BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT TO IMPROVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

(BASE)

Although schools should be one of the safest places for children and students in general, the incidence of acts of school violence such as vandalism, fighting, truancy, playground “bullies”, and student victimization is greater than before. These problems affect an important number of students in school today, compromising negatively the students' physical, mental and social well-being.

The BASE project (Behavioral Assessment to improve School Environment) will develop an innovative web-based software for the application of the positive behavior support at school. The application will offer directly school leaders, teachers, and, more in general, the community of people involved in the educational processes a tool to easy the organization of a school based on values in which the decision making and the problem solving processes are guided by a systematic data collection. The tool will help school directors and teachers to prevent and effectively face the occurrence of problem behaviors as well as teachers’ burnout and students’ disangagement.

The aim of the BASE project (Behavioral Assessment to improve School Environment) is the introduction in the European context of the Positive Behavior Support (PBS), an innovative system to manage the scholastic environment, especially in face of individuals’ challenging behaviours. One of the main impotance of the Project BASE is to expand the functionalities of the Web-based application for monitoring behavior of ADHD children (outcome of the WHAAM project), according to the theoretical and methodological constraints defined by the PBS project. While the original WHAAM application was focused only on the functional assessment applied to problem behaviors of children with ADHD, the new BASE web application will include features useful for a larger field of intervention.

The BASE project ambition is to disseminate across Europe the philosophy underpinning the proven US concept of PBS approach throughout the data collected with the BASE web application. The project, in particular, would like to emphasize the crucial role of the Functional Behavioural Assessment (FBA) prior to intervention allowing educational staff to gather, in a systematic way and according to a systemic perspective, a great amount of data regarding the environmental conditions that trigger and maintain the challenging behaviour.

The impact of BASE Project (Behavioral Assessment to improve School Environment) on school community has to introduce a direct changing in the educational perspective and school efficiency toward a more positive and proactive approach and increase the quality of life at school, according to the concept of health promoted by the World Health Organization (WHO) focuses on the physical, mental and social well-being of School-Aged Children.

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The partnership of the BASE project will ensure the availability of the results for at least 3 years after the end of the project. The collaboration among partners will be maintained: the scientific partners will become a reference point for the schools involved in the project as a long-lasting guide to shape the change that will occur over the years, after the implementation of the PBS. Moreover, each partner will partecipate to the sustainability activities according to their previous responsabilities in the project.

In particular, the BASE project will support the following sustainability activities:

- Pull requests and fixes: considering that the code of the BASE application will be released as an open source project on Github, the BASE's developers will review the requests of contributions by the open source community and they will merge the most appropriated commits. Moreover, the issue tracker will be increased and monitored in order to plan new releases and fix the most relevant bugs.

- Translations: the BASE application could be translated in new languages with the contribution of the Internet communities.

- BASE repository: the repository will be updated with new materials, taking advantage of the contribution of Internet users through a crowdsourcing model.

- PBS dataset: every time that the PBS application is used, the PBS dataset will be enriched with new data after being appropriately anonymised;

- Publications and conferences: the partnership will submit papers to international journals or conferences.

- Servers' activity: the servers used in the project will be kept active at least in the 5 years following the end of the project.

- New project proposals: the partnership will prepare new project proposals to enlarge the effects obtained with the BASE project. The BASE project itself is a good example of sustainability because it is the result of an effective collaboration between the WHAAM and the PBS Europe projects teams.

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