

CAN EFFECTIVE EVALUATION PRACTICES BE THE KEY ELEMENT TO SUCCEED TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL GROWTH?

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ABSTRACT

The ultimate goal of this article is to present and understand the possibilities that arise through the evaluation of the educational project in the teacher's professional development, as well as the improvement of the school unit, which has emerged in recent years from modern international literature. The evaluation should be approached in the sense of improvement, emphasizing effective, but at the same time, alternative practices, which have multiple benefits to the levels of the teacher, the Principal, the school unit, and, by extension, the education system. In addition, it should focus on the essence of the process and, at the same time, promote the cultivation of evaluation culture as a process of improving the quality of the education provided.

By focusing on promotion and utilizing alternative evaluation practices, educational systems can achieve effectiveness at all levels. In particular, through the adoption of alternative evaluation practices, such as mentoring, peer coaching, teaching observation, self-assessment of the teacher, and evaluation by the leader/external evaluator and/or by the students promoting continuous improvement. In the current time of uncertainty, alternative evaluation practices can be applied in a similar way through digital methods. The utilization of multiple resources for evaluation is the key to providing an effective evaluation system.

Keywords: Evaluation Practices, Teacher's Development, School Improvement.

INTRODUCTION

The leader of the school unit holds an important role in the evaluation process, and the effective implementation of most evaluation practices, which can promote the above practices, but also guide the whole process (Darling Hammond, 2013; Danielson, 2011). The educational needs of the 21st Century upgraded the principal role for reviewing the concept - essence of evaluation, regarding to the evaluation as a process for providing the quality of education. The teacher's evaluation by the principal regarding specific leadership approach, such as Instructional Leadership can be the compass of teacher's effectiveness and student's achievement (Kazi, 2021).

Therefore, any evaluator in the internal or external environment of the school organization, participates in the evaluation process is required to be an assistant, a teacher's companion and to emphasize continuous feedback - improvement. In recent years seems to be an increasing research interest around the effective leadership. In particular, international studies investigate how students are taught and learn (Day et al., 2008). Recent studies indicated that the effective principal evaluation regarding the sufficient time for supervision, observation, and at the same time based on a reflective feedback - substantial feedback that improves teacher's professional development and school improvement (Kraft & Papay, 2016).

The evaluation process will have an essential meaning for all the school members if it is faced as a learning tool that is usually used. Therefore, alternative evaluation practices should be a

part of each school day for successful teachers' professional development and, generally, the quality of education (Wadsworth, 2011). However, the evaluation should be approach as processes of collection information about the teaching practices and student's outcomes, and in general regarding the school environment in order to improve them or apply.

Effective evaluation practices

Teachers should be reach the effectiveness if the educational systems, the educational organizations or/and the school leader give them the time, the appropriate support, and specific learning tools to grow in their professional practice (O' Donell & White, 2005). Similar research views investigated that the offered time for teacher's professional development and improvement should be effective utilized within the educational organization (Marzano et al., 2021). The educational organization should be become a place that all the school members improve their professional practices taking into account their specific school context (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). The professional learning communities should be enrich the adoption of alternative evaluation practices. Based on PLC's the teachers have effective collaboration for improve student's outcomes, as well as improve their own practices regarding a part of a lifelong learning (Marzano et al., 2020).

Teaching Observation

A teaching observation is a dynamic evaluation practice that another teacher or the school principal could adapt to improve our teaching practices and routines.

Specifically, we can discover many strengths and weaknesses of usually adopted practices or routines through teaching observation. The main factor of a practical teaching observation regarding the suggestions for improvement. However, these suggestions are significant to include prompts/solutions on how we used alternative practices or routines to improve students' learning. In addition, recommendations may refer to the effective organization of teaching time or state practices for enhancing understanding of unique student categories. According to the above suggestions, the observator should indicate resources or materials that are useful or/and appropriate for the specific aims/purpose (Papay & Kraft, 2016).

Each practical teaching observation is based on a specific purpose and has three unique aims that should be accomplished. Therefore, these purposes and ambitions must be correlated and extracted conclusions after the observation and during a conversation between the evaluator and the person who observed. Each teaching observation that targeted to an effective evaluation and improvement should be based on a rubric of criteria that previously presented to the people (SREB, 2013).

Interactive and sincere communication between the evaluator and the teacher after the observing lesson is crucial for effectiveness. The compelling dialogue is based on the right/smart questions from the teacher to the evaluator (not only from the evaluator to the teacher) at the right time such as '*If you don't ask, don't get*' anything. Therefore, the role of the evaluator is essential during the conversation, as well as the teacher as a player who should be a good listener for do not have thoughts such as "*I wanted to ask more questions*" or "*I don't believe that he/she didn't ask me this question*". Of course, during a conversation we can't champ at the bit to answer. Still, we will be patient to listen, and do not hesitate to request a clarification, explanation, or ask additional questions.

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, a productive conversation takes place before the

observation (programmed time- a week before) and after the observation (the same day of the observation).

The school leader has the opportunity to promote the teaching observation for usually use in a school organization in order to enhance the new (in the organization) or other teachers to apply effective teaching practices (Wei et al., 2009). Therefore, the continuing support by the leader characterized as a significant factor to the success of a teaching observation. The understanding of the source of an ineffective teacher evaluation may be connect with the right solution. However, the observing evaluation strategies that used or promoted by the school principal have directly positive either negative impact to the teacher development and improvement.

Teachers' Self Evaluation

Self-Evaluation is a learning tool that improves a person's disadvantages and enriches the advantages through continued formative self-evaluation. At the same time, self-evaluation provides the adaption of a personal reflection. The teacher should be rich in the outstanding quality of their teaching practices if he reviews at the end of a subject, at the end of a day, a week, a month what and how specific practices applied or specific student's categories encountered. Furthermore, the teacher should have the vigor to understand which theories or perspectives have a negative effect on teaching practices and replace them with others more appropriate for the current situation. A compelling portfolio may begin a daily personal evaluation and reflection. Specifically, using the portfolio is an opportunity to have more choices to apply previous successful practices and adapt in a specific context, considering its differential characteristics.

Peer Coaching

The teacher interaction is a factor in teachers professional development and improvement. Simultaneously, a successful and effective exchange regarding the condition of a supporting/collaborating learning environment. The role of the school principal is essential. Any teacher in a school organization can be a mentor for others at any time in a school year. We fully understand that a real effective relationship between teachers needs a permanent environment that allows the connections to grow, test and become effective during the time. A good practice for effective peer coaching according to the personal stories technique. The teachers can share and discuss personal information (previous educational experiences, hobbies, best teaching experiences etc.) which be the first way to build trust among them, as well as a step to understand some teachers' behaviors or applied techniques in the future. In this point of view, we can support other colleagues according to specific suggestions about the teaching practices, for example '*A good practice for the A will be the C*' or '*in the second lesson of the subject, you can us*' Either '*a good platform that has multiple resources for this subject i*'.

Student's Evaluation

Our student's (never mind in which educational level they teach) could provide us with an objective evaluation of our teaching practices. Students have a daily/directly interact with us, and we can utilize this opportunity *via* a simply evaluation to improve our teaching practices. In order to succeed an effective evaluation from the students we can ask them open type questions about what they learned from a lesson. Moreover, we have the chance to utilize 5 minutes before the end of a lesson to use quizzes about the lesson, or refer to the summary of the lesson, either (if we teach

in lower educational levels) use body language, picture cards with pictures or short statements (e.g. I am fully agreed, etc.). Another practice that is easily applied is the technique of 3-2-1. However, through this technique, students referred to 3 things they learned/understood from the lesson, 2 things that they want to learn more information and 1 question. Consequently, they have an evaluator role that simultaneously improves their knowledge (self-evaluation and reflection) and our (teacher's) practices and routines for being more effectively in teaching and learning.

CONCLUSION

The defining of the evaluation sometimes confused the school members, as well as the comparison with the educational systems' accountability. In general, by using daily and simple alternative evaluation strategies that all the school members adapt, we will promote the evaluation as a tool for improvement. The understanding of the advantages that an evaluation provide to us should be a part of our perspectives and regarding the school/educational system cultures. Other researchers come to common that specific factors such as teamwork, support by specific scientists, enough time, daily reflection, appropriate context, effective practices affect the teacher's professional development. Therefore, the adoption of any alternative evaluation practice or routine should understand the previous factors to succeed the teacher's development and improvement. Evaluation Practices can be lead the teacher's to the professional growth and the school organization to the effectiveness and improvement.

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