

## Supportive Behavior of Senior University Teachers Aged Over 45

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### INTRODUCTION



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The characteristics and supportive behavior of senior human resources in higher education are a relevant topic in society, with a growing number of aging people. The role and the number of university teachers increase with the expansion, massification, and internationalization of higher education. A scoping systematic review of teacher research, covering the period 2010-2019, highlighted a gap in empirical, evidence-based research in this field (Lyu & Thurston 2024). In our previous research, we analysed academics' work–life conflict and found a negative correlation with the institutional social support factor (Berei et al. 2026).

### METHOD

I explore here two research questions: What are the characteristics of senior academic workers? How do they support fellow teachers in their career development? We consider “seniors,” teachers, and researchers working in different higher education fields aged 45 or above. The Centre for Higher Education Research and Development – Hungary collected data from universities in Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, Serbia, and Ukraine using a questionnaire titled Central and Eastern European Teachers in Higher Education (CEETHE 2023). I analysed the data using SPSS (principal factor analyses and correlations).

Socio – demographic and work characteristics of the sample (N=432)	N or %
Sex	Male = 198 Female=232
Totally	N= 430
Age (45 or higher)	mean = 53.88 years
How many years have you worked in higher education?	mean = 23 years
What is your country of residence?	Hungary = 262 Romania =72 Ukraine =58 Others = 40
Totally	N= 432
What is your field of work?	Teacher education = 82 % Other fields = 18%
Totally	100%
What is your academic degree?	Professors or associates = 55% Assistants or lowers = 35%
Totally	100%
Working hours	Minimal or lower = 25% 41 h or more = 75 %
Totally	100% Surce: CEETHE 2023

### RESULTS

What is your experience with fellow teachers? (Cronbach's Alpha=0.846, 8 items, scale 1-never, 2-less frequently, 3-several times a month, 4-several times a week), (Principal component analyses, Varimax rotation, KMO=0.845 and Total Variance Explained = 62.5%).

Experience with fellow teachers	1. Informal conversation factor	2. Working partners behavior factor
You discussed other topics with a fellow teacher, not related to work	0.812	
A fellow teacher has talked to you about his/her plans for the future?	0.781	
You arranged a meeting with a fellow teacher outside of work	0.708	
You discussed educational issues with a fellow teacher	0.635	
You worked as co-author in a research group with a fellow teacher		0.856
You worked with a fellow teacher on an online workspace		0.804
You helped a fellow teacher to prepare for a doctorate, habilitation, or tender		0.703
You discussed scientific issues with a fellow teacher		0.615

Surce: CEETHE 2023

The majority of seniors (56%) did not work with a fellow teacher on an online workspace. Principal component analyses yielded two factors:

**1) informal conversations:** there is a significant and positive correlation between informal conversations and work satisfaction

**2) working partners' behavior:** there is a significant and positive correlation between working partnership relations and working hours and multiple roles of teachers.

Spearman Correlations: Informal conversation factor and work satisfaction correlations: rho=0.108 and p=0.031

Working partner behaviour factor and working hours: rho=0.235 and p=0.000



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### CONCLUSION

For teachers is not characteristic: discussions about future plans; to arrange a meeting outside of work; or support in preparing for a doctorate, habilitation, or tender. Working partnership behaviour and mentor relations with a fellow are additional roles that require additional work and time.

### REFERENCES

- Lyu, Y., & Thurston, A. (2024). Exploring the nature and scope of teacher research in higher education: A systematic scoping review. *International Journal of Educational Research Open*, 7, 100393.
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