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Discussion Post – EDLD 5315

This artifact reflects my early exploration of action research during EDLD 5315. Through readings, videos, and collaborative discussion with classmates, I began refining the research focus for my innovation project and identifying the types of data needed to examine student independence in my kindergarten classroom.

Recognizing the Misperceptions: Collaborative Discussion

Through this reflection, I was able to recognize and clarify some common misconceptions I previously held about action research, particularly the belief that research must be external or disconnected from daily classroom practice. Instead, I began to understand action research as a reflective and practitioner-centered process that allows educators to systematically examine and improve their own instructional practice.

One of the most challenging aspects of action research is clearly identifying and narrowing the problem of practice during the planning stage. As emphasized in Dr. Mertler's videos, focusing on a specific and manageable area of inquiry is essential, even though classroom challenges are often interconnected. Narrowing the focus allows educators to collect meaningful data and better understand what truly influences instructional outcomes.

In this course, I am primarily engaged in the planning phase of the action research cycle, including defining the problem, developing a research question, selecting a research design, and determining appropriate data sources. As discussed in Dr. Thompson's video, professional reflection plays a central role in this phase, allowing educators to intentionally examine their

practice before implementing change. The implementation and data analysis phases will take place later as part of my capstone work in EDLD 5320.

My previous coursework, particularly EDLD 5305 and EDLD 5304, has supported the gathering information stage by helping me think strategically about innovation and measurement through frameworks such as Influencer and 4DX. These models emphasize identifying vital behaviors and distinguishing between lead and lag measures, which has helped me focus on data that reflects true instructional impact.

Action research differs from traditional research in that it is conducted by practitioners within their own context and focuses on improving practice rather than producing generalizable results. However, both approaches rely on systematic inquiry and data analysis, making action research especially relevant for classroom-based improvement.

At this point in my research process, I am refining my research question, which examines how structured digital routines during daily technology center rotations influence kindergarten students' independence during mathematics small-group instruction in a Title I classroom. To address this question, I plan to collect data related to time on task, frequency of student interruptions, weekly technology usage, and teacher observations.

Overall, this reflection reinforced that action research is a cyclical and intentional process that supports meaningful instructional improvement.

References

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