

## Reflective Practitioners: A Response to The Current Challenges in Education

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### Abstract

The development of reflective competence requires a tendency towards introspection, independence in regulating one's own activity, responsibility for one's own decisions and actions, self-criticism. It is a model based on a holistic paradigm. One of the key elements of education for reflective practice is practice, because it is through practice that students discover: problems that will be the subject of reflection on action; they develop reflexivity in action (acquire experiential knowledge, experiences), review theoretical and experiential assumptions and search for new ways of understanding, thereby building knowledge. A reflective practitioner is an active individual who explores different options when trying to solve practical problems. In this paper, two factors were derived from the factor analysis of the attitude scale, the first factor called reflective practitioner and the second called traditional teacher. The scale assessing preschool/elementary school teachers' attitudes toward reflective practice during the educational process is analyzed using factor analysis. The research was conducted with a sample of 445 preschool/primary school teachers in the Republic of Croatia. The results show that the attitudes of preschool teachers are more oriented towards the promotion of reflective practice compared to primary school teachers. Daily educational practice is a key element in the professional development of preschool teachers/elementary school teachers, however, the continuity of development also requires the development of competences through various forms of professional development.

**Keywords:** elementary school teacher, holistic approach, preschool teacher, professional development, reflective practices