

Salutogenic health indicators and work experience factors – a comparison between nurses and teachers in Lithuania

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Conclusion

Salutogenic health indicators were highly related to positive work experiences. Nurses reported less time stress compared to teachers, but scored less favourably on other work conditions despite a higher level on SHIS. The differences may be explained by different work contexts, but also by the differences in age and gender as well as the total life situation. Further studies are necessary to increase the understanding of work health in relation to different professions and contexts.

Aim

To compare reports of salutogenic health indicators and work experiences between two large professional groups in Lithuania.

Methods

Nurses (assistant nurses incl.) from one hospital (response rate 88%; n = 441) and teachers from 11 schools (response rate 83.5%; n = 180) completed a questionnaire on age, gender, other employment, health and work experience, using WEMS (Work Experiences Measurement Scale; Nilsson et al 2010), and SHIS (Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale; Bringsén et al 2009).

WEMS and SHIS are two short validated instruments, which both give total indexes for work experiences and health indicators, respectively. WEMS also contains six subdomains of work factors. The WEMS and SHIS indexes were all standardised to range from 0 to 100% (from most negative to most positive work experiences and health indicators respectively). The analyses were made using t-test, chi-squared test and Pearson correlation.

Results

Compared with teachers nurses reported a higher level of salutogenic health (table 1) On the contrary they scored all dimensions of WEMS, except for time experience, lower than the teachers (table 2).

Table 1 Background data and total SHIS and WEMS by profession

Variable	Female Gender (%)	Age < 40y (%)	More than one employment (%)	SHIS (mean, %)	WEMS (total, mean, %)
Nurses (n=441)	99	43	4	69	66
Teachers (n=180)	87*	24*	28*	65*	71*

*p < 0.01

Background

Work conditions have a well-documented impact on health. Variations in work health are often studied in a pathogenic perspective, while salutogenic health indicators of importance to health promotion are less studied. Knowledge of work conditions and health in Lithuanian contexts is so far rare.



Table 2 WEMS domains (means, standardized 0-100%) by profession

Domain	Management	Reorganisation	Internal Work Experience	Time Experience	Supportive Working Conditions	Autonomy
Nurses (n=441)	76	53	74	68	63	57
Teachers (n=180)	80*	63*	77	64*	70*	69*

* p < 0.05

In both groups there was a positive correlation between WEMS and SHIS (r = 0.53 and 0.56).

References:

- Bringsén Å, Andersson HI, Ejlertsson G. Development and quality analysis of the Salutogenic Health Indicator Scale (SHIS). *Scand J Publ Health* 2009; 37: 13-9
- Nilsson P, Bringsén Å, Andersson HI, Ejlertsson G. Development and quality analysis of the Work Experience Measurement Scale (WEMS). *WORK* 2010; 35: 153-61



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More information on **SHIS** and **WEMS** can be found at www.hkr.se/shis-wems Contact: Ingemar.Andersson@hkr.se



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