

## **Scholarship of teaching: The quest for thinking out of my box!**

It is imperative for academic staff at universities to take responsibility for monitoring their educational professional development in a scholarly way – evidence of enacting the role of educational scholar. Scholarship of learning and teaching can effectively be developed by means of executing action research of teaching practice. Action research offers professionals such as lecturers the opportunity to develop competency in critical reflection on practice. The notion of critical reflection is expanded by advocating scholarly reflection. In addition reflecting on teaching practice is informed by the theory on thinking preferences, also referred to as whole brain thinking, which brings to light the novel construct of whole brain scholarly reflection. Whole brain thinking is investigated as an epistemological underpinning of educational professional development of academic staff. This paper advocates the role of auto-ethnography as an ontological premise to action research. What is reported is the outcome of a number of educational professional development initiatives that have been instrumental in innovation of teaching practice and educational professional development of academic staff within an array of fields. Professional development of academic staff was initiated in health sciences, including nursing and family medicine; financial sciences, with specific reference to taxation; information science and higher education with a focus on scholarship of learning and teaching. Scholarship of whole brain thinking as a way of innovating practice and scholarship of learning and teaching in these fields are combined with a view to contributing to research scholarship within the context of a research-intensive university. Co-constructing of meaning, within a scholarly community of practice, is promoted by means of participatory action research projects. Both qualitative and quantitative data are reported to substantiate the different claims made of innovation and scholarship enhancement.

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