

OC17: Evaluation of the effectiveness of different safety education interventions: a study with secondary school students

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Introduction: Younger workers are more vulnerable to be injured at work, due to a lower experience and knowledge to deal with risks. These workers need to be prepared before their integration in the labor market in order to avoid unsafe behaviors, reducing the occupational accidents. However, for the success of a safety educational intervention (SEI), effective techniques need to be used.

Objectives: This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of three different techniques of SEI, to be applied in future workers.

Materials and Methods: A SEI was designed and applied to 299 secondary students. Three different techniques were used: theory, demonstration, and testimonies. To evaluate their effectiveness, the same survey questionnaire was applied two weeks before and one week after the SEI. The questionnaire included items related to knowledge, safety behaviors, risk perception, risk acceptance and safety commitment.

Results and Discussion: Results showed an important and significant impact of the SEI in all the analyzed dimensions. Only for two items related to knowledge the differences were not significant. Comparisons among the applied SEI techniques showed differences in their effectiveness for risk perception, risk acceptance and safety behaviors, where a higher effect was found for demonstration and testimonies techniques. However, for knowledge and safety commitment, theoretical SEI was found to be as effective as the fear-evoking SEI. SEI was, in general, equally effective for both genders, and for students from different school types.

Conclusion: The results of this study emphasize the importance of a SEI in students close to integrate the labor market. However, appropriate intervention techniques need to be applied in order achieve effective results.

References

1. Labege, M. & Ledoux, E. 2011. Occupational health and safety issues affecting young workers: a literature review. *Work* 39(3): 215-32.