

Abstract

The curricular documents of many democratic states, including the Czech Republic, require schools to develop pupils' competences for democratic culture. The results of the international comparative research show that Czech pupils are above the average at the level of knowledge, but below the average in the area of skills and attitudes. Because skill and attitude component can be strengthened by pupil participation, its implementation in Czech schools probably fails to be effective. The purpose of this thesis is to detect possible obstacles in the implementation of pupil participation at the level of school culture and at the level of structure of schools and education system, and examine what can help overcome these obstacles.

Methods: The research was carried out in the form of a multiple holistic case study of three schools that have extensive experience with pupil participation. In-depth interviews with thirty teachers and the study of school documents took place.

Results: Teachers play a key role in how well the participation will be realized, because without their support most students will not be able to participate adequately. However, teachers often have neither the motivation nor the necessary skills for this activity. Their motivation is mainly influenced by the experience gathered at the school where they work. It therefore seems very useful to establish pupil participation system well from the very start. The school management will achieve this by creating favourable conditions for implementation of participation for motivated teachers, and at the same time by making realization of participation as easy as possible for those not motivated. Another key factor is school culture. If there is trust and a sense of security in the school, it allows teachers to share their failures and work together with their colleagues to find solutions to problematic situations.

Conclusions: Most of the obstacles to the implementation of pupil participation at schools arise from the structural setting of the education system and only a minority of them originate in the nature of participation itself. Nevertheless, the conditions for implementation of pupil participation in the surveyed schools are generally good. The positive aspect of the current education system is the relatively high autonomy of school principals, who, despite the clear limitations of the education system, can create a suitable environment for pupil participation in their school.

Eliška Urbanová, abstract of thesis: *Pupil participation as a way of education for democratic citizenship. Obstacles of its development and their successful overcoming.*