

REFLECTION: A REVIEW TO DEVELOP TEACHERS PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY

Nadia Nazir

Lecturer, Mohi-Ud-Din Islamic University, AJ&K
nadia.nazir@miu.edu.pk

Muhammad Ishaq*

Associate Professor, Mohi-Ud-Din Islamic University, AJ&K
muhammadishaq@miu.edu.pk

Zafar Saleem

Assistant Professor, Mohi-Ud-Din Islamic University, AJ&K
zafar.saleem@miu.edu.pk

ABSTRACT

Reflection enables us to make difference though inner thoughts. Our actions depend upon our reflection. It enhances the skills of the practitioner about how he can improve the existing situation. Reflection provides the opportunity to come out from traditional ways and explore diverse approaches systematically. This research is qualitative in nature and based on review of books and different research studies This paper provides the critical review of various researches about reflective practice The first objective of this review is to identify that reflective practices enhance practitioners professionally and personally. The second objective of the study describe various models or theories related to reflection and third objective is to explain the role of reflective practice in personal and professional development of the teachers.. Recent researches have proved that creativity is required in professional development which is obtained through reflective practice. It brings professionalism and modernism in personal and professional life. In educational field reflective practice is utilized to improve teaching learning process. Reflective practice helps to manage the practices professionally. The studies about reflective practice recommend that reflective practice should be utilized for continuous professional development of the practitioners. It is also recommended that reflective practice should be the part of professional training of the practitioners.

Keywords: reflection, professional development, practitioners.

INTRODUCTION

Reflection means to think, which is applied in our routine life. It has importance in our daily practices. Cowan (1995) has described that reflection is required to recognize the difference between two things. So we become able to solve the problem. It can be said that reflection is the depiction of our inner thoughts which we utilize in our daily life. Our actions depend upon our reflection which provides us the reason for our survival. It is called “instinctive reasoning” (Brookfield, 1995). Reflection is the source of providing various ways to cope with the challenges of our life. So we can get the solution and can make our life successful through reflection. Reflection helps us to come out from conceptual conflicts and to follow the veracious path for the attainment of goals.

Bredeson (2003) claims that reflective practice is to reflect on the actions and practices which we perform in our personal or professional routine. It is to learn from experience of our self that what we did, what happened and what we will do different to improve. The difference between simple

* Corresponding Author

Reflection: A Review to Develop Teachers Professionally and Personally

thinking and reflective practice is that reflective practice leads to look at the events keenly for progress in the present situation. When the person becomes habitual of reflective practice then he can take advantage from it in his personal and professional life. Reflective practice has been considered as a skill for development of personality by getting the new experience for existing ideas and happenings.

Serafini (2002) has described four categories of reflection time, space, discussion and selected exposure. It is beneficial for the professionals to apply the strategies of reflective practice actions and skills. So they can resolve the difficult situations. Reflective practice is to relate the theory with our actions to form an effective structure. Here the theory means our own idea, assumptions or the formal rules and regulations. We are encouraged through reflective practice to go through the process of valuable exertion for enhancement of existing situation

Osterman & Kottkamp (1993) claims that reflective practice is utilized to get self-awareness. It is to look at own actions and think about its impact on activities. With reflective practice the person critically observes his work. Reflective practice provides the opportunity to enhance the qualities and skill for the work. London Pharmacy Education & Training (2010) has described the reflective practice as analytical approach for past events, future vision and awareness about self-abilities. Jasper (2010) has defined that reflective practice develops the person professionally and basic skills provide the improvement in the profession. Teachers need reflective practice to improve their abilities in academic field.

Fejes(2008) claims that teachers' attitude towards teaching leads to quality with the help of reflective practice. Through reflective practice the teachers get awareness about different new teaching strategies. They can utilize these skills in academic environment themselves and with other colleagues.

John Dewey (1859-1952) got the idea of reflection from the field of philosophy and applied it in the field of psychology. He used this approach in educational prospective. He focused on the knowledge with some aims and objectives. He claimed that it can happen through the process of reflection. So it is right that knowledge with understanding can be obtained through reflection. According to Dewey(1933) the procedure of reflection makes the teaching informative, useful and attractive for the students.

Objectives of the Study

The first objective of this review is to identify that reflective practices enhance practitioners professionally and personally. The second objective of the study describe various models or theories related to reflection and third objective is to explain the role of reflective practice in personal and professional development of the teachers.

Rationale of the study

The main reason to do this study is to provide basic knowledge regarding reflective practices because in this busy life it becomes difficult to find different ways to look at our reflection to meet the challenges of the world. So we have to acquire an understanding of practices, theories and cogitate ideas with others.

Methodology

This study is qualitative in nature and based on previous studies. Review of books and different articles were included to get comprehensive information of literature related to reflection and reflective practices.

Significance of Study

This study will be helpful for the educational organizations to develop the tactics and practices for professional development and increase their reflective practices to make teaching more effective to build their capacities. This study is also valuable to realize the need of the reflective practices for teachers and for the planners.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Pollard (2005) has said that reflective practice means to adopt new skills which can improve the person personally and professionally. It upraises the professional standards. With the help of reflective practice

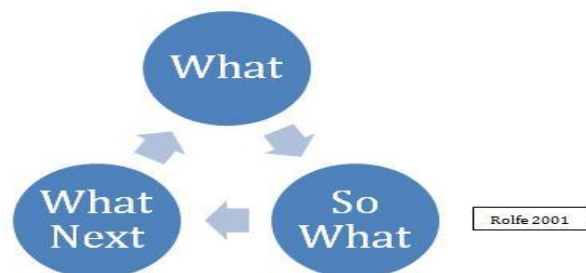
one can check himself with his experience. He reflects on all spheres of his personal and professional life. So he can get knowledge that which area needs more attention. The background of the performance makes impact on the future practice with the help of reflective practice. Reflective practice establishes a system in human mind which compel him to recall his previous work, look at existing conditions and think about the future.

According to Podsen (2000) professional development is based on the components of reflective practice which are looking back for review, evaluation and reflection and looking forward with defined goals. Reflective practice is necessary part of personal development of the individual the society. It also helps the individual to select the career carefully and get the field according to the abilities and qualification.

Craig (1994) has stressed that it is necessary for a professional to understand the attribute of his field so he can move forward. In all professional fields reflection guide the employee to recognize his own strong points and weaknesses. In this way he becomes able to get professional development. Reflection expands our vision about the problems in our proficient field which make our concepts clear about the procedures and other additional issues. When the professional do reflective practice, he thinks that what he is doing, why he is doing and how he can improve his condition with better results. It is the best way to obtain professional growth. Eraut (1995) describes that reflective practice is necessary part of personal development of the individual and the society. It also helps the individual to select the career carefully and get the field according to the abilities and qualification.

Jasper (2007) says that the practitioner gain knowledge about himself and his occupation with reflective practice. He can increase his skills and abilities in specific field which can bring satisfaction for him. The process of reflection encourages the person to compete with the world and get high ranks.

Rolfe *et.al* (2001) has defined the process of reflection in this model:



Retrieved from: http://www.brainboxx.co.uk/a3_aspects/pages/ReflectionModels.htm

Edwards (1999) describes that reflective practice has a link with the common and practical problems of the individual. The practitioner gets information about the concerned issue and become more skillful in performing it professionally. Loughran (2006) has mentioned that reflection has given the variety to the individual's thinking about his professional field in which he passed through the thinking process. He claims that the career can be flourished due to reflective practice. The human mind brings creativity due to the reflection. So he can improve his actions. Boyd & Fales (1983) describe that the process of reflective practice makes the human mind thoughtful about own routine so he starts thinking and makes decisions. Reflective practice of the individual explores the difficulties and brings the clarification with diverse approaches.

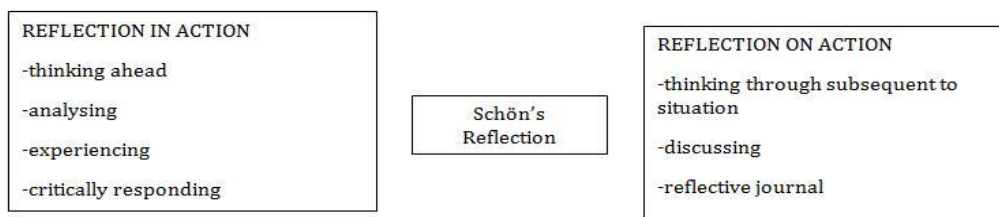
Graves (2002) called the reflective practice a tool to organize personal and professional life so the practices for obtaining the goals can be disciplined. Farrell (2009) says that reflection is the part of human life in the society. They can set their routine successfully because the problems can be solved systematically.

Zeichner & Liston (1996) claimed that reflective practice enables the man to come out from traditional ways of thinking and doing the work. Reflective approach enables him to think critically about the happenings. So he makes a connection in what happened? Why happened? How it can be improved? This strategy brings the modernism in personal and professional life.

Donald Schon' theory and model of reflective practice

Schon (1983) has mentioned in his book "The Reflective Practitioner" that reflective practice is the learning process in professional field for the appraisal. Reflective practice makes them successful practitioner in professional field because it suggests new way to get away from the problems. Schon has promoted the reflective practice in his literary work. He challenged the old and traditional methods for the solution of the problems. He claims that only information cannot solve the problems but reflective practices can bring good results. Schon has claimed that reflective practice makes the person skillful so he can get professional development. For this purpose he should grow ideas in his mind about how he can get rid of the problems. Otherwise customary routine is not helpful to bring unusual results. According to Schon reflection –in- action is related with thinking, analyzing, experiencing and acting in response and reflection- on- action is related with reflection during the situation, discussion and reflective periodical.

Schon (1983) has given following model of reflective practice:



Retrieved from: http://ethanjamest.files.wordpress.com/2014/11/06/steph_model_3.jpg

CRITICAL REVIEW

Schon's book "The Reflective Practitioners"

Schon was a thinker of educational field. He has contributed a lot in the field of reflection by writing the book "The Reflective Practitioners". He was concerned with the professional development of the individual with reflective practice. He presented the idea of double- loop learning for reflective practice in his book. Schon (1983) has promoted reflective practice for the professional development. Through reflective practice the practitioners reverse their thought on ground situation and critically analyze it. They make it foundation for their future actions. Schon adopted Dewey's thought about reflective practice. For practitioners in different professions, he has used the terms of reflection in action and reflection on action in his book "The Reflective Practitioner".

Schon (1983) defines in his book that the practitioners acquire profit from reflective practice personally and professionally. The utilization of various reflective strategies enhances their capabilities to ponder over their own actions and evaluate the consequences. In educational field reflective practice is applied to improve teaching learning process (TLP). Schon says that reflection creates the relationship between theory and the practice.

Raelin (2002) has illustrated the reflective practice as review of recent happening to get the understanding with future plan. He claimed that individual moves towards the destination with the help of reflective practice. Black (2003) has viewed the reflective practice as meditation on the present situation with logic and rationality. For reflective practice past, present and future situation matters a lot for the practitioner. It is to get awareness from the experience and work systematically for professional development. For this purpose, it is essential to look at the task from all sides by keeping in mind the consequences.

Poczwardowski *et.al* (1998) associated reflective practice with self-analysis to manage the practices professionally. This is how the positive results can be obtained. Holt & Stream (2001) called the reflective practice a skill to recognize the strong and weak points of the personality so the hidden potentials can be utilized for self-development and professional development.

York-Barr & Sommers(2001) considered the reflective practice a spiral way for personal and professional development because reflective practices effect on another. We focus on the matter with rationality and can do the assessment of the matter skillfully. Manan & Li (2002) called the reflective practice as technical reflection, practical reflection and critical reflection. It is related with different ways of thinking, methods and procedures to collect information and make progress in the routine of the practitioners.

It is reality that reflective practice is deeply interconnected to the continuous professional development (CPD). It enhances the capabilities to move towards obtaining the goals professionally (Moon, 1999). Learner development Unit (2007) has concluded that thinking gets diversity through reflective practice. The individual makes attempts to look at all sides of the problem or the issue in his personal and professional life. He questions himself and gets answers from his mind according to the environment. For this he should show patience and should not hurriedly reach at the consequences. He should be open-minded for acceptance of all conditions.

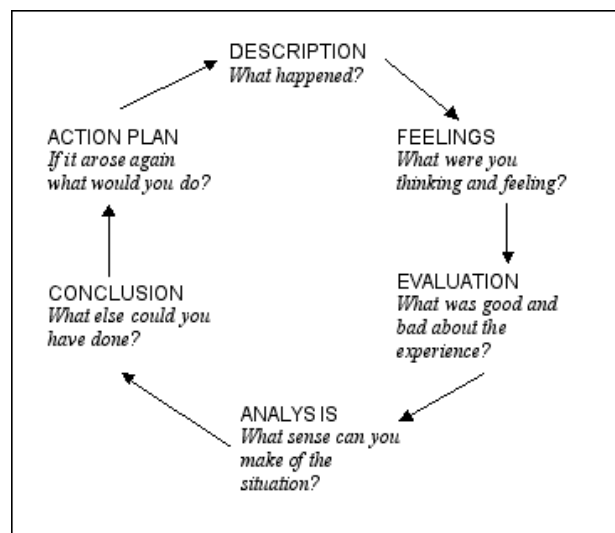
Van Manen(1995) describes that theory is practices in the process of reflection practice. This is how the practitioner comes to know the value of his professional attitude that whether his theory works effectively or not. So it can be concluded that the connection of theory and practice is developed through reflective practice.

Postholm (2008) has mentioned that reflection is applied to check the practices according to the idea or the theory. Idea is established according to the aim of the organization and actions work to obtain the productivity. Reflection on the practical work enables the individuals to check their performance.

Craig (1994) says that although the teachers are aware about the value of the reflection but often they do not apply it in their teaching learning process and follow the traditional means of teaching. In the result the learning of the students is affected.

Gibb's Model of Reflection (1988)

Gibb has presented the model of reflection with six elements.



Source: Retrieved from: <http://newton.ex.ac.uk/handbook/RAD/Rad-TutReflective.html>

Researches about role of reflective practice in Personal & professional development of the teachers

Reflection: A Review to Develop Teachers Professionally and Personally

Boud and Walker (1998) claimed that The individual can get innovation in his professional and personal life with reflection. In the profession of teaching the teachers can get effective approaches of teaching due to reflection. They can check their own abilities and they can evaluate their own performance. So they can bring accomplishment and modernism in their teaching strategies. Reflection makes the teachers more professional (McAlpine *et.al*, 2004).

McApline and Weston (2000) have described that reflection is to think what strategies and styles I am using in performance of my professional duties, What is its impact on overall environment and how much all these activates are beneficial for my professional development. Osterman and Kottkamp (2004) have called the reflective practice an excellent strategy to get new ideas for doing decisions. The process of reflection begins with the questioning to our own mind about activities. What we are doing? Why we are doing?, What will be its result? How it can be improved?

Habermas (1972) has described that teachers' knowledge is technical and practical. Technical phase contains teaching skills and strategies. Practical knowledge of the teacher is related with understanding students' beliefs and diverse backgrounds. Reflection makes the bridge between teachers' technical and practical knowledge. He becomes habitual to utilize the teaching skills according to the level of understanding of the students.

Now this practice is applied in all professional fields at international level. Different organizations and companies held training workshops for their employees to learn different methods of reflection for professional development because reflection makes them think rationally about their professional attitudes and behaviors. Firstly, in European countries the process of reflective practice was started and it was quite helpful to the workers and it was also beneficial for the organizations to get their aims and objectives then in many countries training sessions were arranged in educational, medical, commerce and other areas to make people aware about the reflective practices in professional fields (Hubball, Collins and Pratt, 2005).

McWilliam (1994) has described many ways through which the practitioners can be involved in reflective practice for personal and professional development by reviewing own existing position, by making strategies for development, by utilizing all abilities and resources. They can collect all the information about present situation and they become professional learners through reflective practice. Reflective practice facilitates them to follow the new skills for improvement. Different companies have got tremendous progress in concerned fields through the process of reflective practice (Huff man and Hipp,2003).

Heng & Khim (2004) have described that the individual can face the realities of the world with reflection. It helps to develop own attributes and give confidence to move forward. Our behaviors deal with different situations and reflection can bring improvement in our dealings. It leads to the success in life. On the other hand, lack of reflection means to create obstruct in self-development. The quality of life is obtained through the process of reflection.

Bredeson (2003) says that the individuals can obtain the practice according to the demand of their job, organization and environment. They want to improve their grades and scales though the process of reflection. When it is utilized then the learning process of the practitioner begins and remain continue for professional development because he becomes habitual of this practice. The administrations of the organization should provide the resources for employees' reflective practice. They can arrange training workshops, mentoring programs and peer discussions.

Sarsar (2008) has defined that in modern age it is analyzed that reflective practice has dominated all educational areas in the world. The teachers have come out from the routine actions and they adopt the teaching strategies according to the learning needs of the students. It is a big challenge in teaching profession to enable the teachers to do reflective practice in classroom environment. This is how the teaching is converted in to technical activity to get the aims and objectives of the curriculum. It is proved that habitual ways of teaching make students dull. Reflective practice adds in the personal and professional development of the teachers as well.

Uzat (1998) says that when teachers become consistent with reflective practice they improve themselves personally and professionally. In occupational field it is essential to reflect on the experiences which increase the quality of the work. The complexity of the work is solved through reflective practice. The professional gets the feedback by his mind through reflection upon his own activities. The influence of others gets down due to new activities through reflection.

Kettle and Sellars (1996) defined that use of reflective practice helps the teachers to review back at their own professional attitude towards learning and can refresh their strategies with the passage of time. They discuss with their colleagues and change the existing pedagogy accordingly. This is how they develop themselves in their career.

DISCUSSION

Reflective practice is a complete process for understanding the continuous, social cultural, personal and professional development. Timperley *et.al* (2007) claims that reflective practice is the critical examination of our own activities in all spheres of life. It is self-inquiry for discovering hidden abilities to meet the challenges and transform the personality. By the reflection system about our present actions and past experiences we can formulate strong professional knowledge for future. In this age of competition, it is necessary to reflect upon activities and enhance the skills. Traditional means of development have been expired now days. The world is changing with the passage of time. How can we improve the standards of society, organizations and the individuals? The answer is reflective practice.

Reflective practice is learning through experience. It is called a learning tool in all professions. It is human nature to think about his surroundings and happenings of his society. Reflective practice makes this technique effective for him. It is organized plan of activities and practices to develop the skills and enable the individual to solve his problems (Moon, 1999). It can be said that reflection can make us aware about our intellectual aptitudes, emotions and feelings. So we can make measureable goals with strategies to obtain them. Only theoretical knowledge is not enough for personal and professional development. Reflective practice relates the theory with practices. It involves the individual in practical work for professional growth. Most important aspect of reflective practice is to demonstrate your polished performance as the outcome. We should challenge the existing traditional methods of professional development and should promote modern critical strategies after the reflective practice.

CONCLUSION

This review concluded that reflective practice enables the practitioner to focus his mind on past experience, get better understanding, gain knowledge and develop new thoughts for personal and professional development. For this purpose, he has to reflect on his personality and work daily. Reflective practice is not limited to some specific time but it deals with daily work which makes us skillful. We become creative in thinking and technical in practices due to reflective practice. All these activities depend upon our actions and practical work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For last two decades the researches in academic field have proved that reflection is related with the professional growth of the teachers. It is essential for the new teachers and experienced teachers as well. The efficiency in the class can be enhanced through reflective practice. Modern teaching techniques enable the teachers to do reflection (Harris, 1998).

REFERENCES

- Black, S. (2003, February). *Time for learning. Inform*. Portland State University, USA & University of Groningen, 32-35The Netherlands
- Boud, D. and Walker, D. (1998) Promoting reflection in professionals' courses: the challenge of context. *Studies in Higher Education*, 23(2), 191-206
- Brookfield, S (1995), *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco

Reflection: A Review to Develop Teachers Professionally and Personally

- Bredeson, P.V. (2003). *Designs for learning: A new architecture for professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, a Sage Publications Company.
- Boyd, E., & Fales, A. (1983). Reflective learning: Key to learning from experience. Branch, *Journal of Human Psychology*, 23, 94-11.
- Craig, R.(1994). Reflection and imagination: A holistic approach to teacher education, *Teacher Education Quarterly* 21(3).
- Dewey, J.(1933). *How we think: A Restatement of the relation of reflective thinking to the educative process*. Chicago: Henry Regnery.
- Edwards, A. (1999). Reflective practice in sports management. *Sport Management Review*
- Eraut, M. (1995). Schön shock: A case for reframing reflection-in-action?. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 1(1).
- Farrell, T. S. C. (2009). *Teaching reading to English language learners: A Reflective guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Fejes, A. (2008) To be one's own confessor: Educational guidance and govern mentality, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 29(6), 653-664.
- Gibbs, G (1988) *Learning by doing: a guide to teaching and learning methods*. Oxford: Further Education Unit, Oxford Polytechnic.
- Graves, K. (2002). Developing reflective practice through disciplined collaboration. *The Language Teacher*, 26(7), 19-21.
- Habermas, J. (1972). *Knowledge and Human Interests (trans. J. Shapiro)*. London: Heinemann.
- Harris, A. (1998). Effective teaching: A review of the literature. *School Leadership & Management*, 18(2), 169-183. EJ 563 868.
- Heng, L.W.& Khim, T.S. (2004). *Reflective Practice in Malaysian Teacher Education: Assumptions, Practices, and Challenges*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic.
- Holt, N. L., & Strean, W. B. (2001). Reflecting on initiating sport psychology: A self- Narrative of neophyte practice. *The Sport Psychologist*, 15, 188-204.
- Hubball, H.,Collins,J, & Pratt,D.(2005). Enhancing reflective teaching practices: Implications for faculty developmental programs. *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*.
- Huffman, J. B., & Hipp, K. K. (2003). *Re-culturing schools as professional learning communities*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group, Inc.
- Jasper F. (2010). Applied dimensionality and test structure assessment with the START-mathematics test. *The International Journal of Educational and Psychological Assessment*; 6:104-25
- Jasper, M. (2007). *Vital notes for nurses: reflection decision making professional development*. London: Black Well Publishing.
- Johns, C (1995). "Framing learning through reflection within Carper's fundamental ways of knowing in nursing". *Journal of advanced nursing* 22 (2): 226–34.
- Kettle B., & Sellars, N. (1996). The development of student teachers practical theory of teaching. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 12(1), 1-24. EJ 526 790.
- Learner Development Unit (2007).Developing skills of reflection. Retrieved on: Nov 1, 2014.<http://www.ssdd.uce.ac.uk/learner/Study%20Skills%20Guides/7%20Reflection.html>
- Loughran,J.J. (2006). A response to Reflecting on the self*. *Reflective Practice*, 7, 43-53.
- London Pharmacy Education & Training, (2010). Reflection & reflective practice www.londonpharmacy.nhs.uk/educationandtraining/cpd.htm. Retrieved on: November 4, 2014.
- McAlpine, L., Weston, C.,Berthiaume, D., & Fairbank- Roch, G. (2004). *Reflection on teaching: Types and goals of reflection*. Educational Research and Evaluation.
- McAlpine,L.,&Weston, C. (2000). Reflection: Issues related to improving professors 'teaching and students 'learning. *Instructional Science*, 28(5/6), 363-385.
- McWilliam, E. (1994). *In Broken Images: Femi-nist Tales for a Different Teacher Education*. Columbia University: Teachers College Press.
- Manan, M. V., & Li, S. (2002). The pathic principle of pedagogical language. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18, 215.
- Moon, J. (1999). *Reflection in learning and professional development*. London, UK: Routledge Falmer.
- Osterman, K. F., & Kottkamp, R. B. (1993). *Reflective practice for educators: Improving schooling through professional development*. Newbury Park, Calif: Corwin Press.
- Osterman, K. F., & Kottkamp, R. B. (2004). *Reflective practice for educators: Improving schooling through professional development*. Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

- Poczwadowski, A., Sherman, C. P., & Henschen, K. P. (1998). A sport psychology service: Building on theory and practice. *The Sport Psychologist*, 12, 191-207.
- Pollard (2005). *Reflective Teaching (Second Edition)*. The Tower Building 80 Maiden Lane, Suite 704 11 York Road New York, NY 10038
- Podsen (2000). *Coaching and Mentoring First-Year and Student Teachers*. Eye on Education Inc, Larchmont, NY.
- Postholm, M. B. (2008). Teachers developing practice: Reflection as key activity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24(7). Retrieved Januar 11, 2015, from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science?>
- Raelin, J. (2002). "I don't have time to think!" versus the art of reflective practice. Reflections, North eastern University. Retrieved on 5 November 2014 from <http://www.global-leader.org/Reflective%20Practice%20Article.pdf>
- Rolfe, G., Freshwater, D., Jasper, M. (2001) (eds.) *Critical Reflection for Nursing and the Helping Professions*. Basingstoke, U.K: Palgrave.
- Sarsar, M.N. (2008). Adopting a Reflective Approach to Professional Development, Retrieved January 9, 2015 from EBSCO Online Database Education Research. <http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true%2b&db=ehh%2b&AN=20815234%2b&site=ehost-live>
- Serafini, F (2002). Reflective practice and learning, *Primary Voices K – 6. Urbana*, 10(4).
- Schon, D.A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. New York, NY: Basic Books, Inc.
- Timperley, H., Wilson, A., Barrar, H & Fung, I (2007). *Teacher Professional Learning and Development: Best Evidence Synthesis Iteration*. Wellington, New Zealand: Ministry of Education.
- Uzat, S.L. (1998). Cognitive coaching and self-reflection: Looking in the mirror while looking through the window. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association. New Orleans, LA. ED 427 064
- Van Manen, M. (1995). On the epistemology of reflective practice, *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice* 1(1), 33-50.
- York-Barr, J. & Sommers, J. (2001). *Reflective practice to improve schools: An action guide for educators*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Zeichner, K., & Liston, D. (1996). *Reflective teaching: An Introduction*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.