How do New Zealand Teachers like to be supported by Psychologists?

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Abstract
Educational psychology as a profession has undergone many changes over the past few years, warranting an exploration of the current understandings of key stakeholders’ perceptions and requirements of the profession. While there have been numerous studies investigating the perceptions of teachers who are one of the main stakeholders, regarding the roles of educational psychologists, there are no empirical studies internationally, as well as locally, that have investigated how teachers want to be supported by psychologists who work in schools. This study explored how teachers in New Zealand would like to be supported by psychologists working in their schools, which can include educational, developmental and clinical psychologists, as well as their perceptions of the roles of educational psychologists in particular. The study used a mixed method qualitative research design, combining surveys with an instrumental case study approach. The first phase of the study, involved 50 teachers completing a web-based survey, while the second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with three teachers. Key findings indicate that teachers had limited knowledge surrounding services that psychologists provided in schools. Overall they believed that psychologists working in schools took an ecological approach to their work, but their role had very rarely been explained to them. Some teachers sought the support of psychologists because they did not feel their training had sufficiently prepared them to meet the extent of needs in their classrooms. The support they wanted from psychologists was professional conversations on a range of issues concerning students, as well as professional development. Even though they identified an increased need for psychological assistance, they were not consistent in seeking this support. The findings have some key implications for the future practice of psychologists in New Zealand Schools. Among others, it highlighted the importance of increasing teachers understanding of the role of psychologists in their school, in particular, educational psychologists. The small sample size and other limitations of the study warrant that further research across primary, intermediate and secondary schools to better understand the nature of support that teachers actually want from psychologists, and if there are differences between the three sectors in the nature of support required. Findings from the study can be useful to inform and tailor the services offered by psychologists, in particular educational psychologists, to the needs of teachers.
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Ehara taku toa, he takitahi, he toa takitini-

*My success should not be bestowed onto me alone, as it was not individual success but success of a collective*

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