

The Concept of Quality in Education, Quality of School in the Context of Decentralised School System

Abstract

The article discusses changes in education management methods over the past decades on a Europe wide scale, a process of finding a balance between autonomy for schools and teachers on the one hand and the responsibilities of the government and public authorities on the other. Particular attention will be paid to the situation in post communist countries, where given the tradition of a strongly centralised education system, finding such a balanced is a very complicated problem. In decentralised education with broad autonomy for schools, there is a greater importance placed on external evaluation, systematic monitoring and the assessment of schools. This however assumes precisely defined assessment criteria, that is, the concepts of quality in education, good quality, effective, good school.

To date, an accord has not been reached in the Czech Republic (between politicians, specialists and the public) on what is a good quality, good school, which is a serious obstacle to the internal transformation of schools. Empirical research is currently underway, which it is hoped shall contribute to the solution of the question – What is a good quality, good school? By which attributes can it be identified? Which attributes or characteristics will be considered key to the concept of a good quality, good school? What types of research instruments are best suited to investigate the quality of schools? The indicators of a good quality, good, effective school and the possibilities for their verification, are being investigated with an emphasis on the procedural approach –investigating education processes at a specific class level.

The article presents selected research results, in particular those related to the verification of suitable research instruments (questioning techniques and especially

monitoring real tuition) in the case study of one school. The possibilities and limits of quantitative and qualitative methods in determining the quality of schools are discussed.