

Summary

SMSi as a Micro-cultural Change in Croatian Schools: Pilot Evaluation

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The paper provides a pilot evaluation of the information package SMSi, intended above all to improve information flow and communication between teachers, students and their parents. The study was prepared and conducted from March to May 2008 in three primary schools in Zagreb. The studied group included eight classes attending 6th and 7th grade and their parents. Interviews were conducted also with the teachers who had used the service for some time. The number of students in the study was 163, of whom 69 (42.3%) were part of the SMSi study, and the number of parents was 202 (84 or 41.6% used the service). The data analysis was based on checking five hypotheses on potentially intended and unintended effects of the SMSi service. Findings showed that the service can have a positive effect on informing students of the curricular and extracurricular school activities, on parent-teacher communication, on parent-children communication and on the self-perceived parental control. It was found that parents included in the SMSi show significantly greater satisfaction with the school their child attends in comparison with the control group. Data gathered in the study did not indicate that there is a tendency to substitute direct parent-teacher contact (in the school) with indirect contact (via SMSi). Due to a number of methodological constrictions of this study, a more evaluative and more carefully staged and comprehensive (more controlled) study is needed in the future in order to check these preliminary results.

Key words: pilot evaluation, information package, SMSi, student-parent-teacher communication.