

**Executive Summary of the findings of
UGC funded Minor Research Project**

**AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE
REFLECTIVE PRACTICES OF THE COLLEGE
TEACHERS AT UG LEVEL**

MRP(H) -1386/10-11/KLMG001/UGC-SWRO

Period of the Report

June 2011- December 2012

Submitted by

Fr. (Dr.) Thomas P. J.
(Principal Investigator)

Dr. Tessy Joseph Kallarackal
(Co-investigator)

Assistant Professors, St. Joseph's Training College

Mannanam, Kottayam, Kerala- 686 561

**UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION
BAHADUR SHAH ZAFAR MARG
NEW DELHI – 110 002.**

**Annual Report of the work done on the Minor Research Project.
(Report to be submitted within 6 weeks after completion of each year)**

1. Project report No. Final
2. UGC Reference No.
MRP(H) -1386/10-11/KLMG001/UGC-SWRO; dtd. 22-12-2010
MRP(H) -1386/10-11/KLMG001/UGC-SWRO; dtd. 10-2-2011
3. Period of report from 10-06-2011 to 10-12-2012
4. Title of research project An Exploratory Study of the
Reflective Practices
of the College Teachers at U. G. Level
5. (a) Name of the Principal Investigator Fr. (Dr.) Thomas P. J.
(b) Dept. and University/
College where work has
progressed: St. Joseph's Training College,
Mannanam
6. Effective date of starting
of the project 10-06-2011
7. Grant approved and expenditure incurred during the period of the report
 - a. Total amount approved Rs.70,000.00
 - b. Total expenditure Rs. 72,134.00
 - c. Report of the work done:
 - i. Brief objective of the project
 - a) To assess the level of awareness of college teachers regarding reflective practices.
 - b) To identify the attitude of college teachers towards reflective practices for the improvement in teaching profession.

- c) To identify the major activities of reflective practices adopted by college teachers.
- d) To suggest ways and means for competent ways to engage in reflective practices for professional improvement.
- ii Work done so far and results achieved and publications, if any, resulting from the work
 - a. Thomas, P. J., & Tessy, J. K. (2012, January). *Models of Reflective Practice for Teachers- A Critical Approach*. Published in the Compendium of the UGC sponsored international seminar on education for global excellence. Mar Theophilus Training College, Trivandrum (ISBN 978-93-5067-101-6).
 - b. Thomas, P. J., & Tessy, J. K. (2012, November). *Teachers' Attitude towards Reflective Practices*. Published in the Proceedings of the UGC sponsored national seminar on educational renaissance for a new generation. St. Thomas College of Teacher Education, Pala. (ISBN 978-93-82329-41-8)
 - c. Thomas, P. J., & Tessy, J. K. (2013, January,). *Strategies of Reflective Practices of College Teachers for Professional Development*. Published in the Proceedings of the UGC Sponsored International Conference on Redefining education: Expanding horizons. Bombay Teachers' Training College, Colaba, Mumbai. (ISBN 978-93-82302-56-8).
- iii. Has the progress been according to original plan of work and towards achieving the objective.
(If not, state reasons). Yes
- iv. Please indicate the difficulties, if any, experienced in implementing the project. Nil
- v. If project has not been completed, please indicate the approximate time by which it is likely to be completed. Project is completed.
- vi. If the project has been completed, please enclose a the summary of the findings of the study is attached Summary of findings

vii Any other information which would help in evaluation of work done on the project. At the completion of the project

(a) Manpower trained Nil

(b) Ph.D. awarded Nil

(c) Publication of results

(1) Presented paper on *Models of Reflective Practice for Teachers- A Critical Approach* in the UGC sponsored international seminar on education for global excellence conducted by Mar Theophilus Training College, Trivandrum on 5th, 6th and 7th January 2012

(2) Presented paper on *Teachers' Attitude towards Reflective Practice* in the UGC sponsored national seminar on educational renaissance for a new generation conducted by St. Thomas College of Teacher Education, Pala on 27th and 28th November 2012.

(3) Presented paper on '*Strategies of Reflective Practices of College Teachers for Professional Development*' in the UGC Sponsored International Conference– Redefining Education: Expanding Horizons, organized by Bombay Teachers' Training College, Colaba, Mumbai, 10th -12th January, 2013.

(d) Other impact

The importance of reflective practice for the professional development was imparted to many teachers.

**Executive Summary of the findings of UGC funded Minor
Research Project titled *An Exploratory Study of the Reflective
Practices of the College Teachers at UG level***

Submitted by

**Fr. (Dr.) Thomas P. J. & Dr. Tessy Joseph Kallarackal
Assistant Professors, St. Joseph's Training College Mannanam, Kottayam,**

In the context of teaching and learning, reflective practice refers to the analysis of the educator about his or her own roles as information provider, learning facilitator, mentor, personal adviser or tutor, role model, examiner, curriculum planner, course organizer and resource developer. Reflective teaching means looking at what one does in the class room and thinking about why one does it - a process of self observation and self evaluation. Experience itself is actually not the greatest teacher, for one does not learn as much from experience as he/she learns from reflecting on that experience.

Attitude of teachers to reflective practices are very important since these determines their predispositions to learn from their experience. It shows their readiness to examine their values and beliefs about teaching and learning so that they can take more responsibility for their actions in the classroom. It reveals their willingness to get rid of impulsive and routine way of life and their desire to act in a more deliberate and intentional manner. For those teachers who have a positive attitude towards reflective practice look back on events, make judgments about them, and alter their teaching behaviour in light of craft, research and ethical knowledge. Considering the above importance of reflective practice on teaching profession the investigators have attempted to find out the attitude of college teachers towards reflective practices and also tried to identify and assess the

various reflective practice techniques adopted by them for the improvement in teaching profession.

Objectives of the Study

- 1) To assess the level of awareness of college teachers regarding reflective practices.
- 2) To identify the attitude of college teachers towards reflective practices for the improvement in teaching profession.
- 3) To identify the major activities of reflective practices adopted by college teachers.
- 4) To suggest ways and means for competent ways to engage in reflective practices for professional improvement.

Method Used in the Study

The present study is an attempt to explore reflective practices of college teachers. Hence the investigators have employed survey method in this study. The population of the study is the college teachers of Kerala at UG level. Random sampling technique is adopted to select 312 teachers at UG level from different colleges of Kerala as sample for the study. Teachers' Attitude towards Reflective Practices Scale (TARPS) and Teachers' Reflective Practices Inventory (TRPI) constructed and standardised by the investigators were used for data collection. The data is subjected to statistical analysis such as mean, standard deviation, ANOVA and the post hoc Scheffe Test.

Major Findings of the Study

1. College teachers are aware of some techniques of reflective practices. They knew about journal writing, collection of feedback from peers and students, self assessment, teaching portfolio and discussion with colleagues as a means for reflective practice and there by the

improvement of the teaching profession.

2. College teachers have favourable attitude towards reflective practices.
3. Among the five dimensions of reflective practices such as discussion with colleagues, feedback from peers and students, journal writing, teaching portfolios and self evaluation, college teachers were found to have most favourable attitude towards self evaluation and least favourable attitude towards journal writing.
4. There is significant difference in the attitude towards reflective practices of college teachers having below 6 years, 6-15 years and above 15 years of experience. The teachers of above 15 years of experience were found to have more favourable attitude towards reflective practices in comparison with those of below 6 years and 6-15 years of experience.
5. The college teachers of 6-15 years of experience were found to have more favourable attitude towards reflective practices in comparison with those of below 6 years of experience.
6. College teachers adopt reflective practices in their teaching profession.
7. Among the five dimensions of reflective practices such as discussion with colleagues, feedback from peers and students, journal writing, teaching portfolios and self evaluation, self evaluation is the most frequently used and journal writing is the least used reflective practice techniques of college teachers.
8. There is significant difference in the frequency of adopting reflective practice techniques among college teachers having below 6 years, 6-15 years and above 15 years of experience. The college teachers of 6-15 years of experience were found to adopt reflective practice techniques more frequently in comparison with those of below 6 years and above

15 years of experience.

9. The college teachers of above 15 years of experience were found to adopt reflective practice techniques more frequently in comparison with those of below 6 years of experience.

Conclusions

The analysis of the attitude of teachers towards reflective practice has revealed that teachers have favourable attitude towards reflective practices. This is a positive sign that indicates their readiness for thoughtfully considering their own experiences for self monitoring and self regulation. It also shows their willingness to undertake a review process of their own practices, and their preparedness to think about the taken for granted assumptions of teaching profession and value it as a means for their professional improvement and development. However attitude to dimensions of reflective practices like journal writing and teaching portfolios need to be strengthened and improved upon further.

A positive attitude to journal writing forces one to be honest with oneself and recognises not only the success but areas where one need to improve. It enables one to identify critical incidents which can be the basis for learning and continuing professional development. Portfolios provide a mechanism for teachers to review their practices through different lenses. It provides information for teachers about the areas where they need to correct their mistaken assumptions and enables teachers to frame and reframe some of their problem settings. A positive attitude to portfolios helps teachers to become aware of their own successes and failures in teaching learning process. Hence steps should be taken to promote a more favourable attitude to these dimensions of reflective practices among teachers so that they remain ever committed to their professional development

The results of the study have proved that college teachers adopt

reflective practices in their teaching profession. Researches indicate that journal writing and teaching portfolio are most effective reflective practice strategies for professional development (Çimer & Paliç, 2012; Davis, 2003; Klenowski & Carnell 2006). But from the present study it is evident that these are the least used strategies. Hence steps should be taken to promote journal writing among teachers so that they constantly reflect about their teaching experiences and make further improvements. From this study it is evident that college teachers having below 6 years of experience show least favourable attitude towards reflective practices and adopt reflective practice techniques less frequently. Orientation programmes, workshops and training programmes about the need and importance of adopting reflective practices for improving teaching profession may be organized for them.

Suggestions

Through the review of literature it was clear that journal writing is one of the effective techniques adopted by teachers for reflective practice and for the improvement of the teaching profession. The present study reveals that teachers are not frequently using this technique of reflective practice. Providing dairies with certain guide lines for reflection may prompt the teachers to write an account of their daily teaching experiences.

The study also revealed that teachers are not frequently collecting feedback from their peers and students. The model feedback form papered by NAAC can be distributed and teachers may be encouraged to use them as well as to prepare similar feedback forms and get it filled from their peers and students. Most of the teachers are engaged in self assessment and this has to be strengthened further. The study revealed that teachers are not regularly updating their teaching portfolios. Teachers should be encouraged to keep evidences of their success in teaching profession. Discussion with colleagues is an effective means for reflective practice and there by the improvement of the teaching profession. Teachers should be encouraged to

undertake informal discussions about their teaching experiences in the staff rooms.

Today in our country teachers should play the role of a catalyst in improving the quality improvement and excellence in higher education. Teachers who engage in reflective practice can develop a deeper understanding of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed decision-making skills, and become proactive and confident in their teaching. Thus Professional development through reflective practice can be seen as a process of 'mental growth spurred from within' which is an ongoing process (Feiman-Namser & Floden, 1986). Hence teachers can engage in various reflective activities such as discussion with colleagues, feedback from peers and students, journal writing, teaching portfolios and self evaluation at different stages of their careers for constructing their own personal theories of teaching as well as to improve their instructional practice leading to an improvement of quality in higher education.