

## PROMOTING SELF-REFLECTION THROUGH POSITIVE TEACHER'S CAMP

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### **Abstract**

Promoting self-reflection among teachers is crucial for fostering personal and professional growth. The Positive Teacher's Camp in Indonesia provides a platform for teachers to engage in reflective teaching practices and establish connections among teachers. This camp was organized by *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI) and Initiatives of Change (IofC) Indonesia. The camp agenda includes self-reflection exercises, plenary sessions, workshops, and guided discussions, all aimed at creating a safe and supportive environment for teachers to evaluate their teaching methods and students' approach. Participants are encouraged to evaluate their performance, identify areas for improvement, and integrate regular self-reflection into their teaching practice. This paper aims to promote the importance of self-reflection in education, empowering teachers for personal and professional development. This study used the qualitative descriptive methodology to present a clear and comprehensive overview of the camp. This approach seeks to directly describe phenomena by observing the camp to gather firsthand data on its conduct and the topics discussed. In conclusion, the Positive Teacher's Camp plays a crucial role in nurturing the personal and professional growth of teachers, leading to improved educational outcomes for students by fostering a culture of continuous improvement and development, including practice of regular self-reflection in teaching learning process.

**Keywords:** *self-reflection, personal growth, professional development, teacher, teacher's camp*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Self-reflection is a crucial part of the teaching and learning process. It plays a significant role in emotional well-being, personal growth, and professional development. Teachers require a safe and supportive environment to reflect on their teaching experiences, assess themselves, acquire new knowledge, and generate new ideas. The practice of self-reflection is essential for personal and professional growth, allowing teachers to evaluate and improve themselves.

Reflecting on personal and professional development is an important aspect for teachers. This concern has led to the creation of the Positive Teacher's Camp, which provides a space for teachers to engage in regular self-reflection. *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI) partnered with Initiatives of Change (IofC) Indonesia to organize a Teachers' Camp for educators in Indonesia. *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI) is an education consultancy company dedicated to enhancing the quality of education in Indonesia by supporting educators, students, and educational staff in creating transformative learning experiences. The vision of *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI) is

to develop education with character and technology, while its mission is to provide the best service, the latest technology, regular evaluation, and customer satisfaction. On the other hand, Initiatives of Change (IofC) is a global movement focused on building trust across the world's divides, with inclusive teams and programs that do not discriminate based on various factors.

The Positive Teacher's Camp provides a platform for teachers to connect, share, and engage in meaningful conversations. The theme of the two-day camp is "Reflective Teaching: Let's Learn from our Reflected Experience." The camp aims to foster personal and professional growth for teachers through self-reflection, encouraging a deeper understanding of self and enhancing learning outcomes for self-improvement.

John Dewey, an American philosopher and educator, emphasized the importance of reflection in education, stating that learning involves the active process of thinking about one's own thinking, leading to more meaningful learning experiences. This aligns with the purpose of the camp, which aimed to provide meaningful learning experiences for teachers. Reflective thinking is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process. It enables teachers to reflect on their experiences and make improvements. The Positive Teacher's Camp provides space for teachers to engage in reflective thinking as part of the program.

Donald A. Schön, an American philosopher, introduced the concept of the reflective practitioner in professional education, emphasizing the importance of professionals reflecting in and on action to adapt to new situations and improve their practice. Reflective practices during teacher development sessions can foster deeper self-awareness and professional development, as noted by Farrell (2013). This paper aims to explore how the Positive Teacher's Camp promotes reflective practices for the teachers.

Self-reflection also helps students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement, making learning more personal and relevant. Jennifer Moon (1999) highlighted the essential role of reflection in transforming surface-level information into deeper and more integrated knowledge, both for teachers and students. Through reflective activities such as journals, portfolios, and peer reviews, students develop a deeper sense of ownership over their learning, leading to greater motivation and engagement. For teachers, reflective practice involves evaluating their teaching strategies, classroom management, and interactions with students, as well as challenging assumptions about their teaching approaches to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Self-reflection can be facilitated through tools like peer sharing, observations, teaching journals, and feedback, enabling teachers to evaluate their teaching from different perspectives and improve their teaching methods and student engagement. Danielson (2007) explains the framework of self-reflection as an essential tool that can

be implemented in teacher conferences, with a focus on professional responsibilities including continuously improving teaching practices. Positive Teacher's Camp provides sessions that start with self-reflective questions, allowing all participants to practice reflection. This framework can be implemented in the teaching and learning process.

Self-reflection also helps teachers and students recognize their strengths and areas for improvement, making learning more personal and relevant. Reflective activities such as journals, portfolios, and peer reviews help students develop a deeper sense of ownership over their learning, leading to greater motivation and engagement. Self-reflection can also be a valuable professional development tool for teachers. Through reflective practice, teachers can evaluate their teaching methods, classroom management strategies, and interactions with students. Stephen Brookfield (1995) emphasized in his book "Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher" that teachers must engage in critical reflection to challenge assumptions about their teaching and adapt to meet the needs of diverse learners.

Initiatives of Change (IofC), a global movement, encourages individuals to reflect in three steps: connection, correction, and direction.

1. Connection (Look up): Get into a peaceful, reflective, and prayerful mood to seek inspiration. Reading something inspiring, like a holy book from your own or another tradition or any writing that lifts your spirits, helps establish a connection with your inner self or a higher wisdom.

2. Correction (Look in): Review your life and identify where you may have fallen short of your own values and convictions, such as honesty, unselfishness, love, and purity of heart. Take corrective steps and consider sharing with a trusted friend, as daily review and corrective actions aid in inner growth.

3. Direction (Look out): Turn your attention outward to see what needs to change and consider your role in bringing about that change. This could involve your family, community, or even larger-scale changes to benefit a greater number of people. As Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

This paper aims to investigate how Positive Teacher's Camp facilitates reflective thinking, supports personal development and professional growth, and inspires teachers to apply the reflective teaching practice. The focus of this paper is to explore how Positive Teacher's Camp can be a space to promote self-reflection among teachers as camp participants. The main objectives of Positive Teacher's Camp are to inspire teachers to engage in self-reflection and apply reflective teaching practices in their classrooms. The organizers aim to demonstrate the benefits of self-reflection for personal growth and professional development, provide reflective tools and frameworks, and facilitate connections among teachers at the camp.

Positive Teacher's Camp can have a meaningful impact on teachers' personal growth and professional development. The insights from this study can help inform

readers on how teacher's camp could serve as a platform for teachers to gain inspiration and learning through self-reflection and connecting with fellow teachers.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research paper used the qualitative descriptive methodology to provide a straightforward and comprehensive account of the Positive Teacher's Camp. The methodology involved observing the camp and collecting relevant documents to understand the flow of the camp better.

The observation method allowed researchers to gather qualitative data directly from the camp, focusing on interactions and self-reflection practices. The researchers participated in the camp as facilitators and took notes on the interactions to observe self-reflection behaviors and sharing processes. Additionally, document collection was used to gain insights into the reflection process and understand the self-reflection guidance. The collected documents included pre-camp and post-camp materials such as agendas, participants' grouping, location details, and the list of speakers.

The study focused on four main areas of observation:

1. Teacher Engagement

Teachers were given space and encouraged to take part in guided self-reflection practices during the camp. This process was facilitated by experienced members of Initiatives of Change (IofC), a global movement that values self-reflection as part of its culture. The aim was to inspire and introduce teachers to reflecting on their experiences, attitudes, and teaching methodologies. The teacher engagement also provided space for teachers to share and evaluate their reflective practices and teaching processes for both personal and professional growth.

2. Camp Structure

The Positive Teacher's Camp was organized with a consistent structure to optimize reflection and discussion. Each session started with moments of silence, encouraging participants to connect with themselves and engage in deep and mindful reflection. These reflective moments were followed by talks from speakers who guided participants toward personal introspection, focusing on topics related to teaching and interpersonal relationships. Afterward, participants were divided into smaller groups to discuss and share their reflections, ensuring that all voices were heard in a more intimate and supportive setting.

### 3. Feedback Mechanism

The camp emphasized a feedback mechanism that allowed participants to reflect on their teaching practices honestly and how they approached their students. Through structured group discussions, teachers exchanged insights and advice, which fostered a collaborative atmosphere. These interactions were designed to help participants identify areas for growth and improvement. Feedback was encouraged to give and receive constructive feedback from their fellow teachers in order to promote a culture of continuous learning and mutual support.

### 4. Participant Feedback

At the end of each session, teachers were invited to share their experiences and insights. This process was done both verbally, in group discussions, and in written form through reflection journals. These journals provided an opportunity for deeper personal reflection and served as a valuable resource for both participants and organizers to track progress. Additionally, participants were encouraged to provide direct feedback to the organizers regarding the structure and content of the camp. This allowed organizers of Positive Teacher's Camp to adjust the sessions dynamically, ensuring they met the needs of the teachers and created an environment conducive to growth and self-improvement.

Zeichner, K. M., & Liston, D. P. (1996) provide practical guidance on promoting reflective teaching through dialogue, including during teacher conferences. In this research, obtaining meaningful results is possible by observing and interacting with the participants. During the observation at the Positive Teacher's Camp, it was evident that the promotion of Technical Reflection, which prioritizes the efficiency of teaching techniques, and Personalistic Reflection, which emphasizes teachers' personal growth, values, and emotional investment in teaching, played a significant role.

## **RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS**

Reflective teaching involves a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Participants are divided into groups with a facilitator in each group. During the camp, the participants learned about reflective teaching, where teachers observe, evaluate, and think about their behavior and teaching in the classroom. Mohamad Ramadhona, the CEO of Generasi Cerdas Indonesia (GCI), emphasized the significant role of teachers in students' lives and expressed hopes for everyone to gain valuable learning from the camp. Dr. Saryono from the Curriculum Department officially inaugurated the camp, expressing appreciation to Mohamad Ramadhona and all faculty members for their efforts. He emphasized the importance of appreciating life's journey, citing a

lesson learned during a tea welcoming ceremony. The session started with a tea ceremony welcoming the participants.

Teguh Khaerudin, a lecturer at the State Islamic University in Jakarta, led a session on reflective teaching and prompted a discussion on the quote "Experience is the best teacher." The participants agreed that experience could serve as a tool for self-introspection and learning. They also highlighted the importance of reflecting on experiences, as emphasized by the American philosopher John Dewey.

The camp included sessions on methods of reflective teaching and morning self-reflection and sharing. Irna Yugaswatie shared her experience of benefiting from self-reflection, emphasizing the need for teachers to reflect on their actions and avoid complaints, using her own experience as an example. Tanenji, a lecturer at the State Islamic University Jakarta, led a session on Creative Problem Solving, where participants engaged in group discussions and emphasized the importance of listening and sharing thoughts. The session also focused on effective communication, incorporating visual, verbal, and vocal elements. The camp also addressed the importance of technology in teaching, with a session on technology literacy led by Irna Yugaswatie. The participants learned about the effective use of technology to enhance the learning process.

Mohamad Ramadhona, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI), presented a session on "Being a Happy Teacher." "A happy teacher is someone who can feel and respond to his or her emotions. We learn how to prevent negative emotions and induce positive ones". The participants were divided into groups to share and discuss issues happening in their schools. One teacher shared, "I will learn to control my emotions and keep calm when handling students' behaviour."

Rekha Shahani, an educator and member of Initiatives of Change (IofC) India, presented a powerful session on "Listening to the Inner Voice: Take time every day to listen." She also talked about her personal experiences as the head of a school in Mumbai and also shared a program called Education Today Society Tomorrow (ETST) hosted by Initiatives of Change (IofC) India. As a closing statement, we were given a quote by Mahatma Gandhi, "Silence is both a physical and spiritual necessity for me. In the attitude of silence my soul finds the path in a clearer light."

The session concluded with an appreciation segment. Both the committee and participants expressed their gratitude, acknowledging the collective effort that made the conference possible. Participants specifically commended the wholehearted dedication of the organizing committee. Some praised the young, energetic facilitators, thanking them for orchestrating an inspiring program. There was a collective reflection on applying the gained knowledge, with participants expressing readiness to implement their learnings in their respective schools. There was a hope for continued partnership between *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI), and Initiatives of Change (IofC) to enhance education. Dik Doank, the founder of *Kandank Jurang*

Doank, led a session on reflective teaching, highlighting the nobility of the teaching profession and the significance of sincerity in teaching.

During the morning reflection, Barbara Lawler from Initiatives of Change (IofC) Australia shared her experiences of having quiet times, emphasizing the commitment to inner reflection and caregiving for the young IofC team in Asia Pacific. Mohamad Ramadhona, CEO of *Generasi Cerdas Indonesia* (GCI), presented a session on "Being a Happy Teacher," focusing on emotional awareness and management. The participants engaged in group discussions, where one teacher expressed the intention to control emotions when dealing with students' behavior.

Rekha Shahani, an educator and member of Initiatives of Change (IofC) India, conducted a session on "Listening to the Inner Voice," sharing personal experiences and introducing the Education Today Society Tomorrow (ETST) program. The camp concluded with a quote from Mahatma Gandhi, emphasizing the necessity of silence for spiritual clarity.

It's emphasized that reflective practices during teacher development sessions can foster self-awareness and professional growth, as mentioned by Farrell (2013). Additionally, Jay and Johnson (2002) explain a model for reflective practice, which can be utilized in teacher conferences to facilitate critical reflection and professional development.

Glickman, C. D., Gordon, S. P., & Ross-Gordon, J. M. (2018) highlight the role of teacher conferences in instructional supervision and how structured reflective dialogue can promote teacher growth. Professional development can be gained by engaging in reflective practices and self-assessment. In this study, the facilitators of Positive Teacher's Camp play an important role in guiding the reflective process. During the decision-making session, participants were encouraged to reflect on their abilities and proactive approaches as teachers. The session concluded with an appreciation session, where committee members and participants expressed gratitude and reflected on implementing the knowledge gained during the camp in their respective schools.

Clarke, A. (2006) explores the structure of reflective practice to understand how teachers practice reflection in order to evaluate and improve their teaching methods and professional development. Clarke emphasizes that teachers need to engage in reflective practice systematically and critically, within a supportive environment that encourages dialogue and deep thinking. Regarding this study, the

camp organizer encourages teachers to regularly and systematically implement self-reflection practices in their own schools.

Ghaye, A. (2011) highlights the strategies for integrating reflective practice in teaching by providing various tools and frameworks for teachers to structure their reflective practice. Teacher conferences become key moments for fostering reflection. The tools include reflective journals, storytelling, and action research methods in order to encourage more in-depth and constructive reflection. To end the session, the participants were asked to engage in self-reflection with the following inputs: (1) What am I grateful for as a teacher? (2) How do I play my role as a teacher? We shared in our groups and listened to one another.

The participants were given the opportunity to share their individual and group action plans for decision-making and goal-setting. One principal expressed inspiration from the Quiet Time session and committed to implementing it daily with teachers at their school. Another teacher shared how the camp had recharged their energy and readiness to serve as a better educator. The participants expressed gratitude for the learning and inspiration gained from the camp.

The camp organizers appreciated the acknowledgment and reflections shared by the participants. The camp has provided tools to better engage with their students through self-reflection. The participants were grateful for the time and effort the organizers put into organizing the camp.

The participants emphasized that it has been a valuable experience for them to connect with other teachers. They also expressed that the camp has addressed real issues in education regarding the personal growth of teachers. Ultimately, the speakers of Positive Teacher's Camp inspired the teachers to practice self-reflection regularly. The words of appreciation reflect gratitude for the camp organizers and teachers and build connections among them.

## **CONCLUSION**

Positive Teacher's Camp is a platform that inspires participants to engage in self-reflection. Self-reflection is an essential tool for personal growth and professional development. Regular self-reflection practice allows teachers to improve and grow. The practice of self-reflection should be implemented regularly, provide clear guidance, and be done collectively in a safe space. Positive Teacher's Camp offers platforms for teachers to reflect on themselves, which contributes to personal growth, and on their teaching methods, which contributes to professional development. Regular self-reflection practice helps teachers connect with themselves, improve, and facilitate professional growth.

As lifelong learners, self-reflection gives teachers the space to improve, grow, and inspire. It is also observed that self-reflection enhances open communication

among teachers. In engaging reflective practice, teachers need time constraints, a supportive environment, and sufficient professional development focused on reflective teaching. Positive Teacher's Camp should be conducted regularly to inspire more teachers to engage in self-reflection and to support their personal growth and professional development. This will bring hope for a better education.

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