

PERSONAL TEACHING PHILOSOPHY AND REFLECTION OF “SELF” POTENTIALITIES: A WAY TO PROMOTE VALUE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT: *In modern era industrialization has led to the emergence of high life style. It has made man rich in materialistic sense but deteriorated the ethical fiber in the society. Corruption in religious, economic, social, educational field is rampant. Children due to their exposure to mass-media are turning juvenile delinquents. Due to lack of values they adhere to whatever is shown in the T.V and also overuse of net is finally ruining their life. Parents are busy pursuing their careers and children are taken care by day care centers. Due to this value education is not imparted to this children. They become drug addicts, consume alcohol and enter into antisocial activities. This is the present scenario which needs to undergo change on order to have a peaceful society.*

A teacher has a higher responsibility as compared to other professionals as students look upon the teacher as an embodiment of perfection. Education has become a business today. This has changed the outlook of the students as well as the parents and it has further resulted in deterioration of respect for teachers and all those who are a part and parcel of education system. The present paper is an attempt to state the importance of value education and how personal teaching philosophy promotes value education in the present education system so that the future generations will nourish high ideals to contribute in the development of the society.

Key Words: *Personal teaching philosophy, value education, education, constructivism.*

Introduction

A personal teaching philosophy is the “art and science” of teaching based on the knowledge of personal philosophical beliefs, ideas, values and an insight into personal strength and weaknesses. Personal teaching philosophy is the basic idea behind formulating aims and objectives of teaching, constructing methods and techniques of teaching and evaluation, and framing disciplinary principles. Teaching philosophy that emerges through an introspection into the self and through reflective thinking giving rise to self-knowledge and leading towards the enlightenment of the personal self can be aptly said to be “personal teaching philosophy”. A teaching philosophy that can be uniquely associated with a particular teacher can be termed as a “personal teaching philosophy” which has the seeds of flexibility in it and that which can be self-evaluated from time to time to make improvement for better functioning as an effective teacher.

Constructivists believe that one has to adapt to the environment to acquire knowledge. In the process, one reshapes the acquired knowledge and creates new knowledge (Sternberg, 2008). Constructivist learners acquire knowledge by blending their present and the past experiences to make new discoveries (Mayer, 2003). To learn the constructivist’s way, the learner should make sense of things instead of accepting information at its face value. Indeed, learners are encouraged to internalize and reshape information, transforming it through active observation (Liaw, 2004). The information transformation must be meaningful. By activating his cognitive processing system, the learner will be able to organize his thoughts into logical representation by bridging the newly learnt knowledge with that already acquired or prior knowledge (Mayer, 1999).

According to constructivists, learning is a mental construction which takes place collectively. In the constructivist classroom, learning is facilitated by collaboration (Hughes & Golan, 2008). It is all about interaction to find solutions to a given problem. Studies have found that learners who have been taught using a constructivist approach are very motivated and they enjoy learning much more compared to their counterparts in traditional classrooms (Gabriel, 2004).

Personal teaching philosophy and value education:

It is the personal teaching philosophy that gives identity to a teacher. It is a matter of fact that teachers differ in respect of their teaching strategies. Their teaching strategies are the reflection of their personal beliefs, opinions, philosophy, ideas which help them determine and set certain aims, goals and objectives. Such aims to promote value education. But, it can also not be denied that all teachers do not get the scope of going

beyond the pre-set philosophical base of the institutions to which they belong. They feel constrained and lack flexibility in bringing about innovative teaching practices in the normal classroom situation. As a result, many capable and competent teachers fail to make the teaching-learning process effective and useful to the learners. In order to make the teaching-learning process effective, one has to re-conceptualise “teaching” right from the stage of practice teaching. This re-conceptualisation of teaching can be brought about by creating an insightful teaching-learning condition by helping the teachers realize and develop their personal teaching philosophies. Once a teacher develops his or her personal teaching philosophy, he or she can accordingly design teaching strategies and test the effectiveness of those strategies through practice teaching sessions. This will help in bringing about an evaluative, dynamic and constant progress beneficial both for the teachers and for their pupils.

In education, there is clearly defined relationship between personal beliefs, pedagogy and classroom practice (Manning & Manning, 1994) where “experiences influence beliefs and beliefs influence practice” (Mayness, Allison Julien-Schultz, 2012, p.69). It is essentially how a teacher’s identity is developed and the last part of this process is actually putting values and beliefs into practice in the classroom (Churchill et al., 2011). Teachers’ beliefs, thoughts, and decisions on educational matters make up a highly significant part of the teaching process. A teacher’s beliefs usually reflect the actual nature of the instruction the teacher provides to students (Kagan, 1992).

Personal teaching philosophy promoting to reflection of “self” potentialities

Reflecting upon the personal self at the mirror level cannot entirely help the future teachers get an insight into their overall personality, mental and emotional set-ups. Without a thorough knowledge about the “self”, one cannot possibly become an effective teacher. A comprehensive knowledge and reflection becomes essential which implies reflecting upon one’s potentialities through actual functioning and performances. A teacher with a sound philosophy but a weak execution skill will fail to make the teaching-learning process a success. Once becoming aware of the “self”, one has to go through a certain trial and error phases before finalising which philosophy is best suited to the person and what teaching procedure is suited best for him or her. Therefore, reflection during practice teaching is vital. Such reflection might include reflecting upon one’s capabilities to give it a final shape and whether the person is actually able to function as per his or her capability-whether he or she is being able to make optimum utilisation of the available resources and whether he or she is being able to make effective feedback response to the classroom teaching; whether the person is responsive and can perceive the teaching-learning situation which is apparent to him, or her, and the manner in which it is proceeding and whether the person can learn from it.

Teaching philosophy can promote reflection of “self” potentialities in the following manner:

1. Brainstorming of ideas to reflect my beliefs, knowledge, values and attitude towards creating an environment that is conducive to teaching and learning.
2. Creating a road map based on my personal beliefs, values, and attitudes that are clearly illustrated by practical examples.
3. Making a final revision of my road map before I swing into action so that important points can be added or irrelevant points deleted. I always bear in mind that my teaching philosophy grows with my understanding of what true teaching means.

Conclusion

Teaching is not to be considered as a job, rather, it is to be considered as an act of service for the mankind. For this purpose, personal and practice level reflections are essential for any person to become a real educator. Development of Personal Philosophy is vital as no person can function and deliver his or service without a sound and healthy personal philosophy which comes from knowing the self. Applying this principle in the field of education, a personal teaching philosophy based on reflective approaches can go a long way in helping the future teachers to become “educators” and “serve” both at the individual and social levels giving a new meaning to the very concept of the process of “teaching” and becoming and being a “life-long learner”.

As educators, our noble mission is to inculcate the love of learning in our students so that learning becomes a lifelong process. When they are empowered by knowledge, they can make informed decisions about what they want to achieve in life and how to excel in their chosen path. When our students are passionate about gaining meaningful knowledge and applying it in their lives, we have made a difference. The concept of one size fits all can be discarded for good.

It is only when we know ourselves better we can welcome and appreciate the differences in others. Recognizing the differences in and among the students, and respecting the same, is the foremost duty of any

teacher. Reflective approaches on the part of the teachers can potentially go a long way in re-conceptualising teaching in the near future by realising the same and promoting the development of values in an individual in the following way:

1. It ensure that understanding is facilitated for all students as they have different styles of learning. It is our duty to assist and respect each individual in his or her endeavour to learn. So to facilitate learning, we will conduct a research on their background to assess the level of prior knowledge of the student.
2. We should make sure that our students understand and internalize the knowledge gained in the class, otherwise such knowledge will neither be meaningful nor of applicability in their real lives.
3. We should always challenge our students to put in their best effort to produce quality work. The achievement of each individual student will be recognized and he or she will be able to stand out from the crowd. In this way, we are able to boost their confidence and improve their survival skills to cope in the real world.
4. We should advocate and facilitate critical thinking and cooperative learning in our class. We should promote active, cooperative, and creative learning. We should place great emphasis on giving recognition to different styles of learning that exist among students who come from diverse cultural backgrounds and thereby we will be able to respect our students' cultural and religious values.

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