

School Psychology at Elementary Schools in the Czech Republic from the Perspective of Public Policy

Master's Thesis

Abstract

This diploma thesis focuses on school psychology as a part of the educational system in the Czech Republic, specifically part of primary schools. The beginning of the thesis presents an overview of relevant policy documents, which focus on school psychology, as well as an overview of development programs designed to support it. These overviews give the reader objective information on the current state of school psychology in the Czech Republic. Using the aforementioned documents, an online questionnaire, and most importantly twelve expert interviews (with school psychologists, representatives from the Ministry of Education, National Institute for Education, Charles University), this thesis analyzes benefits of school psychology, such as personal presence and knowledge of the school, preventive character of such services, mediation and others, its possible drawbacks and obstacles, like issues with consolidating the profession in the system, its financing, or the lack of supervision and intervention. Moreover, this thesis presents policy goals of school psychology, with possible indicators to measure their fulfillment. The crucial part of this thesis focuses on accountability of school psychologists, a more detailed look at their position in the system and their relationship to other actors – to whom and what for are they accountable, what are the differences between their inner and external (formal) responsibility, and what consequences they might have.