

Effective Teacher: An Overview

Neetu Dalal

tudabas@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Education shapes the personality of a person. Every Nation progress with the quality of Education imparted to its citizens. In the present scenario when there is a fierce competition in every sphere of life, effectiveness of the teachers becomes imperative to empower the students for facing the emerging challenges of global world. Effective teaching is a par excellence attribute of quality education. An effective teacher may be understood as one who helps in the development of basic skills. This paper describes the characteristics of an effective teacher and what teachers need to know in this present era of excellence.

Keywords

Education, Teaching Process, Effective Teacher

1. INTRODUCTION

In this modern age of science, education plays an important role in building up of society. Education is the key to national prosperity and welfare. It is recognized as a mirror of the society and educational institution as Society in miniature. Education enables an individual to understand his responsibilities to society and nation and to become ideal citizen. It is a powerful instrument for change in society. "Education is not limited to the imparting of information or training in imparting of information or training in skills. It has to give the educator a proper sense of values". (Dr. Radha Krishnan). The educational institutions are a psychological unit where person to person interaction between the teacher's and the taught, is a major factor in the child education. Education is the outcome of interaction in human environment that one experiences as a child, as an adult and as an old person. As such education is the life long process and each one of us gets opportunities for a variety of experiences. The quest for such experiences is an inborn quality. Every human child is compelled to seek his/her basic needs which in turn take the shape of human environment interaction result of which continues throughout life. Education of an individual human begins at birth and continues throughout life. The very first institution i.e. home [mother, father, siblings, etc.] leaves indelible impact on the lives of individuals. The age 0-5 years is very much impressionable when the development of brain takes place at much faster rate. At this stage family members may have a profound educational effect on the overall

development of the child - often more profound than they realize-though family teaching may function very informally. But the child also needs formal education which is imparted in schools and colleges by teachers.

2. CONCEPT OF TEACHER

The teacher is the top most academic and professional person in the educational pyramid under whose change the destiny of our children is placed by the parents and society. The quality of education solely depends upon well adjusted and well satisfied teachers. Teacher is considered to be the most important component of the educational structure in any teaching - learning situation. There is an interaction between teacher and students and the interaction is mostly - initiated and controlled by the teacher. Teaching is an interactive process between teachers and taught. The American commission on teacher education remarked, "The quality of nation depends upon the quality of its citizens. The quality of education depends upon the quality of their teachers. It is no exaggeration to express that the whole educational process revolved round the teacher. In the entire teaching learning process the teacher is a powerful agent who can inculcate the democratic ideas of nationhood in children, the future citizens of the nation. The teacher is a dynamic force of the school. A school without a teacher is just like a body without the soul, a skeleton without flesh and blood, a shadow without substance. "There is no greater need for the cause of education today than the need for strong manly men and motherly women as teachers for the young." As social engineers, the teachers can socialize and humanize the young by their man-like qualities. The teacher's task is related to our perception of education. The process of education keeps on changing according to the contemporary demands and needs of the society. Therefore, the present teacher has to play different roles, and he has to be a competent professional, a skilled teacher. He is always expected to be an effective communicator, a designer and user of learning resources, learning facilitator and an active participant in community life. The role of teacher is considered to be important in all stages of education but a teacher has a predominant part to play at the elementary school level because at this level the school students need the constant attention of their teachers. They consider their

teachers as the only source of inspiration and guidance to them. So the question of effectiveness of teachers is very important for the students in particular and the society in general. Elementary education as its meaning suggests caters to the most fundamental needs of all the children and something that man can't do without. Teachers at elementary level need to be best equipped in terms of his ability to help in laying strong foundations for children's personality. Teaching is an act of sharing knowledge, values, understanding skills and competencies by the learned person.

2.1 What Teachers Need to Know and Be Able to DO?

- a) Content knowledge
 - Understand subject matter deeply and flexibly to help students create cognitive maps,
 - See how ideas connect across fields of knowledge and to life.
 - Make ideas accessible to others, understanding the perspective of the learner
- b) Learner's knowledge
 - Have knowledge of child and adolescent development and how to support growth in cognitive, social, physical, and emotional domains to interpret learners' statements and actions and to shape productive learning experience.
 - Understand and respect differences linked to culture, family experience, forms of intelligence approaches to learning, and the ability to teach in a way that connects with students.
 - Inquire sensitively, listen carefully, look thoughtfully at student work, and structure situations to allow students to express themselves.
- c) Motivating students
 - Understand what individual students believe about themselves, care about, and how to give them encouragement.
- d) Knowledge about learning
 - Decide which type of learning is most appropriate in specific circumstances, which material to use when and for which purpose.
 - Be able to use different strategies for teaching, evaluating students' knowledge and assessing their learning.
 - Have a capacity to understand the strengths of individual students
 - Have a capacity to work with disabled student.
 - Understand how students acquire language (the gateway to learning) to build skills and create accessible learning experiences.
- e) Knowledge about curriculum resources and technologies
 - Allow students to explore ideas, acquire and synthesize information, frame and solve problems.
- f) Knowledge about collaboration
 - Structure student interaction for more powerful shared learning.
 - Collaborate with other teachers.
 - Work with parents to learn more about their children and help shape supportive experiences at school and home.
- g) Capacity to reflect

- Assess own practice and its impact to refine and improve instruction
- Continuously evaluate students' progress to reshape lesson plan.

3. TEACHING PROCESS

Teaching is the most arduous and complex profession in our society and also an important job. Teaching is undoubtedly an extra ordinarily complex task. Teaching is a behavior, an organized set of cognitive acts or operations of teaching, overt and covert, organized logically and meaningfully. Teaching is undoubtedly an extraordinarily complex task. It is not like inducing a chemical reaction, it is much more like painting a picture or making a piece of music, or on a lower level, like planting a garden or writing a friendly letter'. The teacher was regarded as the direct and sole source of life and light.

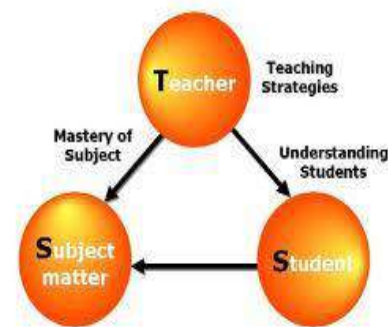


Figure: Teaching Process

4. AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER

In order to identify an effective teacher, the role and contribution of the teacher to the product of education needs to be examined. This entails that good teacher should possess the knowledge of learner's characteristics, learning process, classroom management, requisite skills to be able to contribute significantly to the outcome of educational process which is the growth of students in the right direction. There are many activities in this respect. The effectiveness of the educational system largely depends upon the active resourceful and competent teachers. An effective teacher not only imparts the entire educational curricula allotted to him in the best and most efficient manner but also ensures the best possible academic performance and an optimum development of the personalities of the students. In the present scenario when there is a fierce competition in every sphere of life, effectiveness of the teachers becomes imperative to empower the students for facing the emerging challenges of global world. Effective teaching is a par excellence attribute of quality education. An effective teacher may be understood as one who helps in the development of basic skills, understanding, proper work habits, desirable attitude and value judgment. Teacher effectiveness concerns with these outcomes and the objectives of education. It points to the effects of a teacher in the classroom situation. Teaching in the classroom depends upon how the teacher performs. According to Southern (1974), an effective teacher is the one who has a sense of humor, ability to explain things

clearly so that students can easily understand what is being taught, ability to make any subject interesting to learn, ability to control the class, ability to be ready and willing to help students when they need and ability to be as fair as possible in dealing with students. In the words of Anderson (1991) "An effective teacher is the one who quite consistently achieves goals, which either directly or indirectly focuses on the learning of their students." The positive and negative behaviors exhibited by teachers determine, to a great extent, their effectiveness in the classroom and, ultimately, the impact they have on student achievement.

4.1 Characteristics of Effective Teacher

- a. Training in Pre-Service Programme -The ultimate aim of teacher education is to prepare effective teachers- teachers who are capable of bringing behavioral changes in pupils under their charge to an optimum level in relation to the input in terms of human energy and material resources expanded in the process. Teacher preparation ought to begin with a sound pre-service teacher education program that may transform an individual into a competent and committed professional functionary, fully equipped with an equally comprehensive professional readiness to perform these tasks with perfection and satisfaction.
- b. Academic achievements -Academic achievement reveals scholastic performance of the individual in the curricular subjects and shows learning outcomes (Devnath, 1971). Generally it indicates proficiency in school subjects. Academic achievement of a teacher is a weighted aggregate of division obtained at high school, higher secondary, and graduate, post graduate and other examinations.
- c. Subject matter knowledge -Subject matter knowledge is another variable that one might think could be related to teacher effectiveness (Collinson 1996). Studies of teachers "scores on the subject matter tests of the National Teacher Examination have found no consistent relationship between the measure of subject matter knowledge and teacher performance as measured by students outcomes or supervisor's ratings". It is necessary for a teacher to be an effective one and to have a deep and thorough knowledge of his subject. He must be familiar with the different methods, techniques, strategies and tactics of teaching and must possess the art of using these methods at appropriate time in the classroom. A teacher gets depth in the knowledge of the subject matter in his academic degree course while the knowledge of teaching skills and other qualities of teachers and teaching profession during teacher training course. Thus, it may be said that higher the academic career of a teacher greater are the chances of utilizing his efficiency in teaching.
- d. Intelligence - Intellectual teachers will make full use of their knowledge and provide Intelligence, also known as the general mental ability, helps an individual to adjust to the environment and learn from the past experiences. Operationally speaking, intelligence is the ability which helps an individual to succeed in school or in some job (Linda, 1990). A more comprehensive and perhaps appropriate description is that intelligence includes at least the abilities demanded in the solution of the problems which require comprehension and use of symbols.
- e. Teachers as a Role Model - Role Models are people who set good examples by the words they speak and by the actions they take. Role Models can be the people you know personally or people you have learned about in the news at school or on television. Students tend to copy the behavior and mannerism of the teachers. The teacher's entire personality is a reflection on the minds of the students. If the teacher is honest, leads a balanced and disciplined life, the children adopt these virtues as an ideal conduct unconsciously. The ideal teacher is one who through his thoughts, words and deeds, gives an impression of an honest upright life which can serve as a model for the students to copy, follow and emulate.
- f. Teacher's Character - A flower in bloom is loved by all and in this lies its glory. Similarly, man may be viewed as having achieved everything in life when he becomes perfect in character. If the best flowers among mankind take to teaching, society is abundantly enriched; their fragrance and beauty are then made the best use of. If the teacher becomes an embodiment of right conduct in thought, word and deed, the students by their association will learn virtue and develop many qualities. They can be humanized and can live and act like better human beings. They can become thoughtful, concerned and courageous.
- g. Teacher's Personality - Every teacher must have a good personality. Radiant, pleasing and impressive personal appearance, refinement, pleasant manners, enthusiasm, drive, initiative, open mindedness etc., are some of the essential traits of an ideal teacher. External appearance has a psychological effect upon the students. By attractive appearance, he/she can win the love and affection of his students and can command respect. He/she should be frank, tolerant, kind, fair and straightforward so that he/she can stimulate learning. Some personality traits which make the teacher effective are self confidence, self respect, excellent appearance, sound health, good intellect, high character, sense of humor, optimism, punctuality, enthusiasm and industriousness etc. A teacher must have some personal values like love, brotherhood, forgiveness, sharing, team

spirit, responsibility, sympathy, patience, courtesy, loyalty, tolerance and accountability etc.

h. Teacher's Mental Health -We speak of education as a lamp lighting another lamp, one life making another life and a spirit speaking to another spirit. We can achieve this objective, if the teachers have good mental health. Students develop interest in those subjects, which are taught by pleasing and genial teachers. The teacher makes the emotional atmosphere in the classroom. A neurotic teacher may spread fear, nervousness and worry in the classroom. A fanatic-teacher may spread hatred, prejudice and hostile feelings among the students. If he has a good mental health, he can create love, interest and enthusiasm for learning and a taste in the subject he teaches.

i. Teacher's Physical Health - A teacher should possess a sound body along with a sound mind. He should have a sound physical health, physical energy and vitality. This will make him alert, cheerful, happy, dynamic and enthusiastic.

j. Teacher's Emotional Intelligence - Teachers should be emotionally well balanced. Emotionally healthy teacher will not magnify their importance. If the teacher is emotional, moody, prejudiced and over strict, he will create a fear and terror and this will endanger the health of the pupils. A teacher who has high emotional intelligence knows his emotions and feelings well, which helps him in his thinking and actions. It is more about self awareness and self management. Bad tempered and impatient teachers are quickly sensed by the students and in this way can destroy the delicate student-teacher relationship. The teacher who is able to stay calm and show interest in the well being of individuals will win respect in the classroom.

k. Social Adjustment - Sociability is another important quality of a teacher. He should have a sound social philosophy and he should make his best contribution to the society. He should know how to adjust himself to the social surroundings in which he lives. He should not be quiet, retreating and introverted. He should be free from worry, anxiety and egotism. He should mix well in society and take a helpful interest in his neighbour. Normal social life outside the school will go a long way to give him happy social adjustments. Social values like discipline, respect for elders, faithfulness, knowledge, dedication, devotion, sense of competition, responsibility self reliance, sincerity, affection, obedience, patriotism, honesty, confidence, cleanliness, good manners, patience, positive approach, courage, hopefulness, regularity, self evaluation and truthfulness

etc. are some of the qualities of effective teachers.

l. Teacher's Professional Efficiency -The teacher must possess a strong sense of vocation and true devotion to teaching. He should have a genuine love for his calling. For his professional efficiency, he should have knowledge of psychology and educational philosophy, and a clear understanding of aims, contents, methods and materials of instruction, perfect skill and interest in teaching. He must possess a fair knowledge of national and international current affairs.

m. Teacher's Accountability - Lessinger advocates that each child has a right to be educated in order to become a productive citizen of a country. The parents and the citizens have a right to know the progress of education of their children. Teachers, being the "educational or human engineers" are accountable for the progress of the children they teach. Teacher's accountability is very important in modern teaching-learning process, and it should be evaluated at frequent intervals. There must be proper supervision of their work. The supervisor should see how far the teachers are accountable in respect of teaching, research, co-curricular activities, use of aids and equipments in the classroom, utilization of local resources for the benefit of the students and development of students" moral and ethical values. Thus, the degrading condition of education in our country can be checked.

n. Professional Ethics of Teachers - Teachers, who consider their job as a profession, work only for pay cheque. Their work is considered useful for their own sake. Since perchance they have occupied a professional chair they try for their own good, at the cost of others. But our cultural heritage proves that true teachers are those who consider their job as honorable. Such teachers work with a sense of self-fulfillment and self-realization. Prof. George Herbert Palmer once rightly said, "If Harvard does not pay me to teach, I would gladly pay Harvard for the privilege of teaching." This should be the professional value of an Indian teacher. An ideal teacher should not work for pecuniary motives, but with a sense of education and for the cause of education.

- Towards Students - It should be teachers" primary duty to understand them, to be just, courteous, to promote a spirit of enquiry, fellowship and joy in them, not to do or say anything that would undermine their personality, not to exploit them for personal interests and to set before them a high standard of character, discipline and personality.

- Towards Profession -It should be teachers" primary duty to be sincere and honest to their work and to go thoroughly prepared to the class, to endeavor to

maintain their efficiency by study and other means; not to do or say anything which may lower their prestige in the eyes of their students; not to write or encourage the use of help books; not to exert any pressure upon their students or their parents to engage private tuition, not to act as an agent or accept commission and other compensation for recommending books.

- Towards Society -It shall be teachers" primary duty to set an example in citizenship, to endeavor to promote the public good, to uphold the dignity of their calling on all occasions, to size up the demands and aspirations of the society, to be dynamic leaders when required and to be ideal followers when desired.

The National Policy on Education (1986) has also rightly stressed the significant role that teachers need play in the improvement of the educational system and in the development and growth of education to teach effectively in the classroom. An effective teacher may be understood as one who helps in the development of basic skills, understanding, proper work habits, desirable attitude and value judgment. The teacher's role is viewed in terms of a mediator a facilitation and a director of learning, a helper and controller of the learning behavior of the learner, a dispenser of knowledge, a counselor, an evaluator of the learning's performance in the academic field, an expert in class management activities and a link between school, parents, community and society.

4.2 Factors Influencing Teacher Effectiveness

Some of the factors that could have great influence teacher Effectiveness apparently would be:

- i) Locus of control
- ii) Psycho-social maturity
- iii) Organizational conflicts
- iv) Intelligence
- v) Academic Back ground
- vi) Altitude towards teaching profession
- vii) Socio Economic status
- viii) Age
- ix) Self-Concept
- x) Teaching Experience
- xi) Professional Training Center
- xii) Level of Aspiration
- xiii) Climate
- xiii) Job-Satisfaction

5 CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of the educational system largely depends upon the active resourceful and competent teachers. An effective teacher not only imparts the entire educational curricula allotted to him in the best and most efficient manner but also ensures the best possible academic performance and an optimum development of the personalities of the students. An Effective teacher can play an efficient role in the improvement of the education system, development and growth of education with the help of these above said qualities. Although evaluation is inherently threatening to most faculty members, the vast majority takes their assignments seriously and has a sincere desire to conduct them as effectively as possible.

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