



PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHERS

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Abstract

The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers and for this reason teaching is the noblest amongst all professions and is called the people's profession. The irony of fate, however is that teaching is deemed to be the most unattractive profession and the teacher no longer occupies an honorable position in the society. In order to face the challenges of the dynamic world, destructing of teacher preparation process is highly essential for professionalism and empowerment of the teachers. Resurgence of a country come through the flood gates of value-oriented education. Professional Ethics makes explicit the teacher's role and defines his rights and duties along with the knowledge of what is involved in his virtuous conduct. The Code of Professional Ethics for teachers provides a framework of principles to guide them in discharging their obligations towards students, parents, colleagues and community. Increased awareness of the ethical principles governing the teaching profession is essential to ensure 'professionalism' among teachers. This would require value oriented education for teachers so that the teachers we prepare are ethical, who know professional ethics for their own development as well as for guiding the youngsters and making the future of nation. This paper emphasises the need of inculcation professional ethics in teacher training programs.

Key Words: Teaching Profession, Professional Ethics, Value Education, Teacher Education

Introduction:

The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers and for this reason teaching is the noblest amongst all professions. Teachers are members of what be called the people's profession. They come from and work for the people. In Indian society, teacher is traditionally given a very high status, is accorded high status and is sometimes worshipped also. Hence an extremely high conduct and behavior pattern is expected from him. According to Confucian theory, only a person who is always a source of love, morally upright and whose behaviour not only in personal but also in institutional love is impeccable, is worthy of being a teacher.

The irony of fate, however is that teaching is deemed to be the most unattractive profession and the teacher no longer occupies an honorable position in the society. The teaching profession has degenerated over a period of time from its high ideals and ethical values to the level of merely a service oriented vocation. It has become a vocation like any other vocation. In the field of education, India's technical and professional manpower bank is the second largest one in the world but with all this visible material progress, India has been losing sight of things on the ethical front. Despite being proud of its culture, teachers, saints, ethics, values, honesty, truth and generosity as hallmarks of its heritage, it has turned to be a nation ranking fourth amongst the dishonest people in the world. Violence, frustration, immorality, self centeredness are increasing in the present social set up. Teachers should be prepared to meet the challenges of local, national and global demands because society depends on teachers and the quality of education depends to a great extent on the quality of teacher. Teachers develop both the learner and the society.

In order to face the challenges of the dynamic world, destructing of teacher preparation process is highly essential for professionalism and empowerment of the teachers. Resurgence of a country could not come through the channels of science and technology alone but also through the flood gates of value-oriented education. If values are imbibed with a purpose, they will go a long way in molding citizens of tomorrow and realizing the dream of an egalitarian society as envisaged in our constitution. Teaching can regain its earlier noble status in case the quality of teacher education is improved.

Is teaching a profession? A profession may be defined as an occupation which requires specialized knowledge or advanced learning. The functionalist theory of profession holds that

the professions are those occupations whose members bring a high degree of knowledge and skills to these social functions which are most central to the well being of the society. A professional is one who is able to acquire a fund of knowledge, range of skills and their application in the service of humanity. The dictionary meaning of 'professional' are: belonging to a profession; showing the skill of a trained person; doing specified work etc. for payment and not as a pastime. The criteria for an occupation to be recognized as a profession includes, among others, the following considerations.

- A profession is an occupation, performing a crucial social function.
- It requires considerable degree of skill
- It involves a concept of social service, though the person earns his living by virtue of one's profession.
- A profession has a clearly defined membership of a professional group.
- Every profession has its own code of ethics. This emerges through the thinking and consideration of service by the professionals themselves. This code is self imposed.
- A professional group has its own organization that exerts influence on its members to observe the code of ethics in their work and also safeguards the interest of the professional itself.

Role of Ethics in the Professions: The adoption, general observance, and enforcement, where required, of a professional code of ethics are basic characteristics of all professions. The formulation and enforcement of a code of ethics has twofold purpose:

1. To derive a set of rules under which its members will be enabled to provide better service to society and under which the profession can provide better protection for its members
2. To assume responsibility for assuring the competence of its members and to prohibit the type of conduct which will bring the profession into disrepute.

Professional Responsibility: The profession carries additional moral responsibilities to those held by the population in general. The concept of Professional Ethics is partly comprised of what a professional should or should not do in the work place. It also encompasses a much greater part of the professionals' life.

Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college degrees to formal coursework, conferences and informal learning opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage. There are a variety of approaches to professional development, including consultation, coaching, communities of practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision and technical assistance.

The teacher is considered a professional because he is trained to teach and has acquired the teaching skills. As a professional, the teacher is required to observe certain code of conduct or norms of behavior. It means that his behavior pattern must be governed by ethical considerations, popularly known as professional ethics. Ethical conduct of profession implies the right utilization of one's professional skills towards the fulfillment of comprehensive human goals and thus meaningfully participating in the larger order including society and nature.

Professional Ethics makes explicit the teacher's role and defines his rights and duties along with the knowledge of what is involved in his virtuous conduct. The Code of Professional Ethics for teachers provides a framework of principles to guide them in discharging their obligations towards students, parents, colleagues and community. Increased awareness of the ethical principles governing the teaching profession is essential to ensure 'professionalism' among teachers.

The teacher is the most important factor for the success of an educational program. The school may have excellent building, well designed curricula, good teaching aids but if the teachers are not efficient, educational program can never be successful. If a nation wants quality education as well as a value-oriented society, it must have quality teachers. Thus there is much of a need of educating the teacher in teacher's professional ethics. A teacher's profession demand that he should his duties intelligently, diligently, honestly, sincerely and uncomplaining to raise his status and prestige in the society. As a professional the teacher is required to observe certain code of conduct or norms of behavior because he is supposed to be the role model for a particular society.

Ethics of Teaching: Ethics, as we know, is a science of morality. It is concerned with the evaluation of human conduct with reference to www.the_srjissupreme.com ideal of human

known as a highly noble profession. It requires from its members expert knowledge and specialized skills so that they are able to perform their functions in society better than the average person. They are also expected to do their duties with a service motive. They do their work for earning a livelihood, for making their lives happy and comfortable, but the ideal of profession for them is public service rather than monetary gain. The extent to which a particular comes up to these requirements and expectations, will determine the dignity or standing of that profession in the society. Rightly it has been observed that no profession can rise above the level of its members. The teaching profession is going to be as noble as the teachers themselves are. To be noble a teacher, a teacher has to be ethical and professional in all what he does. While performing his duties, he has to deal with students, their parents and the community at large. He has also to interact with his colleagues, the head of the institution, with the Board, or University authorities, his employers and with the government. Everywhere, he has to make a choice between right and wrong, good and bad, ethical and unethical course of action.

The teaching profession has enormous opportunities where a teacher has to be face to face with serious problems of conduct and behavior and in this context ethics plays a dominant role in this profession. Ethics of teaching is very much interrelated with Ethics of teacher as a person. It is a positive concept by virtue of which a teacher shall treat all students with love and affection and be just and impartial to all irrespective of caste, creed, sex, status, religion, language, place of birth etc. A teacher believing in the ethics of teaching shall always help the students in their all round development, intrinsic values and character. In fact he will do his best to draw out the best in every student entrusted to him. In teaching he will recognize the differences among students and seek to meet their individual needs. He will always be particular to encourage students to formulate and work for high individual goals in the development of their physical, intellectual, creative and spiritual endowments. An ethical teacher will all the time realize that the primary obligation of the teaching profession is to guide the learners in the pursuit of knowledge and skills, to prepare them in the truest way of democracy and to help them to become happy, useful, socially responsible, and morally strong citizens of the nation and the world at the large. Such a teacher will make his/her teaching an exciting affair. The students through such teaching will not only acquire new knowledge, but also develop a desire to learn and will become a better human being.

Ethics of teaching is a no-limit concept. Ethics of teaching demands that teachers work and teach for such a positive concept whole heartedly and with utmost sincerity. Ethics of teaching is based on the rich, ethical inner self of the teacher. It never operates in a vacuum, however proper functioning and implementation, presupposes an ethical environment.

The entire system of education revolves around the teacher and the taught. If the teacher is personally committed to the values and practices them in his own life, it is almost certain that the students will imbibe the values for which their teacher stands.

As values cannot be taught, the teachers have to ensure that these values are upheld by the children in the process of schooling. It therefore becomes imperative for the teachers to function as role models. So the challenge of teacher education is to prepare such teachers as can take care of holistic education of children. Teacher educators must have a planned, purposive and conscious approach for inculcation of values among teachers. This would require value oriented education for teachers so that the teachers we prepare are ethical, who know professional ethics for their own development as well as for guiding the youngsters and making the future of nation.

Discussion: To make teaching People's Profession, and to prepare teachers who really can be the ideals for the society, we need to inculcate Value Education and Professional Ethics Programs in the Teacher Education Courses. In present Teacher Education Programs there is not even a discussion about the roles and responsibilities of teachers in making a society. Code of conduct for teachers exists in our country too, but we need a program to make the teachers get aware of them during their training courses.

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