

ACTIVITIES ON HEALTH PROMOTION AND FACTORS TO ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN LITHUANIAN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING INSTITUTIONS

Research period 2016–2017.

Relevance of the research. Vocational training institutions (VTI) are attended by various age pupils with different needs which are usually determined by a former education institution, place of residence, social status, experiences, the acquired knowledge, personal problems, etc. Significant number of these pupils are from lower social status families lacking healthy lifestyle and social skills. Some VTI pupils start living independently early (in the hostel). VTI pupils acquire not only vocational skills, but some of them also seek secondary education at the same time. Diversity of needs and problems, broad spectrum of age of VTI students, relatively short duration of education inevitably require integrated and wider approach toward health promotion.

Aim. To estimate in what way application of activities on health promotion and factors to its implementation are expressed in VTI.

Objectives. 1. To analyse the scope of actions concerning health promotion. 2. To identify predisposing factors for the implementation of health promotion. 3. To identify barriers for the organization and implementation the activities on health promotion. 4. To assess the students' health behaviour and some factors related to it.

Methodology. The research was executed in 2017 in 8 Lithuanian Vocational Training institutions (4 belonging to the National Network of Health-Promoting Schools (HPS) and 4 institutions not belonging to this network (NHPS). A semi-structured interview method was applied for quantitative data collection and questionnaire of 31 questions, including one open-ended question for the assessment of health-related behaviour. Guidelines for questions were designed referring to the Measurement Instrument for Determinants of Innovations¹ prepared by the Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research. Data from 39 representatives of administration, coordinators of health-promoting activity, subject teachers, social pedagogues, public health care and other specialists and randomly selected 745 students with 96.7 percent of response rate are being collected. Qualitative analysis of semi-structured interview by applying provisions of the inductive and deductive methodology and quantitative analysis of questionnaire data are being carried out.

Results. The research revealed the predominance of an integrated approach for „school-based health promotion”; moreover, health promotion was seen as part of an institution's image and as an integral part of a general strategic institutional plan, annual education plan and non-formal education plan. Two types of integration were highlighted in health promotion processes: i) interdisciplinary, when teachers of various subjects prepare plans for inclusion of health-related subjects in the subject lessons, which are mutually compatible and transferred to the annual plans, and ii) inter-professional. The latter is expressed in two forms: i) health-promoting processes involve VTI social pedagogues, public health-care specialists, psychologists, and hostel tutors, ii) professionals are outsourced for implementation of various activities, and here an important role is played by social workers. The research specified the following factors encouraging application of an integrated health-promoting approach: perception of actual situations determined by the importance of need for a targeted activity and relevance of this activity; „bottom-up“ approach complying with students' needs; common goal and shared understanding of the goal, awareness of responsibility and of the school mission; common institutional culture, perceived vision and health-promoting psycho-social and physical environment; promotion and support of top-management and

¹Measurement Instrument for Determinants of Innovations (MIDI). M.A.H. Fleuren; T.G.W.M. Paulussen; P. Van Dommelen; S. Van Buuren. Leiden: TNO, 2014.

administration, team work and support of colleagues, idea sharing, advice and encouragement, engagement of students; commitment of specialists, strong leader; visible performance results; dissemination and publicity (best-practice/information/ experience sharing, publicity).

The results of the students behaviour revealed that only 23,0 percent and 26.5 percent reported eating fruits and vegetables at least once a day respectively. VTI are often confronted with use of psychoactive substance, bullying. 18 percent of students indicated that they smoked tobacco or electronic cigarettes in the last 30 days, 55.5 percent – alcoholic beverages, 11.4 percent – used marijuana or hashish. Every fourth reported being involved in bullying others at least once during the previous couple of months and almost every three – bullying others. Some differences were identified in terms of self-reported health, happiness, depressed mood assessment, physical activity, passive leisure, oral hygiene, nutrition, the use of psychoactive substances and bullying between the sexes, by course, residence.

Conclusions. Specific nature of VTI requires solutions imposing an integrated health-promoting approach in the entire institution. Health-promoting activity includes interdisciplinary and inter-professional integration, whereas execution of health promotion requires diverse its implementation facilitating factors.

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