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An Exploration of the Profession of Psychology in Aotearoa New Zealand Schools

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Abstract

In order to make inferences based on, or create theories around aspects of the profession of school based psychology in New Zealand, we must know what the profession looks like. The roles of, and services provided by, psychologists in schools have been the subject of research by numerous authors internationally, however few studies have been conducted within the New Zealand context. The present study utilised a survey methodology to gather information regarding the characteristics, training, employment, and service provision of psychologists working in Aotearoa / New Zealand schools, and their perceptions of barriers to the provision of services. Results from 59 New Zealand psychologists working in the school context are used to provide a description of the profession of psychology in Aotearoa / New Zealand schools. Data indicates that the respondents provide a wide range of services in the school context including a focus on consultation, assessment, and intervention based services. Respondents identified lack of knowledge surrounding available services, limited availability of psychologists, funding issues, and systemic issues to be barriers that inhibit provision of psychological services to schools.

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