

## A JOURNEY OF GROWTH IN POST-PANDEMIC: THE ROLE OF REFLECTION IN THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OF BEGINNER TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about significant challenges in the field of education, particularly for beginner teachers in public schools. As these teachers navigate through the post-pandemic era, it is crucial to explore effective strategies that can support their career development. The role of beginner teachers in public schools is vital in shaping young minds and establishing a strong foundation of education. Self-reflection emerges as a fundamental tool for these educators to enhance their teaching abilities and unlock their full potential. Self-reflection promotes personal growth by providing beginner teachers with a deeper understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. By critically assessing their teaching methods, these educators can build upon their competencies and seek professional development opportunities to enhance their skills. Here are some tips to bear in our mind to the success of reflection in our career as a new teacher in the public school.

### Importance of Reflection in Career Development

Reflection is a valuable tool for beginner teachers as it enables them to make sense of their experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. By engaging in reflective practices, teachers can gain a deeper understanding of their teaching methods, instructional approaches, and classroom management strategies. According to Georgia Professional Tech Education (2023), experiential learning allows you to learn in authentic

environments while engaging with others, reflecting on these experiences, and possibly learning from mistakes. Therefore, reflection is a process that involves active thinking and analysis, helping teachers refine their practices and improve student outcomes. As beginner teachers face unique challenges in the post-pandemic era, reflection can provide them with a framework to adapt and grow professionally.

## Enhancing Self-Awareness and Professional Growth

Reflection fosters self-awareness, which is essential for professional development. By reflecting on their teaching practices, beginner teachers can identify their strengths and areas for improvement. This self-awareness allows them to set realistic goals and engage in targeted professional development activities. Kalman et al., (2022) have emphasized the importance of "reflection-in-action" and "reflection-on-action," suggesting that teachers should reflect both during and after their teaching experiences. This ongoing reflection process enables beginner teachers to refine their instructional strategies, adapt to changing circumstances, and continuously improve their skills.

## Promoting Effective Classroom Management

Effective classroom management is crucial for beginner teachers to create a positive learning environment. Reflection plays a significant role in developing these skills. By reflecting on classroom management challenges, beginner teachers can identify potential triggers and develop proactive strategies to address them. Research by Slade et al., (2019) highlights that reflective practices help teachers become more responsive to student needs and create a supportive classroom climate. Through reflection, beginner teachers can enhance their classroom management skills, leading to improved student engagement and academic achievement.

## Collaboration and Mentorship

Reflection can be further enhanced through collaboration and mentorship. Beginner teachers can benefit from engaging in reflective discussions with their peers and experienced educators. Collaborative reflection provides a platform for sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and gaining insights from different perspectives. Mentors can also play a crucial role in guiding and supporting beginner teachers in their reflection process. According to Pottinger (2019), effective mentorship programs can significantly impact the professional development of beginner teachers, helping them navigate challenges and develop reflective practices.

In the post-pandemic era, reflection emerges as a powerful tool for the career development of beginner teachers in public schools. By engaging in reflective practices, teachers can enhance their self-awareness, refine their teaching practices, and improve classroom management skills. Collaboration and mentorship further enrich the reflective process, providing beginner teachers with valuable insights and support. As schools adapt to the new normal, fostering a culture of reflection can empower beginner teachers to navigate challenges and embark on a journey of growth in their careers.

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