ENDIGI

Encouraging Digital Competence for VET Learners in Europe

2021-KA226-2FF4477E Erasmus+ project

SUMMARY RESEARCH, UK

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE METHODOLOGY

1.1. DESCRIPTION OF TASKS

The development of the preliminary investigation was coordinated by SYNTHESIS. Different types of research were carried out (including field research) in order to understand the demotivation of VET learners regarding learning digital competences:

-Reports and questionnaires related to the actions, strategies and tools already carried out by counsellors and trainers.

-Questionnaires filled out during orientation sessions and related to training. Learners answered questions such as what discourages them, what could motivate them, what makes it difficult for them to access training, why they think it is not important, etc.

-Previous research on the same or analogous fields.

-Research on existing training programmes and pedagogical models.

Each partner made a report of their country following the model prepared by SYNTHESIS, who was responsible for writing the conclusions in terms of common elements and specific characteristics.

1.2. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION OUTLINE

The preliminary investigation outline was based on 2 layers of investigation:

1. Primary Research in the form of Field Research (questionnaires, focus groups)
2. Secondary Research in the form of Desk Research (literature review)

The types of research design utilised were _exploratory research design_ and _causal research design_.

Exploratory Research Design refers to research conducted when it is necessary to **understand the general nature of the problem**, identify possible alternatives to the solution, as well as relevant variables that need to be taken into account, relating to the phenomenon demotivation in VET learners and the factors contributing to it.

Causal Research Design refers to research aimed at **determining the relationship between a cause and effect.** It is also known as explanatory research, and it can help establish causal links between demotivation of VET learners and possible causes, therefore informing potential interventions to boost the learning process and the acquisition of digital competences.

The preliminary investigation was carried out in 3 phases:

For Primary Research:

1. Preparatory Phase: identification of suitable participants (VET learners, VET teachers, VET stakeholders)
2. Implementation Phase: administration and collection of questionnaires, delivery of focus groups (either online or phase to phase)
3. Processing Phase: collection and summary of findings (per partner)

For Secondary Research:

1. Preparatory Phase: Collection of existing data (literature review)
2. Processing Phase: Processing of data, input of findings onto the template
3. Iterative Phase: Review and partner feedback & brief discussion

Final Phase:

Integration of the findings of Primary Research & Secondary Research will be combined into a final report created by SYNTHESIS, and will be included in the Methodology document, which is one of the main Intellectual Output of the project.

1.3. QUESTIONNAIRES

Three types of questionnaires have been designed: one for Learners, one for VET Teachers / Instructors, and one for Stakeholders / Providers.

The three questionnaire models are attached below.

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Demographic Information:
>   Age group
>   Gender

Background Information:
1.   Are you currently a VET learner?
2.   Have you been a VET learner in the past?
3.   Are you thinking of becoming a VET learner in the future?
4.   Have you ever dropped out of a VET course or learning programme?

VET learning experience:
5.   What were the reasons that made you drop out of the course / learning program (you can choose more than one)?
     - Lack of time
     - Lack of motivation
     - Poor Quality of the training programme
     - Lack of financial stability and/or resources
     - Poor connection with the instructor
     - Poor facilities
     - Personal / family reasons
     - Other (please indicate) _____

6.   Did you seek out support before dropping out?

7.   If yes, how was your request handled?
     It was handled well, it was handled poorly, it was not answered at all

8.   If no, what were the reasons that prevented you from seeking support before dropping out?
     - Embarrassment
     - Confusion as to whom to contact
     - Inability to explain effectively
     - Not interested in receiving support
     - Not interested in continuing with the course / training program

9.   During a VET programme / course have you ever felt demotivated?

10. How would you describe feeling demotivated?
     - An overall lack of motivation for all things and tasks
     - A lack of motivation only in relation to attending / completing the VET training / program
     - Feeling bored
     - Feeling unheard
     - Feeling unimportant
     - Feeling overwhelmed
     - Having difficulty in communicating with other VET learners and/or the instructor

11. What in your opinion contributed to those feelings of demotivation?
- The VET teacher / instructor
- The rest of the VET learners
- The content of the training
- Difficulty of the training
- Delivery of the training and teaching methods
- Personal circumstances
- Outside events (not related to the VET environment)

12. What would have changed these feelings of demotivation for you?
- Better communication with the VET learners
- Better communication and support by the VET teachers / instructors
- Better scheduling
- Better delivery of the training and different teaching methods
- Monetary or other awards and benefits associated with the VET learning / training
- External support (by family, friends, etc)
- Support offered by the VET provider
- One to one support sessions
- A change in personal circumstances
- Other (please indicate) _____

13. From your experience with VET learning so far, it is easier to become demotivated when dealing with what type of content?
- Theoretical
- Technical
- Both
- Other (please indicate)_____

Demographic Information:

Age group:
Gender:
Years of experience in the VET sector:

Background Information:

1. Are you currently a VET teacher/ instructor?
2. Have you been a VET teacher / instructor in the past?
3. Are you thinking of becoming a VET teacher / instructor in the future?
4. How would you rate your experience as a VET professional?
   Very positive, positive, neutral, negative, very negative

VET teaching experience assessment:

5. Have you experienced learners quitting the training or failing to commit to it?

6. What percentage do these learners represent in your experience?
   0%, 25%, 50%, 75%, more than 75%

What are the reasons -in your opinion- contributing to the above?
- Lack of time
- Poor performance
- Lack of commitment
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of financial Resources
- Difficulties in interpersonal communication
- External factors (work, family, etc)
- Personal factors (personal problems, struggles, illness)
- Poor quality and/or delivery of the training

7. Have you observed students / learners becoming demotivated?
   - What are the reasons -in your opinion- that lead to learners becoming demotivated?
     Poor understanding of the learning material
   - Poor engagement in the learning process
   - Inefficient delivery of the training
   - Poor communication, rapport, or connection to the rest of the learners
   - Poor communication, rapport, or connection to the trainer / instructor
   - Difficulty with grasping new information and/or performing tasks / assignments
   - Difficulties with technical competences
   - Personal Circumstances
   - Lack of support by the learner's environment (family, friends, etc)
   - External situations

8. Did you take any corrective measures / initiatives to address demotivated learners?

9. What kind of measures / interventions did you offer for demotivated learners?
    - One to one support sessions
    - Additional support within the class / group
    - Additional learning material
    - Change of delivery method or teaching method
    - Events / meetings or other group activities
    - Other (please indicate) _____
    - None

10. How successful were these interventions?
    Highly successful, successful, not successful, completely unsuccessful

11. What other interventions would you propose for demotivated learners?
    (Please indicate).

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Background Information:

1. What is your role within the VET sector?
   - VET provider
   - VET policy maker
   - Government or Public Authority
   - VET sector regulating body

VET Stakeholders / Providers Experience Assessment:

2. How would you rate the VET sector in your experience?
   Very satisfactory, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, severely lacking

3. What are the main issues / problems / concerns in the sector?
   - Lack of funding
   - Lack of regulations
   - Poor quality of learners
   - Poor quality of teachers / instructors
   - Limited awareness about the sector
   - Poor quality of facilities / means of delivery for VET trainings
   - External social, political, financial conditions
   - Other (please indicate) _____

4. Are you aware of demotivation of learners as negative factor within the sector?

5. How important would you say demotivation of learners is?
   Very important, important, not very important, not important at all

6. Have you taken measures to address demotivation of learners?

7. What measures / interventions / initiatives have you taken to address learners' demotivation?
   - Improved facilities
   - Flexible scheduling
   - Academic support services
   - Personal mentoring or other support
   - Benefits / Awards associated with trainings
   - Links between employment and VET training
   - Media and communication campaigns
   - Research into the issue
   - Policy changes
   - Other (please indicate) _____

8. What other suggestions you have to address demotivation of learners on your (stakeholder / provider) part? (Please Indicate)

2. SUMMARY PRIMARY RESEARCH, UK

The summary of participation of the results of the questionnaires in each country is reflected below. Detailed conclusions of the results are included in the Methodology document.
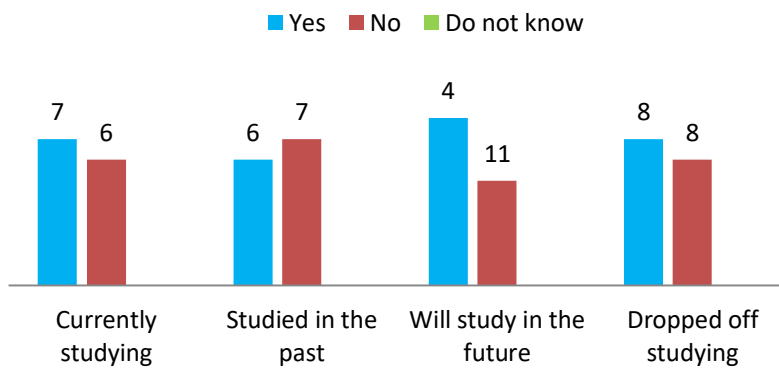
2.1. VET LEARNERS

2.1.1 VET learners profile

NUMBER OF LEARNERS: 13
GENRE: 10 females (72.7%), 2 males (18.2%) and 1 N/A (9.1%)
AGE GROUP: From 16 to over 35

ACADEMIC SITUATION:
- 53.8% are currently studying and for 46.2% it is their first training experience
- 61.5% are interested in further training while 38.5% are not
- 53.8% have dropped other studies

2.1.2 VET learners' results summary

Regarding the feeling of demotivation, the surveyed learners shown that the main issues that affect them regarding this aspect are:
- Feeling bored
- Feeling overwhelmed
- An overall lack of motivation for all things and tasks

In terms of what contributed to those feelings of demotivation, the learners responded:
- The content of the training
- The delivery of the training and the teaching methods
- The level of difficulty of the training

According to the surveyed VET students, the participants would be encouraged to continue with their studies if improvements in the following aspects would take place:

- Better delivery of the training and different teaching methods
- Support offered by the VET providers and better communication
- The content of the training.

2.2. VET TRAINERS

2.2.1 VET trainers profile

NUMBER OF TRAINERS: 1
ROLE IN THE SECTOR: Teacher
AGE GROUP: From 31 to 35
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE: 5

ACADEMIC SITUATION:

     - is currently teaching, has been a teacher in the past and thinking of continue teaching in the future
     - the experience as a professional was rated positive

2.2.2 VET trainers' results summary

According to the surveyed VET expert, the participants will be encouraged to continue with their studies if the following measures would be taken:

- New activities
- Interactive presentations
- Role-plays
- Quizzes

Main reasons for the demotivation:

- Poor engagement in the learning process
- Difficulty with grasping new information and/or performing tasks/assignments
- Poor communication or connection with the rest learners

Main measures offered to demotivated learners:

- Change of delivery method or teaching method,
- One to one support sessions
- Additional learning material and support within the class

2.3.   PRIMARY RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The Primary Research of the process has resulted in a series of interesting and worrying data. Both students and trainers showed a significant lack of motivation on the part of the participants when it comes to training; as well as the incipient need to take measures in this regard: modification of study methodologies, approaches and tools, flexibility in schedules and training, work individually, communication with instructors etc.

All the information collected through the forms will be used as a basis in the process of creating a new educational methodology, aimed at teachers, to make it easier for them to work with the participants efficiently and effectively.

3. SUMMARY SECONDARY RESEARCH

- DESK RESEARCH 1 -

Title: 'The role of EFL learners' demotivation, perceptions of classroom activities, and mastery goal in predicting their language achievement and burnout'

Author(s): Jahedizadeh, S., Ghanizadeh, A. and Ghonsooly, B.

Year of publication: 2016

Link: [The role of EFL learners' demotivation, perceptions of classroom activities, and mastery goal in predicting their language achievement and burnout - The Open University (exlibrisgroup.com)](#)

Main Findings and/or Points of Interest:
This piece of research focused on the causes of demotivation and burnout for EFL students. One of the leading causes of demotivation was the course material such as textbooks. If the material provided was not kept up to date or was not presented in a way that kept the student engaged, then the students were likely to experience demotivation. Additionally, the research also found that the student's interest in what they are learning also played a big part in their motivation. Moreover, if the student is not actually interested in what they're learning and see little to no point of learning it then they are likely to become demotivated to learn. The third most significant reason for demotivation in their findings was a student's experience of failure. This could be low test scores or them struggling to memorize important information. Furthermore, the research also showed that the environment in which the students learn also plays a big factor in their motivation. Their peer's attitude towards learning, the facilities available to them, etc. These were also found to be causes of demotivation for students as it effected their emotions towards learning meaning that if the student was not happy in the environment in which they are learning then they are less likely to be motivated to learn and more likely to experience demotivation.

- DESK RESEARCH 2 -

Title: 'Study on Learners' Demotivation in EFL Classroom – A Case Study at a Higher Vocational College.

Author(s): Can Chen.

Year of publication: 2019

Link: [EJ1247951.pdf (ed.gov)](#)

Reasons for demotivation:
This study focused on 'secondary vocational students' and their motivation to learn. They found that one of the biggest causes of demotivation was the student's relationship with

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the teacher. Students reported that the students who performed better generally had a better relationship with the teacher and the teacher had more time for them. This, consequently, caused demotivation for the students that were not performing as well. Furthermore, teachers' competence and style of teach also had an effect on the student's motivation to learn. Different students respond better to different style of teaching and the style that this particular teacher(s) used did not work for every student which led to them not learning as well which then caused their demotivation.

When the student experience to much extra work or homework they experience demotivation. Students get overwhelmed by the workload causing them to find the motivation to do it.

Similar to the last piece of research, this study also found that students who experience failure are more likely to experience demotivation.

- DESK RESEARCH 3 –

Title: 'Does the anticipation of a merit grade motivate vocational test-takers?'

Author(s): Johnson, M.

Year of publication: 2007

Link: [Full article: Does the anticipation of a merit grade motivate vocational test-takers? (open.ac.uk)](#)

Main Findings and/or Points of Interest:
Findings showed that there was a positive relationship between consequential test taking and motivation. This means that when students are presented with recognition for their good work and potentially received rewards or other benefits, they generally show signs of increased motivation towards learning, however, when they are not provided with these, students tend to put less effort into their work and become demotivated from learning as they do not feel there is any benefit to doing so.

- DESK RESEARCH 4 –

Title: 'Virtual Classroom Insights Part 4: Causes For Student Demotivation'

Author(s): Maya Kolarova

Year of publication: 2018

Link: [Virtual Classroom Insights Part 4: Causes For Student Demotivation | VEDAMO](#)

Main Findings and/or Points of Interest:
This research found that learning difficulties such as dyslexia impacts a student's motivation to learn - If the student isn't receiving the appropriate support and the content of the course isn't present in an appropriate way then this may cause someone with learning difficulties trouble when trying to take in the content. Consequently, it

becomes easy for them to lose interest in what they are learning, and they can become demotivated. In addition to this, other health conditions such as depression can also affect a student's motivation to learn. It is common for someone suffering with depression to experience a lack of motivation and this may also cause them to become demotivated when learning. Additionally, the general environment of the class may also affect their motivation. The support the student receive plays a big part in their learning. If the students do not feel that they are being supported emotionally, intellectually, and socially then they may start to experience demotivation when learning. This also plays into bullying. Students of all ages and in all different places of education experience bullying. If they do not receive help and support with this issue, then this may cause the student to pull back from the learning and become demotivated in the class.

In addition to this, excessive testing can also cause demotivation. While exams and tests can better help pupils prepare for a final assessment (if one is given on their course), excessive testing can cause them to become overwhelmed and lose interest in the overall learning.

SECONDARY RESEARCH CONCLUSIONS

The Desk research carried out at a national level has resulted that the most common reasons for demotivation of students are:

- Course material, usually textbooks which are not updated
- Topic, if the students are not interested in the topic of learning they tend to lose focus and feel demotivation
- Students experience of failure, for example when students receive low score then they feel more demotivated
- The environment in which the students learn also plays a big factor in their motivation
- Students relationship with the teacher, students who performed better generally had a better relationship with the teacher and the teacher had more time for them. This, consequently, caused demotivation for the students that were not performing as well
- Student experience to much extra work or homework they experience demotivation
- Students who receive recognition for their good work or other benefits, they generally show signs of increased motivation towards learning, compared to students to don't.
- Student with learning difficulties who doesn't receive the appropriate support and the content of the course isn't present in an appropriate way then this may cause difficulties when trying to take in the content, and lose interest.