

THE RELATIONS BETWEEN STUDENT TEACHERS' LEVEL OF REFLECTIONS AND SELF-DISCREPANCY AND THEIR DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS

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Personality, qualities and commitments of a teacher have been indicated to be a decisive factor in their effectiveness to a teacher's identity and as important as specific knowledge and skills used in the day-to-day tasks of teaching (Nias, 1989). The teacher's realistic and positive self-conception is important based on the teacher's influence on pupils' evolving concept of themselves (Lauriala & Kukkonen, 2001).

Identity can be regarded as both stable and changing (Strauman, 1996). The most stable aspects of self are related to one's ideal and ought-to self. Ideal self refers to the domain of self representing one's own and significant others' hopes or aspirations. Ought-to self in turn refers to the domain of self representing one's own and significant others' sense of one's duties, obligations or responsibilities. Actual self is seen to be more variable across time and situations (Strauman, 1996; Higgins, 1996).

Teaching practicums have been shown to be significant phases where teachers' identities evolve and change and where they consider their development into a teacher. Hence reflection is important in becoming aware of and constructing their identity (cf., Villa & Calvete, 2001).

The aim of our paper is to study how student teachers' level of reflection and self-discrepancy are related to each other and to their conceptions of domains needing still to be worked on. Subjects were Finnish student teachers (N=40). Quantitative and qualitative data were collected.

The results indicate that deep reflection is related to lack of self-discrepancy; i.e., low feelings of guilt and shame. Relations between reflection, self-discrepancy and the domains in teacherhood still needing working on indicated that high reflectors with low self-discrepancy reported more mature domains to be developed: teachers' and pupils' well-being, co-operation with parents and understanding pupil learning. The results will be discussed as related to the development of practice teaching to better take into account identity formation.

References

Nias, J. 1989. *Primary teachers talking: A study of teaching as work*. London: Routledge.

Strauman, T. 1996. Stability within the self: A longitudinal study of the structural implications of self-discrepancy theory. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71, 1142-1153.