Teachers as Reflective Practitioners in Junior High School in the Kwadaso Municipality

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Abstract: The study was a descriptive survey which sought to assess how Junior High School teachers in the Kwadaso Municipality in Ghana reflect on their practices in the classroom. The target population for the study was teachers in public Junior High Schools. Convenience sampling procedure was used to select 72 teachers. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was 0.88. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that teachers reflect their practices to ensure effective delivery of their lessons. Teachers practically reflected by talking about their classroom experiences with their colleagues. Teachers cognitively reflected by reading books related to effective teaching. Teachers should be encouraged by the Ghana Education Service to keep reflecting to improve their practices.

Keywords: Junior high school, public, practitioners, reflective, teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, teachers are expected to possess high quality and standards to provide students with better instruction and outcomes to achieve effective education. Education effectiveness is defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO] as the result of specific reviews or analyses that measure the achievement of a specific educational objective or the extent to which an educational institution is expected to meet specific requirements. Unavoidable teacher influence on curriculum implementation has a direct impact on student learning. There are numerous contributors to the quality of learning or teaching outcomes, such as teachers' ability to demonstrate effective classroom teaching strategies (Rivkin, Hanushek & Kain, 2005; Ololube, 2006; Kunter, Klusmann, Baumert, Richter, Voss & Hachfeld, 2013).

One of the most important responsibilities of teachers is to foster the lifelong growth and development of their students. The best teacher practices in Ghana will result from the adoption and interaction of three critical domains: professional knowledge and skills, professional values and attitudes, and professional competencies (Ghana Education Service [GES] 2015); and these

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are centred on all subject matter knowledge, knowledge of learner, general pedagogy, motivational competency, competency in instructional process, resource utilisation, assessing competence, and professionalism. These domains are regarded as the essential set of teaching competencies and standards for basic school education (Yidana & Quartey, 2017). Transformation Teacher Education and Learning [T-TEL] (2018) emphasised that when teachers understand and demonstrate these qualities and standards as represented by the domains of the National Teaching Standards, it will facilitate improved and desired teaching and learning for students. These essential skills include planning for teaching and learning, assessing students' progress, teaching for inclusivity and equity, classroom inquiry and reflective practice, action research, portfolio development, professional values, management, and leadership qualities.

The growth of research interest in the field of teacher effectiveness is intensifying, with reflective practice of teaching perhaps contributing the most to the literature and discussion (Mathew, Mathew & Peechattu, 2017; Habib, 2017). For effective education to be realised in basic schools, reflective practice must become one of the most important elements that every teacher must implement. Yidana and Lawal (2015) noted reflective practice as a professional requirement for teachers and an essential competency-based rubric that facilitates the successful implementation of any education proposal. Schon (1987) further says that reflective practice is an engagement of the thought process and doing through which a practitioner gains knowledge and becomes more skillful. Reflective practice entails the integration of theory and practice and thought and action. Reflective practice in teaching refers to the process of examining one's way of imparting knowledge and promoting learning in the classroom and determining what works best for the students. It is a continuous integration of tacit knowledge and theoretical knowledge. Reflective practice occurs when teachers consciously assume the role of reflective practitioner and examine their own beliefs regarding teaching and learning, accept full responsibility for their actions while teaching, analyse their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching. The movement towards reflective practice in teacher education, development, and growth aligns with the view that teachers can only adjust and stimulate quality instruction when they can question and examine their practices and competencies as being right or wrong. Thus, the change that education is expected to bring about, with the teacher at the centre, rests with a reflective educator (Sellars, 2012).

In Ghana, Amakyi and Ampah-Mensah (2014) mentioned that the Colleges of Education Act, 2012 (Act 847) stipulates that after student teachers completing the one year off-campus teaching experience, student teachers return to their various institutions and prepare for final examinations on the academic courses they took during the year. Missing from the one year off-campus teaching is a guided reflection on their teaching experiences. The emphasis on teacher education is placed more on acquisition of theoretical knowledge. Darling-Hammond (2006) points out that the most significant indicator of student success is an excellent teacher; one who facilitates learning in the classroom. However, teacher education programmes leave new teachers poorly prepared and increase the attrition rate of these teachers.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY
- The study intends to assess teachers as reflective practitioners in Junior High School in the Kwadaso municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- How do teachers in Junior High School in the Kwadaso municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana ensure reflectivity in their practices?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The findings of the study would provide useful information to educational stakeholders such as teachers, students, and Ghana Education Service [GES]. Teachers would think on their feet and find solutions to emerging problems during their day-to-day teaching. Students would be highly engaged by their teachers to appreciate deeply the meaning of content delivered to them by their teachers. The findings would aid the Ghana Education Service [GES] to tease out areas in the school curriculum which require either modification or expunge.

LITERATURE REVIEW

CONCEPT OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

Reflective practice is frequently viewed as an evaluation of teachers' classroom performance. Beauchamp & Childress (2009) posits three reflective practice components. The first aspect consists of the processes that construct the activities of examining, thinking, comprehending, evaluating, developing, and transforming. The second aspect is objects, which purposefully engage the teachers' practice, social knowledge, experience, and theories. The final component is rationality. The purpose of reflective practice is to achieve a particular objective or rationale. For example, considering future actions or decisions, altering one's thinking or knowledge, enhancing one's actions, enhancing student learning, and altering oneself or society. Teachers' engagement in reflective practice would help to alter their line of thinking to ensure effective and smooth classroom practices. In Ghana, teachers at the junior high school are trained to acquire reflective skills to teach. But do teachers at the junior high school in Ghana demonstrate their reflectivity during classroom practices?

Farrell (2015) proposed five distinct stages of reflection. The initial phase is philosophy. Philosophy is regarded as a benchmark for reflective teaching practice. It examines reflective activity regarding the teacher as a person. Therefore, teachers should have a better grasp of self-awareness or identity, as what teachers do (both inside and outside the classroom) is heavily influenced by their fundamental philosophies. The second phase involves fundamentals. This phase involves teachers reflecting on their assumptions, beliefs, and ideas. Assumptions are what we believe to be true. Beliefs refer to the general proposition that a person accepts as being true. Both assumptions and beliefs that can moderate an individual's response to a particular situation are consolidated into concepts. These three components of the second stage cannot be separated because they serve as the foundation for classroom teaching and learning activities. The third phase involves theory. In the third stage of reflection, teachers evaluate the various choices of theory applied to their teaching practices. This phase of reflection entails planning and deciding on a variety of activities that teachers may employ. Teachers need specific information about the classroom and student needs to conduct this reflection. These three aspects are the concealed aspects of teaching. The following step is practice. Teachers can reflect on observable behaviours through practice. Teachers can reflect while teaching (reflection-in-action), following the lesson (reflection-on-action), and prior to teaching (reflection-before-teaching) (reflection-for-action). Reflection-in-action enables teachers to monitor and adjust their instruction in real time. Reflection-on-action permits instructors to assess the learning process after it has occurred. Reflection-for-action permits teachers to reflect prior to instruction. Therefore, teachers can

anticipate classroom events. The final phase cannot be practiced. The final stage of reflection transcends practice. In this phase of reflective practice, teachers become critical practitioners. In this phase, the moral value of reflective practice is examined. Compared to other reflective practice proponents, such as Schon, the stages are more comprehensive for understanding the conceptual framework of reflective practice for teacher education. Teachers' motivation to engage in reflection-in-action, reflection-on-action, reflection-before-teaching, and reflection-for-action would ensure effective and well thought through teaching and learning in schools. Teachers together with students would be able to tell which aspect of teaching and learning requires additional attention. However, the question which requires response is, do teachers at the junior high school level in Ghana engage in reflectivity before, during and after teaching and learning processes?

REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

The reflective practice was proposed by Dewey in 1910 and 1938 as a means for teachers to become aware of their classroom practices. Dewey believes that teachers are better able to create classroom environments that promote quality learning when they are aware of their values and beliefs (Rushton & Suter, 2012). Schon (1983) indicated that "reflection occurs in both theory and practice" (p.55). Pollard (2014) opined that reflection results in a positive change to support professional development, as expanded the theory of reflective practice to include teachers' values and beliefs about education. Pollard (2014) added that reflection is a practice that connects teachers to their personal values and the goals of education as they perceive them. Several researchers have identified reflective practice as a mechanism that can support and facilitate quality teaching and learning (Excell & Linington 2010; Killen, 2015; Rousseau 2015; Shaik 2016). Reflective practice is the process by which a teacher considers how he or she teaches and how its benefits students (Connelly, Shaik & Mosito, 2020). Farrell (2015) mentioned that the reflective practitioner engages in evaluating their teaching practice and discussing problems with other people or experts to find solutions to the problems. Reflective practice is more than simply 'thinking' about what is occurring in a lesson; it gives meaning to the thinking (Brock, 2015) and provides teachers with the opportunity to develop a clear understanding of how they are supporting quality teaching and learning. Pollard (2005) explains that teachers must reflect on their values and roles to support effective teaching and learning.

Dewey (1933) indicated that the reflective practitioner begins with a perceived conflict in a context, continues with the interpretation of classroom activities, and concludes with a decision to eliminate the problem. Reflection utilizes the past to inform our judgment, permit us to reflect on our experiences, and equip us with a broader repertoire of knowledge, skills, and techniques for approaching new situations (Killion, Joellen, Todnem & Guy, 1991). Harvey, Coulson and McMaugh (2016) define reflection as a deliberate and conscientious process that employs a person's cognitive, emotional, and somatic capacities to mindfully reflect on past, present, or future actions to learn, gain a deeper understanding of, and potentially improve future actions. Cruikshank (1987) noted that reflective teaching is the ability to analyse teaching practices. Gore and Zeichner (1991) mentioned that reflection is considering an action in its context. Gore and Zeichner added that reflective teaching involves two processes: self-observation and self-evaluation. In the process of self-observation, teachers must consider their students' needs, goals, interests, routines, lessons, and class time. In contrast, self-evaluation enables teachers to make decisions regarding their classes. Nikolov (2016) indicated self-evaluation as the result of self-and peer-correction and assists students in becoming more reflective during the learning process. In

this process, both instructors and students bear responsibility. Learners evaluate themselves and their peers, while teachers evaluate all students within the context. They can all convene and discuss their reflections and the constructive feedback from the evaluation exercise. Thus, teachers can determine the classroom environment. Therefore, reflective teachers are those who promote reflection as an essential classroom tool, and reflective practice is an interactive process between a teacher and their students. It is not only about making the teacher a better educator, but also about raising students' awareness of their own learning processes. Teachers engage in an ongoing cycle of self-observation and self-evaluation to understand their responses to classroom situations.

This type of reflection examines what has occurred in the past and how this can influence our future teaching practices. As a result, students will benefit from an enhanced learning environment. An example of reflection-for-action in the classroom is when a teacher evaluates past events and draws conclusions or makes judgments that will influence future lessons/teachings. The ability to reflect on practice in a methodical manner is regarded as a requirement for professional practice. The following are some characteristics of reflective teaching:

1. It is a combination of skills and inquiries with responsible and open-minded attitudes and a cyclical process in which teachers revise their works.
2. It is based on self-reflection and the evaluation of educational activities by teachers.
3. Open-mindedness is the willingness to consider alternative viewpoints and listen to more than one side of an issue.
   According to McKay (2007), reflective practice is influenced by three factors:
1. Teachers' experiences: teachers spend a significant amount of time in their classrooms; as a result, they gain a wealth of knowledge regarding the role of students, lessons, and curriculum in the context. When making decisions about what to do in their classrooms, reflective teachers consider these beliefs.
2. Sufficient knowledge: teachers must have adequate knowledge of their students' needs in various classroom situations, their students' learning progress and the content they wish to teach, course management, the role of interaction, and the course's objectives. Teachers who are reflective frequently base their decisions on what they have learned in their education.
3. Individual values: a teacher's experiences shape the educational, political, moral, and social values.

BENEFITS OF REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

In a study by Cunningham (2001) as cited in Juhary (2014) a crucial objective of reflective teaching is the ongoing observation and improvement of teaching practices. This objective can assist teachers in regaining their teaching skills and adopting appropriate strategies for a given situation. As learners are exposed to teaching and learning activities, reflective practice can be extremely advantageous. This helps lay the foundation for future academic and social experiences in the school environment (Excell & Linington 2010). The teacher manages the classroom and develops the classroom environment based on the knowledge of teaching, knowledge of learner, and knowledge of classroom management. Utilizing reflective practice in the classroom environment aids teachers in fostering the academic, social, and emotional development of learners that will continue throughout their formal education. The reflective practitioner is conscious of his strengths and weaknesses and is flexible in meeting the needs of the learner he cares for.

Reflective practice is essential to in-service teacher education because it enables in-service teachers to become reflective practitioners and effective teachers. Teachers learn by observing what works and what does not work for their students, and by reflecting on their practice. They learn from the strengths and weaknesses of other teachers, students, and themselves, and then develop better classroom practices. It is evident that teachers can learn through reflection and acquire teaching expertise through reflective practice. Therefore, it is crucial for in-service teachers to improve reflection or mindfulness in teaching (Applegate,1981). Braun and Crumpler (2004) illustrate the theory of Schon (1983,1987) that experienced teachers without reflection remain on par with novice teachers. The necessary capacities of a professional educator cannot be acquired technically; rather, they are acquired through a great deal of introspection, creativity, and adaptability. Without reflective practices, teachers cannot guarantee the achievement of desirable teaching and learning goals, and as a result, they have become technicians, not professionals (Shandomo, 2010). This is a result of their inability to accept responsibility for their actions in the classroom and their lack of awareness of the consequences of their choices.

Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss and Shapley (2007) explained how reflective teaching influences the academic achievement of students. They explain that the effectiveness of professional development depends largely on how teachers implement the acquired knowledge and skills in the classroom. This research indicates that the "content knowledge and pedagogical skills" that teachers acquire through training programmes have a direct effect on student achievement. This study emphasizes the significance of reflective practice in the design of effective professional development activities for in-service teachers. It indicates that teachers must possess practical teaching skills for students to achieve the desired learning outcomes. To improve the quality of teachers in these areas, the most important task for educators is to enhance their teaching skills. This can be accomplished by linking the professional development of teachers with their clinical experience, which will inevitably have a positive impact on student achievement (Yoon & Shapley, 2007).

Disu (2017) discovered how reflective teaching helps teachers become effective educators. The researcher demonstrated that teachers use reflective teaching to observe the learning progress of students, discover more effective teaching methods, and experiment with innovative approaches to gain new insights into classroom instruction. Consequently, it promotes teaching effectiveness and enhances student learning. However, reflecting on what works well and what needs improvement can be difficult when accommodating the demands of the curriculum and the needs of learners (Killen, 2015). In Ghana, teachers at the junior high school are to deliver their lessons in schools bearing in mind the important of reflections. Teachers do this by joining their professional knowledge with experiences in teaching. This would help students to achieve the desired level of learning outcomes in schools. Students would understand what would be taught in schools and therefore could apply them in the world of work effectively. But the question which needs answer is, do teachers at the junior high school in Ghana reflect their classroom practices by linking their professional knowledge to clinical experience to ensure effective teaching and learning in schools?

METHODS

DESIGN

The descriptive survey design was used for the study. This enabled the researchers to collect information on teachers as reflective practitioners in junior high schools. Descriptive survey

design seeks to explore and describe events as they are. The researchers wanted to know from practicing teachers the act of reflection during teaching and learning processes.

PARTICIPANTS

The target population was the set of teachers in public assisted junior high schools in the Kwadaso Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The convenience sampling procedure was used to select 72 practicing teachers in public assisted junior high schools in the Kwadaso Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Teachers selected for the study mainly taught for 10 years and more. Majority of the teachers also had first degree as their highest educational qualification.

INSTRUMENTS

The English Language Teaching Reflective Inventory (ELTRI), a reflective teaching scale developed by Akbari, Bhezadpoor and Dadvand, (2010), was used to measure the participants degree of reflectivity. The scale is designed based on five components of teacher reflection namely practical (6 items), cognitive (6 items), metacognitive (7 items), affective (3 items), and critical (7 items). The practical component deals with the actual practice of teaching. The cognitive component is concerned with teachers' efforts on professional development. Affective component focuses on teacher's reflecting on students, how they are learning, and how learners respond or behave emotionally in their classes. Metacognitive and critical components are the other two subscales that deal with teachers and their reflections on their own beliefs and personality, and the sociopolitical aspects of pedagogy and reflections upon them, respectively. The scale comprises of 29 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The original reliability of the scale was estimated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha to be 0.90 (Akbari et al., 2010). In the currently study, the reliability of the scale was estimated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha as 0.88, which was acceptable.

PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION

Ethically the purpose of the study, the need for individual participation, anonymity as well as confidentially of respondents' responses were considered in study. Informed consent was sought from participants by explaining the purpose of the study to them. Anonymity of respondents was highly considered in the study. This gave the participants the opportunity to have their identity concealed. Neither names nor any identifiable information from respondents were taken. On the issue of confidentiality, effort was made to maintain confidentiality of the responses of the participants. Participants were told that their responses would be kept confidential and that no one known to them would have access to the information provided. The scale was administered personally by the researchers to all the 72 practicing teachers involved in public assisted junior high schools in the Kwadaso Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. A period of one week was used to travel to all schools to administer the scale. A total of 72 questionnaires representing 100 percent response rate was obtained from participants. This was due to several follow-ups made on participants.

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Data was analysed using means and standard deviations to answer research question. The response to the scale is 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often and 5=Always. In this study, we wanted to determine the specific mean reflective practice of teachers. The cut-off points for

interpreting the reflective practice of teachers were calculated by dividing the range (4) of the response to the scale by the number of categories (5), giving 0.8 (Adu Gyamfi & Yeboah, 2022). Then the criterions are 1.0-1.7=Never; 1.8-2.5=Rarely, 2.6-3.3=Sometimes, 3.4-4.1=Often, and 4.2-5.0=Always.

RESULTS

- How do teachers in Junior High School in the Kwadaso municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana ensure reflectivity in their practices?

The results on teachers' reflectivity in relation to teachers' practical way of teaching registered an overall mean (3.37) and standard deviation (1.02). The results showed that teachers often reflected in practical terms by talking about the classroom experiences with their colleagues and seeking their feedback (*M=3.89, SD=.92*). It was found that teachers often reflected by keeping the accounts of their teaching for reviewing purposes in a file (*M=3.60, SD=.94*). The results further showed that teachers involved in the study often reflected practically by discussing practical or theoretical issues with their colleagues (*M=3.53, SD=.94*).

The results in relation to teachers reflecting cognitively showed that; teachers always read books or articles related to effective teaching to improve their classroom performance (*M=4.25, SD=.97*), teachers often looked at journal articles or searched the internet to see what recent developments in their profession are (*M=3.88, 1.02*), teachers often participated in workshops related to teaching and learning issues (*M=3.79, SD=1.11*) and teachers often carried out small scale research activities in their classes to become better informed of learning processes (*M=3.51, SD=.90*).

On teacher's reflectivity in relation to metacognitive, it was found that teachers often reflected by talking to their students to learn about their learning styles and preferences (*M=4.07, SD=1.14*). The results further revealed that, teachers reflected often by thinking of the meaning or significance of their job (*M=3.97, SD=.97*), teachers often reflected by trying to find out which aspects of their teaching provides them with a sense of satisfaction (*M=3.92, SD=.97*) and teachers often reflected by talking to their students to learn about their family backgrounds, hobbies, interest and abilities (*M=3.86, SD=1.13*).

Affectively, teachers involved in the study always reflected to improve their classroom practice by thinking about their strengths and weakness (*M=4.19, SD=.92*), teachers often reflected by thinking of the positive or negative role models their have had and the way they have been affected in their practice (*M=3.71, SD=.99*). It was found that teachers often reflected by thinking of inconsistencies and contradictions that occur in their practice (*M=3.49, SD=1.03*).

As regards how critical teachers are in relation to reflections in the classroom practices, it was observed that teachers often reflected by thinking of ways to enable their students to change their social lives in fighting poverty, discrimination and gender biases (*M=4.18, SD=1.02*). The results further showed that teachers often reflected by thinking of outside social events that could influence their teaching inside the class (*M=3.92, SD=1.01*), teachers often reflected critically by thinking of ways through which they could promote tolerance and democracy in their classes and in the society in general (*M=3.90, SD=.98*) and teachers often reflected critically by thinking about the ways of gender, social class, and race influence students' achievements (*M=3.74, SD=.91*).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics - Teachers Reflectivity (n=72)

As a practicing teacher, I reflect on my work by:

Practical	M	SD	Remarks
1. Talking about my classroom experiences with my colleagues and seek their feedback	3.89	.92	Often
2. Keeping the accounts of my teaching for reviewing purposes in a file	3.60	1.14	Often
3. Discussing practical or theoretical issues with my colleagues.	3.53	.94	Often
4. Writing about the accomplishment or failures after each lesson	3.36	1.05	Sometimes
5. Observing other teachers' classroom to learn about their efficient practices	3.00	.88	Sometimes
6. Asking my peers to observe my teaching and comment on my teaching performance.	2.85	1.20	Sometimes
Mean of means	**3.37**	**1.02**	
Cognitive			
1. Reading books or articles related to effective teaching to improve my classroom performance	4.25	.97	Always
2. Looking at journal articles or search the internet to see what recent developments in my profession are	3.88	1.02	Often
3. Participating in workshops related to teaching and learning issues	3.79	1.11	Often
4. Carrying out small scale research activities in my classes to become better informed of learning/teaching processes	3.51	.90	Often
5. Thinking of writing articles based on my classroom experiences	3.03	1.36	Sometimes
6. Thinking of classroom events as potential research topics and thinking of finding a method for investigating them	3.21	1.18	Sometimes
Mean of means	**3.61**	**1.09**	
Metacognitive			
1. Talking to my students to learn about their learning styles and preferences.	4.07	1.14	Often
6. Thinking of the meaning or significance of my job as a teacher	3.97	.97	Often
7. Trying to find out which aspects of my teaching provide me with a sense of satisfaction	3.92	.97	Often
2. Talking to my students to learn about their family backgrounds, hobbies, interest and abilities.	3.86	1.13	Often
4. Thinking about my teaching philosophy and the way it is affecting my teaching	3.60	1.09	Often
5. Thinking of the ways my biography or my background affects the way I define myself as a teacher	3.40	1.21	Often
3. Asking my students whether they like a teaching task or not	3.29	1.10	Sometimes
Mean of means	**3.73**	**1.08**	
Affective			
1. Thinking about my strengths and weaknesses as a teacher	4.19	.92	Always
2. Thinking of the positive/negative role models I have had as a student and the way they have affected me in my practice	3.71	.99	Often

3. Thinking of inconsistencies and contradictions that occur in my classroom practice	3.49	1.03	Often
Mean of means	**3.79**	**0.98**	
Critical			
1. Thinking of ways to enable my students to change their social lives in fighting poverty, discrimination, gender bias	4.18	1.02	Often
2. Thinking of outside social events that can influence my teaching inside the class	3.92	1.01	Often
3. Thinking of ways through which I can promote tolerance and democracy in my classes and in the society in general	3.90	.98	Often
4. Thinking about the ways gender, social class, and race influence my students' achievements	3.74	.91	Often
5. Thinking about instances of social injustice in my own surroundings and try to discuss them in my classes	3.67	1.11	Often
6. Including less-discussed topics, such as old age, AIDS, discrimination against women and minorities and poverty	3.47	1.15	Often
7. Thinking about the political aspects of my teaching and the way I may affect my students' political views	3.17	1.27	Sometimes
Mean of means	**3.72**	**1.06**	

DISCUSSION

The findings from the study showed that generally, teachers involved in the study indicated that they reflect their practices in schools to ensure effective delivery of their lessons. The findings of the study are discussed in relation to (a) practical reflectivity, (b) cognitive reflectivity, (c) metacognitive reflectivity, (d) affective reflectivity and (e) critical reflectivity. The findings in relations to teachers' practical reflectivity showed that teachers often reflected by talking about their classroom experiences with their colleagues and seeking their feedback, keeping the accounts of their teaching for reviewing purposes in a file and discussing practical or theoretical issues with their colleagues. Teachers sharing their classroom experiences with their colleagues would indeed help teachers to tease out their strengths and aspects which requires concentration for the betterment of the teaching and learning processes. The finding is line with findings of Farrell (2015) who indicated that reflective practitioner engages in evaluating their teaching practice and discussing problems with other people or experts to find solutions to problems. Nikolov (2015) posits that practical reflection is when teachers discuss and get constructive feedback from colleagues and others regarding issues which affect teaching and learning processes. Nikolov furthered that teacher's practical reflection encompasses the willingness to discuss and consider alternative viewpoints an issue to facilitate classroom practices. This means that teachers can better address a concern in school when they engage in reflection by sharing their concern with colleagues or experts.

The findings in terms of cognitive reflection showed that teachers reflected cognitively by reading books or articles related to effective teaching to improve their classroom performance, looking at journal articles or searching the internet to see what recent developments in their profession, participating in workshops related to teaching and learning issues and carrying out small scale research activities in their classes to become better informed of learning processes. The findings are line with findings of Disu (2017) who discovered how reflective teaching helps teachers become effective educators. Disu added that teachers reflect cognitively by reading books, searching for information on the internet to further students understanding of what transpired in the teaching and learning situation. According to Disu, teachers discovering of more effective teaching methods, participating in workshops, seminars, conferences, and experiment with innovative approaches to gain new insights into classroom instruction demonstrate teacher's cognitive reflection. Consequently, it promotes teaching effectiveness and enhances student learning. Gore and Zeichner (1991) opine that teacher cognitive reflection entails teachers considering their needs towards the teaching and learning processes. This could be done by participating in a workshop and seminars to acquire more insights into an orientation.

On teacher's reflectivity in relation to metacognitive, it was found that teachers often reflected by talking to their students to learn about their learning styles and preferences, thinking of the meaning or significance of their job, trying to find out which aspects of their teaching provides them with a sense of satisfaction and teachers talking to their students to learn about their family backgrounds, hobbies, interest, and abilities. The findings lend support to findings of Fathima and Saravanakumar (2012) who maintain that teachers could reflect their teaching metacognitively by having students monitor their own learning and thinking, having students learn their studying strategies and having students develop questions; ask questions of themselves, about what is going on around them in terms of their family background, hobbies, and interest.

Mention should be made in terms of affective reflection that teachers reflected their practices to improve classroom practice by thinking about their strengths and weakness, by thinking of the positive or negative role models they have had and the way they have been affected in their

practice and by thinking of inconsistencies and contradictions that occur in their practice. The findings agree with findings that teachers reflected affectively by identifying their strengths and weakness and thinking about positive successes they have chalked that can support and facilitate quality teaching and learning (Excell & Linington 2010; Killen, 2015; Rousseau 2015; Shaik 2016, Brown, 2017). Connelly, Shaik and Mosito (2020) noted that teachers could do effective lesson delivery when they reflect affectively on what to do in the school. This would guide teachers to consider how to teach to benefit students.

The findings revealed that teachers reflected in the classroom practices in relation to critical aspect of teaching by thinking of ways to enable their students to change their social lives in fighting poverty, discrimination and gender biases, by thinking of outside social events that could influence their teaching inside the class, by thinking of ways through which they could promote tolerance and democracy in their classes and in the society in general and by thinking about the ways of gender, social class, and race influence students' achievements. McKay (2007) noted that as part of teachers' efforts to engage in reflectivity in relation to critical aspect of teaching, teachers are to have adequate knowledge of their students' needs in various classroom situations, the need to understand students' social lives, students' learning progress and students' behaviour in school which could promote tolerance and democracy in classrooms. Teachers must think through ways to promote and shape educational, political, moral, and social values of students.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of the study provide compelling evidence that teachers indicated a significant level of reflectivity across multiple dimensions of their teaching practices. Their reflective practices encompassed practical, cognitive, metacognitive, affective, and critical aspects. Practically, teachers engaged in discussions and sought feedback from colleagues, contributing to the identification of strengths and areas for improvement. Cognitively, teachers actively pursued professional development opportunities and expanded their knowledge through reading and research. Metacognitive reflection allowed teachers to personalize instruction and deepen their understanding of their role. Affective reflection promoted self-awareness and personal growth, while critical reflection addressed social issues and created inclusive learning environments.

The study underscores the importance of reflective practice for teachers, as it enhances teaching practices, supports professional development, and fosters student-centered and socially conscious approaches to education. By actively engaging in reflection, teachers can continuously improve their instructional strategies, better understand their students' needs, and contribute to positive changes in their classrooms and society. It is crucial for educational institutions and stakeholders to recognize and promote reflective practices among teachers through the provision of resources, training, and a supportive culture of collaboration.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Foster a culture of reflection: Schools and educational institutions should actively promote and support a culture of reflection among teachers. This can be accomplished by creating dedicated spaces and opportunities for collaborative discussions, peer feedback, and professional development activities focused on reflective practice. In addition, administrators and school leaders should emphasize the value of reflection and ensure that it is integrated into the school's teaching and learning culture.

- Provide resources for professional development: It is crucial to provide teachers with the necessary resources and support for their ongoing professional development in reflective practices. This can include access to relevant books, articles, and online resources on effective teaching and reflection techniques. Schools should also facilitate participation in workshops, seminars, and conferences addressing reflective teaching strategies. Schools can enhance their reflective skills and improve overall teaching quality by investing in teachers' professional growth.
- Incorporate reflection into teacher training programs: Teacher training programs should emphasize the importance of reflection and provide trainee teachers with opportunities to develop their reflective skills. This can be achieved by including reflective exercises, case studies, and guided discussions on teaching practices and their impact on student learning. In addition, by incorporating reflection into teacher training, future educators will be better equipped to engage in reflective practices throughout their careers.
- Cultivate collaborative learning communities: Schools should create platforms and spaces that foster collaborative learning communities among teachers. These communities can serve as forums for teachers to share their experiences, exchange ideas, and provide constructive feedback to one another. Collaboration among teachers can enhance reflective practices and contribute to professional growth. School leaders can facilitate the establishment of professional learning communities and support collaboration and knowledge-sharing among teachers.

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