

Briefing Paper

Purpose:

Explain the significance of reflective practice to facilitate professional development in the early years workforce.

Incorporate theoretical frameworks and models to enable the application of reflective practice

The briefing paper will support practitioners in developing an understanding of reflective practice and its value in enhancing quality service provision.

Introduction

Reflection is a continuous systematic reviewing process for all educators to make them professionally knowledgeable. It allows the person to link one task to another and make sure students reach their maximum potential. (Cambridge Community, 2021)

Reflection means slowing down and thinking more deeply, asking questions, learning to live with uncertainty and creating links between experience, reading, writing and learning. (Cockburn and Handscomb, 2012, p.146)

A Professional practitioner never acts without thinking, they reflect in their actions which helps them to understand the child's needs, identifying the learning barriers. Reflection makes sure all students learn more effectively as learning can be tailored to their needs. By knowing the student's thoughts and feelings, his learning experience is improved. Once a student starts taking part in a learning cycle, they become more aware of different learning styles and what suits them and improves the quality of teaching and learning. Reflective teaching also helps the practitioner to improve their knowledge, skills, and ability to solve problems. It allows a practitioner to access, appreciate and improve. Therefore, we can say that reflection is a continuous professional development process often referred to as Reflection in Action. Reflective practice influences training development and conception. The tacit knowledge, every day's complexities, judgements and dilemmas of professional life are developed by Reflection in action. (Page 52) Reflection in action is based on the experience of surprise which is more intuitive and spontaneous. A professional practitioner is a specialist who encounters certain types of situations

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repeatedly because he can practice, he develops techniques for how to respond. His practice becomes stable and brings him less surprise, knowing his practice he increasingly becomes more spontaneous and automatic. Based on his judgement and experience he is often referred to as a specialized person. A person who reflects in his action becomes a researcher because of his experiments and implementations. The process of reflection in action is extraordinary, it is the core of practice for a reflective practitioner. (Colwell and Pollard, 2015, p. 51-53).

Models of Reflective Practice

According to Brock (2015, p.15-19)

The most important thing for critical reflection is to become adept at it. There are several models and theories on how to develop the process of critical reflection. One of the most famous theories is Kolb's (1984) and Gibson's model (1998).

Gibbs' reflective cycle

Gibbs reflective cycle is also based on Kolb's model is more useful mainly focuses on the incidents and experiences. It has a six-stage reflective cycle based on description of what has happened, feelings and thoughts about the experience, evaluation of the experience good or bad, analysis about the situation, conclusion of what have learnt then action plan.

Example: In an early year setting a child came crying complaining about the other child. The child claimed that child B has punched his face and used inappropriate language. However, Child B completely denied it. (Cambridge Community, 2021).

According to Gibb's Model, the practitioner would focus on the description of the situation, evaluate the circumstances, analyze the situation by asking questions to the other children that were present at the time of that incident. Based on reflective practice, and because of the previous information and records the practitioner concluded that child B was accused of bullying child A. According to the conclusion, the practitioner would escalate the issue to the behaviour management team.

Kolb's Model of Reflection

David Kolb, an educational researcher came up with a four-stage reflective model called Kolb's Learning Cycle (1984). The cycle is based on experience, observation, learning from experience and planning an active experimentation.

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Concluding from it, a practitioner should analyze the situation and learn from the experience of what students have already learnt and what should be to create a better understanding of the subject. The practitioner should take academic references for the purpose of research and based on observations and experience a new action plan would come into place. (Cambridge Community, 2021).

Conclusion

Reflection is a cyclical process that depends on observing, analyzing, adapting and repeating the cycle. (Cambridge Community, 2021). The development of knowledge and expertise, thinking critically, development of new policies and practices occurs constantly. An early year's practitioner is always adapting to change and new developments. These changes might be positive or negative, it is essential to engage in critical reflection to analyze the situation (Brock, 2015, p. 22). According to EYPs reflective practice is one of the two main attributes of a early years practitioner, allowing the practitioners to develop a better understanding of their workplace, improving and developing the essential skills. When incorporating models of reflection provides a better understanding of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, intuition based on experience which promises continuous professional development in the early years setting (Johnson, 2010, p. 111).

Reference List

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