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## Meaning in Life, Psychological Well-Being and Depressive Symptomatology: A Comparative Study

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship of meaning in life and its dimensions to depression and general psychological health, as well as the differences concerning the meaning of life among individuals with low, moderate and high depressive symptomatology. A sample of 401 newly recruited young men for their national service in the navy, completed four questionnaires on meaning in life, depressive symptomatology, psychological health and socio-demographic factors. Significant associations were found between meaning in life and depressive symptoms. As expected, subjects with higher life meaning were found to have lower depressive symptomatology, while subjects with higher depression scores were found to have a lower sense of meaning in life. However, concerning the meaning in life dimensions, only the "contentedness with life" and the "goal achievement" significantly differentiated individuals of low, moderate and high depressive symptomatology. Furthermore, statistical significant correlations were found between meaning in life and the four dimensions of general health. In the same vein, the comparison between individuals with the lower and the higher meaning of life has shown that the two groups differ significantly with regards to psychological health: those with higher meaning of life present a better psychological health. Finally, being married or involved in a romantic relationship, as well as participation in social activities are proven to be significant sources of meaning. These findings point to a definite relationship of meaning in life with depression and psychological health. Implications for psychotherapy and counselling are discussed.

### KEYWORDS

Meaning in Life; Depressive Symptomatology; Psychological Health

### Cite this paper

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