

Golden Research Thoughts

PERSONALITY AND PROFESSIONALITY OF A TEACHER: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS OF CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS EFFECTIVE TEACHING

Abstract:-

Teaching is a profession where both performer and performance equally matters. The paper is an attempt to combine teacher and teaching termed here as personality and professionalism. Personality is a complex entity but felt very easily by behaviour of the concerned person. Many theories have been put forward by social scientists to explain constructs of personality. The 'Big Five Personality Traits' is the best measure to explain requirements in respect of a profession and teaching in this paper. Professionalism is best explained in terms of Commitment, Competence and Performance domains. Details of dimensions of these domains have been discussed specifically relating to teaching profession. In the end it has been emphasized that there is a 'teacher type' personality and there are some commonly agreed domains of work in teaching. A teacher needs to be fit in terms of both personality as well as professionalism for becoming an effective teacher.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is a profession where both teacher and teaching play equally important role in delivery of target service. People remember their teacher not only by virtue of their teaching only, but due to their behavioral and other characteristics we call it personality. Also students criticize their teacher due to poor subject mastery and methodology they employ for delivery of contents, reinforcement, feedback, evaluation and the like, this we term as professionalism. A teacher can't be ignored for poor teaching and poor behaviour as well. This is due to the nature of the profession which involves both knowledge and knower and teacher needs to attend both. Question is what kind of personality and professionalism are essential for becoming an effective teacher.

PERSONALITY OF A TEACHER

What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches. ~Karl Menninger

Personality of a teacher is the trade mark for his teaching style, choice of learning activities and illustrations. There had been number of theories of personality, but 'Big Five personality traits' suits most to evaluate personality for a professional reference. Five factors are: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism.

- **Openness to experience:** (inventive/curious vs. consistent/cautious): implies openness to acceptance of new ideas and submitting oneself to criticism. It involves appreciation for art, emotion, adventure, unusual ideas, curiosity, and variety of experience. It is also described as the extent to which a person is imaginative or independent, and depicts a personal preference for a variety of activities over a strict routine. Openness reflects how much you seek out new experiences. A teacher needs to be open to experiences for encouraging creativity among learners but at the same time he needs to finish the course in time and should not forget examination and results learners need to produce. In other words a teacher needs to be cautiously open.
- **Agreeableness:** reflects how much you like and try please others (friendly/compassionate vs. analytical/detached). It is tendency to be compassionate and cooperative, rather than suspicious and antagonistic towards others. It is also a measure of one's trusting and helpful nature, and whether a person is generally well tempered or not. People who score high on this dimension tend to believe that most people are honest, decent, and trustworthy. People scoring low on agreeableness are generally less concerned with others' well-being and report having less empathy. Teaching is a very tricky job being too much agreeable can lead to exploitation by the students. Adolescents don't really obliged to your caring attitudes, rather they may take due advantage of it. Hence a teacher needs to be analytically agreeable.
- **Neuroticism:** (sensitive/nervous vs. secure/confident). It is the tendency to experience unpleasant emotions easily, such as anger, anxiety, depression, and vulnerability. Neuroticism also refers to the degree of emotional stability and impulse control and is sometimes referred to by its low pole, "emotional stability". Neuroticism is the tendency to experience negative emotions. Individuals who score high on neuroticism are more likely than the average to experience such feelings as anxiety, anger, envy, guilt, and depressed mood. They respond more poorly to stressors, and are more likely to interpret ordinary situations as threatening, and minor frustrations as hopelessly difficult. They are often self-conscious and shy, and they may have trouble controlling urges and delaying gratification. A teacher needs to be sensitive towards others rather than one-self; it can be termed as positively sensitive. Hence a teacher needs to be positively sensitive secured.
- **Conscientiousness:** (efficient/organized vs. easy-going/careless). A tendency to be organized and dependable, show self-discipline, act dutifully, aim for achievement, and prefer planned rather than spontaneous behavior. Conscientiousness reflects how careful and orderly an individual is. Conscientious individuals are generally hard working and reliable. When taken to an extreme, they may also be "workaholics", perfectionists, and compulsive in their behavior. People who score low on conscientiousness tend to be more laid back, less goal-oriented, and less driven by success; they also are more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behavior. In teaching, teacher sometimes irritate with their strict discipline and "workaholics" behaviour and sacrifice creativity and learners intellect in favor of achieving targets and meeting self-devised deadlines. Hence a teacher needs to be creatively conscientious.
- **Extraversion:** (outgoing/energetic vs. solitary/reserved). Energy, positive emotions, assertiveness, sociability and the tendency to seek stimulation in the company of others, and talkativeness represents extraversion trait. Extraversion reflects how much one is oriented towards things outside one self and derives satisfaction from interacting with other people. High scorers are said to be "extroverts" while low scorers are said to be "introverts. Introverts will tend to become tired out by socialization, while Extroverts will be energized by it. Introverts value down time while extroverts value stimulation. Due to their disposition, extroverts will usually be good at social interaction due to lots of experience; introverts tend towards the socially awkward. In teaching one needs both extroversions as well as introversion. Due to nature of job a teacher needs to be social, but as he needs to avoid talkativeness beyond classroom interaction. It will save his/her energy and time needed to be devoted for self-study. Hence a teacher needs to be reservedly extrovert.

In conclusion we can sum up a teacher needs to be Cautiously Open, Analytically Agreeable, Positively Sensitive and secured, Creatively Conscientious, and Reservedly Extrovert. Now question is personality is not simply acquired much of it, is hereditary. How teacher of such dimensions can be prepared. There are two ways of doing it, either one should match one's personality characteristics with

teaching profession before joining it or one should try to utilize acquired components to the maximum extent.

Professionalism

"The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires." --William Arthur Ward

A professional is a member of a profession and acquiring or exhibiting representative traits of the said profession is termed as professionalism. The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform the role of that profession. In addition, most professionals are subject to strict codes of conduct enshrining rigorous ethical and moral obligations. Professional standards of practice and ethics for a particular field are typically agreed upon and maintained through widely recognized professional associations. we can attach an unending list of characteristics representing professionalism include-trained, licensed, dutiful, norms abiding, accountable, maintains confidentiality, maintains integrity, communicative, ethical, altruistic, honest, sincere, empathetic, knowledge loving, scholar & continuous learner, responsible, maintains integrity, autonomous, a team player, justice loving, and many more. It is 'pattern' of work behaviour rather than some told or theorized characteristics. It involves number of dimensions, which needs be refined to deal it effectively. In behavioral sciences the best way of doing it is classification in to minimum factors, which could be further dealt in detail.

There are three major domains which cover almost all the factors of the concept professionalism we name as professionalism. Three domains are: Commitment, Competence and Performance. It

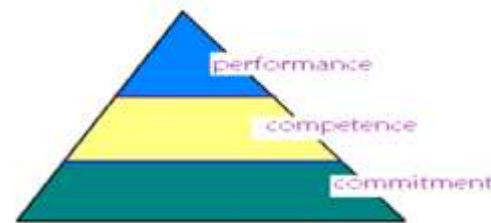


Figure 1: Commitment-Competence-Performance Triangle

can be represented as part of triangle or combination of circles. As shown in figure 1 triangle commitment is base of others two and should be dealt first and should be in greater amount. Once a teacher is committed competence will be learnt and performance is inevitable. In case

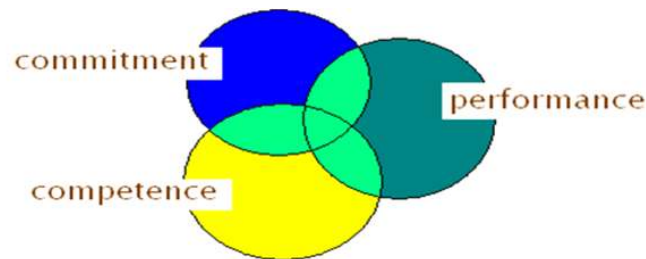


Figure2: Commitment-Competence-Performance Circles

of combination of circles all three domains have equal contribution in professional development of a teacher, rather there is overlapping of three domains indicating one is not exclusively possible without others. Sometime one performs first, in the meantime feels necessity to undergo competence training and when experience satisfaction commits oneself in the end. These three domains are further detailed in the following pages.

● **Five Areas of Commitment**

- Teacher needs to have commitment towards learner, society, profession, excellence and basic human values.

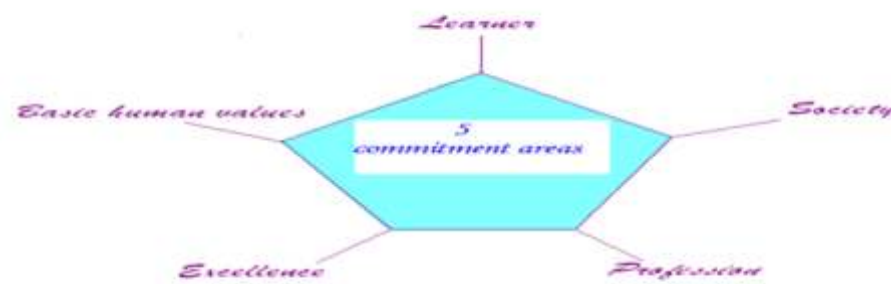


Figure 3: Five Commitment Areas

Commitment towards learner includes protection of child right, respecting his dignity; ensure progression, inculcating values and beliefs appropriate to humanity. Commitment towards society is respecting norms and values of society to maintain the good practices and traditions. School is nothing but, miniature form of society and children passing out from school will become part of society. A teacher committed towards society will prepare children to conserve, preserve and promote the society. Commitment towards profession implies maintaining dignity of profession by presenting behaviour worthy of a teacher. A teacher needs to fulfill expectation of society, employer, and learners. Commitment towards excellence is real spirit of professionalism. A teacher may be called excellent if one tries to see attainment of his students as a mark of his own achievement. A teacher should look to establish new benchmarks in both teaching as well as learning, by introducing innovations in teaching and presenting self-example as a curious learner. Commitment towards basic human values is demand of humanism and socialism. A teacher must be unbiased and justified in his actions. He must be free from biases of cast, color, creed, ethnicity, gender and economic status of the learners. A justice and peace loving teacher is acceptable to all the student and student title him as 'My Teacher' the necessary condition for beginning to learn.

● **Three Areas of Competence**

A competent teacher is demand of the era of information and technology where Bacon's quote 'Knowledge is Power' is order of the day. Competent teacher must essentially possess mastery in three areas namely: Pedagogical, Managerial and Content related domains.

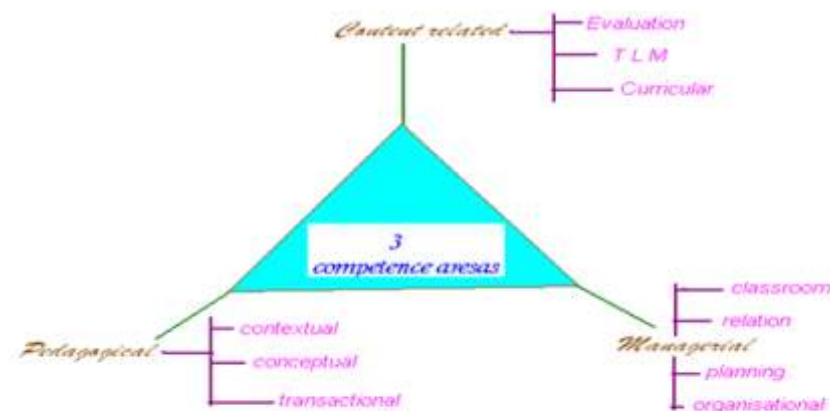


Figure 4: Three Competence Areas

Pedagogical areas are further categorized in to contextual, conceptual and transactional skills. A contextual skill implies teacher needs to understand where and what he is teaching. A teacher needs to fulfill various kinds of roles and possess different skills depending on the age of the learner, subjects one teaches and the nature of education he is delivering. Conceptually teacher must understand what the 'teaching' is all about and what expectations from a teacher are? Teaching is defined differently in different societies and times by virtue of changes in dominant philosophy, teacher needs to understand what teaching is, in present state of affair and should perform his duty accordingly. Transactional skills implies how knowledge to be delivered so that it should get fixed in to the minds of the learner. It involves expertise in teaching methods, devices, techniques, behaviors, styles and the like, which makes teaching more efficient effective.

Managerial competence involves management of classroom, relation, planning and organizational. Classroom management necessitate skills to maintain environment conducive to learning and ensuring no student be left behind or isolated in the class. A teacher must thin about social and ecological engineering of the classroom. Relation management is one of the biggest determinants of

teacher effectiveness. A teacher needs to be accepted by his students and vice-versa. Relation building depends on qualities like reliability, dependability, empathy skills, faithfulness and time sparing. Once a teacher builds relation with his students, teaching becomes magical afterwards. Planning is simple but very effective managerial skill for effective teaching. Planning of classroom activities, rehearsing the experiment to be performed, sitting arrangement, evaluation mechanisms are some of the vital for smooth sailing. Organizational managerial skill is another area needs attention. Teacher needs to organize academic as well as co-academic tasks for giving an impression of a skilled mentor rather than a mere caretaker. Quality of organization is indicated by punctuality, following schedule, meeting deadlines, preparedness and maintaining records.

Content related domain involves skills of evaluation, preparing teaching learning material, and curriculum management. Evaluation one of the most valued are of professional adequacy. Teacher must know how to evaluate various areas of performance, including designing and validation of evaluation tools. Further, evaluation needs to be used as feedback and tool for improvement of product as well as process. Preparing teaching learning material involve skill to prepare and improvise learning aids, presenting learning material in variety of ways, and providing information regarding learning resources elsewhere. Curriculum management is another domain of competence both in terms of academic and co-academic activities. Teacher not only needs to be able to deliver the contents but also bring it near to reality by organizing related activities in the form of field trips, exhibition, demonstration, show, project and the like.

Five Areas of Performance

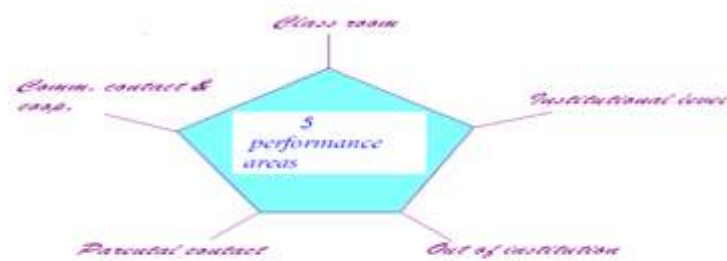


Figure 5: Five Performance Areas

Teacher need to perform on five area namely-classroom, at institutional level, out of institution, parental contact and community contact and cooperation. At classroom level a teacher need to perform in the terms of learner’s performance and their satisfaction. Teacher needs to bring in to action all skills learnt in pre-service and in-service training. Institutional level performance is about taking responsibility in the joint venture. Teacher must participate and take organizational responsibility in institution level projects like co-curricular programs including, organization of cultural activities, sports, examination, record maintaining, social campaigns, construction and the like. Out of institutional responsibilities of teacher includes organization of camps, tour & trips, taking part in in-service programs, representing institution in meeting called by government for various reasons, taking issues of institution to the administration and civil authority and the like. Parental contact is very important instrument for establishing relation between school and parents to work together for welfare of learners. Teacher is the most appropriate person to carry this responsibility, as he will also be discussing performance of learners which is interest of the parents. Community contact and cooperation is sought by the school and teacher can serve as liaison between the two. School needs community cooperation for trapping community resources to carry out its vital projects through donations, participation, expertise and guidance. School should devise school programs which call for community participation. Social auditing is one of the recent concepts for community intervention in school affairs. But these all devices can only work by the community contact undertaken by the teacher.

It has observed that commitment, competence and performance when combine can produce a perfect teacher as explained graphically in following figures.

Commitment-Competence Interaction

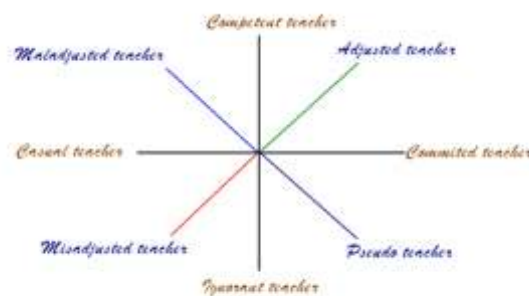


Figure 6: Commitment-Competence Interaction

Commitment-Competence-Performance Interaction

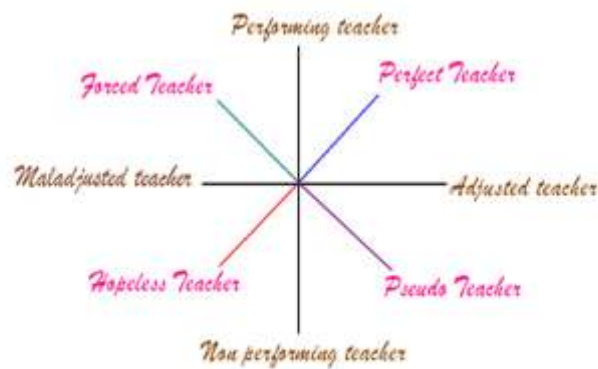


Figure 7: Commitment-Competence-Performance Interaction

CONCLUSION

A professional teacher (perfect teacher) when has personality appropriate to teaching will produce an effective teacher as represented in the following figure.

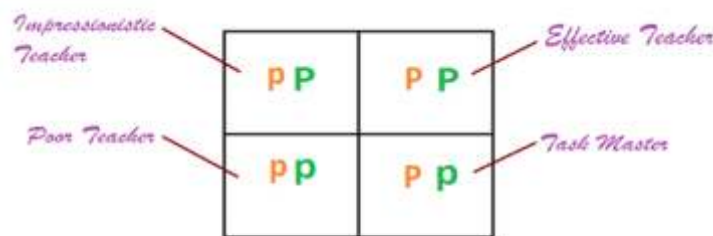


Figure 8: Personality-Professionality Interaction

A teacher with task as dominant characteristic is termed as a ‘task master’, when personality is dominant we call as ‘impressionistic teacher’ and when both task and personality are poor we designate as ‘poor teacher’. An effective teacher must be good at task as well as personality. Teacher needs to be good at task, as for this reason s/he has been entrusted as Guru of the learner, but Guru’s personality is by any means not less important as an educational tool. Teacher is not simply teaching, s/he is building personality of a person in making, and personality can only be taught rather it is caught. In concluding remarks I stop with a quote of Henry Brooks Adams “A Teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops”, the influence is obviously both personality and professionality.

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