



Brief

Self-evaluation of learning outcomes through the practical assignment “observation of hand hygiene and meals in kindergarten” by students in kindergarten teacher education

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Kindergarten teacher education is a three-year bachelor degree program of professional education. Internships during the education offer an important arena for students to practice professional competencies. When students acquire theory in the classroom and subsequently begin internship, it is easier for them to see the connection between theory and practice. The experiences from the internship period provide a good starting point for classroom discussions with the other students who have brought different experiences in order to reflect on their own practice.

During their internship, kindergarten teacher education students in the course *nature, health and movement* were given the assignment to observe all meals and handwashing routines in their assigned kindergarten for one week. Their results were collected, analysed and used in a lesson at the university when they returned. The purpose of this article is to explore what learning outcomes the students themselves think they achieved through the practical assignment.

A total of 45 students completed a questionnaire on their practical assignment the previous year, and two students voluntarily participated in a research interview. The questionnaire responses were exported into an Excel sheet for quantitative and qualitative analysis and the quantitative results were shown as bar charts. Research interviews with two students were conducted in order to gain deeper insight into the results from the questionnaire.

The results show that kindergarten teacher students who carried out the practical assignment in their assigned kindergartens acquired basic competencies about nutrition

and the function of meals in kindergartens, gained the confidence to refer to the necessary frameworks on meals in kindergarten, and obtained greater awareness of the importance of meals and hand hygiene in kindergarten. The students were also willing to address these topics in kindergartens in the future and increase the quality of the meals and hand hygiene if necessary. This kind of practical assignment shows students the relevance of theoretical teaching in practice and therefore is highly relevant to kindergarten teacher education.

Keywords: *internship assignment; kindergarten teacher students; learning outcome; self-evaluation*