

STUDENT - TEACHERS PERCEPTION ON THE QUALITIES OF A TEACHER

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Abstract

Teaching is a noble profession and we are the torch bearers for the future generation, this statement is used frequently to refer about teachers and their role. But in this dynamic and ever-changing society it becomes imperative to focus on the role of teachers and meet the challenges faced in the classroom. The present study is a survey carried on 40 Student- teachers and their views of the qualities of an ideal teacher under four categories – Social, Emotional, Personal and Intellectual quotient. Each quotient has various statements that emphasise the role of a teacher. The results may illuminate the perceptions of Student - Teachers in reaching the demands of the new generation students and thus reduce the gap between teaching and learning and result in a better learning atmosphere through effective and efficient teachers.

Keywords: *perception, Student - Teachers, social quotient, emotional quotient, personal quotient and intellectual quotient.*

Introduction: Classroom management is often hypothesized as a prime factor in assisting control mechanism in the class, but it also needs to be focussed with respect to curriculum, instruction, and teacher competency. Hence the role of a teacher plays a vital role in classroom dynamics.

We often fail to sum up the role of teacher, every time the basket consisting of qualities varies and this could be due to the ever changing demands in the society. But we still can associate few qualities that have been consistent since time immemorial.

Who is an Ideal teacher?

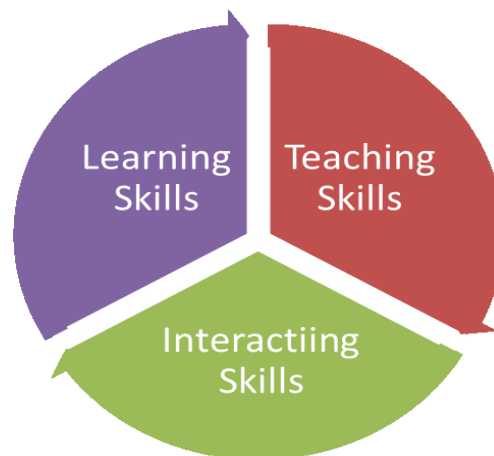
These were few excerpts taken to define an ideal teacher, in the words of Kabir “Your Guru is there to lead you. There is no need to worry as to how to demystify life. If you

abide by your Guru's teaching there won't be darkness", According to Sri Aurobindo, a teacher possesses three instruments – instruction, example, and influence. The good teacher will seek to awaken much more than to instruct; he will aim at the growth of the faculties and the experiences by a natural process and free expansion. He will not impose his opinions on the passive acceptance of the receptive mind; . . . He will know that the example is more powerful than instruction. According to Swami Vivekananda "within man is all knowledge, and it requires only an awakening, and that much is the work of a teacher. We have to do only so much for the boys that they may learn to apply their own intellect to the proper use of their hands, legs, ears, eyes, etc." According to Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, a teacher "must be a committed man, committed to faith in the future of man, in the future of humanity, in the future of the country and the world." The profession of a teacher "should not be reduced to a trade; it is a calling, a vocation, a mission." Teachers, according to Dr. Radhakrishnan, must impart to the students "zest for new experience, love for adventure in knowledge." (September 19, 2011)

A 21st century teacher has witnessed challenges arising from the globalised society, a teacher shoulders huge responsibilities in moulding the character and mind of the new generation. Teachers in the contemporary society need to be armoured by being truly professional by being fully equipped with high academic standards, pedagogical and practical skills and ethical and moral values. Every nation depends on high quality standards of education through teachers who are professionally satisfied, motivated, committed and are willing to perform for the benefit of the learners, the community and the society.

With this view the researcher thought of finding out from the Student - Teachers the qualities that they feel are important for being an ideal teacher.

Skills of a teacher of the 21st century as felt by the researcher:



Learning Skills: A teacher is a life-long learner and this will hold true if the teacher himself/herself assumes the responsibility of learning ardently. When a teacher learns the darkness of ignorance is assumed by the light of knowledge.

Teaching Skills: The essence of learning lies in the art of teaching and teacher plays a vital role in teaching towards the manifestation of self (learner); hence a teacher should devise means and methods of teaching for effective learning.

Interacting Skills: A teacher should enhance her social skills through effective communication and interaction; this will enable in being empathetic, caring, and considerate and develop in oneself skills of being a good human

This paper attempts to achieve the objective:

1. **To find out the qualities of a teacher as perceived by Student - Teachers.**

Literature Review:

Charlene Tan, Pak Tee Ng (2012) in a critical reflection of teacher professionalism in Cambodia aims to develop the teachers to become autonomous professionals in terms of curriculum and pedagogical improvements. However the reality is that the Cambodian teachers manifest characteristics of both the pre-professionals and autonomous professionals. This paper also examines the issues and challenges faced in the development of teacher professionalism, which are entwined in the complexities of educational reform, societal and economic development. By

identifying some structural, economic and socio-cultural challenges faced by Cambodian teachers, this paper suggests that Cambodian teachers need greater teacher collaboration within a culture of trust and accountability to become collegial professionals.

Nihan Demirkasımoğlu (2010) states in Defining “Teacher Professionalism” from different perspectives about how teacher professionalism is defined in scholarly debates in recent times. Within this purpose the definitions of professionalism, criteria of professionalism, and the characteristics of a professional teacher and the status of teacher professionalism will be discussed from different perspectives. In historical context, the issue that whether teaching is a professional status or not has been controversial. According to some authors (e.g. Leiter, 1978; Samuels, 1970), teaching is a semi-professional job because they are directed to perform certain standards by their superiors. As a result of this, teachers’ individual autonomy and decision making powers are limited. Some authors (e.g. Stevenson, Carter ve Passy, 2007; Ozga, 1981) believe that it is more useful to approach professionalism as an ideological construct that is used for occupational control on teachers. Another approach (e.g. Phelps, 2006) reflects a positive attitude towards teacher professionalism and identifies the term as the best and highest standards for teachers. This paper will offer an operational definition of teacher professionalism and an integrative approach about multiple interpretations of teacher professionalism in sociological, political and educational context. In the light of multiple approaches, it will be concluded that teacher professionalism means meeting certain standards in education and it is related to proficiency.

Geoff Whitty (2006) Contemporary educational reform – including both marketization and centralisation, but

Also a new emphasis on the involvement of a wider range of stakeholders – has resulted in a period of significant change for teachers. It has also raised new questions: for example, how should we understand the role of the teacher? Who has a right to be involved in decisions about education? Consequently, and perhaps more than ever in

recent times, we need to reflect on the appropriateness of existing notions of teacher professionalism to the context in which teachers work and to the goal of social justice.

Research Methodology:

To analyse the perception of 40 Student - Teachers about the qualities of a teacher,

Based on the qualities as classified

- Social quotient,
- Emotional quotient
- Intellectual quotient
- Personal quotient

The Student - Teachers were given a list of qualities classified as Social, Emotional, Intellectual and Personal quotient which they had to categorize in the order of their preference as their perception of an ideal teacher. Each quotient is given a range from 1 to 5 of which 1 being the least preferred and 5 being the most preferred. The Student-teachers had to choose their range of preference accordingly

The data collected was analysed using statistical technique. The mean value for each of the quotients was analysed. Further it was analysed based on the classification of the qualities based on the various quotients.

To determine the relative ranking of the student support methods, the score of the students are transformed to RII values using equation (Tam ET, al, 2000):

$$RII = \frac{\sum w}{AN}$$

Where W is the weightage given to each quotient as perceived by the Student - Teachers ranging from 1 to 5, A is the highest weight (i.e. 5 for this study), N is the total number of samples, and RII is the relative important index, $0 \leq RII \leq 1$.

Results and Discussion:

The mean value and RII values and ranking of all Student - Teachers perceptions are shown below.

Table 1: The Mean and RII values of Qualities of teachers as perceived by Student - Teachers.

Student Support Methods	Mean Value	RII	Ranking
Social Quotient	304	0.69	I
Emotional Quotient	313	0.73	II
Intellectual Quotient	301	0.68	IV
Personal Quotient	329	0.76	III

The Mean value and RII values of Qualities of teachers as perceived by Student-teachers are indicated in the above table. The RII values are used to rank the qualities based on the various quotients such as – Social, Emotional, Personal, and Intellectual as perceived by the Student- teachers. The **Social Quotient** was ranked First and **Intellectual Quotient** was ranked Fourth. **Emotional Quotient** was ranked Second and **Personal Quotient** was ranked Third.

Discussion

The sample of this research were **Student - Teachers** who had joined the Two years B.Ed course, these student teachers were preparing themselves to meet the dynamic and ever-challenging classrooms. They had a glimpse of the same during their Practice teaching sessions and hence they had framed a perception of the qualities that is required by the teachers in the classrooms today. With the emergence of new curriculum, teaching methods and school set-up the role of the teachers varies and hence the student teachers feel today is the world of connection and interaction and hence social skills plays a prominent role. To be empathetic and caring is of prime importance to handle the students of today's generation, they look for comfort and support which the teacher needs to be aware of. The teacher needs to understand the emotional turbulence that our students face and hence be a pillar of strength for them. Personal quotient should also be

given prominence but as the other quotients will be addressed the personal quotient by itself will be groomed, thus making a teacher an ideal teacher. The students can access information from internet anytime, anywhere, anyway and hence intellectual quotient was not of prime importance, basic knowledge is primary other secondary sources of information can be retrieved from the internet too hence Intellectual quotient is not quite prominent.

Conclusion:

Professionalism in a globalised society reinstates teachers to be innovative in their attitude, flexible in their approach and creative and reflective in their mind – always refreshing themselves with the day-to-day increase of knowledge in their subject area. Rabindranath Tagore remarks that a teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. Tagore adds that the teacher who has come to the end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them. At a time when knowledge is escalating fast, teachers can barely afford to remain static. In this world of information and technology, teachers should endeavour to equip the student with every kind of research and enquiry which will enable them in critically thinking and taking right decisions. Mahatma Gandhi once remarked: “If teachers impart all the knowledge in the world to their students but inculcate not truth and purity among them, they will have betrayed them and instead of raising them, set them on the downward road to perdition.

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