

INTRODUCTION

The teacher, at the end of his/her study/formation, is going out of the portals of the educational institution, not only to educate the students but the society, since the present day students would be the architects of the future society. And a teacher has enormous power – A teacher can make a student or could break a student. But a teacher is going out into the world to mould the students as leaders with social responsibility.

The Indian President Pranab Muherjee said on Apr 25th 2013, during the convocation of Utkal University, "education is powerful tool for human progress and employment. It is also a strong driver of social thinking and transformation". The teachers, as educators, possess that powerful tool!

During the formation period, teachers are dreaming of their future, they could also visualize the reality. The implementation of Right to Education (RTE) in 2009 and the mandatory pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) of 30:1 imply that by 2015 there would be need for 20 lakhs new teachers. In July 2013, Tamilnadu Govt indicated creation of 7,000 more teaching jobs. And at the same time the prerequisite for teaching is made stricter by introducing Teacher Entrance Test (TET), which seems to bring down the enthusiasm in teaching profession. And the trend in Tamilnadu is moving from State Board to Matriculation and now towards CBSE system. The new graduates are stepping into this complex situation – They need to go forth with courage and confidence.

REDEFINING THE ROLE OF TEACHERS

We are aware of significant shifts in education – Often these shifts force us outside our comfort zones. There is a paradigm shift in teaching-learning process. We are living in an age of knowledge explosion – Even children are familiar with google-surfing, face-book. Teaching learning process is moving from the concept of teach-ability to learn-ability. Digital media plays a crucial role in shaping the future of the world. The universe of information is brought to our doorstep. A whole new generation of learners and communicators, the so called Digital Citizens or Netizens, are in the making. The students may not need teachers for information but they need teachers for formation. In this backdrop the role of the teachers needs to be redefined.

Today most of the students lack self-esteem and self-confidence. Teachers are to be mentors to the students – They need to accompany them in their ambition as well as their frustration, so that they could grow in leadership qualities. So the class room is not merely the teaching arena but the formation of individual students is the focus of teaching.

In order to be an inspiring source, a teacher could arm or strengthen oneself on the following:

- i. Need to create a mindset: The basic assumption is that each student is a potential leader who could become a genius for the betterment of the world. And each teacher needs to excel in planning,

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organization, management skills to give your best, especially to the least in the society.

- ii. An efficient teacher is an effective learner: A teacher can never truly teach unless he/she is still learning, just like a candle can never light another candle unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teachers need to work alongside their students as coaches, facilitators, guides, and mentors.
- iii. Teachers are connectors: The teachers are edu-connectors. The teachers serve as bridges and network systems for the students. Teachers not only open their eyes of knowledge, they take them along new vistas of friends in the class, new milieu or atmosphere of learning process tailored to the need and capacity of each student. Teachers are the bridges to lead the students from their familiar world to unknown region of learning.
- iv. Teachers are enablers: When Michael Angelo was interviewed for work on the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, he brought in a testimony from his previous employer. The letter read: 'By coaxing and encouraging much can be brought out from this young artist, but by criticism nothing can be done'. By identifying the hidden talents of students and by encouraging them to develop their talents, the teacher could shape each of the students to be a great leader. Accompany the students in his/her struggle and they would be grateful to you for the rest of their lives.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL

Teachers are the real nation builders, since each teacher is a social engineer who should engineer a just society from his/her students. The teacher is the yardstick that measures the achievements and aspirations of the

nation. The nation evolves in every school and the teacher is the dynamic force of the school. A school without efficient and effective teachers is just like a body without mind and soul; a skeleton without flesh and blood; a shadow without substance. As Maria Montessori prayed, each teacher could pray: Help us, O Lord to fathom the secret of each child so that we may know, love, and serve each child according to your laws of justice and following your divine will.

A teacher should be a person of 5'C's, namely creativity, competence, consciousness, commitment, and compassion – Students should imbibe these from the teachers. Value education is very much needed today. Further, the teacher should bring in the god-quotient in teaching – Trust and faith in the trans-power, namely God, is essential to keep going even amidst critical challenges.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE SOCIETY

As today's students are tomorrow's society, the role of teachers in the society is also significant. Teachers can enrich the present young generation so that an enlightened, safe, and secure society is formed already in the class rooms. Already from school days onwards, each student should learn and grow in social responsibility. Teachers could take out the students for service learning – The students could visit the economically and socially marginalized sections of the society, such as the remote rural areas, where the students could learn the richness of life in the simplicity of rural life. At the same time, the students should have exposure to scientific and technological advancements so that they could become innovative and entrepreneurial scientists and technocrats of tomorrow. As technological innovation is the backbone of any society, the teachers should foster technological innovation in their teaching.

ROLE OF TEACHERS IN THE WORLD

Further, teachers guide students to attain the

knowledge and skills they need to succeed in the world. As a teacher, one needs to guide the students to attain the knowledge and skills, in other words attitude and aptitude, they need to succeed in the world. This world has seen so many great genius people such as Bill Gates, Abraham Lincoln, Albert Einstein, Abdul Kalam – All of them had something common among them, namely resourcefulness, optimism, dedication, and above all excellent teachers. The teacher and the student could be compared to the potter and the clay – The teacher moulds each student to be the best instrument of change in the world. This task is very crucial that even the teachers of a village can make a difference on an international level. Properly educated children would build up global harmony and would promote international peace.

CONCLUSION

Finally, we look for and dream of success: Success is not an end in itself, but a consequence - calling for more commitment. And what is success? It is being able to go to bed each night with your mind and soul at peace. In life, one builds bridges and thinks about the already existing bridges - One should learn which bridges should be crossed and which should be burned.

One could think of five tips on education :

- i. Love teaching – Love has never kept anyone away from his/her dreams.
- ii. Allow children to ask questions and help them develop critical thinking – No question is a stupid question. Questions like: ‘Why does the sea look blue?’ would get you the Nobel prize!
- iii. Motivate the students. Motivation is like the fuel that takes the rocket into the space, even to the Mars. As one reads in the novel, *The Alchemist*, once you have the motivation, the entire universe conspires to make it happen for you.

- iv. Come back to this institution, your alma mater, again and again – Come to be inspired and energized again and again. The institution has stood by you in your need of formation, so stand by your institution when it needs you.
- v. Keep up enthusiasm and dream alive. Do your best under all circumstances; and always try to do better than the best.

The average literacy rate in India is around 74% (men 82% and women 66%) and in Tamilnadu, it is 80%. Try to make the literacy rate 100%. Every teacher is a flame of wisdom – Let your light shine. This flame of knowledge and wisdom should set the world on fire of prosperity, peace, joy, and harmony.

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