Reflective Thinkers: An Examination of the Development of the Student Teachers' Journal Reflections during the Student Teaching Experience

Christine L. Fryer
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Follow this and additional works at: http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd

Recommended Citation
Fryer, Christine L., "Reflective Thinkers: An Examination of the Development of the Student Teachers' Journal Reflections during the Student Teaching Experience" (2013). Theses and Dissertations (All). 124.
http://knowledge.library.iup.edu/etd/124

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by Knowledge Repository @ IUP. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses and Dissertations (All) by an authorized administrator of Knowledge Repository @ IUP. For more information, please contact cclouser@iup.edu, sara.parme@iup.edu.
REFLECTIVE THINKERS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT TEACHERS’ JOURNAL REFLECTIONS DURING THE STUDENT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Graduate Students and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

Christine L. Fryer
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
May 2013
We hereby approve the dissertation of

Christine L. Fryer

Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education

Margot Waddington-Vagliardo, Ed.D., Co-Chair
Associate Professor of Early Childhood
and Elementary Education
East Stroudsburg University

Kelli R. Paquette, Ed.D., Co-Chair
Professor of Education
Indiana University of Pennsylvania

Angelo Senese, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Professional
and Secondary Education
East Stroudsburg University

ACCEPTED

Timothy P. Mack, Ph.D.
Dean
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Title: Reflective Thinkers: An Examination of the Development of the Student Teachers’ Journal Reflections during the Student Teaching Experience

Author: Christine L. Fryer

Dissertation Co-Chairs: Dr. Margot Waddington-Vagliardo
Dr. Kelli R. Paquette
Dr. Angelo Senese

One of the ultimate goals of teacher education programs is to produce highly qualified educators who will be able to teach and inspire students. One way to prepare effective teachers is to include reflection in teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Moore, 2012; Schon, 1987). Reflection aids teachers to make instructional decisions which impact student learning (Schon, 1987; Shkedi, 2000). Using reflective thinking is a skill which requires thought and practice (Schon, 1987; Sparks-Langer, Simmons, Pasch, Colton, & Starko, 1990). The small case study included purposeful reflection workshops for 12 student teachers during the student teaching experience in order for me to be able to explore the possible influence that the workshops may have had in the journal reflections. The journal reflections were examined and evaluated according to the Reflective Pedagogical Thinking Scale (Sparks-Langer & Colton, 1993) during the student teaching experience. Initial study phone interviews were conducted with the university supervisors in order to provide information about their prior experiences with student teachers and their expectations for the student teachers in this study. Culminating phone interviews were also conducted with the university supervisors in order for me to learn about their student teachers’ strengths and areas of growth and improvement during their student teaching experiences. There were also initial and culminating focus group sessions with the student teachers to obtain their perceptions of their strengths, areas of growth, and use of reflective thinking during student teaching. Findings included that reflective thinking can be
taught and learned in reflection workshops. As a result of teaching how to reflect and providing
time to practice reflective thinking during the workshops, student teachers included related
concepts and terminology from the reflection workshops in their journal reflections. The student
teachers reported that the reflective thinking during the study improved their instructional
decision making skills while student teaching.