Supporting reflective teaching via schools’ culture: A framework utilizing Tierney’s understands of schools’ culture

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This paper developed a conceptual framework of the ideal working conditions and practices that could enable the spread of reflective teaching by synthesizing an altered version of Tierney’s framework of schools’ culture and characteristics of reflective teaching. Accomplishing these, suggests potentially, how various dimensions of schools’ culture could be used to support reflective teaching as well as indicate broadly, what needs to be done, what measures to take and what thinking are to be changed so as to enable the spread of reflective teaching. This paper is also an outworking of my doctoral dissertation to be presented to the University of Nottingham School of education in September 2006.

Introduction

In this paper, I outline what is involved in teaching reflectively, the characteristics of reflective teaching and develop a conceptual framework of an ideal school culture in which reflective teaching could thrive. The conceptual framework is developed from a synthesis of an altered version or Tierney’s (1988) framework for identifying schools’ culture and the characteristics of reflective teaching. The characteristics of reflective teaching emerge from the discussion of literature.

A vast literature in the area of reflective teaching exists. The works of John Dewey between 1859 and 1952 and Donald Schon between 1930 and 1997 are bedrocks for the study of reflection and reflective teaching. Also of significance are works of Ghaye and Ghaye (1998) Zeichner and Liston (1996), Hatton and Smith (1995), Cole (1997) Day (1996), Hyrkas, Tarkka and Ilmonen (2000), Farrell (2001), Coyle (2002) and many others. The impact of teachers’ workplace conditions and practices on reflective teaching is discussed by a number of these and other writers. I will use the writers highlighted in the foregone discussion along with others to aid in discussing the issues relevant to this paper.
Defining Reflective teaching

While planning a lesson, a teacher critically thinks about what is to be taught, how the teaching is to be carried out, the potential outcomes, and how his or her belief, values and assumptions have influenced the lesson content. This also involves anticipating any foreseeable difficulties and taking steps to correct, or to prepare for them. Schon (1987) refers to this act as 'reflection-on-action'.

During the actual implementation of the lesson the teacher critically thinks—on the spot—about what is being taught and the intended outcome, sometimes having to address difficulties being experienced immediately. Normally, alteration and changes are made to student activities or teaching method. Schon (1987) refers to this as reflection-on-action.

After the lesson, the teacher will make mental or written notes and critically think about whether or not intended outcomes were achieved and the level to which the outcomes were or were not achieved and possible reasons for these occurrences. He or she will critically think about the degree to which his or her belief, values and assumptions about teaching affected the lesson implementation, then make a written note of these in a journal and use the information gained to impact future lessons (Schon 1987. reflection-on-action).

The processes outlined in the foregoing discussion would involve teachers in analyzing, discussing, evaluating, changing and developing their practice by adopting an analytical approach to their work (Coyle 2002). From this observation, I conclude that reflective teaching is an approach to teaching, learning and problem solving that uses reflection as the main tool (Martin Jr, Wood, & Stevens 1988). As indicated in the process outline above, the 'reflective model' encourages those who embrace it, to think about what they do (Ghaye & Ghaye 1999). I will add the phrase ‘thinking critically’, ‘for this entails the recall, consideration and evaluation of experiences, usually in relation to a broader purpose’ (Farrell 200, 1 p.5). Here, I will infer that when reflection is employed in a pedagogical sense, it must include the recall, consideration and evaluation of teaching experiences as a means of improving future ones.
A teacher employing the reflective model is engaged in recalling events and happenings, considering them and evaluating their meaning and therefore—according to Farrell (op.cit)—she would be employing critical thinking. This could suggest some connection between reflective teaching and critical thinking.

**Reflective Teaching and Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is characterised differently by various writers. Fowler (1996) lists over fifteen definitions of critical thinking proposed by fifteen different writers. There are some similarities as well as differences to these. An examination of the definitions suggests that the writers all agree on the fact that its binding characteristic is the fact that it is primarily a mental or cognitive process with particular outcomes such as arriving at appropriate:

- Beliefs
- Patterns of reasoning
- Conclusion of whether to reject or suspend judgment on an issue
- Understanding and meaning of an issue or statement
- Logical inferences
- Evidence and following where they lead
- Decisions about material by distinguishing between facts and opinion

This list of outcomes of critical thinking displays the different uses and results of the application of it as a cognitive skill. For example, critical thinking can be applied to a particular situation and a conclusion drawn in regards to what to believe or what actions to take, or it can result in making logical inferences from a reading or conversation.

Critical thinking is a co-requisite of reflective teaching. I will suggest that it is integral and that reflective teaching cannot be said to have occurred without critical thinking. Newman (1999), being mindful of this fact, uses the term critical practice and the critical practitioner synonymously with reflective practice and practitioner. Essentially then, for any teaching to be considered reflective teaching, critical thinking i.e. giving careful consideration or thought and being involved in a process of disciplined intellectual criticism which combines knowledge of context and balanced judgment, must be an integral aspect, even a vital requirement and this is displayed in the three stages of the process of teaching I used in the definition in the foregoing discussion.
Cole (1997), while embracing the concept of critical thinking as a co-requisite to reflective practice, adds to the discussion the concepts of ‘ongoing critical inquiry’ and the point that this should be ‘self-directed’. In other words, critical thinking should be an integral aspect of teachers’ ongoing critical inquiry of their own teaching. From this suggestion, I will assume that ongoing critical inquiry of one’s practice is a feature of reflective teaching. The writer, however, warns that this ongoing critical inquiry should be the initiative of teachers engaged in reflective teaching and preferably, not decreed by policy-makers or educational administrators.

Other writers such as Coyle (2002), Hyrkas, Tarkka & Ilmonen (2001) and Calderhead (1992) agree with this, for they are of the opinion that there is indeed a feeling of autonomy when teachers engage in self-directed critical thinking as an integral aspect of their on-going process of inquiry into their own teaching. When this occurs, teachers are more likely to take control of their own learning and this should eventuate into improved learning opportunities for students. So, reflective teaching involves not just thinking about what you do and how you do it, but it involves critical thinking under the direction of the individual teacher.

From this, I surmise that reflective teaching includes self-directed ongoing critical thinking and inquiry, initiated by teachers and not administratively decreed; it could eventuate into creative and innovative approaches to classroom and school situations and problems, and the development of knowledge that is contextualised. Contextualised knowledge involves an understanding and familiarity with the nuances of a particular school or classroom and the possibility of what would happen in response to the implementation of a particular teaching method or policy. This contextual understanding could emerge from teachers’ ongoing critical inquiry into their teaching context.

To this discussion, other writers add the concept of meta-thinking, to an understanding of critical thinking and by extension reflective teaching. Elder and Paul (1994), and Halpern (1996), in their definitions, suggest that critical thinking should also involve evaluating one’s own thinking processes, or the art of thinking about your thinking, while you are thinking, in order to make your thinking better, clearer, more accurate or more defensible. They continue by stating that self-awareness of our ways of learning and of our knowledge is the essence of critical thinking. From
this discussion, I will infer that critical thinking which is inextricably bound to reflective teaching, involve the willingness to question, to take risks in learning, to try out new strategies and ideas, seek alternative and take control of learning, use higher order thinking skills, suspend judgment and to be able to reflect upon one’s own learning processes.

The nature of reflective teaching being ‘individual centered’ emerges in the work of Coyle (2002), who, while referencing reflective teaching, pointed out that it is hermeneutically oriented leaving much to the individual’s interpretation. Writers such as Posner (1989), Zeichner (1992), Eby and Kujawa (1994), Hyrkas, Tarkka & Ilmonen (2001), Cunningham (2001) quoting Brookfield (1995) and Hatton & Smith (1995) agree that self-examination by teachers is a part, and a key element of reflective practice. This self-examination involves assessing one’s beliefs and values and engaging in discussions, which lead to self-understanding, self-improvement and should equate into being a better teacher-learner thus facilitating necessary changes in self, others and context. This is significant, for reflective practice involves teachers engaging in these and other affective activities such as carrying out self-observation through the use of video recording of classroom teaching encounters and self-evaluation which includes the identifying of personal meaning and or significance and the disclosure of feelings (Reiman 1999).

The act of assessing self, beliefs and values are all affective in nature. For reflective practitioners engaged in these affective activities, there is the need for colleagues and schools’ administrators to be sensitized to the characteristics of the practice so as to reduce the chance of impacting negatively the emotions and or self-esteem of the practitioner. This sensitization of colleagues and administrators to the nuances of reflective teaching could also aid in the modification of various dimensions of teachers’ workplace conditions and practices that are known to be impediments to reflective teaching such as a lack of collegial relationship and collaborative teaching. Cunningham (2001), makes the suggestion that if teachers are able to discuss and analyse problems they encounter in their classroom with others, this could aid their analysis of situations, which could eventuate into improved future classroom encounters.
The role of emotions in reflective teaching is being hinted at here. Markham (1999), made the point that there is a feeling of vulnerability, which follows from exposing one’s perceptions and beliefs to others. If this is the case, then this supports the need for colleagues and administrators to be in position of certain interpersonal relational skills, to be able to minimize if not totally eradicate the feeling of vulnerability experienced by the reflective practitioners. This could be aided via the school culture. I will say more about this later. From this thought, I will conclude that reflective teaching enables teachers to use their intuition, initiative, values and experiences during teaching, and exercise their judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills.

Posner (1989), addressing student teachers on field experience, encourage them to think critically, evaluate and plan in regards to classroom incidents, teaching techniques and methods. Posner strongly suggests that student teachers should engage in critical thinking for it will aid them in being deliberate and intentional in a number of ways, such as devising new teaching methods rather than being slaves to tradition, or to challenge accepted ways that the schools have always carried out the tasks of teaching.

While this might be commendable and could even be beneficial to seasoned or experienced teachers, one is left to question if he is in fact demanding too much from student teachers to be able to impact a school during their ‘field experience’. Having said this, it might be possible. Eby and Kujawa (1994) while agreeing with the use of critical thinking to impact both self and others, rightly suggest that student teachers’ attention should be focused on classroom contexts and the impact that a critical thinking teacher could have there. For example, using course tasks and assignments to focus students on issues, questions or problems and promote meta-cognitive attention to thinking so that students develop a growing awareness of the relationship of thinking to reading, writing, speaking and listening.

I will surmise that the main aim of reflective practice is to enable teachers to analyze, and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what is learned to inform decision-making, planning and future action and this could eventuate into school improvement. Having established what constitutes reflective teaching, how do teachers’ workplaces impede the practice?
Reflective Teaching and Teachers’ workplace

Markham (1999) and Cole (1997) make reference to schools’ context as factors that can impede reflective teaching. In essence what these writers suggest is, for professional learning to occur via the act and processes of reflection, the context in which reflective practitioners operate must be supportive of this kind of learning. Markham (1999) holds that the impediments to reflective practice fall mainly into three categories:

- The seductive simplicity of the metaphor of reflection
- Resistance to reflection on the part of teachers themselves and
- The blocks to ethico-political reflection that teaching environments and institutions erect.

He suggests that the modification or elimination of such factors will create greater possibilities for reflective teaching. Hatton and Smith (1995), suggest that in the context of schools and institutions, resistance to reflective practice emerges because reflection in teacher education and by extension schools is not generally associated with the work of a teacher. Time and opportunity are needed to develop complex reflective skills. Day (1999), states that the demands on teachers’ time and emotions and intellectual will become more and more, rather than less, in light of the societal expectations and needs of learners.

From these statements, I will infer that the very nature of reflection and reflective teaching could impede the practice. Cole (1997), suggests that reflective practice needs to receive institutional support as a legitimate form of professional development. She maintains that external structures imposed by schools and school systems, the profession, government and the public at large engender psychological states, such as anxiety, fear, helplessness, loneliness, meaninglessness and hostility which act against reflective teaching and teachers becoming reflective practitioners. Day (1999) supports the observation that cultures in schools act as potential barriers to participation in all forms of reflective practice especially those which often discourage disclosure, feedback and collaboration. From Day’s comment, one could infer that reflective teaching involves disclosure of feelings and ideas and receiving and giving feedback as a part of a collaborative experience.
Manen (2002), qualifies Day’s statement by pointing out that one impediment to ‘reflection-in-action’ is the nature of life in the classroom. The writer characterises classrooms as contingent, dynamic, ever changing; every moment, every second and is situation-specific. Moments of teaching are ongoing incidents that require instant actions.

Observing personal impediments to reflective teaching Cunningham (2001) states that reflective practice requires a commitment to continuous self-development and the time to achieve it. There is the need to be trained in reflective practice and time given to experiment with and master the general process. The practice may prove emotionally challenging. Some teachers might not be ready to confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and competence that can be a part of the process. From this one could also infer, that reflective teaching demands that teachers confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and indeed their own competence.

Zeichner and Liston (1996), state that given the busy complicated world of the classroom with its fast-paced an unpredictable environments where teachers must make hundreds of spontaneous decisions each day, with numerous institutional constraints that increase the complexity of teachers’ work, high student-teacher ratio, lack of time and pressures to cover a required and broadly defined curriculum it seems that teachers do not have the time to reflect because of the need for them to act quickly in this fast-paced and constrained classroom environment.

The foregone discussion defined reflective teaching looked at impediments to reflective teaching such as the nature of reflection itself, teachers’ work place conditions and practices. Table 1 summarizes the characteristics of reflective teaching emerging from the discussion.
### Reflective teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics of Reflective teaching</th>
<th>Authors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>An approach to teaching, learning and problem solving that uses reflection as the main tool</td>
<td>Martin Jr, Wood, &amp; Stevens 1988</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It includes the recall, consideration and evaluation of teaching experiences as a means of improving future ones.</td>
<td>Farrell 2001, Coyle 2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>Features the ongoing critical inquiry into one's practice</td>
<td>Cole 1997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes critical thinking—which involves the willingness to question</td>
<td>Elder &amp; Paul 1994, Martin 1989, Halpern 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes seeking alternative and taking control of one's learning</td>
<td>Elder &amp; Paul 1994, Martin 1989, Halpern 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes using higher order thinking skills</td>
<td>Elder &amp; Paul 1994, Martin 1989, Halpern 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes being able to suspend judgment</td>
<td>Elder &amp; Paul 1994, Martin 1989, Halpern 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It cannot be ‘caught; people must be trained in the process</td>
<td>Cunningham 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is subject and standard conscious and promotes the individual as responsible for identifying subject content deficiencies, and through the act of reflection, takes steps to</td>
<td>Zeichner and Liston 1996</td>
</tr>
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</table>
address such deficiencies

| It includes the use of video recording of classroom teaching encounters and self-evaluation that includes the identifying of personal meaning and or significance, which includes the disclosure of feelings. | Reiman 1999 |
| Involves discussing and analysing problems encountered in classroom with colleagues thus aiding the analysis of the situations | Cunningham 2001 |
| Enables the use of intuition, initiative, values and experience and the exercising of judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills | Markham 1999 |
| Includes critical thinking which aids teachers in being deliberate and intentional in a number of ways, such as devising new teaching methods rather than being a slave to tradition, or to challenge accepted ways that schools have always carried out the tasks of teaching | Posner 1989 |
| Enables teachers to analyse, and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what is learned to inform decision-making, planning and future actions | Calderhead 1992 |
| Places value on both the individual and the development and implementation of knowledge derived from critical thinking about the practice of teaching | Hatton & Smith 1995, Farrell 2001, Coyle 2002 |
| Demands time and opportunity to develop complex reflective skills | Day 1999, Cunningham 2001 |
| Requires personal risk taking for it demands that one’s perceptions and beliefs are shared with others | Markham 1999 |
| Involves disclosure of feelings and ideas and receiving and giving feedback as a part of a collaborative experience | Day 1999 |
| Demands that teachers confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and indeed their competence | Cunningham 2001 |
| Is applicable to any subject being taught | Coyle 2002 |

**Table 1** summary of the characteristics of reflective teaching

In the next section, I will use a synthesis of the characteristics of reflective teaching listed in Table 1 above with an altered version of Tierney’s framework for determining school culture to create a conceptual framework of the ideal work place in which reflective teaching would thrive. To aid in this process, I will reference schools’ mission, environment, socialization, information, strategy, leadership, teaching practice and artifacts. These make up the altered version of Tierney’s 1988 framework.
A School Context in which Reflective Teaching could Thrive

Essentially, schools’ mission, environment, socialization, information; strategy, teaching practice, artifacts and leadership reflect the culture of schools. While there are numerous framework for examining institutional culture such as Jackson and Hinchliffe (1999) adapting Harris and Hartman (1992) Cameron and Wren (1999), adapting Marriner-Toney (1993), Young (2000), Parker and Bradley (2000) adapting Zammuto and Krakower (1991) and Dastmalchian, Lee and Ng (2000) adapting Cameron and Quinn (1999), the framework proposed by Tierney (1988), unlike others, is the most suited for my intent and purpose for it was specifically constructed for use in educational contexts.

Table two outlines an altered version of Tierney’s framework and question used for examining workplace conditions and practices. The added dimensions are teaching practice and school artifacts. These I added, because I thought they were relevant aspects of schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of work place conditions and practices</th>
<th>Questions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>How does the organisation define its environment? What are the attitudes towards the environment (Hostility? Friendship?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>How it is defined and articulated? Is it used as a basis for decisions and how much agreement is there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialization</td>
<td>How do new members become socialized? How is it articulated? What do we need to know to survive/excel in this organisation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>What constitute information? Who has it? How is it disseminated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy</td>
<td>How are decisions arrived at? Which strategy is used? Who makes decisions and what are the penalties for bad decisions?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>What does the organisation expect from its leaders? Who are the leaders? Are there formal and informal leaders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching practice</td>
<td>Are teachers encouraged to reflect on their teaching? Are open discussions encouraged regarding new theories and research? Do staff room discussions surround new ideas that were implemented by teachers? Are teachers active researchers regarding happenings in their classroom? Is critical thinking generally encouraged?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools’ artefacts’</td>
<td>What learning resources are available for teachers’ use? What conditions are these in? How accessible are these resources?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 an altered version of Tierney’s (1988) school culture framework
The cultural dimensions are displayed in the left column. Tierney considers these, essential concepts to be studied in any school, if an understanding of schools’ culture is being sought. He assumes that values, beliefs and assumptions of an institution are reflected in the organization’s process and artifacts. Tierney’s analysis consists of asking questions such as: How is the mission defined and articulated? Is it used as a basis for decision-making? What constitutes information and who has it? Or how are decisions arrived at and who make them. (Kezar and Eckel 2001). To Tierney’s framework, I have added the categories of teaching practice and school’s artifacts for these two are integral to the operation of a school, and hence integral to the formation of its culture.

The Ideal School Environment

Tierney interpreted the environment to mean the community or state in which the institution is located. He was concerned about the nature of the interaction between community and institution. In the study he carried out, the school’s relationship with its environment fostered a close identification with the nature of its environment and prompted change in the school’s programme, based on the needs of the community. For this paper, the writer proposes that the environment surrounding schools will need to be supportive of reflective practice. This will demand an assessment of the nature of the relationship between school and community and the school displaying to the community, via such avenues as the parent teachers’ association, direct contact with teachers and principal, the fact that developing reflective practice should be embraced for the following reasons:

1. Is a response to an ever change environment as well as the changing need of the learners.
2. Can eventuate into creative and innovative approaches to classroom and school situations and problems.
3. Includes self-examination by teachers which involves assessing one’s beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that lead to self-understanding, self-improvement and should equate into being better teacher-learners thus facilitating necessary changes both in self, others and context.
4. Is applicable to any subject being taught.
5. Is also subject conscious as well as standard conscious, because it promotes the individual teacher as responsible for identifying subject content deficiencies, and through the act of reflection, and being autonomous, takes steps to address such deficiencies.

6. Places value on both the individual and the development and implementation of knowledge derived from critical thinking about the practice of teaching, which could eventuate into improved competence and standard in teaching and learning.

7. Demands that teachers confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and indeed their competence.

8. Involves teachers in taking control of their own learning and this should eventuate into improved learning opportunities for students.

These eight areas were selected because they are the ones with which any community or environment in which a school is located would be concerned. They address aspects such as the needs of the learner, improving and solving classroom and schools’ problems, teachers facilitating necessary change in themselves, learners and contexts or schools, and they also address the areas of standard and competence and improved opportunities for students.

The Ideal School Mission

Tierney’s study saw mission in two dimensions, programme and clientele. Teachers’ workplace conditions and practices, which are supportive of reflective teachers/teaching, should include in its mission the development of school personnel and therefore on-going development programmes and in-service days are a part of the school’s operations. The mission, when it is articulated both in writing and in oral presentation, should be explicit about encouraging in both teachers and the school at large, all twenty eight characteristics of teaching reflectively that are outlined in table one in the foregone discussion.

The Ideal Socialization Process

Tierney saw the socialization process as being important for new staff and he highlights the role of old staff in the process. If teachers’ workplace conditions and
practices are supportive of, and amicable to reflective teachers and teaching. One should see staff members engaged in reflective practice, new staffs being introduced to the concept at induction and on in-service days and it forms a part of formal and informal discussions in the staff room and elsewhere. Existing staff will make efforts to allow the ‘new comer’ to ‘fit in’ with the ‘personality’ of the place which might include collaborative work among staff, open discussion of ideas etc. Based on Tierney’s frame work, during the socialization process new school staff should be told about and where possible shown that reflective teaching:

1. Is an approach to teaching, learning and problem solving that uses reflection as the main tool
2. When employed in a pedagogical sense, it must include the recall, consideration and evaluation of teaching experiences as a means of improving future ones
3. Features the ongoing, critical inquiry of one’s practice.
4. Includes critical thinking--which involved the willingness to question.
5. Includes taking risks in learning
6. Includes being able to suspend judgment
7. Must be taught, people must be trained in the process
8. Includes self-examination by teachers which involves assessing one’s beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that leads to self-understanding, self-improvement and should equate into being better teacher-learners thus facilitating necessary changes in self, others and context.
9. Includes the use of video recording of classroom teaching encounters and self-evaluation, which includes the identifying of personal meaning and or significance which includes the disclosure of feelings.
10. Includes teachers being able to discuss and analyse problems they encounter in their classroom with others, so as to aid their analysis of situations, which could eventuate into improved future classroom encounters.
11. Enables teachers to use their intuition, initiative, values and experiences during teaching and exercise their judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills.
12. Includes critical thinking, which aids teachers in being deliberate and intentional in a number of ways, such as devising new teaching methods rather than being slaves to tradition, or to challenge accepted ways that the schools have always carried out the tasks of teaching.

13. Is applicable to any subject being taught.

14. Is also subject conscious as well as standard conscious, because it promotes the individual teacher as responsible for identifying subject content deficiencies, and through the act of reflection, and being autonomous, takes steps to address such deficiencies.

15. Demands time and opportunity to develop complex, reflective skills.

The Ideal Information Processing

How information is disseminated and what is considered information was of interest to Tierney. In a school supportive of reflective teachers/teaching, written and oral discourse and principals and head teachers’ communicative style reflect the all fifteen characteristics of reflective teaching listed above along with the following:

1. Includes seeking alternative and taking control of learning.

2. Includes being able to reflect upon one’s own learning processes.

3. Includes self-examination by teachers which involves assessing one’s beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that lead to self-understanding, self-improvement and should equate into being a better teacher-learner thus facilitating necessary changes in self, others and context.

4. Enables teachers to analyze, and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what is learned to inform decision-making, planning and future action and this could eventuate into school improvement.

5. Places value on both the individual and the development and implementation of knowledge derived from critical thinking about the practice of teaching, which could eventuate into improved competence and standard in teaching and learning.

6. Requires personal risk taking for it demands that one’s perceptions and beliefs are shared with others and this can lead to a feeling of vulnerability.
7. Involves disclosure of feelings, ideas and receiving and giving feedback as a part of a collaborative experience.
8. Demands that teachers confront the uncertainty about their teaching philosophies and indeed their competence.
9. Involves teachers in taking control of their own learning and this should eventuate into improved learning opportunities for students.

The Ideal Strategy (decision making process)

According to Tierney (1988), initiative or decision-making starts at the ‘grass-root’ level. Supportive workplace conditions and practices will generally encourage individual initiatives and these are discussed openly. Generally, administrators make decision by wide spread discussion and dialogue, an open door policy exist where teachers can discuss classroom ideas with principals and head teachers and teachers are allowed to freely experiment with new ideas and are not publicly ridiculed when an error occurs in the method tried. It is likely that the thinking which supports this kind of openness and teachers’ involvement in the decision-making processes of the school would also support and encourage the following characteristics of reflective teaching which suggest that teachers are:

1. Self-directed critical thinkers and their inquiry is self-initiated and not administratively decreed.
2. Involved in trying out new strategies and ideas.
3. Able to use their intuition, initiative, values and experience during teaching and exercise their judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills.
4. Are in need of time and opportunity to develop complex reflective skills.
5. Able to take control of their own learning and this should eventuate into improved learning opportunities for students.

The Ideal School Leadership

Leadership for Tierney involves proper communications and conscious use of time and place by schools’ administrators. Teachers’ workplace conditions and practice that are supportive of reflective teachers/ teaching are those with administrators who are willing to facilitate, and are also aware of the fact that reflective teaching:
1. Includes self-directed critical thinking and inquiry initiated by teachers and not administratively decreed.
2. Includes being able to reflect upon one’s own learning processes.
3. Includes self-examination by teachers which involves assessing one’s beliefs and values and engaging in discussions that leads to self-understanding, self-improvement and should equate into being a better teacher-learner thus facilitating necessary changes both in self, others and context.
4. Includes teachers being able to discuss and analyse problems they encounter in their classroom with others, so as to aid their analysis of situations, which could eventuate into improved future classroom encounters.
5. Enables teachers to use their intuition, initiative, values and experience during teaching and exercise their judgment about the use of various teaching and research skills.
6. Includes critical thinking which aids teachers in being deliberate and intentional in a number of ways, such as devising new teaching methods rather than being slaves to tradition, or to challenge accepted ways that the schools have always carried out the tasks of teaching.
7. Enables teachers to analyze, and evaluate their own practice, school, classroom relationships, context, and make use of what is learned to inform decision-making, planning and future action and this could eventuate into school improvement.
8. Demands time and opportunity to develop complex reflective skills.
9. Requires personal risk taking for it demands that one’s perceptions and beliefs are shared with others and this can lead to a feeling of vulnerability.
10. Involves disclosure of feeling ideas and receiving and giving feedback as a part of a collaborative experience.

**The Ideal Practice of Teaching**

Teachers’ workplace conditions and practices that are supportive of reflective teachers/teaching encourage teachers to reflect on their teaching activities. The practice of teaching carried out in such a workplace would reflect all twenty-eight
characteristics of reflective teaching identified in table two in the foregoing discussions.

The Ideal School Artifacts

Teachers’ workplace conditions and practices which are supportive of reflective teachers/teaching contain teaching and learning resources that are available, in excellent condition and easily accessed by teachers. Examples of resources include: access to the Internet, CD ROM, library and books. These resources should have a direct bearing on, and provide aids for reflective practitioners.

Conclusion

First, the assumption made by this paper includes the fact that its readers have some interest in either or both subjects which is the focus of this paper and that there might be a desire to change a school culture. However, caution must be taken in implementing this or an altered version of the proposed conceptual framework. For conceptual change to occur in an organization, those who are stakeholders, those who will be affected, need to be consulted. Second, given the fact that the acceptance and implementation of any conceptual framework involves a process of discussion among various stakeholders of any organization, the framework presented here must be seen as a catalyst for further discussion, leading to possible and further alteration according to personal, school and socio-political context.

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