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Professional Reflection – An Easy Way to Improve Educational Work of Teachers?

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Abstract

With the current curricular changes in education and the increasing pressure on teachers to enhance the effectiveness of educational practice, it is becoming ever more important to focus on the evaluation of one's own personality and professional expertise. This can be facilitated through the reconstruction of teaching practices, followed by the modification of educational objectives and methods. In this paper, we analyze the significance of professional reflection in teachers' work and the preconceptions regarding the challenges of its implementation. We argue that successfully engaging in reflective practice – and obtaining meaningful outcomes – depends on a proper understanding of reflection within the professional context, and on the experience of the educational stakeholders and the school culture, which shapes the conditions that support contributions to educational knowledge. We also address arguments in favor of encouraging reflection among novice teachers (i.e., student teachers), for whom it serves as a tool to update their knowledge and skills in response to school requirements and the educational needs of students. One effective method for promoting such reflection is microteaching within teacher training faculties. In conclusion, we emphasize the necessity of systematically obtaining, evaluating, and utilizing feedback as an approach of personal development and professional growth. This underscores the critical role of continuous professional learning, as highlighted in the final dimension of the professional standards for primary and secondary school teachers (in Slovakia).

Keywords: Feedback; Professional Reflection; School; Student Teachers; Teachers