



Participatory problem solution methods in use of OHS

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Background

- Recent studies show that psycho-social factors affect well-being, work ability, sickness absences and early retirement
- Traditionally OHS has worked more with the physical factors in workplaces
- Changes in work life have made psycho-social factors more important
- This means that we must widen OHS practice to also take these factors into account
- We must develop new methods for working with work communities rather than mainly with individuals



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The aim of this study

- 1) Are participatory problem solution methods feasible in the use of OHS?
- 2) What results can be achieved through this kind of short interventions?



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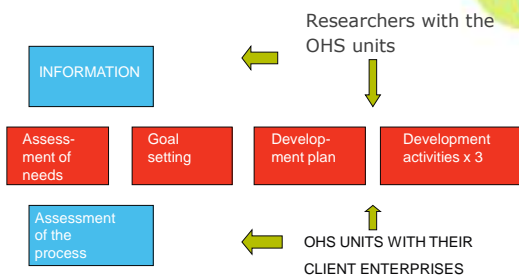
Study Design

- This study took place in 2008-2011
- Participants; 11 OHS units with their client enterprises
- Eleven OHS units carried out a problem solution process in their client enterprises, supported by a FIOH research group
- They(OH units) worked with selected representatives of work communities 4-5 times, about 3 hours at a time
- Qualitative data were collected from this process; plans, assignments, interviews, research diary notes. The data were analysed using inductive content analysis



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Process



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Theoretical basic

- Process consultation
- Co-creating
- Socio-constructivist learning theory
- Positive psychology



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RESULTS



Needs

- Attitudes, competence and work ability of employees
- Work environment
- Significance of leadership
- Support of workability
- Communication
- Planning work and division of tasks
- Role of OHS



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Goals; areas to be improved



- Psycho-social well-being
- Division of work
- Clarification of roles
- Meeting practices
- Communication and interaction
- Fluency and quality of work
- Workplace rules

Methods OHS to meet the needs

- Information
- Surveying
- Organising work
- Training in work community co-operation
- Development of meeting practices
- Drawing up rules and early intervention models
- Improving competence
- Training in groupwork



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Achieved results assessed by managers



- Organising work and time planning
- Responsibilities of managers
- Commitment of managers
- Development of organisation
- Discussing work
- Motivation and professional competence
- Activities for improving work and working conditions
- Interaction and communication

Results

- The situations in work communities were very multidimensional
- The relationship between psycho-social conditions and the well-being and work ability of employees was identified.
- Sick leaves were used as a solution to solve difficult situations in work communities
- OHS used solutions concerning individuals instead of solving problems in work communities, in co-operation with employees and employers.
- When OHS units worked with work communities in order to solve problems and develop working conditions, many improvements were seen
- Systematic, goal-oriented way of working needs to be developed



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Discussion continues...



- The roles and responsibilities of client organisations and OHS need to be clarified
- When work life changes, the well-being of work communities must be discussed. This requires co-operation and a multiprofessional way of working in OHS.
- There is a need to develop methods for handling communal questions together with employees and managers.
- We still need changes in attitudes and to broaden the concept of a client to concern not only individuals but also organisations and communities.



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Recommendations



- To focus on communities in OHS in order to prevent and treat mental problems and support return to work after sick leave
- To develop, test and regularize methods and models for co-operation between work communities and OHS.
- To develop competence in this kind of intervention
- To include methods and models in OHS training
- To strengthen multiprofessional co-operation
- To extend work careers, support of decision-making on the macro level is needed



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**Thank you for your
attention**
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Esittäjän nimi

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