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An early childhood education lens on the practice of reflection in Aotearoa New Zealand

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Abstract

Reflection is a well-researched concept in the field of education. However, the authors find the book resources are limited in terms of current practice in early childhood education (ECE) within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand. With the aim to develop a book chapter at a later stage, the authors conducted a literature review to understand the concept of reflection in teaching. The review has significance as it revealed unique concepts of reflection within the context of Aotearoa New Zealand for the sector of early childhood education. Informit was used and an advanced search was carried out between 2017 and 2022. About 40 peer-reviewed full-text articles were found. The articles were then reviewed to understand the nature and value of documented reflection. The themes that emerged from the literature search were related to 1) theories and professional development; 2) domain knowledge; 3) practice of kaiako (teachers); and 4) ECE settings. The findings from these four categories are discussed with a critical lens to indicate areas that could be important in the day-to-day practice of a kaiako, and to suggest including voices that may be missing in the current literature. The article also emphasises the importance of taking the reflections beyond an educational setting.

Keywords: Practice reflection, early childhood education, teaching practice, self-analysis

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