

Nelecom – Evaluation of the community-based project 'New Learning Cultures in Communities'

Friedrich Schiller University of Jena, Center for Applied Developmental Science

WHAT IS THE INTENTION OF NELECOM?

Nelecom is a community-based project of the Thuringian Ministry of Education in cooperation with the German Foundation for Children and Adolescents (DKJS) aiming at: (1) promotion of the positive development of children and adolescents (social-emotional competence, participation, and responsibility for issues in their communities), (2) the encouragement of expansion, support, and advancement of a learning culture based on regional identity, individual promotion, and appreciated relationships, and (3) the connection of kindergartens and schools with partners and other responsible persons of all generations, institutions, organizations, and initiatives within the community.

To accomplish these aims, different program elements will be implemented in four selected pilot-communities under involvement of important key figures and network partners over the course of the following two years.

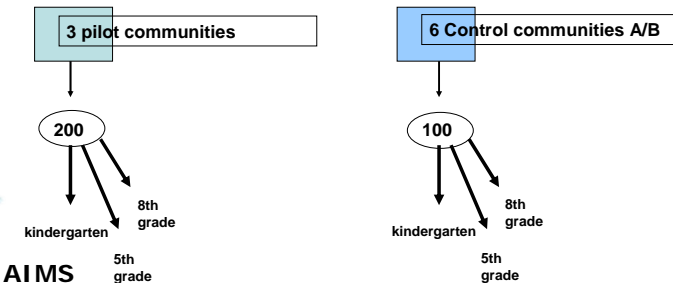
DESIGN

- Quasi-experimental design with intervention and control groups
- longitudinal design: 4 measurement points (initial test, pre-test, post-test, follow up)
- intervention group; VG: → successful application for the Nelecom-project.
- intend-to-treat control-group; KG/A: → application for the project but not chosen as pilot-community; in terms of socio-demographics (e.g., social structure, infrastructure, and availability of resources) widely comparable to the intervention group
- no-treatment and no-intend control group; KG/B: → no interest for the project; also widely comparable to the intervention group

MEASURES

- Self-report questionnaire for students on developmental assets (within the contexts of family, school, community, and personal competencies), and problem behaviour.
- Self-report questionnaire for teachers and heads of school on self-efficacy within the class-room and beliefs relating to the project (teachers of intervention group)
- Questionnaires for parents of kindergarten-children reporting about developmental assets available to their children

SAMPLE



STUDY AIMS

- Documentation of the short- and longterm-effects of project elements on indicators of positive development, and problem behavior (outcome evaluation)
- Documentation of the feasibility, and acceptance of the project (process evaluation)
- Selected questions we want to answer within the outcome evaluation:
 - Do subjective assessments of pilot-children/-adolescents regarding developmental assets become more positive and do they reduce problem behavior as compared to controls?
 - Does the content of the implemented projects in pilot-communities evoke the effects or is it enough to be interested in the promotion of children and adolescents to evoke effects? (comparison between VG und KG/A)
- Selected questions we want to answer within the process evaluation:
 - How were single activities involving all community-members assessed and what were the main results?
 - Which activity-profile was implemented within the different pilot-communities and what was done in 2009 for the assurance of sustainability?
 - Which activities were most accepted by children and adolescents?

FUTURE PLANS

After the pilot-phase (03/2008-09/2009) it is planned to implement the successful components of the Nelecom in all Thuringian communities.



Project team:

Dr. Karina Weichold, Prof. Dr. Rainer K. Silbereisen, Anett Brambosch, Undine Swoboda, Christina Grünbaum

(Research group "Theory-based Evaluation of Programs targeting Promotion of Positive Behaviours and Prevention of Adaptation Problems")

Project funded by:

Thuringian Ministry of Education and supported by the DKJS (German Foundation for Children and Adolescents).