

TOWARDS TEACHING QUOTIENT: THE ROLE OF A TEACHER

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Abstract:

Teachers are the builders of the nation. The success of any educational system depends on the quality of the teachers which in turn, depends on the effective teaching-learning process in a classroom and beyond. The present papers offer some observation on the role and responsibilities of a teacher.

Keywords: Teacher, Development, Teaching Quotient, Nation Building, Motivation.

Authentic education to the greater number of citizens, and engaged themselves in research has been the mantra for development. Today human society is shaping into a knowledge society across the globe, where the teacher is the architect. The success of any educational system depends on the quality of the teachers, which, in turn, depends on the effective teaching-learning process in a classroom and beyond. The Programme of Action of the UNESCO assumes that teacher's performance is the most critical input in the field of education whatever policies may be laid down, in the final analysis, these have to be interpreted and implemented by teachers as must through their example as through teaching-learning process. The National Policy on Education (NPE, 1960) suggests that the status of the teacher reflects the socio-cultural ethos of a society. Teachers stand as a living institution in the course of education and scholarship. They stand for leading of human race towards even higher objects. If they discharge these duties, it is well with the nation and the people. These teachers have secured a great place in society, and reciprocally they have to play a more significant role in nation building. It is the human resources that make a country great and prosperous. Citing America poet Emerson, we can say, "Not Gold, but only men can make/ A people great and strong." It is the teacher who makes these men. We cannot forget the role of Acharya Kautilya, and Aristotle respectively is shaping the future of Chandragupta Vikramaditya and Alexander. The following three metaphors can be used to determine the role of a teacher.

1. As a beacon light to society
2. As a seer
3. As an architect of civilization

Teachers are respectable persons of society, and therefore, teaching has been called a noble profession. In ancient cultures, across the globe, teachers were accorded quite more

significant position in society. In ancient India, it was mixed up with religion. Later, it became separated from religion, and with time, it became a profession. At the early stage, it was the profession of the Rishis- the enlightened members of society. Over time, teaching-learning got democratized. The members of different classes and status by virtue of their knowledge came to teaching, but the spirit same.

Before centering around the role of a teacher, it is apt to note the responsibilities of a teacher. Citing V.K. Rao and R.S. Reddy we find that “good teachers are keen and enthusiastic, well organized, firm but fair, stimulating, know their stuff and are interested in the welfare of their pupils.”(Preface).With the emergence and popularity of world wide web and ICT, the modes and patterns of education have become extraordinarily varied and expanding, and simultaneously, the negative side is that it has become a commodity. In this context, there is a big challenge before the teacher. Teaching, nowadays warrants the state of the knowledge, pragmatic values, presence of mind, and a higher level of creativity. Every class becomes a situation to manage at the face of technology on the palmtop. In this competitive environment, a good teacher with quality education can survive. We can call it ‘Teaching quotient’ in place of teaching aptitude.

The teacher has to bear the responsibilities of creating an environment in which the learner feels ease at learning the content. Further, he/she should have an insatiable urge for knowledge and skill, and keep a spirit of a curious learner all life through. Harold Hazen very appropriately states in this context “more than ever the life of the professor must be the life a student. Further, he should attain mastery in his subject thoroughly”, and he should “take plenty of time to prepare, no matter how often he has covered the subject before.”(Hazen,15).

The adherence to duty discipline decency and decorum should never be suspended by a teacher and s/he should be a believer in the maxim that ‘punctuality is the key to success’. A teacher has a greater responsibility towards students, which should cross subject boundaries and particular vested interest groups in the institution. Further, a teacher has a commitment to self-evaluation and regulation within the occupational group.

Accepting teaching as a profession is like moving on razor’s edge. In my view, a teacher is expected to maintain and inculcate the role of a torch and also being a torchbearer for the coming generations.

One of the essential tasks for educators is to change the mentalities and qualifications inherent in all professions; thus they should be first to be ready to rethink and change the criteria and basic situation of the teaching profession, in which the job of educating and stimulating students is steadily superseding that of given instruction.

(Faure,216)

Faure further writes:

A teacher should be able to teach the highest level whatever his field in education; this should depend only on his worth. Ideally, the teaching function should be regarded in the same way, as deserving the equal dignity, whatever the particular

sphere in which it is carried on, legislative, professional, labor union and social action should gradually reduce and finally abolish hierarchal distinctions maintained for no valid reason among the various categories of teachers. (Faure,216).

An important UNESCO document titled “Recommendation Concerning the status of Teachers” determines the following roles and responsibilities of teachers.

1. Recognizing that the status of their profession depends to a considerable extent upon themselves, all teachers should seek to achieve the highest possible standards in all their professional work.
2. Professional standards relating to teacher performance should be defined and maintained with the participation of teachers' organizations.
3. Teacher and teacher organizations should seek to co-operate fully with authorities in the interests of pupils, of the education service and society generally.
4. The teachers' organizations should establish codes of ethics or conduct since such codes significantly contribute to ensuring the prestige of the profession and the exercise of professional duties in accordance with agreed principles.
5. Teachers should be prepared to take their part in extra-curricular activities for the benefits of pupils as adults. (P.9)

The ILO report on “The teachers in developing countries” (1991) finds the role of teachers up to the highest pedestal. An excerpt is being given below:

The teaching profession should enjoy academic freedom in discharge to professional duties. Since teachers are particularly qualified to judge the teaching aids and methods most suitable for their pupils, they should be given the essential role in the choice and the adaptation of teaching material, the selecting of textbooks and the application of teaching methods, within the framework of approved programs and with the assistance of educational authorities. (ILO,1991)

That is to say, a student is a clay pitcher, and the teacher works on it towards giving it the final shape. On the one hands it provides support from within, and on the other removes deformities from outside. While preparing it, he eradicates the oddities giving palm's base inside and trapping from outside.

Conclusion:

The role of a teacher is not confined within the boundaries of the academic institutions/he is the builder of the nation. A teacher is expected to have a greater vision for the advancement of society, and only a motivated teacher can do it.

Note: This is the revised and updated version of my article ‘The Role of Teacher’, in Principles and Methods of Teaching English for M.A. English, Directorate of Distance

Education, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, 2006. I place on record the said article as the basic text for it.

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