

Satisfaction, commitment and motivating factors: the staff of basic social-pedagogical assistance in the Province of Bolzano

Sabine Krismer

Amt für Familie, Frau und Jugend – Autonomous Province of Bolzano

Background and purpose

The implementation of managerial principles in social services in the Province of Bolzano started at the end of the 90s in form of the Social Management. This approach is based on the model of the New Public Management with the aim to lead the professional action as much objective, measurable and verifiable as possible making use of neutral and standardized instruments. This paper, based on an empirical research, analyses the impact due to this reform processes for the professional well-being and motivation of the professionals in the basic social-pedagogical assistance in the Province of Bolzano with the goal to formulate practical recommendations for the administrators, professionals and education facilities.

Methods

The research is based on a qualitative method including 25 interviews in form of recorded and transliterated narratives: 15 interviews with current professionals from the basic social-pedagogical assistance and 10 interviews with professionals who have left this area, with the goal to understand which reasons have brought them to this decision. The participants with different occupational profiles and professional experiences represent all territories of the Province. For the analysis of data was used an analytic software (Atlas.ti).

Results

Labour disaffection is connected to organizational and institutional issues.
Organizational and institutional issues influence the professional identity.
Central role of the authority level in mediation an implementation of reform processes.
Importance of education.
System which select the most indifferent.

Conclusions

The New Public Management is overwhelming the strongest identities with the risk to loose efficiency in system. This negative consequences needs cooperation between different levels: social policy, administration, profession, education: 1. Strengthen professional aspects and competences of professionals to face changes 2. Authority level able to mediate reform processes 3. Review principles of New Public Management starting from motivations of professionals

Key words: New Public Management, well-being, Province of Bolzano