Promoting teachers’ moral reasoning and collaborative inquiry performance: A roletaking and guided reflection study

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Abstract

A study of experienced teachers is used to illustrate a developmental research method for promoting technical performance and moral and conceptual reasoning. The research is based on Sprinthall's and Thies-Sprinthall's (1983) principles of new social role-taking and guided inquiry. Called the learning-teaching framework (LTF), the theoretical and applied research embeds new role-taking, guided inquiry, balance, support and challenge, continuity and instructional coaching in educational programming across the teacher professional development career span. The study was a 7-month quasi-experimental intervention of expert teachers participating in a professional development program to support peer coaching (e.g. a form of collaborative inquiry which prompts teachers to initiate complex new roles as peer coaches in which they plan, demonstrate and practice new models of teaching). The aims of the study were to encourage new social role-taking, support new learning in effective teaching, encourage new complex performances in coaching and support conferences, and promote gains in moral and conceptual reasoning. Significant positive gains in learning, performance, and moral judgment reasoning were achieved. The study highlights the benefits of using the LTF as a framework for educational programming and teacher character development programs that are based on similar theoretical assumptions.