Abstracts

252 TACKLING WORK-RELATED STRESS FACTORS IN LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT THROUGH ACTION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Introduction Job demands/resources model of stress assumes that every occupation has its own specific risk factors associated with work-related stress. Action research (AR) allows bottom-up approach where company staff in collaboration with researchers, identifies the most important issues for change within organisational setting, develop, implement, and evaluate context-specific solutions. The aim of the study was to analyse work-related stress factors (job demands) and to draft organisational interventions using AR within local self-government.

Methods AR as a collaborative process (problem identification, planning, implementation, evaluation, and reflection), involving representatives from both self-government and Institute of Occupational Health of RM, was used to generate knowledge and practical solutions to work-related stress factors in local self-government. Actual AR included qualitative study based on focus group (FG) methodology (two FGs, 10 participants in each) with workplace stressors as a main topic of discussion. Within quantitative part of the study, 100 self-government employees (response rate over 80%) completed surveys (including instruments for measuring job demands and burnout). After planning organisational interventions aimed at tackling emerging work-related stressors, evaluation and reflection phase included collection of outcome and process data.

Results Actual study detected the most important work-related stressors in this self-government (FGs: work in ‘ocean’ type office, client-related workplace violence, performing several tasks at a same time; Questionnaire data: too much paperwork, low opportunities for professional development, strict hierarchy). Burnout was detected in 17% employees with significantly higher emotional exhaustion in financial sector (12.04±4.7) than in fire department (7.3±3.8) communal works (5.8±3.9) (F=3.55; p=0.011). AR team proposed several organisational interventions, including reduction of paperwork, new staff employment, team building activities, communication skills training, redefinition of quantity and quality of workplace tasks, etc.

Discussion Presented AR process is still ongoing and cyclic and includes follow-up activities that are accessible and audible to team members and other employees.

254 QUALITY OF WORKING LIFE OF CANCER SURVIVORS: ASSOCIATIONS WITH HEALTH- AND WORK-RELATED VARIABLES

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Introduction To measure Quality of Working Life (QWL) among cancer survivors, and to take account of the impact of cancer diagnosis and treatment on a cancer survivors’ working life, we developed the self-administered Quality of Working Life Questionnaire for Cancer Survivors (QWLQ-CS). QWL is an important predictor of work continuation. This study aimed to:

• describe the Quality of Working Life (QWL) of cancer survivors, and
• explore associations between the QWL of cancer survivors and health- and work-related variables.

Methods Employed and self-employed cancer survivors were recruited through hospitals and patient organisations. They completed the Quality of Working Life Questionnaire for Cancer Survivors (QWLQ-CS) and health- and work-related variables were assessed in a cross-sectional study. The QWL scores of cancer survivors were described and associations between QWL and health- and work-related variables were assessed.

Result The QWLQ-CS was completed by 302 cancer survivors (28% male) with a mean age of 52 ± 8 years. They were diagnosed between 0 and 10 years ago with various types of cancer, such as breast cancer, gastrointestinal cancers, urological cancers and haematological cancers. The QWL mean score of cancer survivors was 75 ± 12. (0–100). Cancer survivors had statistically significant lower QWL scores when they had been treated with chemotherapy or when they were not working (p<0.05). Cancer survivors without managerial positions, with low incomes or physically demanding work, and who worked a proportion of their contract hours had statistically significantly lower QWL scores (p<0.05).