was also present, as assessed by visual inspection of a plot of studentized residuals versus unstandardized predicted values (see Figure 5). There was no evidence of multicollinearity, as assessed by tolerance values greater than 0.1. There were no studentized deleted residuals greater than ±3 standard deviations, no leverage values greater than 0.2, and values for Cook's distance above 1. The assumption of normality was met as assessed by a Q-Q plot (see Figure 6). SPSS did not indicate the presence of outliers in the data.

Figure 5

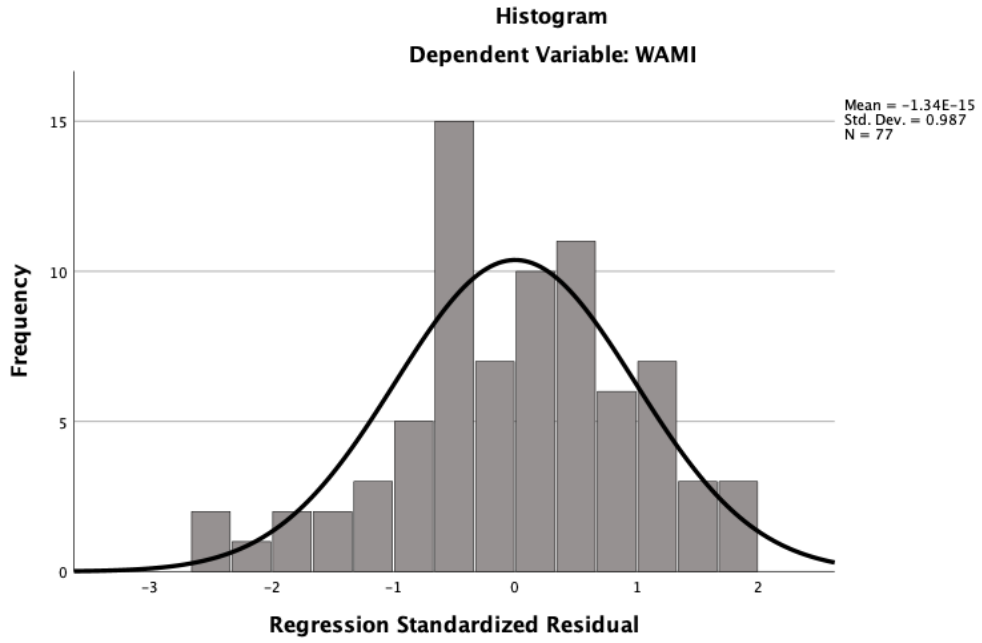
Scatterplot for Multiple Linear Regression for Homoscedasticity Assumption Test



Note: Scatterplot of WAMI (dependent variable) against the TSES and WTMST (independent variables) shows homoscedasticity.

Figure 6

Histogram for Multiple Linear Regression for Normality Assumption Test



Note: Q-Q plot of WAMI against TSES and WTMST showing normality.

Results

Hypothesis One

The results of the simple linear regression failed to reject null hypothesis 1. The number of hours of training in trauma-informed practices accounted for 4.7% ($R^2 = .047$) of the variation in scores on the WAMI, with adjusted $R^2 = 3.4\%$ (adjusted $R^2 = .034$). For simple linear regression, R^2 is used as a measure of the effect size, with a range of 0 to 1. In this study, the R^2 value (.047) was close to 0, indicating a small effect size. The regression model did not produce statistically significant results: $F(1, 75) = 3.709$, $p > .05$. This indicates that there is no linear relationship (see Table 7). The regression equation for this model can be expressed as WAMI = 39.678 + (.042 × hours).

Table 7

Simple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variable	*B*	*SE B*	95% CI for *B*		β	*p*	R^2	ΔR^2
			LL	*UL*				
Model							.047	.034*
Hours	.042	.022	-.001	.085	.217	.058*		

Note. Model = "Enter" method in SPSS Statistics; *B* = unstandardized regression coefficient; CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit; *SE B* = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient; R^2 = coefficient of determination; ΔR^2 = adjusted R^2.
*$p > .05$

Hypothesis Two

The result of the multiple linear regression rejected null hypothesis two, producing statistically significant results ($p < .05$) with a medium effect size (Cohen's $f^2 = .15$; Cohen, 1988). The scores on the TSES and the WTMST accounted for 13.4% ($R^2 = .134$) of the variability in the scores on the WAMI, with adjusted $R^2 = 11.1\%$ (adjusted $R^2 = .111$). The multiple regression model produced statistically significant results: $F(2, 74) = 5.723$, $p < .05$. This indicates that the scores on the TSES and WTMST statistically significantly predicted the scores on the WAMI (see Table 8). The effect size ($f^2 = .15$) produced is equivalent to Cohen's medium effect size of 0.15 (Cohen, 1988).

Table 8

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Variable	*B*	*SE B*	95% CI for *B*		β	*p*	R^2	ΔR^2	f^2
			LL	*UL*					
Model						.005	.134	.111	.15

TSES	.160	.048	.065	.255	.366	.001**
WTMST	-.010	.013	-.036	.016	-.085	.438*

Note. Model = "Enter" method in SPSS Statistics; *B* = unstandardized regression coefficient; CI = confidence interval; *LL* = lower limit; *UL* = upper limit; *SE B* = standard error of the coefficient; β = standardized coefficient; R^2 = coefficient of determination; ΔR^2 = adjusted R^2. *$p > .05$. **$p < .05$.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Overview

The findings of the present study are presented in this chapter. The study aimed to answer whether varying hours of TIP training affect teachers' meaningful work. While the study did not find a direct linear relationship, it emphasized the ongoing importance of trauma-informed care (TIC) in shaping pedagogical practices. Moreover, the research highlighted the positive role of self-efficacy and work task motivation in meaningful work experiences. This chapter highlights the study's implications for the public education sector, as well as its limitations. It also recommends future research avenues to refine our understanding of the nuanced dynamics of educators' meaningful work experiences in the context of trauma-informed education.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how the number of hours of training in trauma-informed practices, self-efficacy, and work task motivation positively influence a public educator's experience of meaningful work. The first research question under investigation in this study was whether there is a difference in the meaningful work experience of K–12 public school teachers based on the number of hours of training in TIP they have received. Providing professional development and training in TIP is a key component for any organization, including a school, to become trauma-informed (SAMHSA, 2014). With training in TIC, followed by continuous coaching and support from school leadership, teachers' confidence in their ability to utilize TIP in their classrooms and support students through trauma-informed interventions increases (Kim et al., 2021). Other studies have shown that trauma-informed training has a positive impact on teachers' attitudes toward trauma, as many teachers develop a more positive attitude toward TIC after receiving such training (Baker et al., 2016; Robertson et al., 2021).

The results from the current study were unable to confirm a positive linear relationship between the number of hours of training in TIC and meaningful work, indicating that in this sample of K–12 public educators, the number of hours of training in TIP does not positively predict meaningful work as measured by the WAMI. However, these results do not negate the body of research that supports the provision of TIC training to teachers, which is beneficial to their pedagogical practices and the relationships they build with their students (Bilbrey et al., 2022; Brunzell et al., 2019; Holzberger et al., 2014; McIntyre et al., 2019).

In a qualitative study conducted by Brunzell et al. (2019), a group of teachers underwent a one-year training program to learn how to shift their current pedagogical practices to reflect a trauma-informed positive education model. The teacher participants in that study reported feeling better equipped to meet the needs of their trauma-affected students as a result of shifting their pedagogical practices to include TIP. Additionally, they reported building stronger relationships with their students as a result of using the skills, such as attachment-building strategies and unconditional positive regard, that they had acquired through their training.

According to Turner and Thielking's (2019) research, teachers derive meaning from their work through various channels, such as enhancing their teaching practices and making learning more meaningful for their students. In the current study, participants scored the highest in efficacy in the instructional strategies subscale of the TSES and in the teaching tasks subscale of the WTMST (i.e., presenting instruction) in terms of work task motivation. These findings support the research that states that teachers recognize the importance of their pedagogical practices and that receiving training in TIP can have a positive impact on their teaching.

The second research question under investigation in this study is whether a teacher's sense of efficacy and motivation toward work tasks are positive predictors of a meaningful work

experience. According to Rosso et al. (2010), self-efficacy and motivation are essential components of creating meaning in work. The relationship between motivation and self-efficacy is interdependent. Intrinsic motivation, which is the most self-determined form of motivation, leads to the fulfillment of one's basic psychological needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985). When individuals are intrinsically motivated, they are likelier to have a higher level of self-efficacy, which refers to their belief in their ability to accomplish a task and achieve a desired outcome (Bandura, 1977). Other research studies support the idea that teachers who receive training in TIP report higher levels of self-efficacy (Chudzik et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021).

The present study's findings support that self-efficacy and work task motivation positively predict meaningful work with a medium effect size of $f^2 = 0.15$, as demonstrated by statistically significant results ($p < .05$) in this sample of K–12 public educators (Cohen, 1988). In a previous study, Holzberger et al. (2014) found that teachers who reported higher levels of self-efficacy also reported having their basic psychological needs (i.e., autonomy, competence, and relatedness) met at work. Self-efficacy is influenced by internal factors, such as beliefs and attitudes, whereas external factors, such as the environment and social interactions, determine the satisfaction of basic psychological needs. These findings indicate a connection between self-efficacy and self-determination theories, which could support the argument for incorporating TIP into the school environment. The conclusions of the current study align with previous research that has demonstrated a positive relationship between the amount of training TIC teachers receive and their self-reported level of self-efficacy (Chudzik et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021). Furthermore, the results of the current study contribute to the large body of research on the role of self-efficacy and its influence on teacher effectiveness and students' academic achievement (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017; Zee & Koomen, 2016).

Implications

Due to the high prevalence of trauma among students, the public education sector has responded by providing support and intervention to students in a school setting that addresses their non-academic needs. In 2015, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) called for schools to adopt multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS) to address both the academic and non-academic needs of students. To expand trauma-informed care (TIC) to all public-serving sectors, SAMHSA (2014) published a guidance manual to demonstrate the impact of trauma on individuals. The last two decades of research on trauma and adverse childhood experiences have led to a charge for schools to respond in ways that are reshaping teaching practices. However, the implementation of TIC and TIP in schools varies widely, from no use of these practices to deeply embedding them into all aspects of a school system (Thomas et al., 2019).

The current study showed that teachers find their work more meaningful when they have high levels of self-efficacy and work task motivation. However, the study did not find any evidence to support the idea that the quantity of TIP training is related to a more meaningful work experience. Instead, the study found that self-efficacy and work task motivation are positive predictors of meaningful work. Other research studies suggest that high-quality professional development in TIC can lead to more positive attitudes toward TIC and higher levels of self-efficacy (Baker et al., 2016; Chudzik et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2021).

The current study's findings suggest that trauma-informed schools should not only focus on the quantity of TIP training provided to teachers, but also on the quality of that training and the availability of follow-up support from school and district leadership. Other studies that have examined the effectiveness of training in TIC for educators found that the positive results were not necessarily due to the amount of time spent on training, but rather, the quality and type of the

training and the amount of follow-up support that was provided by school leaders (Dorado et al., 2016; Parker et al., 2019). These studies produced positive outcomes in teachers' attitudes toward TIC, student behavior, growth mindset, and influence on pedagogical practices. Their findings support the notion that high-quality training is essential in improving teachers' attitudes and motivation.

The current study aimed to measure the relationship between the amount of training in TIC and a teacher's sense of meaningful work. However, the results showed that the amount of training alone does not contribute to meaningful work. In a qualitative study conducted by Brunzell et al. (2018), sources of meaningful work for teachers were identified. Therefore, besides the amount of training, the type and quality of training should also be examined. Moreover, ensuring that the training offered incorporates the identified sources of meaningful work for teachers is essential.

Limitations

It is important to acknowledge that there are some limitations to the findings of the current study. Firstly, the study design, which was a quantitative, nonequivalent posttest-only design, may pose a threat to internal validity. This is because it is difficult to determine whether the results are due to the treatment or to preexisting conditions within the groups (Heppner et al., 2015). It is unclear whether receiving training in TIP predicts meaningful work through self-efficacy and work task motivation, or whether self-efficacy and work task motivation predict meaningful work through other factors not accounted for in this study. Additionally, the type and quality of training received by participants was unknown and not controlled by the researcher. Another threat to internal validity is the use of self-reported data. Respondents may not have

accurately reported the number of hours of training they had received, and their answers to the Likert scale items used in this study may have been biased.

A third limitation of the current study concerns its external validity, as the sample size and sampling technique used may have affected the accuracy of the results. For linear regression analysis, the total sample size needed to confirm Cohen's (1988) medium effect R^2 of 0.13 at a power of 0.8 and a significance level of $\boldsymbol{\alpha} = 0.05$ was 55 participants. For multiple regression analysis, the total sample size needed to confirm Cohen's (1988) medium effect f^2 of 0.15 at a power of 0.8 and a significance level of $\boldsymbol{\alpha} = 0.05$ was 68 participants. Although the sample size collected (N = 77) and analyzed in this study met the requirements for the statistical tests used in this study, a small sample size can impact the power and effect size (Heppner et al., 2015). Furthermore, having a low survey return rate could mean that the data gathered is not a complete and accurate representation of the population (Price & Murnan, 2004). The present study utilized convenience sampling to select participants, meaning that the researcher handpicked the population from which the respondents were drawn, and the participants responded to the survey voluntarily. Moreover, the sample population of the study was not diverse, with most of the participants being female, white/Caucasian, and teachers from elementary grade levels. As a result, this hampered the ability to generalize the responses to the general population of public education classroom teachers.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of the current study suggest that self-efficacy and work task motivation are crucial factors that contribute to a meaningful work experience for teachers. As a result, it is recommended that future research should focus on exploring ways to enhance and support

teachers' self-efficacy and work task motivation to increase their chances of having a more meaningful work experience.

Furthermore, this study examined the correlation between the quantity of TIC training and meaningful work experience for teachers. However, the results showed that the amount of TIC training received does not necessarily lead to a more meaningful work experience. Therefore, future studies should investigate both the quantity, type, and quality of TIC training to determine whether they together predict a meaningful work experience for teachers. To achieve this, future studies should clearly define what constitutes high-quality training or select a sample of participants who have undergone a specific training program. Future research studies could also contribute by utilizing a larger and more diverse sample that better represents the population of public educators. Additionally, it would be helpful to utilize a mixed-methods study design to include qualitative data, which would provide better insight into how training in TIP supports meaningful work for teachers.

References

Aldrup, K., Klusmann, U., Lüdtke, O., Göllner, R., & Trautwein, U. (2018). Student misbehavior and teacher well-being: Testing the mediating role of the teacher-student relationship. *Learning and Instruction*, *58*, 126–36. doi:10.1016/j.learninstruc.2018.05.006

Alisic, E. (2012). Teachers' perspectives on providing support to children after trauma: A qualitative study. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *27*(1), 51–59. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028590

American Psychiatric Association. (1980). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (3rd ed.). American Psychiatric Publishing.

American Psychiatric Association. (2013). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed.). American Psychiatric Publishing.

Anderson, K. A., Haynes, J. D., Ilesanmi, I. O., & Conner, N. E. (2022). Teacher professional development on trauma-informed care: Tapping into students' inner emotional worlds. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, *27*(1), 59–79. doi:10.1080/10824669.2021.1977132

Avery, J., Morris, H., Jones, A., Skouteris, H., & Deppeler, J. M. (2021). Australian educators' perceptions and attitudes towards a trauma-responsive school-wide approach. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, *15*(3), 771–85. doi:10.1007/s40653-021-00394-6

Bacher-Hicks, A., Chi, O. L., & Orellana, A. (2023). Two years later: How COVID-19 has shaped the teacher workforce. *Educational Researcher*, *52*(4), 219–29. doi:10.3102/0013189x231153659

Baker, C., Brown, S. S., Wilcox, P. D., Overstreet, S., & Arora, P. (2016). Development and psychometric evaluation of the attitudes related to trauma-informed care (ARTIC) scale. *School Mental Health, 8*(1), 61–76. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-015-9161-0

Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, *84*(2), 191–215. doi:10.1037/0033-295x.84.2.191

Bartlett, J. D., Barto, B., Griffin, J., Fraser, J. G., Hodgdon, H., & Bodian, R. (2016). Trauma-informed care in the Massachusetts child trauma project. *Child Maltreatment*, *21*(2), 101–12. doi:10.1177/1077559515615700

Baweja, S., Santiago, C. D., Vona, P., Pears, G., Langley, A. K., & Kataoka, S. H. (2016). Improving implementation of a school-based program for traumatized students: Identifying factors that promote teacher support and collaboration. *School Mental Health*, *8*(1), 120–31. doi:10.1007/s12310-015-9170-z

Bell, M., Bayliss, D. M., Glauert, R., & Ohan, J. L. (2018). School readiness of maltreated children: Associations of timing, type, and chronicity of maltreatment. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *76*, 426–39. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.12.001

Bellis, M. A., Hughes, K., Ford, K., Hardcastle, K., Sharp, C., Wood, S., Homolova, L., & Davies, A. G. (2018). Adverse childhood experiences and sources of childhood resilience: A retrospective study of their combined relationships with child health and educational attendance. *BMC Public Health*, *18*(1), 792. doi:10.1186/s12889-018-5699-8

Benjet, C., Bromet, E. J., Karam, E. G., Kessler, R., McLaughlin, K. D., Ruscio, A. M., Shahly, V., Stein, D. J., Petukhova, M., Hill, E. J., Alonso, J. A., Atwoli, L., Bunting, B., Bruffaerts, R., Caldas-De-Almeida, J. M., De Girolamo, G., Florescu, S., Gureje, O., Huang, Y., . . . Koenen, K. C. (2016). The epidemiology of traumatic event exposure

worldwide: Results from the world mental health survey consortium. *Psychological Medicine*, *46*(2), 327–43. doi:10.1017/s0033291715001981

Berger, E., Bearsley, A., & Lever, M. (2021). Qualitative evaluation of teacher trauma knowledge and response in schools. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, *30*(8), 1041–57. doi:10.1080/10926771.2020.1806976

Bilbrey, J. B., Castanon, K. L., Copeland, R. B., Evanshen, P. A., & Trivette, C. M. (2022). Primary early childhood educators' perspectives of trauma-informed knowledge, confidence, and training. *Australian Educational Researcher*. doi:10.1007/s13384-022-00582-9

Blitz, L. V., & Mulcahy, C. A. (2017). From permission to partnership: Participatory research to engage school personnel in systems change. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, *61*(2), 170–80. doi:10.1080/1045988x.2016.1242061

Blodgett, C., & Lanigan, J. (2018). The association between adverse childhood experience (ACE) and school success in elementary school children. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *33*(1), 137–46. doi:10.1037/spq0000256

Blustein, D. L., Lysova, E. I., & Duffy, R. D. (2022). Understanding decent work and meaningful work. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *10*(1), 289–314. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-031921-024847

Both-Nwabuwe, J. M., Dijkstra, M. T. M., & Beersma, B. (2017). Sweeping the floor or putting a man on the moon: How to define and measure meaningful work. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *8*, 1658. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2017.01658

Brown, E. J., Freedle, A., Hurless, N., Miller, R., Martin, C. A., & Paul, Z. A. (2020). Preparing teacher candidates for trauma-informed practices. *Urban Education*, *57*(4), 662–85. doi:10.1177/0042085920974084

Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2018). Why do you work with struggling students? Teacher perceptions of meaningful work in trauma-impacted classrooms. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *43*(2), 116–42. doi:10.14221/ajte.2018v43n2.7

Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2019). Shifting teacher practice in trauma-affected classrooms: Practice pedagogy strategies within a trauma-informed positive education model. *School Mental Health*, *11*(3), 600–14. doi:10.1007/s12310-018-09308-8

Bukhari, S. G. a. S., Jamali, S. G., Larik, A. R., & Chang, M. S. (2021). Fostering intrinsic motivation among teachers: Importance of work environment and individual differences. *International Journal of School and Educational Psychology*, *11*(1), 1–19. doi:10.1080/21683603.2021.1925182

Burić, I., & Kim, L. E. (2020). Teacher self-efficacy, instructional quality, and student motivational beliefs: An analysis using multilevel structural equation modeling. *Learning and Instruction*, *66*, 101302. doi:10.1016/j.learninstruc.2019.101302

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). *Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs): Preventing early trauma to improve adult health.* https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aces/index.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023). *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System ACE Data*. https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/ace-brfss.html

Chafouleas, S. M., Johnson, A. H., Overstreet, S., & Santos, N. M. (2016). Toward a blueprint for trauma-informed service delivery in schools. *School Mental Health*, *8*(1), 144–62. doi:10.1007/s12310-015-9166-8

Champine, R. B., Hoffman, E. E., Matlin, S. L., Strambler, M. J., & Tebes, J. K. (2022). "What does it mean to be trauma-informed?": A mixed-methods study of a trauma-informed community initiative. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *31*(2), 459–72. doi:10.1007/s10826-021-02195-9

Chudzik, M., Corr, C., & Wolowiec-Fisher, K. (2022). Trauma: Early childhood special education teachers' attitudes and experiences. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, *51*(1), 189–200. doi:10.1007/s10643-021-01302-1

Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Creswell, J., & Guetterman, T. (2019). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (6th ed.). Pearson.

Cronholm, P. F., Forke, C. M., Wade, R., Bair-Merritt, M. H., Davis, M., Harkins-Schwarz, M., Pachter, L. M., & Fein, J. A. (2015). Adverse childhood experiences. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *49*(3), 354–61. doi:10.1016/j.amepre.2015.02.001

Crosby, S. D. (2015). An ecological perspective on emerging trauma-informed teaching practices. *Children & Schools*, *37*(4), 223–30. doi:10.1093/cs/cdv027

Cross, D., Fani, N., Powers, A., & Bradley, B. (2017). Neurobiological development in the context of childhood trauma. *Clinical Psychology Science and Practice*, *24*(2), 111–24. doi:10.1111/cpsp.12198

Deci, E. L., Olafsen, A. H., & Ryan, R. M. (2017). Self-determination theory in work organizations: The state of a science. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, *4*(1), 19–43. doi:10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032516-113108

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Springer.

Deci, E. L., Vallerand, R. J., Pelletier, L. G., & Ryan, R. M. (1991). Motivation and education: The self-determination perspective. *Educational Psychologist*, *26*(3 & 4), 325–46. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15326985ep2603&4_6

Dorado, J. S., Martinez, M., McArthur, L. H., & Leibovitz, T. (2016). Healthy environments and response to trauma in schools (HEARTS): A whole-school, multi-level, prevention and intervention program for creating trauma-informed, safe and supportive schools. *School Mental Health*, *8*(1), 163–76. doi:10.1007/s12310-016-9177-0

Douglass, A. R., Chickerella, R., & Maroney, M. R. (2021). Becoming trauma-informed: A case study of early educator professional development and organizational change. *Journal of Early Childhood Teacher Education*, *42*(2), 182–202. doi:10.1080/10901027.2021.1918296

Every Student Succeeds Act, 20 U.S.C. § 6301. (2015). https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/1177

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Lang, A., & Buchner, A. (2007). G*Power 3: A flexible statistical power analysis program for the social, behavioral, and biomedical sciences. *Behavior Research Methods*, *39*(2), 175–91. doi:10.3758/bf03193146

Felitti, V. J., Anda, R. F., Nordenberg, D., Williamson, D. F., Spitz, A. M., Edwards, V., Koss, M. P., & Marks, J. S. (1998). Relationship of childhood abuse and household dysfunction

to many of the leading causes of death in adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *14*(4), 245–58. doi:10.1016/s0749-3797(98)00017-8

Fernet, C., Senécal, C., Guay, F., Marsh, H. W., & Dowson, M. (2008). The work tasks motivation scale for teachers (WTMST). *Journal of Career Assessment*, *16*(2), 256–79. doi:10.1177/1069072707305764

Fouché, E., Rothmann, S., & Van Der Vyver, C. (2017). Antecedents and outcomes of meaningful work among school teachers. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, *43*(0), 1–10. doi:10.4102/sajip.v43i0.1398

Ghanizadeh, A., & Royaei, N. (2018). Probing EFL teachers' job motivation in the light of intra-individual level predictors. *Polish Psychological Bulletin*, *49*(3), 375–82. doi:10.24425/119505

Hambrick, E. P., Brawner, T. W., Perry, B. D., Brandt, K., Hofmeister, C., & Collins, J. M. (2019). Beyond the ACE score: Examining relationships between timing of developmental adversity, relational health and developmental outcomes in children. *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, *33*(3), 238–47. doi:10.1016/j.apnu.2018.11.001

Heppner, P. P., Wampold, B. E., Owen, J., Thompson, M. N., & Wang, K. T. (2015). *Research design in counseling* (4th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Herman, K. C., Hickmon-Rosa, J., & Reinke, W. M. (2018). Empirically derived profiles of teacher stress, burnout, self-efficacy, and coping and associated student outcomes. *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, *20*(2), 90–100. doi:10.1177/1098300717732066

Holmes, M. C., Yoon, S. A., Berg, K. A., Cage, J., & Perzynski, A. T. (2018). Promoting the development of resilient academic functioning in maltreated children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *75*, 92–103. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.07.018

Holzberger, D., Philipp, A., & Kunter, M. (2014). Predicting teachers' instructional behaviors: The interplay between self-efficacy and intrinsic needs. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *39*(2), 100–11. doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2014.02.001

Hui, C., Snider, L., & Couture, M. (2016). Self-regulation workshop and occupational performance coaching with teachers: A pilot study. *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, *83*(2), 115–25. doi:10.1177/0008417415627665

Jhangiani, R. S., Chiang, I. A., Cuttler, C., & Leighton, D. C. (2019). Research methods in psychology (4th ed.). Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

Kim, S., Crooks, C. V., Bax, K., & Shokoohi, M. (2021). Impact of trauma-informed training and mindfulness-based social–emotional learning program on teacher attitudes and burnout: A mixed-methods study. *School Mental Health*, *13*(1), 55–68. doi:10.1007/s12310-020-09406-6

Kotrlik, J. W., & Williams, H. A. (2003). The incorporation of effect size in information technology, learning, and performance research. *Information Technology, Learning, and Performance Journal*, *21*(1), 1–7.

Laerd Statistics (2015). Simple linear regression using SPSS Statistics. Statistical tutorials and software guides. https://statistics.laerd.com/

Larkin, H., Felitti, V. J., & Anda, R. F. (2014). Social work and adverse childhood experiences research: Implications for practice and health policy. *Social Work in Public Health*, *29*(1), 1–16. doi:10.1080/19371918.2011.619433

Liang, C. T. H., Liu, L., Rocchino, G. H., Kohler, B. A., & Rosenberger, T. (2020). Trauma-informed care training for educators: Some preliminary evidence. *Journal of Prevention and Health Promotion*, *1*(2), 240–63. doi:10.1177/2632077020972038

Loomis, A. M., & Felt, F. (2021). Knowledge, skills, and self-reflection: Linking trauma training content to trauma-informed attitudes and stress in preschool teachers and staff. *School Mental Health*, *13*(1), 101–13. doi:10.1007/s12310-020-09394-7

Loomis, A. M., & Panlilio, C. C. (2022). Trauma-informed attitudes, teacher stress, and expulsion decision risk in preschool classrooms. *School Mental Health*, *14*(4), 918–32. doi:10.1007/s12310-022-09513-6

Luthar, S. S., & Mendes, S. H. (2020). Trauma-informed schools: Supporting educators as they support the children. *International Journal of School and Educational Psychology*, *8*(2), 147–57. doi:10.1080/21683603.2020.1721385

Magnano, P., Santisi, G., Zammitti, A., Zarbo, R., & Di Nuovo, S. (2019). Self-perceived employability and meaningful work: The mediating role of courage on quality of life. *Sustainability*, *11*(3), 764. doi:10.3390/su11030764

Martela, F., Gómez, M. S., Unanue, W., Araya, S., Bravo, D., & Espejo, A. (2021). What makes work meaningful? Longitudinal evidence for the importance of autonomy and beneficence for meaningful work. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *131*, 103631. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103631

McChesney, G., Adamson, G., & Shevlin, M. (2015). Service use patterns and mental health symptoms among adolescents exposed to multiple types of trauma. *Journal of Adolescence*, *40*(1), 1–10. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2015.01.003

McGuire, A., & Jackson, Y. (2018). A multilevel meta-analysis on academic achievement among maltreated youth. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *21*(4), 450–65. doi:10.1007/s10567-018-0265-6

McIntyre, E., Baker, C., & Overstreet, S. (2019). Evaluating foundational professional development training for trauma-informed approaches in schools. *Psychological Services*, *16*(1), 95–102. doi:10.1037/ser0000312

Minne, E., & Gorelik, G. (2021). The protective role of trauma informed attitudes on perceived stress among teachers and school staff. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, *15*, 275–83. doi:10.1007/s40653-021-00389-3

Morton, B. M. (2018). The grip of trauma: How trauma disrupts the academic aspirations of foster youth. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, *75*, 73–81. doi:10.1016/j.chiabu.2017.04.021

Orakcı, Ş., Göksu, D. Y., & Karagöz, S. (2023). A mixed methods study of the teachers' self-efficacy views and their ability to improve self-efficacy beliefs during teaching. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 1035829. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1035829

Paola, M., Rita, Z., & Giuseppe, S. (2022). Evaluating meaningful work: Psychometric properties of the work and meaning inventory (WAMI) in Italian context. *Current Psychology*, *42*, 12756–67. doi:10.1007/s12144-021-02503-y

Parker, J. D., Olson, S., & Bunde, J. (2020). The impact of trauma-based training on educators. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, *13*(2), 217–27. doi:10.1007/s40653-019-00261-5

Perfect, M. M., Turley, M. D., Carlson, J. E., Yohanna, J., & Gilles, M. P. S. (2016). School-related outcomes of traumatic event exposure and traumatic stress symptoms in students: A systematic review of research from 1990 to 2015. *School Mental Health*, *8*(1), 7–43. doi:10.1007/s12310-016-9175-2

Perry, B. D., & Hambrick, E. P. (2008). The neurosequential model of therapeutics. *Reclaiming Children and Youth, 17*(3), 38–43. https://www.bdperry.com/_files/ugd/5cebf2_08901cf61a4342818d7ae15117ad9629.pdf

Phifer, L. W., & Hull, R. (2016). Helping students heal: Observations of trauma-informed practices in the schools. *School Mental Health*, *8*(1), 201–5. doi:10.1007/s12310-016-9183-2

Poulou, M., Reddy, L. A., & Dudek, C. M. (2019). Relation of teacher self-efficacy and classroom practices: A preliminary investigation. *School Psychology International*, *40*(1), 25–48. doi:10.1177/0143034318798045

Price, J. H., & Murnan, J. (2004). Research limitations and the necessity of reporting them. *American Journal of Health Education*, *35*(2), 66–7. https://doi.org/10.1080/19325037.2004.10603611

Reinbergs, E. J., & Fefer, S. A. (2018). Addressing trauma in schools: Multitiered service delivery options for practitioners. *Psychology in the Schools*, *55*(3), 250–63. doi:10.1002/pits.22105

Robertson, H., Goodall, K., & Kay, D. (2021). Teachers' attitudes toward trauma-informed practice: Associations with attachment and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). *Psychology of Education Review*, *45*(2), 62–74. doi:10.53841/bpsper.2021.45.2.62

Rones, M., & Hoagwood, K. (2000). School-based mental health services: A research review. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, *3*(4), 223–41. https://doi.org/10.1023/a:1026425104386

Rossen, E. (2020). Supporting and educating traumatized students (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Rosso, B. D., Dekas, K., & Wrzesniewski, A. (2010). On the meaning of work: A theoretical integration and review. *Research in Organizational Behavior*, *30*, 91–127. doi:10.1016/j.riob.2010.09.001

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, *55*(1), 68–78. https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2020). Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation from a self-determination theory perspective: Definitions, theory, practices, and future directions. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *61*, 101860. doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860

Sacks, V., & Murphey, D. (2018). The prevalence of adverse childhood experiences, nationally, by state, and by race or ethnicity. https://www.childtrends.org/publications/prevalence-adverse-childhood-experiences-nationally-state-race-ethnicity

Schnell, T., Höge, T., & Pollet, E. (2013). Predicting meaning in work: Theory, data, implications. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *8*(6), 543–54. doi:10.1080/17439760.2013.830763

Schwartz, K. D., Exner-Cortens, D., McMorris, C. A., Makarenko, E., Arnold, P. M., Conde, C. F., Williams, S., & Canfield, R. (2021). COVID-19 and student well-being: Stress and mental health during return-to-school. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, *36*(2), 166–85. doi:10.1177/08295735211001653

Searle, B. J., & Parker, S. K. (2013). Work design and happiness: An active, reciprocal perspective. In I. Boniwell, S. A. David, & A. C. Ayers (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Happiness* (pp. 711–32). Oxford University Press.

Shahzad, K., & Naureen, S. (2017). Impact of teacher self-efficacy on secondary school students' academic achievement. *Journal of Education and Educational Development*, *4*(1), 48–72. doi:10.22555/joeed.v4i1.1050

Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *20*(3), 322–37. doi:10.1177/1069072711436160

Steger, M. F., Littman-Ovadia, H., Miller, M., Menger, L. M., & Rothmann, S. (2013). Engaging in work even when it is meaningless. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *21*(2), 348–61. doi:10.1177/1069072712471517

Steiner, E. D., & Woo, A. (2021). *Job-related stress threatens the teacher supply*. RAND Corporation. doi:10.7249/RRA1108-1

Stempel, H., Cox-Martin, M., Bronsert, M., Dickinson, L. M., & Allison, M. A. (2017). Chronic school absenteeism and the role of adverse childhood experiences. *Academic Pediatrics*, *17*(8), 837–43. doi:10.1016/j.acap.2017.09.013

Stupnisky, R. H., BrckaLorenz, A., Yuhas, B., & Guay, F. (2018). Faculty members' motivation for teaching and best practices: Testing a model based on self-determination theory across institution types. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *53*, 15–26. doi:10.1016/j.cedpsych.2018.01.004

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). (2014). *SAMHSA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach* (No. 14–4884). Department of Health and Human Services. http://store.samhsa.gov

Tekin, A. (2016). Autonomous motivation of Omani early childhood pre-service teachers for teaching. *Early Child Development and Care*, *186*(7), 1096–1109. doi:10.1080/03004430.2015.1076401

Thomas, M. S., Crosby, S. D., & Vanderhaar, J. (2019). Trauma-informed practices in schools across two decades: An interdisciplinary review of research. *Review of Research in Education*, *43*(1), 422–52. doi:10.3102/0091732x18821123

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *17*(7), 783–805. doi:10.1016/s0742-051x(01)00036-1

Turner, K., & Thielking, M. (2019). How teachers find meaning in their work and effects on their pedagogical practice. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *44*(9), 5. doi:10.14221/ajte.2019v44n9.5

Unick, G. J., Bassuk, E. L., Richard, M. K., & Paquette, K. (2019). Organizational trauma-informed care: Associations with individual and agency factors. *Psychological Services*, *16*(1), 134–42. doi:10.1037/ser0000299

Van Wingerden, J., & Poell, R. F. (2019). Meaningful work and resilience among teachers: The mediating role of work engagement and job crafting. *PLOS ONE*, *14*(9), e0222518. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0222518

Vignoli, E., Prudhomme, N., Terriot, K., Cohen-Scali, V., Arnoux-Nicolas, C., Bernaud, J., & Lallemand, N. (2020). Decent work in France: Context, conceptualization, and assessment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *116*, 103345. doi:10.1016/j.jvb.2019.103345

Wassink - de Stigter, R., Kooijmans, R., Asselman, M. W., Offerman, E. C. P., Nelen, W. L., & Helmond, P. (2022). Facilitators and barriers in the implementation of trauma-informed approaches in schools: A scoping review. *School Mental Health*, *14*(3), 470–84. doi:10.1007/s12310-021-09496-w

Williams, A. (2020). Early childhood trauma impact on adolescent brain development, decision making abilities, and delinquent behaviors: Policy implications for juveniles tried in adult court systems. *Juvenile and Family Court Journal, 71*(1), 5–17. https://doi.org/10.1111/jfcj.12157

Yoo, J. H. (2016). The effect of professional development on teacher efficacy and teachers' self-analysis of their efficacy change. *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, *18*(1), 84–94. doi:10.1515/jtes-2016-0007

Zee, M., & Koomen, H. M. (2016). Teacher self-efficacy and its effects on classroom processes, student academic adjustment, and teacher well-being. *Review of Educational Research*, *86*(4), 981–1015. doi:10.3102/0034654315626801

Appendix A: Demographics Survey

Demographics Questionnaire

Please provide the following information:

1. **What is your gender?**

   Male

   Female

   Non-binary

   Prefer not to answer

2. **What is your ethnic or racial background? (Select all that apply)**

   White/Caucasian

   Black/African American

   Hispanic/Latinx

   Asian/Pacific Islander

   Native American/Indigenous

   Multiracial/Mixed race

   Other

3. **What is your highest level of education completed?**

   High school diploma or equivalent

   Some college or trade school

   Bachelor's degree

   Master's degree

   Doctorate or professional degree

4. **Do you currently hold an active teaching license in the state of Tennessee?**

Yes

No

5. **At the beginning of the 2023–2024 school year, how many years of teaching experience will you have completed?**

   Less than 1 year

   1 to 4 years

   5 to 9 years

   10 to 19 years

   20 to 29 years

   30 years or more

6. **For the 2023–2024 school year, in which grade level band are you assigned to teach?**

   Pre-K

   K–5

   6–8

   9–12

7. **For the 2023–2024 school year, which of the following best describes your role in the school district?**

   Special education classroom teacher

   General education classroom teacher

   School-level administrator

   District-level administrator

   Paraprofessional

   School support staff

None of the above

8. **Please indicate the total number of hours of training you have received in trauma-informed practices (TIP) in each of the following categories. Provide your answers in whole number amounts.**

   District-level professional development sessions

   School-level professional development sessions

   Conferences

   Online and/or in-person courses

   Self-taught methods (i.e., books, articles, videos)

Appendix B: Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale

Removed to comply with copyright

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *17*(7), 783–805. doi:10.1016/s0742-051x(01)00036-1

Appendix C: The Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers

Removed to comply with copyright

Fernet, C., Senécal, C., Guay, F., Marsh, H. W., & Dowson, M. (2008). The work tasks motivation scale for teachers (WTMST). *Journal of Career Assessment*, *16*(2), 256–79. doi:10.1177/1069072707305764

Appendix D: The Work and Meaning Inventory

Removed to comply with copyright

Steger, M. F., Dik, B. J., & Duffy, R. D. (2012). Measuring meaningful work. *Journal of Career Assessment*, *20*(3), 322–37. doi:10.1177/1069072711436160

Appendix E: School District Permission Request Letter

July 31, 2023
Dr. [redacted]
Chief of Staff
[redacted]

Dear Dr. [redacted],

As a graduate student in the School of Behavioral Sciences and the Department of Community Care & Counseling at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The title of my research project is The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training on Work Meaningfulness for K–12 Public Education Teachers, and the purpose of my research is to evaluate how trauma-informed professional development affects a teacher's perception of meaningful work.

I am writing to request your permission to conduct my research in [redacted] and to utilize its teachers to recruit participants for my research.

Participants will be asked to complete a demographics survey and the following three research-based surveys: the Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), and the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI). Participants will be presented with informed consent information prior to participating. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please provide a signed statement on official letterhead indicating your approval. If you would like to request a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication, please indicate that in your response.

You may send the permission letter to my email address at [redacted] or to my home address at [redacted].

Sincerely,
Alicia Kahrs

Appendix F: Permission Consent from School District

[redacted]

08/04/23

Mrs. Kahrs:

You have permission to conduct research in [redacted] and utilize its teachers to recruit participants for my research.

It is our understanding that participants will be asked to complete a demographics survey and the following three research-based surveys: The Work Tasks Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST), the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), and the Work and Meaning Inventory (WAMI). Prior to participation, staff will be presented with informed consent information. Furthermore, [redacted]' staff who take part in this study are doing so on a completely voluntary basis, and participants are welcome to discontinue participation at any time.

[redacted] requests a copy of the results upon study completion and/or publication. I wish you the best in your endeavors as you conduct your research.

[redacted], Ed. D.
Chief of Staff

Appendix G: Participant Recruitment Letter

Dear Potential Participant,

As a doctoral candidate in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The purpose of my research is to assess the effect of trauma-informed professional development on a teacher's perception of the significance of their work, and I am writing to invite you to join my study.

Participants must hold an active teaching license and provide direct instruction to students in either the special education or general education settings in grades K through 12. Participants must have at least one full year of teaching experience and have received at least one hour of training in trauma-informed practices (TIP). Participants will be asked to take an anonymous online survey that includes a demographic questionnaire and three research-based survey instruments. It should take approximately 15 minutes to complete the procedures listed. Participation will be completely anonymous, and no personal, identifying information will be collected.

To participate, please click here to complete the surveys.

A consent document is provided on the first page of the survey. The consent document contains additional information about my research.

Because participation is anonymous, you do not need to sign and return the consent document unless you would prefer to do so. After you have read the consent form, please click the link to proceed with the survey. Doing so will indicate that you have read the consent information and would like to take part in the study.

Sincerely,
Alicia Kahrs
Liberty University
[redacted]

Appendix H: Participant Study Information Sheet

Study Information Sheet

Title of the Project: The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training on Work Meaningfulness for K–12 Public Education Teachers

Principal Investigator: Alicia Kahrs, Doctoral Candidate, School of Behavioral Sciences, Liberty University

Invitation to be Part of a Research Study

You are invited to participate in a research study. To participate, you must hold an active teaching license and provide direct instruction to students in either the special education or general education settings in grades K through 12. Participants must have at least one full year of teaching experience and have received at least one hour of training in trauma-informed practices (TIP). Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research.

What is the study about, and why is it being done?

The purpose of the study is to assess the effect of trauma-informed professional development on a teacher's perception of the significance of their work. This study will also investigate the relationship between self-efficacy and motivation for finding meaning in working as a teacher.

What will happen if you take part in this study?

If you agree to participate in this study, I will ask you to do the following:

1. Participate in an anonymous online survey that includes a demographic questionnaire and three research-based survey instruments. This should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

How could you or others benefit from this study?

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society include providing insight into how trauma-informed practices can contribute to a teacher's work in schools. This study aims to demonstrate how trauma-informed practices are adaptable and universal, meaning that they can be applied in any school setting, regardless of location or population.

What risks might you experience from being in this study?

The expected risks from participating in this study are minimal, which means that they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

How will personal information be protected?

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to them. Participant responses will be anonymous. The data will be stored on a password-locked computer. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted.

How will you be compensated for being part of the study?

Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision on whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or [redacted]. If you

decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time prior to submitting the survey without affecting those relationships.

What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please exit the survey and close your internet browser. Your responses will not be recorded or included in the study.

Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?

The researcher conducting this study is Alicia Kahrs. If you have questions, **you are encouraged** to contact her at [redacted] You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Shannon P. Warden, at [redacted].

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the IRB. Our physical address is Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA, 24515; our phone number is 434-592-5530, and our email address is irb@liberty.edu.

Disclaimer: The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is tasked with ensuring that human subject research will be conducted in an ethical manner as defined and required by federal regulations. The topics covered and viewpoints expressed or alluded to by student and faculty researchers are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official policies or positions of Liberty University.

Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher using the information provided above.

Appendix I: Permission Consent for Use of TSES

William & Mary
School of Education

MEGAN TSCHANNEN-MORAN, PHD
PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

August 22, 2023

Alicia Kahrs,

You have my permission to use the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (formerly called the Ohio State Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale), which I developed with Woolfolk Hoy, A., in your research.

You can find a copy of the measure and scoring directions on my web site at https://mxtsch.pages.wm.edu/.

Please use the following as the proper citation:

> Tschannen-Moran, M & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 17*, 783-805.

I will also attach directions you can follow to access my password protected web site, where you can find the supporting references for this measure as well as other articles I have written on this and related topics.

All the best,

Megan Tschannen-Moran
William & Mary School of Education

P.O. Box 8795 • Williamsburg, VA 23187-8795 • (757) 221-2187 • mxtsch@wm.edu

Appendix J: Permission Consent for Use of WTMST

[External] RE: Permission Request for WTMST

Fernet, Claude [redacted]
Mon 8/7/2023 2:27 PM
To:Kahrs, Alicia Marie [redacted]

1 attachments (172 KB)
WTMST- English version.doc;

[EXTERNAL EMAIL: Do not click any links or open attachments unless you know the sender and trust the content.]

Hi Alicia,

Of course you can use the WTMST (see the attached file).
Best wishes,

Claude Fernet, Ph. D., professeur titulaire
Directeur du Groupe de recherche sur la santé et le mieux-être au travail — FRQSC
Responsable du programme de 2e cycle en Leadership et performance
dans les services de santé et services sociaux

Département de gestion des ressources humaines | École de Gestion
Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
Trois-Rivières, Québec, G8Z 4M3
[redacted]

De : Kahrs, Alicia Marie [redacted]
Envoyé : 4 août 2023 16:55
À : Fernet, Claude [redacted]
Objet : Permission Request for WTMST

Dr. Fernet,

As a graduate student in the School of Behavioral Sciences at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for an Ed.D. in Community Care and Counseling in Traumatology.

The title of my dissertation study is "The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training on Work Meaningfulness for K-12 Public Education Teachers." The purpose of my study is to evaluate how trauma-informed professional development affects a teacher's perception of meaningful work. Additionally, I want to examine whether self-efficacy and work task motivation are predictors of positive meaningful work for teachers.

I am writing to request your permission to use the Work Task Motivation Scale for Teachers (WTMST) to collect data for my study. Thank you for considering my request. If you choose to grant permission, please respond by email to [redacted]

Thank you,
Alicia Kahrs

Appendix K: Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 4, 2023

Alicia Kahrs
Stacey Lilley, Shannon Warden

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-190 The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training on Work Meaningfulness for K-12 Public Education Teachers

Dear Alicia Kahrs, Stacey Lilley, Shannon Warden,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(i). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:
The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix L: Principal Letter for Participant Recruitment

Dear Principal,

As a graduate student in the School of Behavioral Sciences and the Department of Community Care & Counseling at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a doctoral degree. The title of my research project is The Impact of Trauma-Informed Training on Work Meaningfulness for K–12 Public Education Teachers, and the purpose of my research is to evaluate how trauma-informed professional development affects a teacher's perception of meaningful work.

Cleveland City Schools has granted me permission to conduct this survey in our district, and I am writing to request your assistance in disseminating the participant recruitment letter to the teachers in your building.

I have attached a copy of the recruitment letter that should be sent to all certified full-time teaching staff in your building on the following two dates:

Initial email: Monday, September 11, 2023

Reminder email: Monday, September 18, 2023

I appreciate your assistance in this matter, and I look forward to sharing the results of the study with the district at its completion. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Alicia Kahrs