



PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Mrs. Shubhangi Godse

Adhyapak Mahavidyalaya,

Aranyeshwar,pune-9

Abstract

The ethical conduct of teachers makes them accountable for their actions towards the society and the community which entrusts its young ones to their care and education, towards the pupils, towards the authorities who supervise their actions and most importantly towards their own self. The most important dimension is psychology of ethical consciousness. Social morality is another dimension of ethics. The third dimension of ethics is rooted in metaphysics or philosophy in general. Ethics studies the different points of view for ascertaining the true meaning of these concepts.

Keywords: *Ethics, Profession, Professional ethics*

INTRODUCTION-

After independence, there has been a great progress in various sectors like agriculture, industries, technologies, information communication, etc. in the country. India is trying to expand its field in important sectors so that it may soon become a powerful nation – indeed a super – power. In the field of education, India’s technical and professional manpower bank in 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, 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 of the world. Violence, frustration, immorality, self – centredness and egoism are increasing in the present social set up.

A NOBLE PROFESSION-

The progress of a country depends upon the quality of its teachers and for this reason teaching is the noblest amongst all professions. In order to face the challenges of this dynamic world, restructuring of teacher preparation process is highly essential for professionalization and empowerment of the teachers. Teachers should be prepared to meet the challenges of local, national and global demands because the quality of education depends to a great extent on the quality of teachers. Teacher is the most important pillar of the education system that develops the learner as well as the society.

TEACHING PROFESSION:

What is Profession?

- A profession is an occupation which requires specialized knowledge or advanced learning.
- Profession is an occupation, performing a crucial social function.
- A profession has a clearly defined membership of a professional group.

ETHICS:

The word Ethics is derived from the greek term ‘Ethikes’ or ‘Ethios’ which broadly stands for customs. It may be taken as the do’s and don’t’s of behavior of individuals. Ethics is the science of human character as expressed in right or wrong conduct. Ethics is the science of morals or moral principles.

A 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.

The professional ethics signifies the code of conduct to be adopted in practice by the individuals who opt for that profession. According to the dictionary of Education ‘Ethics is a branch of philosophy dealing with the moral nature of human conduct’, or it may be defined as ‘the principles and standards guiding moral conduct in everyday life or in a special field or profession’. Different individuals are involved in different professions. Every profession has its own ethics. The word ethics suggests norms, moral responsibilities, personal values etc. When we talk about teaching profession, we talk about teacher’s moral responsibilities and personal

values. Role commitment is, in general, teacher's moral responsibility. The professional ethics for teaching profession is traced to the Lord himself in the Indian context. It is contained in the Upanishads, in the Geeta and in other ancient Indian texts.

The ethical conduct of teachers makes them accountable for their actions towards the society and the community which entrusts its young ones to their care and education, towards the pupils, towards the authorities who supervise their actions and most importantly towards their own self. "The role of education is vital for progress and development of the country. This places a special responsibility on the teachers at all the levels of education. Equally, it is important that Government and other institutions concerned do their utmost possible to provide to teachers conditions of work and service which will enable them to do the best for education and research."

DIMENSIONS OF ETHICS

An extensive field is covered by ethics as it is related to every walk of life. It emphasizes an ideal conduct covering almost all the spheres.

The first and the most important dimension is psychology of ethical consciousness. There are different psychological aspects like desire, will, freedom etc. which are supposed to be the constituents of our conduct and without understanding the ultimate nature of these; we cannot develop a pattern of ideal conduct.

Social morality is another dimension of ethics. Our customs and traditions which are prevalent in the society are constituents of social morality. On the basis of these customs and traditions, we can judge the character of a particular society. So the knowledge of customs and traditions of a particular society is very important.

The third dimension of ethics is rooted in the metaphysics or philosophy general. This branch gives different points of view regarding different concepts like right and wrong, virtue and vice. Ethics studies the different points of view for ascertaining the true meaning of these concepts.

So, from the above description of the dimensions of ethics, we may say that ethics touches almost all spheres of our life and it has got a very extensive scope. It is as wide as life itself. It provides us rational and enlightened norms of conduct without affecting the freedom and dignity of human beings.

COMMITMENT TO SOCIETY

The curriculum design of the present teacher education pattern provides an opportunity to go through these dimensions, so that the ethical development can be achieved. Philosophical and sociological foundations of education give them the understanding to know the truth and to discriminate between right and wrong and also to understand the customs and traditions of the prevailing society while the knowledge of psychology makes them aware with the different aspects of personality, thus helping them to develop a right kind of attitude for their profession. Therefore, it becomes the duty of the teacher to see what role to play, to know which professional opportunities to use, which impulses to encourage and which social attitude to cultivate in the child. For this reason, the curriculum of the present teacher education must be dealt with great care and attention, so that the prospective teachers could be made aware of their responsibilities towards their wards and their profession as well as to boost their commitment towards the society and the nation as such.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR TEACHERS

In Indian society, teacher is traditionally given a very high status; is accorded due regard and respect and is sometimes worshipped also. Hence an extremely high conduct and behavior pattern is expected of him. 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. In the case of teaching profession, the dimensions of ethics extend from the description of an ideal personality of the teacher to the teacher's desire, wishes and aspirations, to his role in social welfare and uplift of the pupil's individuality and encouragement of an ideal conduct in him.

All the activities, operations and events through which the prospective teachers are to be made aware are very important for teacher education because they provide the prospective teacher an opportunity to accomplish their desired goals. Teachers are literally architects of the Nation's destiny. The development of a democratic country depends on the status of teacher. The society is indebted to the teachers for shaping the destiny of the nation through the education of young children. The Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) rightly points out, "We are convinced that the most important factor in the contemplated educational reconstruction is the teacher, his personal qualities, his educational qualifications, his professional training and the place that he occupies in the school as well as in the community."

TEACHER'S MORAL OBLIGATIONS

According to commonwealth: The teacher has a major role in educational development whether he approaches his work actively or passively. He can influence development adversely by opposing innovations or merely remaining mute in the face of a growing need for reform; on the other hand, he can participate actively as the initiator himself or an interpreter of the plans devised by others.

The teachers first obligation is to provide excellent instructions .Teachers with a high level of moral professionalism have a deep obligation naturally tend to demonstrate their moral professionalism by

- Coming to work regularly and on time.
- Being well informed about their subject matter.
- Regularly reviewing and updating instructional practices.
- Cooperating and, if necessary, confronting parents of under-achieving students. Proposing constructive movements and firmly rejecting or criticizing unsatisfactory policies.

It is assumed that moral behaviors are built on a series of components of moral maturity such as Moral sensitivity- The awareness of how our actions affect other people.

Moral judgment-involved intuitions about what is fair and just.

Moral motivation- required prioritization of moral values over personal values in a professional setting.

Moral character- requires individuals to act on their moral convictions.

Along with these obligations some professional obligations are also more important. These are as follows.

- 1) Towards students-
 - a. Sincerity in teaching
 - b. Motivating the child
 - c. Providing emotional stability
 - d. Conscious workers
 - e. Developing leadership qualities
- 2) Towards parents-
 - a. Regular information about child
 - b. Guiding parents for child's future
 - c. Informing attitude and aptitude of child
 - d. Providing conducive home environment
 - e. Counseling of parents
- 3) Towards society –
 - a. Providing good citizens

- b. Making students responsible towards rights and duties
 - c. To follow social norms
 - d. Setting up of ethical standards
 - e. Harmony with nature
- 4) Towards profession –
- a. Safeguarding and enhancing professional mannerism
 - b. Respecting the profession
 - c. To be open to professional growth
 - d. Contributing growth of profession
 - e. Active participation
- 5) Towards Higher Authorities –
- a. Abiding by rules and regulations
 - b. As a link between higher authorities and students
 - c. Providing strategic information
 - d. Implementing policies and programmes
 - e. Respectful to higher authorities

NEED OF PROFESSIONAL ETHICS:

- For self correction
- For self satisfaction
- To guide the conduct and behavior
- To shape the personality
- To set up ideals for students
- Improvement of human relations
- Development of society
- The professional excellence
- To improve the professional environment
- To follow norms and principles of the profession

The teacher should know the objectives before the nation in terms of economic, social, political and cultural growth. This should endanger in him the ability to train the present generation of the students into enlightened citizens of India. He should have good information about Indian thought from ancient times to the present. This will help him have an adequate and a healthy personal philosophy of life which is a must in every teacher irrespective of the grade and level at which he may be teaching.

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