

Translating Creativity to an Educational Context: A Method to Augment the Professional Training of Newly Qualified Secondary School Teachers

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Abstract : This paper will provide an overview of a three year mixed methods research project that explores if methods from the supervision of dramatherapy can augment the occupational psychology of newly qualified secondary school teachers. It will consider how creativity and the use of metaphor, as applied in the supervision of dramatherapists, can be translated to an educational context in order to explore the explicit / implicit dynamics between the teacher trainee/ newly qualified teacher and the organisation in order to support the super objective in training for teaching; how to 'be a teacher.' There is growing evidence that attrition rates among teachers are rising after only five years of service owing to too many national initiatives, an unmanageable curriculum and deteriorating student discipline. The fieldwork conducted entailed facilitating a reflective space for Newly Qualified Teachers from all subject areas, using methods from the supervision of dramatherapy, to explore the social and emotional aspects of teaching and learning with the ultimate aim of improving the occupational psychology of teachers. Clinical supervision is a formal process of professional support and learning which permits individual practitioners in frontline service jobs; counsellors, psychologists, dramatherapists, social workers and nurses to expand their knowledge and proficiency, take responsibility for their own practice, and improve client protection and safety of care in complex clinical situations. It is deemed integral to continued professional practice to safeguard vulnerable people and to reduce practitioner burnout. Dramatherapy supervision incorporates all of the above but utilises creative methods as a tool to gain insight and a deeper understanding of the situation. Creativity and the use of metaphor enable the supervisee to gain an aerial view of the situation they are exploring. The word metaphor in Greek means to 'carry across' indicating a transfer of meaning from one frame of reference to another. The supervision support was incorporated into each group's induction training programme. The first year group attended fortnightly one hour sessions, the second group received two one hour sessions every term. The existing literature on the supervision and mentoring of secondary school teacher trainees calls for changes in pre-service teacher education and in the induction period. There is a particular emphasis on the need to include reflective and experiential learning, within training programmes and within the induction period, in order to help teachers manage the interpersonal dynamics and emotional impact within a high pressurised environment

Keywords : dramatherapy supervision, newly qualified secondary school teachers, professional development, teacher education

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