Impact of preventive interventions for the unemployed. What is the evidence?

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Presentation content

Preventive interventions for the unemployed: JOBS
• Intervention theory, preparedness for job-search

Two experiments evaluating efficacy of JOBS
• Efficacy results, comparison with practice-based interventions

Other related career management interventions
• Efficacy of School to Work

Conclusions
Preventive interventions for the unemployed - background

• Job loss and unemployment represent loss of vital resources affecting mental and physical health (for a review, see Wanberg, 2012)

• Several approaches to mitigate the harmful effects of unemployment have been developed (e.g. vocational training, subsidized work); generous unemployment benefits seem to mitigate the harmful effects on mental health (e.g. Strandh, 2001); similar results in the Finnish Basic Income Experiment (Kangas et al., 2019)

• During prolonged unemployment the situation seems to be most severe among those job seekers who are at higher risk for depression (Kessler, Turner & House, 1988).

• Reemployment restores mental health and well-being (Vesalainen & Vuori, 1999).
Mental health through preparedness for job-search: intervention theory

Proximal effects
- Increase in preparedness for job-search
- New goals and motivation related to reemployment

Long-term effects
- Better mental health
- Better career situation
- Better work ability
- Longer careers

Resource-based employee-focused job-search Intervention JOBS
Preparedness for job-search

(Vuori & Vinokur, 2005); based on MPRC group training principles (Price & Vinokur, 1995; Vuori et al., 2005).

Do I know possible solutions for the problem?

Defining solutions and tasks for carrying out goals

Do I have a problem which I have to solve?

Identifying work life goals

Identifying barriers and setbacks

Specific Self-efficacies

Practising needed skills and actions

Defining solutions for barriers and setbacks

Practising overcoming barriers and setbacks

1. Identifying barriers and setbacks
2. Identifying work life goals
3. Specific Self-efficacies
4. Defining solutions and tasks for carrying out goals
5. Defining solutions for barriers and setbacks
6. Practising overcoming barriers and setbacks

Do I believe that I can solve the problem?

Do I have a problem which I have to solve?

Identifying work life goals

Identifying barriers and setbacks

Specific Self-efficacies

Practising needed skills and actions

Defining solutions for barriers and setbacks

Practising overcoming barriers and setbacks

Do I know possible solutions for the problem?

Defining solutions and tasks for carrying out goals

Do I have a problem which I have to solve?
Primary and secondary analyses of two data sets from the 1990’s

The Finnish JOBS data consists of 1,261 job-seekers during years 1997-1998.

• mean age 37.0 years
• 78 % women
• Mean duration of unemployment 10.7 months
• 70 % on higher level of benefits

The Job-Search Evaluation data consist of 1,041 job seekers from 19 employment offices nationwide during years 1998-2000

• mean age 38.5 years
• 62 % women
• Mean duration of unemployment 13.5 months
• 22 % on higher level of benefits
  1. In 9 offices (50 % of groups) research-based JOBS was used as the method
  2. In 10 offices (50 % of groups) practice-based job-search training
Effects of The Finnish JOBS -training on reemployment and mental health (RCT; N = 1261) T1=baseline, T3=1/2 year follow-up, T4=2 year follow-up

Reemployment and labour market activity

Symptoms of depression


The Finnish JOBS data and reemployment: time x intervention for all participants and for participants at risk of depression

-multilevel multinomial logistic regression models to the repeated employment outcome data (control group = 0, experimental group = 1)
The Finnish JOBS data:
Job-search preparedness as a mediator of the beneficial effects

Finnish JOBS
Controls = 0
Exp. group = 1

Baseline (T1) | Intervention and immediate effect (T2) | 6-month follow-up (T3) | 2-year follow-up (T4)
--- | --- | --- | ---

Dissemination of the Finnish JOBS (Työhön) method during 1997-2000

Trained trainers 305
(year 2000)

Method packages 3574

Participant’s workbooks 37 028

Trainer networks
The Job-Search Evaluation data

JOBS vs Practice-Based job-search interventions; Risk of depression at baseline

Research-Based JOBS Intervention

Practice-Based Job Search Interventions

The Job-Search Evaluation data:
Re-employment for the full JOBS sample and those at risk of depression
-multilevel multinomial logistic regression models to the repeated employment outcome data

The Job-Search Evaluation data:
Exiting the labor force among unemployed at risk of depression

- multilevel multinomial logistic regression models to the repeated employment outcome data

The Job-Search Evaluation data:
Income for participants at risk of depression

Research-based JOBS program

Practice-based methods

## Job-search training and participant satisfaction

**Labor training in Eastern Finland**

### Contents

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<th></th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Usefulness</th>
<th>Trainer(s)</th>
<th>Total score</th>
</tr>
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<td><strong>Research-based JOBS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Practice-based methods</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Diagrams

**Training courses:**
- 1101
- 1102
- 1103
- 1104
- 1105
- 1106
- 1107
- 1108

**Training courses:**
- 1102/LH
- 1102/ac
- 1106/LH
- 1107/LH
- 1107sk
- 1108/Ka
- 1108/PSK
Theory-based preventive interventions across the work-life course – enhancing career management and mental health

Work organizations

Towards Working Life
- career choice
- educational career

Country-wide dissemination since 2006
- new versions

Towards Successful Seniority
- coping with age-discrimination
- engagement in seniority

Dissemination in family centers since 2014

International dissemination with MPRC

From Family Leave to Work
- work and family balance
- return to work

Unemployment
- prevention of early retirement due to mental health disability

School to Work
- quality employment
- work socialization

Vocational education

Family leave

Country-wide and international dissemination since 2002
- new versions

Towards Working or Retiring
- quality employment
- work socialization

Basic education

Country-wide dissemination since 1997

Country-wide and international dissemination since 2008
- new versions

Dissemination In family centers since 2014

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**School to Work group method (2002, 2014 2nd ed.)**

Enhancing employment preparedness
- Quality employment after studies
- Socialization to work life

**Effects on employment and mental health:**

**Mediating model:**
### Effects of the School to Work at one-year follow-up; RCT-study; n=416

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Employment 20h/week</th>
<th>Quality of emp.</th>
<th>Psychol. distress</th>
<th>Depression</th>
<th>Work life goals</th>
<th>Economic goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.65*</td>
<td>2.08*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>2.30*</td>
<td>2.48**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Control of outcome variable (T1)**

- Employment 20h/week: 1.81<sup>c</sup>
- Quality of emp.: .33<sup>**d</sup>
- Psychol. distress: .43<sup>**</sup>
- Depression: 2.05<sup>e</sup>
- Work life goals: 1.92<sup>f</sup>
- Economic goals: 1.14

| Age (T1) | 1.06 | 1.07 | .00 | .02 | 1.00 | 1.14 |
| Gender   | .89  | .59  | .00 | -.01| .98  | .94  |
| Employment self-efficacy (T1) | 1.16 | 1.40 | .23<sup>**</sup> | -.25<sup>**</sup> | 1.37 | .93 |
| Employment status (T1) | 3.18<sup>**</sup> | 0.95 | -.09 | .05 | .50 | .95 |
| Prior education (T1) | 1.50 | 0.94 | -.03 | -.07 | 1.28 | 1.22 |
| R² explained by intervention | .01 | .01 | .02 | .00 | .03 | .03 |

### Interactions<sup>g</sup>:

| Interv.*psychol. distress | 65 | 1.07 | .28* | -.25* | 1.78 | .83 |

**Notes**

- Figures are standardised odds ratios (logistic regression, OR).
- Figures are non-standardised parameter estimates (linear regression).

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School to Work; mediation of effects

Dissemination of the School to Work method

17 500 copies of participant's workbook distributed

505 trained trainers

Dissemination at the end of year 2007
Conclusions

• Theory-base is a vital prerequisite for effective preventive interventions. Intervention theory also guides intervention development.

• Specific self-efficacies are effective tools for building interventions aiming at behavioral change. Inoculation against setbacks prevents relapse and enhances mental health. As an example, preparedness for career challenges comprises both of these components.

• Transitions and times of changes are effective periods for behavioral interventions. As people debate their prospects they are more motivated to seek external support.

• The challenge of reemployment relates to one focal career transition, other transitional phases are for example: from school to quality employment, back to work from family leave or sick leave, retiring due to disabilities or age etc.
Thank you!

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