

Report
of the Exploratory Research on the Social Impact of the Project “Home”

The research was carried out throughout the period 20.03.2019–20.06.2019.

Prepared by Dr Renata Matkevičienė

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Research Methods

The aim of the exploratory research on the social impact of the project “Home” is to find out a likely influence and long-term impact on and changes in the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour of the project participants made by the project activities.

The research employed combined several research methods: qualitative interview of participants of the project (a structured interview including a questionnaire-based survey) before starting the project activities and after they ended; quantitative survey of community members to find out their opinions (a quantitative survey including a multiple-choice questionnaire).

The methods employed in the investigation were targeted at revealing the project participants’ attitudes and changes in them being influenced (possibly influenced) by the project activities. The questions aimed at finding out whether and, if yes, how the participants’ relationships with themselves and other participants (members of the group) of the project differed, and whether and, if yes, how the assessment of the environment changed after the project activities, what important factors of perception and assessment of the environment were pointed out in relation to determination or possible determination in the long-run of the changes in the participants’ attitudes and behaviour.

In the proceeding of the investigation, the interview designed for the project participants included the questions which targeted at finding out self-assessment, assessment of others, perception of the role of oneself as an individual, own responsibilities etc.

An interview with the project participants by employing a qualitative interview, a questionnaire, asking to fill in statements – such research method was chosen to find out the project participants’ opinions, perception of environment, and repeating questions before and after the project activities were supposed to allow finding out likely/ possible influence of the

project activities on the changes in the participants' attitudes or behaviour (if such changes were to be observed).

Moreover, the research employed the investigation of community members' opinions by applying a quantitative survey method to find out the assessment expressed by the community members (usually peers, friends, parents) who were not engaged into the project activities but observed the activity outcomes and project activities, possible changes in them in relation to possible influence of the project activities (a quantitative survey was conducted after the project activities ended, i.e. after the final work of the project participants was demonstrated to the community).

The questions addressing the community were formulated in such a way so that they could enable finding out the community members' opinions (assessment) about the project activities (to be more precise, the outcome of it), also, they were asked to express their opinion on the impact of the project activities and similar activities made on project participants.

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The research employed the convenient sampling, i.e. all participants of the project activities (both project participants and participants of presentation of the final project) who agreed to be engaged in the research (i.e. answer the questions) took part in the investigation. The research participants were surveyed at the beginning of the project activities, during one of the first activities; moreover, they were surveyed after the project activities ended (i.e. after presentation of the project activities to the community). The survey questionnaires were distributed to the community members after the presentation of the project activities to the community.

Implementation of the investigation proceeded in compliance with the requirements set to conducting of a particular research: parents' consent letters allowing organisation of various activities that engaged school students, taking photographs and surveying were collected.

The research was being conducted in the following stages:

Stage 1 – the project participants were given a questionnaire to find out their self-perception, their relationship to the environment;

Stage 2 – the project participants and community members were given specific questionnaires to find out the assessed of the project activities; moreover, a discussion with the community or an interview with a leader (a teacher) of the project participants was conducted to discuss a possible impact of the project activities on the project participants' attitudes and behaviour (short-term impact);

Stage 3 – processing and analysis of the research results.

The exploratory research involved 5 groups of the surveyed; however, 2 groups of the surveyed were rejected due to improperly filled in questionnaires of the research participants.

The data of the exploratory research is presented in a generalised manner, grounding on the results of the surveys of the project participants and communities of Radviliškis, Vilnius and Visaginas: 52 questionnaires of the project participants (24 before starting the project activities or at the very start of them, 28 questionnaires after the project activities ended); 39 questionnaires of the survey of the community members' opinions.

Further in the report, the depersonalised and systematised data is presented by providing the data in percentage to reveal possible changes in perception of the environment, which may have influence on the changes in the attitudes and behaviour in the long-run perspective.

The research is exploratory because the data presented in the course of it is based on the conducted surveys only, without assessing other factors which may possibly have impact; moreover, it is assumed that measurement of the social impact must necessarily involve longitudinal observation of the changes, whereas the present research aims at finding out a likely short-term impact of the project activities on the project participants, hoping that it will also possibly influence the changes in project participants' attitudes and behaviour in the future.

Discussion on the Research Results

Results of the Survey of the Participants Engaged in the Project Activities

Aiming to find out a possible impulse made by implemented project activities for particular changes, the participants of the project activities were asked questions on what was important to them, what life events are important to them, how they perceive the world and its process, how they see themselves as active agents of the changes. These questions were presented to the participants of the project activities before and after the project activities aiming to compare and find out the likely change.

The questions on who you are, what is the most important in life aimed at finding out self-reflection of a participant of the project activities and raised questions addressing self-definition and assessment of the environment.

The informants' responses suggest that majority of them have chosen to define themselves through the features characterising a person and activities: they indicated their name and/ or family name, age and status of a school student or emphasised the character traits, usually including the features such as merry, friendly, enjoying communication, open, wanting and seeking to help others. The character traits listed by the participants of the project activities to characterise themselves included sensitiveness to other's opinion, fear and, on the contrary, courage (or lack of it) to express own opinion, vulnerability and fear of being bullied when other notice your weakness. Humanity as an important feature is listed in a number of respondents' answers.

It should be noted that after the project activities ended, both participants of the project activities and people who watched the presentation of the project outcome acknowledged that the project endowed its participants with more courage, especially in expression of own opinion,

more openness and, the most important, understanding of the importance of building and maintaining mutual relationships (this change is demonstrated by emphasised attention to stories of other participants of the project activities, ability to listen to someone else and (increased) self-confidence and trust in others, as indicated in the answers). Answers of several respondents indicate a deeper change, too, because these responses underline attentive listening to the selves and self-cognition, facing the people who you communicate with (emphasising that it is hard to do); moreover, they point out that they remembered other people's stories which emotionally moved, revealed new things about their friends.

Such answers show that at least during the project activities the participants became more sensitive to each other, more open (to themselves and others), began valuing interrelationships more.

To sum up, it is worth mentioning that, at the beginning of the project activities, the project participants gave very abstract answers to the questions on the matters which are very important in life, by mentioning such things as love and respect for family, relatives, friends.

Moreover, the participants of the project activities considered the world, making it better in quite an abstract way: *"I would establish some kind of shelters for homeless people so that they should not stay in cold weather outside, I would try to help them whoever asks for some help"; "I would like to change wars, bullying, crime, zoos very much. I suppose the world would be more beautiful, less people would die, animals would not suffer"; "if I could change I would change all bad things, but the fact is that it is impossible"; "I would like to eliminate intolerance towards homosexual people most of all, to make their marriage legitimate all around the world, I think that they are people too, and they have the right to love"; "perhaps I would try to spread the good in all its aspects. I would like the peace prevail in the world, I would eliminate the reasons which can cause wars, everyone should have enough food, this problems would disappear, I would abolish division of people into castes"; "to make the world fair, to avoid people being dependent on money"* and the like.

After the project ended, the participants of the project activities much more specifically named important things underlining new experiences, such as *"increased self-confidence in*

people around, valuing them staying with you”, striving to know people and spend more time with them in order to understand them better, “trust in people” and “ability to hear them, to listen to them”, responsibility and consideration before making decisions etc.

One of the questions that was addressed to the informants to find out how they assessed themselves, their capacities, other people and their possibilities to change the world is complex, requiring consideration of the world, its problems and characterisation of the responsibilities. The questions were asked before and after the project activities to find out whether the understanding of what creates the world and what is every man’s responsibility, possibilities changed.

Table 1 Can a man change the world?

Before the project	After the project activities ended
<p><i>“I suppose that one man could not change the world, for sure. I think so because it is impossible for one man to change everything, all people of the world should try to change what is not good.”</i></p> <p><i>“One man can discover something and make something better, this might improve the life of the world; however, always some improvements will occur. One man cannot change.”</i></p> <p><i>“It is impossible to change the whole world, one man can change some small things in life by doing good deeds.”</i></p> <p><i>“I suppose one can. I have had several people who have changed their lives upside down. I think that each person can change something in the world, only one’s wish and high self-confidence are needed.”</i></p> <p><i>“Of course, can, simply someone needs to demonstrate own passion, show initiatives, and when others see that all this leads towards good they will wish to contribute themselves. Influential people whom we usually follow have most of the power.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Very much. One man can change your point of view and actions.”</i></p> <p><i>“I estimate that each person can change the life in one’s own way, but this requires much work to be done. Yes, one man can do much.”</i></p> <p><i>“One man can change the whole world; however, the most important thing is to have a wish and a will.”</i></p> <p><i>“One man can change small things, manage one’s life around.”</i></p> <p><i>“A person can change much, many small things surround him, and this can encourage other people to make good changes.”</i></p> <p><i>“Certainly yes, because one man’s deeds remain for a long time.”</i></p> <p><i>“I don’t think that yes. Because when you want very much you can achieve much.”</i></p> <p><i>“A man can change people’s points of view by step-by-step changing, this way changing the world, too.”</i></p> <p><i>“Certainly yes!”</i></p> <p><i>“In our project, one man taught us much, to not be afraid, to show one’s own. Yes, can do much.”</i></p>

<p><i>"I suppose that can because often people fall in love so much that it seems that the person you love is the entire world, and when that person leaves, you fell hopeless, sad. One man usually changes our world."</i></p> <p><i>"yes, because the biggest changes happen starting from small things"</i></p> <p><i>"one man cannot do anything, he needs a team"</i></p> <p><i>"only large groups of people and politicians can change the world"</i></p> <p><i>"one man cannot change the world, but if every man changed, the world would change"</i></p> <p><i>"any discovery can change the world, and one man can change the world"</i></p>	<p><i>"one man can do very much"</i></p> <p><i>"a man, if one wants, can achieve everything and change the world"</i></p> <p><i>"To communicate more with people, to trust them."</i></p> <p><i>"It is possible, simply all should become united and do good deeds."</i></p> <p><i>"People make the world better, therefore I suppose people should be better to each other and get on well with each other."</i></p> <p><i>"It is always possible, however, not only the planning of how to do it is needed but measures should be taken."</i></p> <p><i>"The world consists of all of us; therefore, one our change can make much influence in the world."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, to spread positive emotions to each other. Simply to bring more colours into it because often grey people intoxicate with bad emotions which prevent from becoming more colourful."</i></p> <p><i>"It is possible, only joint efforts as well as belief and wish are required. And the life will become better."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, more talks about the problems and other topics are needed."</i></p> <p><i>"Yes, I think it is possible, only people should help each other. Friendliness and many efforts are needed"</i></p> <p><i>"if we encourage each other, the world will become better"</i></p> <p><i>"more emotions, to not be afraid of anything, just simply act"</i></p> <p><i>"surely, only much work, persistence and communication are needed"</i></p> <p><i>"yes, if people will be able to collaborate"</i></p> <p><i>"Much is possible through collaboration! And we have proven it!"</i></p>
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Table 1 presents the informants' answers about one man's possibilities to change the world, solve social problems.

The submitted answers demonstrate a change in the thinking: if majority of the informants were sceptical when assessing man's possibilities to change the world before the project activities started, after the project activities ended they not only assessed one man's possibilities as sufficient to change the world, especially when other people are involved in the activities, but also trust in them and declare man's possibilities and ability to solve problems, change the world. Moreover, it was observed that exactly the answers submitted after the project activities emphasise importance of team work, collaboration, joint activities seeking to solve important problems.

Discussion of the Results of the Surveyed Community Members' Opinions

90% of the informants who took part in the survey indicated that they enjoyed the outcome of the project activities, i.e. a performance which they watched or in which they participated. It is worth noting that, grounding on the informants' responses, only half of them participated in similar activities earlier; the fact that majority of the community members (90%) enjoyed these activities shows that performative demonstration of social problems or relevant topics to the youth and discussion of them by employing artistic means of expression (drama performance, acting performance) are acceptable forms.

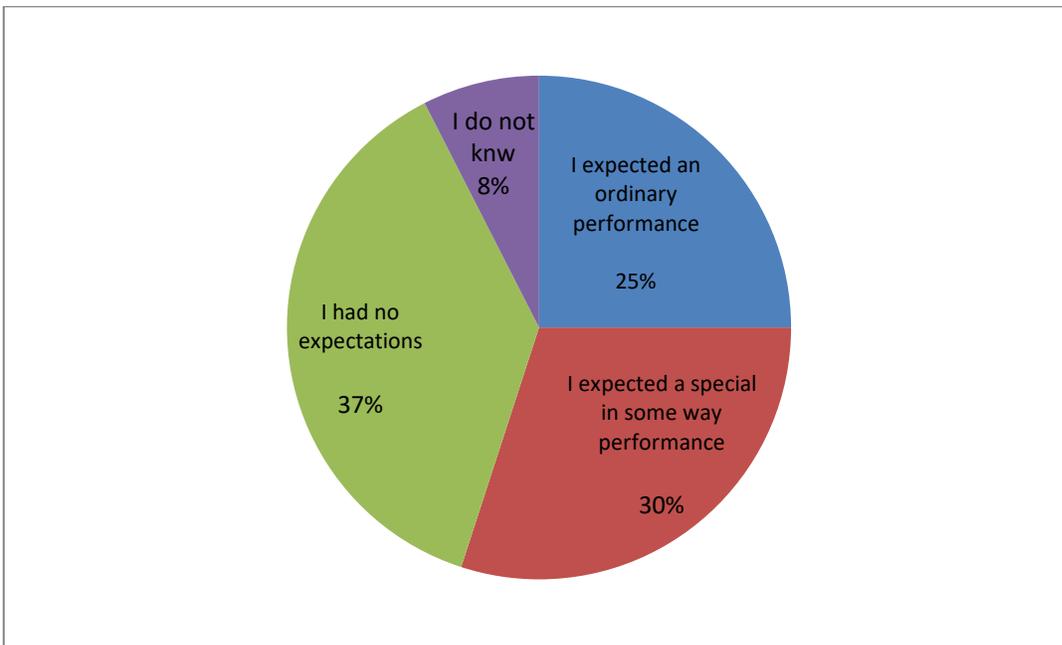


Fig. 1 Characterisation provided by community members expressing their expectations related to the outcome of the project activities.

In fact, it is worth noting that the audience (community) are quite critical because almost 70% of the informants had no high hopes about the performance of the colleagues (friends, acquaintances), and one one fourth expected something unusual and special (see Fig. 1).

The research results related to the social change, i.e. the change in participants' actions: attitudes and behaviour, grounding on the survey of community members' opinions, show that there are changes (especially when taking into consideration that two thirds of the participants are familiar) – the changes have been observed by almost 60% of the informants (see Fig. 2).

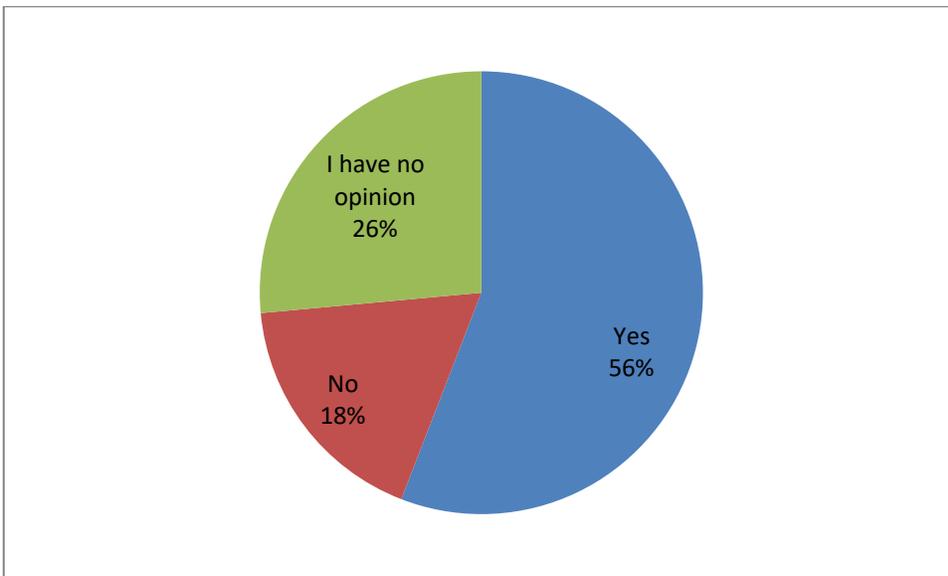


Fig. 2 Change in behaviour of the project participants after the project activities ended (opinions of the community members).

The results of the community opinions demonstrate that almost 30% of the project participants became braver, over 20% thought that the project participants became more creative, freer, braver and more open (see Fig. 3).

Such results of the community survey also correlate with the results of the survey of the project participants, which shows that the project participants themselves hope that the project helped them to not only better understand themselves but also to be braver, to easier and freer express themselves, to be freer, to not be afraid to make mistakes and search for the self.

The community survey demonstrates that friends and acquaintances of the project participants who watched the outcome of the activity indicated that such activities like those of the implemented project help to reveal some features of participants of project activities, for instance (see Fig. 4):

- creativity (almost one fifth of the informants pointed out this feature);
- activeness (over 17%);
- openness (over 16%);

- understanding (almost 12%);
- community sense, sensitivity, responsibility, respect for others etc. (each of the features comprised almost 10% of the features indicated by the informants).

Such distribution of the features is also in coherence with the features emphasised during the project activities that were pointed out by the project participants themselves, such as creativity, openness, respect for others and attention to others.

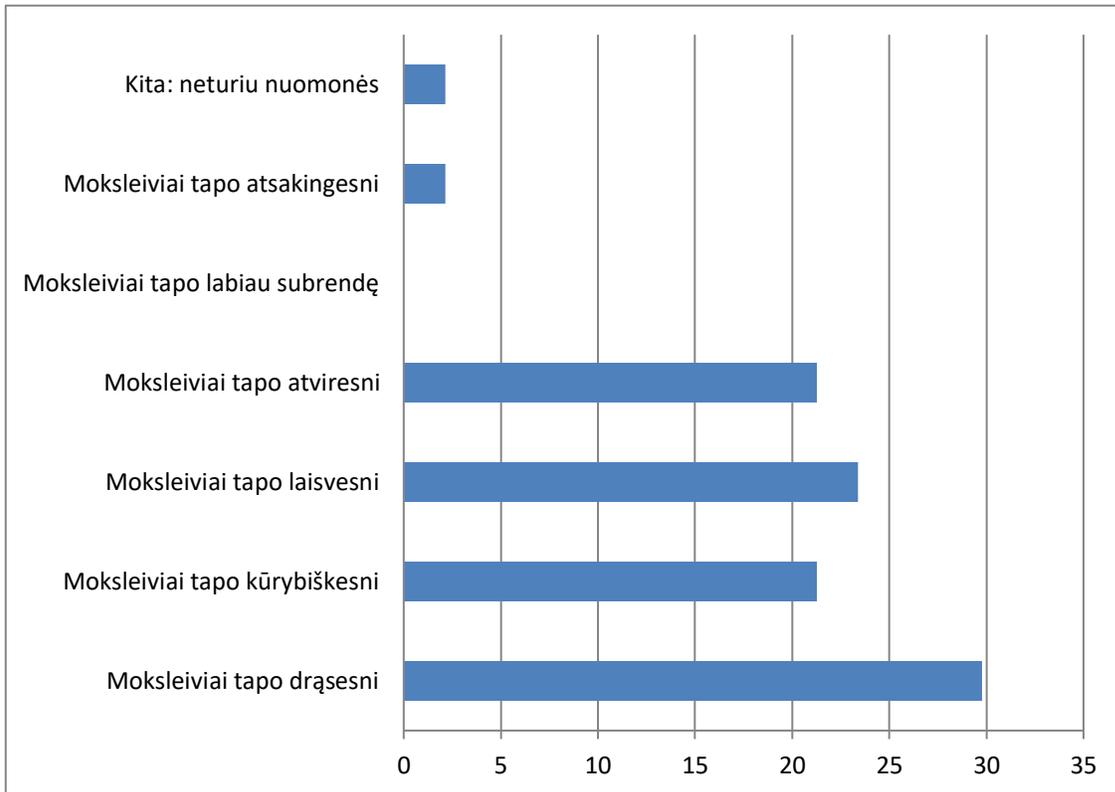


Fig. 3 Changes in the behaviour of the project participants (several multiple choice options were available, the data is presented by per cent)

Grafike:

Other: I have no opinion

School students became more responsible

School students became more mature

School students became more open

School students became freer

School students became more creative

School students became braver

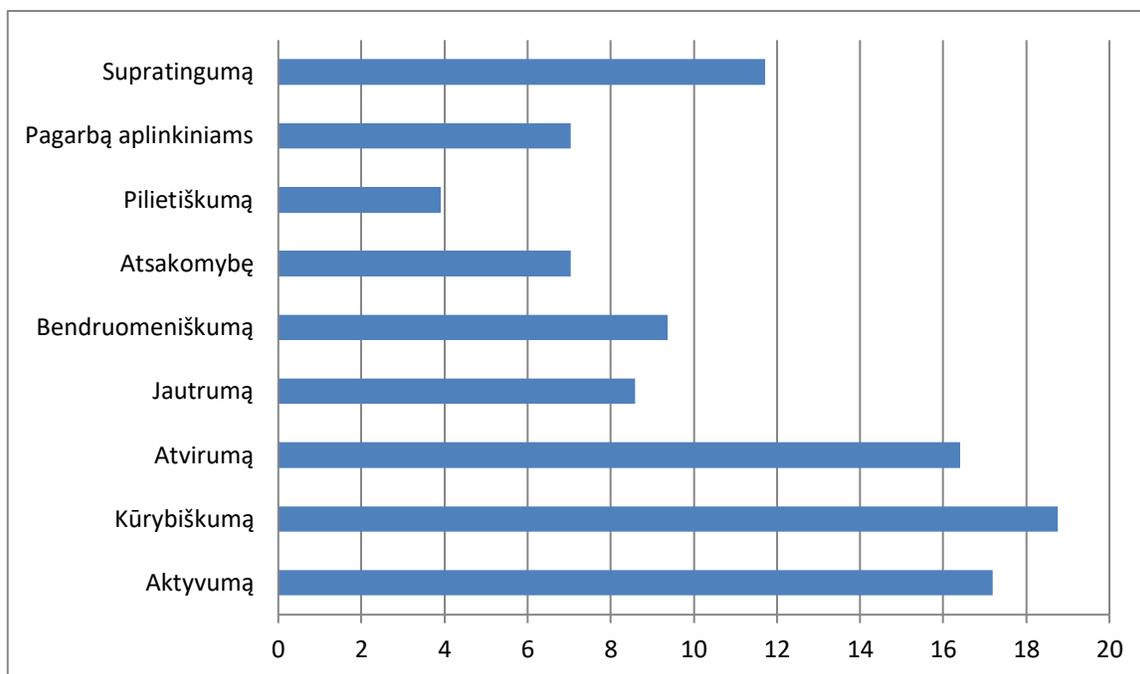


Fig. 4 Features that are developed by such project activities, as expressed by the community members (several multiple choice options were available, the data is presented by per cent)

Grafike:

Understanding

Respect for others

Civic spirit

Responsibility

Community sense

Sensitiveness

Openness

Creativity

Activity

86% of the informants underlined that such kind of project activities like these which were implemented and the result they watched helped the youth to talk about relevant problems, search for ways to solve those problems.

It should also be noted that the data of the community opinion survey (see Fig. 5) demonstrates that similar like these project activities help participants of the project to easier express themselves (almost 1/3 of the informants think so), understand and build interrelations (almost 60% of the informants indicated this feature disclosed by the project activities). Importance of building relationships by employing specific (such kind and similar ones) project activities is highlighted also by the fact that part of the informants (30%) indicated participation in creative activities as the activity which contributes to the building of relationships in general, others chose specific project activities as helping to create and enhance relationships with parents and teachers (15% each).

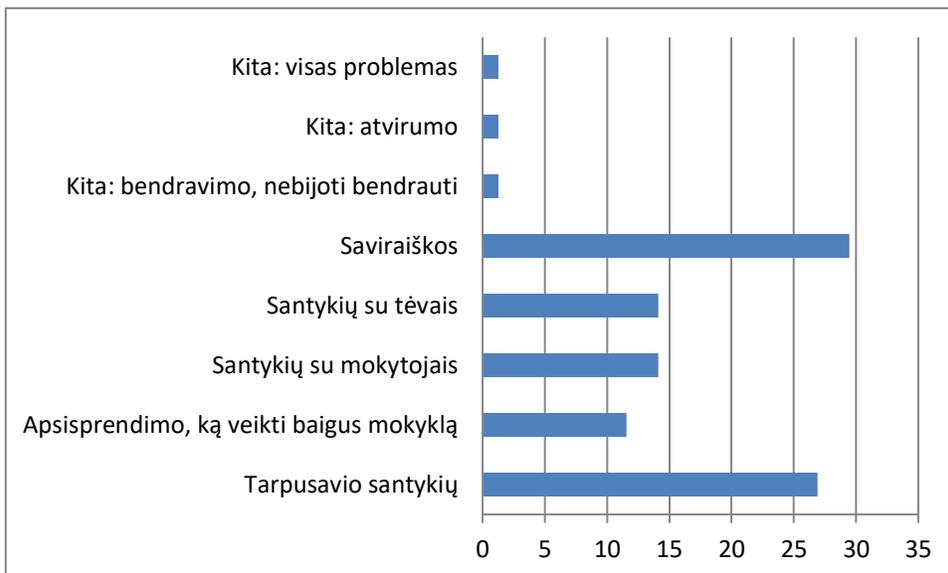


Fig. 5 Problems which can be solved by employing such project activities like those implemented (community opinions, by per cent)

Grafike:

Other: all problems

Other: openness

Other: communication, not being afraid to communicate

Self-expression

Relationships with parents

Relationships with teachers

Decision on what to do after graduation

Mutual relationships

Certainly, it is also worth noting that participation in specific project activities may make influence when choosing one's career path, too; this aspect was indicated by one tenth of the informants stating that participation in particular activities, better cognition of oneself help (may help) to decide about the career (when choosing a career path, that of an actor or a public person, or, on the contrary, rejecting such professional path).

Generalisations

Aiming to find out the likely impulse made by the project activities for particular changes, the participants of the project activities were asked questions on what was important to them, what life events are important to them, how they perceive the world and its process, how they see themselves as active agents of the changes. These questions were presented to the participants of the project activities before and after the project activities aiming to compare and find out the likely change. Of course, the research organisers and implementers are aware that the project activities are only one of the stimuli and factors to make a social change happen, encouraging changing attitudes or behaviour; nevertheless, they believe that the change in considerations, self-reflection after the project will encourage the participants of the project activities to re-consider themselves, their relation to the environment, specific social problems, possible ways to solve them.

The research results revealed that the project had a particular impact on the project participants: they became braver, more open, conscious. After the project activities ended, both participants of the project and the people who watched the presentation of the project outcome indicated that the project endowed its participants with more courage, openness, and, the most important, the understanding of the building and maintenance of mutual relationships.

It is worth emphasising the observed largest change in the attitudes of the project participants: if at the beginning of the project activities an individual and one's capacities to act were assessed very cautiously and importance of one's activities in solution of arising problems was assessed with reserve, so, after the project ended, increased self-confidence of the project participants and belief in abilities and possibilities of each individual to change the world was emphasised. Perhaps this is the most valuable outcome of this project.