

The perceptions of different professionals on school absenteeism and the role of school health care in absenteeism interventions

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The structure of the presentation

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- Background
- Current study
- Application

Basic education law

Basic education law

- Municipalities

Basic education law

- Municipalities
 - 309 different municipalities

Basic education law

- Municipalities
 - 309 different municipalities
- Length of basic education

Basic education law

- Municipalities
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- Funding

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- Monitoring

Basic education law

- Municipalities
 - 309 different municipalities
- Length of basic education
- Funding
- Monitoring
 - completion of basic education
 - unexcused absences

Health and welfare services

- Aim

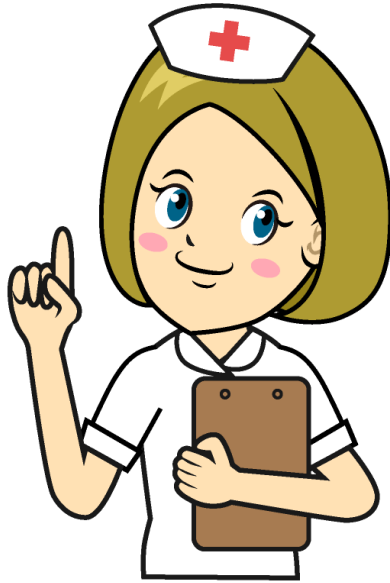
Health and welfare services

- Aim
- Composition

Health and welfare services

- Aim
- Composition
- Quotas
 - School nurse 1:600
 - School social worker 1:800
 - School psychologist 1:800
 - School doctor 1:2100

School health care services



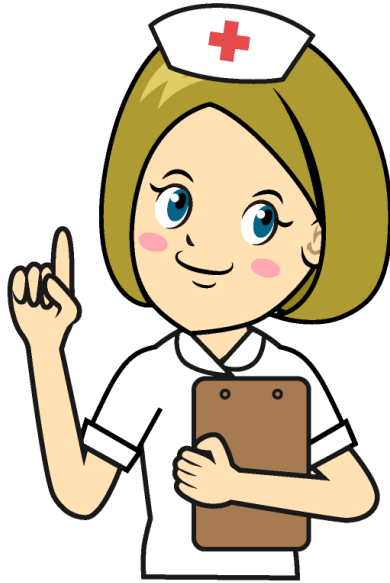
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School health care services

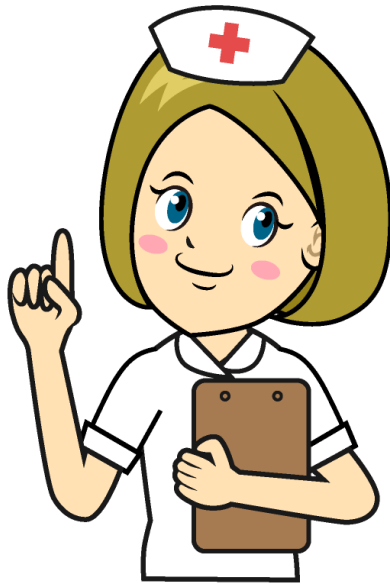


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School health care services



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Health and welfare services

- Aim
- Composition
 - Quotas
- Meetings

Health and welfare services

- Aim
- Composition
 - Quotas
- Meetings
- Differences in job descriptions

The role of school health care in
absenteeism intervention?

Aims of the current study

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- 1. Reasons for absenteeism

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- 1. Reasons for absenteeism
- 2. Reasons to include school health care in absenteeism interventions

Aims of the current study

- 1. Reasons for absenteeism
- 2. Reasons to include school health care in absenteeism interventions
- 3. Reasons inhibiting the inclusion of school health care in absenteeism interventions

Pilot interviews

Pilot interviews

- Group composition

Pilot interviews

- Group composition
- Interview questionnaire

The final interviews

The final interviews

- Positive Discrimination Index

The final interviews

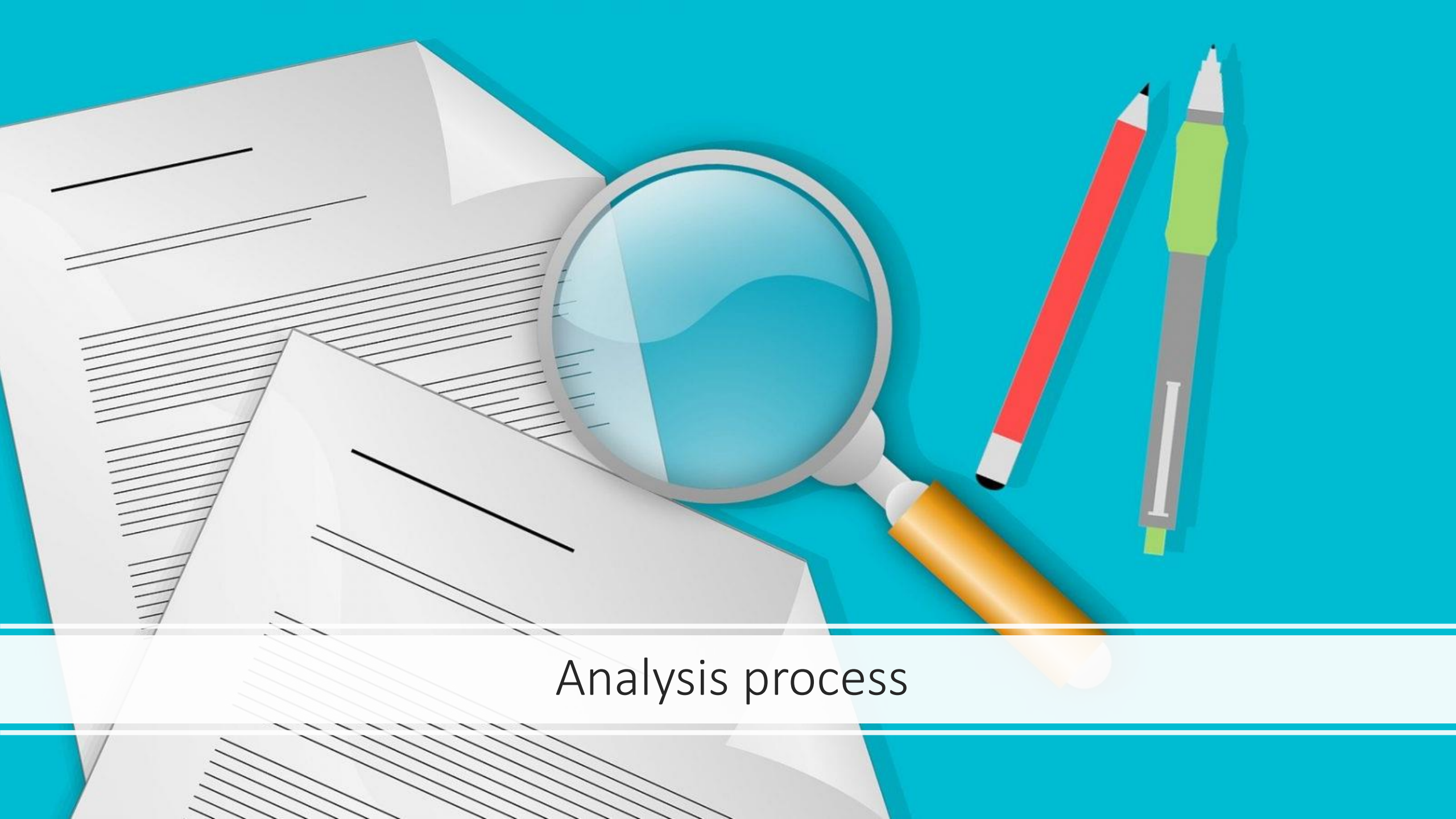
- Positive Discrimination Index
- Invitations to ten schools

The final interviews

- Positive Discrimination Index
- Invitations to ten schools
 - 3 high-ranking schools
 - 2 low-ranking schools



Focus groups interviews



Analysis process

Participants

Participants

- Mostly female, 55 in total

Participants

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 - Teachers (subject/special education/resource) 22
 - Guidance counselors 7
 - (Vice) principals 6
 - School nurses 6
 - School social workers 5
 - School doctors 4
 - School psychologists 3
 - Social workers from child protective services 3

Reasons for absenteeism

Student-
related
reasons for
absenteeism



Student-related reasons for absenteeism

- Health-related reasons

Student-related reasons for absenteeism

- Health-related reasons

- *“The absences in our school are mainly caused by abdominal pains and migraines, and they cause hundreds of hours of absences, and then how to tackle them—that is truly quite a problem.”* (principle)

Student-related reasons for absenteeism

- Health-related reasons
- Undiagnosed learning difficulties
 - *“Or then there is some hidden, like, learning difficulty, which might not manifest until middle school, so that in elementary school they still manage but then in junior high school some learning related challenge or difficulty is discovered.”* (social worker)

Student-related reasons for absenteeism

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- Undiagnosed learning difficulties
- Reasons related to leisure time

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Family-related reasons

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- Heritability
- Insufficient parenting
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- Heritability
- Insufficient parenting
 - *“... a few of these asocial, careless families where they don’t monitor a whole lot whether the child attends school or not.”* (school doctor)
- Changes within the family
- Travel
 - *“Increasingly, students travel around the globe; that is one impacting factor.”* (school nurse)



School-related reasons

School-related reasons

- Relationships in school

School-related reasons

- Relationships in school
- Electronic student management systems
 - *“There are also cases where the students themselves have had the guardian’s login details to [the electronic student management system], and this way they have signed off on [the absences].” (teacher)*

Reasons to include school health care in absenteeism interventions

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- Medical expertise

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- Confidentiality, acceptability, natural authority
 - *“So if you work as a full-time school doctor, this is everyday life. Absences are a part of the everyday. They are a part of the job. I think that it’s one of the most important aspects of the job.”* (school doctor)

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 - Part of the job description
 - Benefits from health check-ups
 - Own entity

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 - Part of the job description
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- School nurse; a good partner to everyone



Reasons inhibiting the inclusion of school health care in absenteeism interventions

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- Resources?
 - *“As I listen to everyone here I get the feeling [that people are saying] that ‘let’s burden the nurse more’, all the time, more, more, and more, so that you should be a psychiatric nurse and an acute care specialist and, in a way, the whole package, and at the same time manage the entire social side, to give advice on who to contact and when it’s needed.”* (school nurse)

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- Interest, effieciency, unfamiliarity

Opinion of the school doctors

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- Tendency to change

Opinion of the school doctors

- Tendency to change
- Opinion on co-operation difficulties

Opinion of the school doctors

- Tendency to change
- Opinion on co-operation difficulties
- Legislative changes

Summary

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- Reasons for absenteeism
 - Student- and family-related reasons
 - School-related reasons
 - Society-related reasons

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 - Best accomplished when school health care is present at the school

Summary

- Reasons for absenteeism
 - Student- and family-related reasons
 - School-related reasons
 - Society-related reasons
- Theoretical support on the inclusion of school health care
 - School doctors' motivation
 - Best accomplished when school health care is present at the school
- Difficulties in co-operation
 - Basis for policy changes?
 - Smaller quotas?
 - Health check-ups for all?

Limitations

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- Study site

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- Different time and place for the interview for different professionals

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- Data gathered prior to Covid-19

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Thank you!

Questions?

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