

Professional Role of Teacher: Ref. to Collegiate Education

Shyamanta Chakraborty,
UGC-Academic Staff College, Gauhati University,
Guwahati -781014, Assam, India
Tel: 91361-2570599; 91-9859976185
Email: ajrs1989@gmail.com

Abstract:

Professionalism implies sense of responsibility along with an acceptable recognized standard, which could be incorporated in our teaching-learning through teachers. The paper gives a qualitative analysis of professional framework of teaching-learning for collegiate education. It describes various parameters of teaching-professionalism. Basic elements of teaching-professionalism, professional-resources, professional-competency, professional role of teacher, professional assessment of teaching-learning etc. are discussed in various points in the context of Indian higher education system. Focusing on present day teaching-learning processes within the framework of professionalism, the paper explains how professionalism could be able to induce creativity, innovation and ability in order to articulate teaching-learning profession to the level of satisfaction and success. It also discusses how professionalism can help in developing and enhancing competency among teachers, teachers' perspective role in human resource development and management, scientific thinking, verbal and written communicative skills etc. The analysis finally remarks that the perspective role of teacher as a professional is the only solution for success and sustainability of our collegiate education in the present changing scenario of knowledge world.

Key words: Teaching-learning, Professionalism, Knowledge, Resource, Competency.

1. Introduction

Swami Vivekananda said “*People carry within them the potential for self-actualization and self-direction through continuous development*”. This is the classic idea of professionalism. Professionalism is an essential tool of positivist epistemology. Professionalism is the way through which one contributes towards society by the process of self-actualization. A profession is a vocation of specialized knowledge that helps to do something profoundly. In general, the capability to perform one’s duties and responsibilities properly or to perform a particular task

with skill of an acceptable quality is the professionalism. Every profession has its own concept, a body of knowledge called professional literature, and ethics that guides one's actions and commitments. Teaching is an important profession. Successful teaching has immense contribution towards society. It is the coherence of professionalism in teaching-learning that is acted for the sake improvement of its clan. Professionalism in teaching has many levels and need to handle differently because what is relevant to a specific learner might not be for other. Creative thinking, capacity building in dealing complex and multidisciplinary works, social communications, teaching-learning management, and team work are the core skills which a professional teacher acquires effectively. Therefore, sustainable teaching-learning is possible only with professional mind. Teaching is a variable and only profession that could be reconstructed to match learning needs and situations of the learners with respect to a prevailing environment. For effective teaching, professionalism is subsidiary and supportive. Higher levels of cognition like relating, comparing, synthesizing, abstracting, etc. are always necessary for effective teaching which a teacher supposed to cultivate through professionalism. In grooming of intellectuals, teachers require a different environment. A professional teacher has to act in a way which has coherence because it relates to a framework of fundamental concepts of teaching-learning while not restricting to specific procedures. Thus professionalism has both creative and personal aspect along with a moral dimension which often expressed in some form of code of professional conduct.

Only a professional teacher can spur wide variety of skill enhancing imagination in the minds of youths and impart dynamism within him or her. Professionalism also provides a framework for a teacher's career and clarifies what progression a teacher will need to do so that one has able to meet a relevant standard and simultaneously gains professional development. Many authors have already discussed different issues of professionalism in context of teaching-learning, but only a few have discussed in the context of Indian higher education system. The paper provides some of the basic elements and issues of teaching professionalism namely professional philosophy attributes and values, behavior, responsibility, requirements, qualities and resources for teaching professionalism etc. Paper tries to distinguish how competency and performance in teaching are different and depends upon professionalism. It has also briefly discussed the perspective professional role of teacher in the context of present educational

scenario. The analysis concludes that in the changing scenario of education in all fields, teachers are necessarily to develop professionalism for successful success of teaching-learning.

2. Basic Elements of Teaching-professionalism

2.1 Professional Philosophy

A teacher within the framework of profession has to earn own identity, philosophy and knowledge that are to articulate in action through a system and process. Every valued education demands reasoned thought and answer whether in the classroom or otherwise. Educational system should encourage learners for thinking and learning in rational ways. As such, the philosophies in building teaching-learning a professional activity are as follows.

- (i) To ensure knowledge construction through employable curricula, and dissemination of knowledge through effective teaching-learning process.
- (ii) Strongly influence student-learning outcomes through acquisition of foundational concepts, knowledge and skill, and foster critical thinking skills.
- (ii) Student-centered environment so that learners actively participate, rather than passively learn.
- (iii) Compiling a rationale procedure for each objective and skill, and design course plan that emphasizes the application of critical thinking skills to foster deep learning, and the use of collaborative learning skills to facilitate “real-world” problem and evidence-based problem-solving strategies.
- (iv) Embedding activities in the instructional process that are designed to help learners in developing research and writing skills that are readily transferable across other disciplines.
- (v) To prepare students to function as highly skilled and competent across the scope of practice in primary and alternative areas.
- (vi) Effective assessment procedures that strongly influences student acquisition of knowledge and skill rather than looking or measuring marks or grades.
- (vii) Facilitating acquisition of lifelong learning skills.

2.2 Professional Knowledge and Dispositions

Teaching profession provides opportunity to a teacher to develop knowledge and understanding not only on a specialized field or branch but also over a wide range of pedagogical strategies which in turn helps to use and adapt one's profession. The professionalism demands teachers' to have a continuous deep knowledge of

- teaching-learning process in general, and for a level in particular i.e. to know how students learn and how to teach them effectively.
- how the brain works with respect to learners' age
- subjects and the relationships between learners
- pupils as individuals and their interests
- subject content they are to teach, proper plan and access for effective learning.
- understanding students in the broader context (political, economic, technological, social, cultural and environmental).
- create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.
- personalized learning, care and opportunities in achieving maximum potential.

2.3 Professional Attributes and Values

A teacher has to earn specialized knowledge, understanding and skills over a wide range of teaching-learning and behavioural management strategies, and should adapt and use these for enhanced and effective practices. Further, a teacher has to acquire the followings.

- Commitment to improve student learning as their primary responsibility.
- Executing consistently high levels of professional conduct and principles of fundamental justice in their dealings with students, colleagues, and the teaching community.
- Uphold and articulate the philosophy of education as it relates to the aims and approaches to teaching.
- Understanding professional obligation to contribute to the social, cultural and economic well-being of the community.

- Understand the influences that have shaped one's values and beliefs, and how these values and beliefs may influence their interaction with others.
- Exercise discretion in dealing with matters of confidentiality, trust and sensitivity in relation to students, parents and professional colleagues etc.
- Willing to contribute to educational change and the shaping of educational policy.
- Knowledge about the education system in which they work.
- Care for pupil-need, and to build relationships with pupils, families, communities and other professionals.
- Exercising judgment on curriculum, assessment and pedagogies.

2.4 Professional Requirements

Education alone is not sufficient to develop full professional capabilities. After completion of Initial Professional Education and specific skills development, a professional teacher needs to require followings.

- A license from recognized body or organization, because only a licensed professionals can be a defense against accusations of malpractice.
- The body of current knowledge to keep profession current, update maintains and improves teachers' ability and competence.
- Teacher necessarily required keeping momentum of their professional development process.
- Like other professionals teaching professionals should also adhere their professional code and ethics. This is essential not only to enforce a standards or minimum level of conduct but also helps professionals to feel their belongingness within the community.

2.5 Professional-behaviour and Role model

Teaching has its role, codes and characteristics, and some description of behaviour both historically and currently which could be written and researched. Therefore, teacher as a professional has to go through following roles.

- Encouraging student-faculty contact for active learning.
- Encouraging cooperation among students
- Collecting prompt feedback for benefit of effective learning.
- Emphasizing time on task
- Respecting diverse talents and ways of learning.

2.6 Professional Role model

Many a times there are tends to follow a role model whose philosophy largely influenced and obliged to sustain one's profession. There is a great influence of role models on professional career of teacher which many teachers neither fully understand nor realize. Professionalism demands obligation towards his or her followers to sustain the profession.

2.7 Professional Responsibilities:

Responsibilities provide teachers not only the necessary guidance in meeting the needs of students, working with parents or caregivers and other staff but also guides for an effective member of the teaching community that gives direction of interaction with colleagues. Following are the major responsibilities of a teacher professional.

- Perform one's duties efficiently and effectively, and with honesty, integrity and fairness at all times in accordance to organization's code of conduct, policies and procedures.
- Consciousness of one's duties and special duty of taking care to the students
- Exercise the highest standards of professional behaviour, professional judgment, etc.
- Devise and collaborate in the developmental plans, policies, programmes for effective teaching and learning programmes and implement appropriate evaluation mechanisms.
- Promote competence in curriculum development, delivery and evaluation, classroom management and teaching skills.

- Comply with reasonable directions given by a supervisor/principal and adhere to the official guidelines concerning the performance of your duties;
- Being fair in exercising delegated responsibility and promote personal and professional development of staff.
- Use information gained in the course of employment only for proper and appropriate purpose.
- Use public resources economically.

2.7 Leadership

A true professionalism demands to carry out one's work with the system or environment as a leader who willing to take a lead role in developing workplace policies and practices, and in promoting collective responsibility for their effective implementation. Team working and collaboration is a part of professionalism which not only helps teaching-learning process but also contributes to the professional development of colleagues using a broad range of techniques and skills appropriate to their needs so that they demonstrate enhanced and effective practice. Teacher as a leader needs to have followings.

- Should be critically aware of the extent of the 'hidden' curriculum and the ways in which it influences teaching-learning process.
- Understand their role as facilitators of the moral, spiritual, social, cultural, creative, aesthetic and physical development of children; keep abreast and take account in their teaching of social and cultural change.
- Understand the framework of laws, regulations and policies that affect teachers' work.
- Work collaboratively with teacher education institutions to provide positive field experience opportunities for teachers in training.
- Adopt a mentoring role with beginning teachers.
- Exercise a leadership role in professional organizations including teachers' unions.

3. Professional Resources

Teaching is a highly regulated professional work. Effective teaching is an asset or resource for an educational system. Therefore, a successful strategy in developing teacher's competency and professionalism is to have basic resources which enrich and enhance horizon of knowledge and enhance teachers' professional competency, as follows.

3.1 Knowledge and Understanding

The primary purpose of HRD process is to foster an extensive and deep knowledge and understanding of subjects/curriculum of areas and related pedagogies. Professionalism in teaching demands teacher to have good mastery over the subject or field. Moreover, knowledge and understanding provides teacher clarity of teaching-learning inconformity to the changing scenario of environment of academic system. These also facilitate teaching-learning behaviour and management strategies. It helps to know how to use and adapt different methodologies in their practice or profession while helps in personalize learning. These also provide opportunities for teachers to achieve their maximum potential.

3.2 Critical Understanding and Thinking-differently

Professionalism demands ability to identify areas of strength and weakness for further professional development for a teacher. This virtually means power of understanding for effective teaching-learning and behaviour management strategies. These include how to select and use approaches for proper professional growth. This provides teacher to have an extensive and deep knowledge and understanding of their subjects/curriculum areas and related pedagogy gained, for example through involvement in wider professional networks associated with their subjects/curriculum areas etc. It provides teacher an opportunity to enhance their assessment capabilities on teaching-learning on the other hand providing all learners to achieve their maximum potential. It also helps teacher in their personalized learning so to enhance clarity on subject.

3.3 Time-Management and Teaching-enthusiasm

A professionalized teacher should effectively manage time with work schedule with full of sincerity, punctuality and regularity. Professionalism teaches a teacher how to take lead in planning collaboratively within the system in order to promote effective practice of teaching-learning for which time management is essentially essential. Professionalism without enthusiasm is meaningless. An enthusiastic teacher have excellent ability in facilitating learners, colleagues, parents and carers with timely, accurate and constructive practice and takes feedback on learners' attainment, progress and areas for development to promote professionalism.

3.4 Scientific ways of Assessment

Professionalized teaching is impossible unless learners are assessed their abilities to cope-up the course modules and also the degree of self motivation before registration or during the initial class session. This is highly necessary not only to provide guidance in selecting the course format that offers each individual student the greatest opportunity for academic success but also to make them more enthusiastic of the subject matter. Teacher has to use statistical data and information in order to formulate comparative baseline for evaluation of learners' progress and attainment, self-assessment and improvement for effectiveness of teaching. Pre-assessment of student abilities should be conducted to provide guidance for all round development along with academic achievement.

3.4 Orating and Communicating Proficiency

A professional teacher has to prove his mastery in class room teaching and management for which he or she should be a good orator. Successful teaching demands good lecturing and interactive skill both inside and outside class room. Orating skill is also a measurement of academic skill for a teacher in his or her profession. It is the approach that structures not only teachers' professional practice inside the class room but many other activities including interpersonal relations, improving personality development etc. It also helps teachers in building conceptual performance which is not only job related but also behaviour related. These could be obtained not from the curriculum but by application of knowledge through skills.

3.5 Professional Accountability

Professionalism expects teacher's proper contribution to the development of teaching-learning process through appropriate levels of skills, expertise and experience. This helps in assessing teacher's role within the system and his or her capabilities of using up-to-date subject knowledge and pedagogy in practice. It is expected that the teacher to contribute using a broad range of techniques and skills appropriate to their needs of learner and the system as a whole so that it demonstrates enhanced and effective practice.

3.6 Self-assessment and Researching practice

Professionalism on teaching demands an effective research to evaluate innovative curriculum practices and draw positive outcomes along with external evidences to rejuvenate their own practices and the system as a whole. The outcome of such research should identify and explore links within and between subjects, curriculum or areas with proper and prospective planning and their effective implementation. Such type of system provide opportunities to teacher to apply high-level skills in classroom practices to evaluate and help the system in devising and implementing effective strategies to meet the learning needs leading to improvements in pupil's outcomes.

3.7 Diversity in Teaching

Diversity is a path for achievement, a positive force for academic achievement. Diversity means differences in identities and their backgrounds not limited to race and ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, gender, age, religion, political opinion, language, and ability. A professional teacher should diverse issues proactively to ensure that issues related to diversity have the potential to improve rather than obstruct the classroom experience for students. A true professional in teaching must build a strong knowledge-base by knowing learners' identity, culture, background, gender, race and ethnicity, cognitive, and emotional development for successful teaching-learning. One of the key for success of teaching diversity is that teacher should adopt methods of multicultural education in the classroom management.

3.8 Personalized-learning

Personalized learning means maintaining a focus on individual progress in order to maximize learners' capacity to learn, achieve and participate in teaching-learning process. There needs different creative activities in solving various problems of teaching-learning where specialized knowledge and techniques are necessary which obviously demands importance of specialized personal learning which in turn means an attempts of excellent in solving different problems. Thus, professionalized personal learning means extensive and deep study and understanding on a subjects, topic or problem through related pedagogy. It helps to acquire and know the ways to improve teachers' practice in workplace including how to analyze statistical information to assess the effectiveness of teaching-learning over the young learners for a standard. A true professional teacher shows excellence in knowledge, understanding and teaching for which one must meet certain standards in a field by overcoming core and post-threshold standards. Professional knowledge and understanding in such cases develops professional skills, an extensive knowledge on matters concerning equality, inclusion and diversity in teaching. This certainly leads to excellent results, demonstrates excellent and innovative pedagogical practices in the process.

3.9 Performance-management

Professionalism demands that one has to survive with respect to the situation, environment while submitting performance and promotion. For teachers, this basically means teachers' performance management which is a key of sustainability in teaching profession. Teachers' performance management provides the context for regular discussions about teachers' career aspirations and their future development, within or beyond their current career stage. It also includes assessing or looking the relevant standards as a whole by identifying areas of strength and areas for further development. Professional performance management in teaching helps to handle teaching-learning situation without emotion and encourage for interactions with intellect and experience that can flourish physical, mental, health and emotional well-being; protection from harm and neglect; education, training and recreation; the contribution made by them to society; social and economic well-being etc. Further, professional management in

teaching-learning provides a relatively linear basis of understanding that often helps in controlling and managing emotional situations. Teaching-learning situation has a purpose and a goal; while jocularity and emotional situations take away time spent moving toward that goal. Therefore, professional performance of a teacher could be expected only when teaching-learning is professionally managed. A professionalised performance teacher always keeps focus on their direction while sees others differently who doesn't take their position seriously.

4. Professional Competency, Competency and Performance

Teaching is a performance and Teacher is the performer. There are distinctions between competency and performance. A teacher may be a competent but not necessarily a good performer or the performance on a particular occasion is not to the standard required by its environment of the law. On the other hand, a poor performer may not have lack of competence. There is not necessarily to be one-to-one correspondence between these two. Competency is qualitative approach and a vital factor for professional development of teacher. It is the capability to perform the duties of teaching with skill of an acceptable quality. In a casual sense, we may be defined professionalism as combination of knowledge and skills. Competency means to attain the level of mastery required on the subject, topic, or problem which in turn provides a relatively linear basis of understanding. Therefore, professional competency of a teacher implies a combination of competency and performance on their duties.

4.1 Professional Competency in Teaching

Professional Competency is the central point of teaching-learning. It is the capability to transform one's knowledge, understanding and skills into action of teaching. It provides clarity and appropriate differentiation in Human development process. Professional competency expects teacher to continue to meet the core standards and to broaden and deepen their professional attributes, knowledge, understanding and skills within that context. A true professionalism applies all these to all subsequent career stages for sustainability. In fact, professional competency is inevitable in human resource management because such practices also promote organizational health and help in curing ills. It has multi-faceted nature which brings together a variety of seemingly disparate approaches that ultimately develops a sense of 'competence.

Professional work is more than technical work of a very complex type. It brings coherence to the professional and occupational standards for the whole institutional workforce where process varies depending on the standards of concern. It also provides a framework for a teacher's career to assess their relevant standards of teaching.

5. Teachers' Professional Role

The professional statement of teaching states that teacher should have a contractual entitlement to sustain relevant professional development throughout their careers to the level of distinctive competence, reflecting the skilful applications of specialized knowledge, skills and experiences. This will prove professional clarity in their practice in conformity to the changing scenario of academic system. All these would be effective if it accompanies a sense of responsibility along with a sense of accepting recognized standards for self-motivation and self-assessment. The tasks of a teacher becomes easier for the learners who are self-motivated by doing extra reading and work to understand the material rather than motivating them by teachers or other. There lies the importance of professionalism in guiding, motivating and inducing the learners. A professional teacher not only facilitates students in constructing problems and finding solutions, but also keeps motivating and inducing in order to acquire occupational knowledge and skills. Professionalism in teaching demands following roles from a teacher in the process of teaching-learning.

- An expert of body of knowledge-skill in a field or area etc.
- An executor of his or her philosophy of teaching through proper plan-program, policies and procedures.
- A professional demeanor, follower of statements, ethics and rules of profession as a teacher.
- An excellent demonstrator of innovative pedagogical practices.
- Articulating the vision, mission or direction of teaching-learning in respect to time.
- An effective communicator both verbally and non-verbally.
- Aware of future trends or concerns of the profession.
- Aware of commitment to professional associations.

- Maintaining a level of excellence in profession.
- Capable of acquiring decision making and problem solving capability.
- Capacity in planning and organizing, building-trust and collaborating teamwork.
- A good manager of stress and tolerance with environmental-adaptability.

6. Assessing Teaching-professionalism

The professional standard of teacher needs to assess or identify their professional development periodically. There should be a continuum of expectations about the level of engagement in professional development that provides clarity and appropriate differentiation for each career stage. This helps teachers to progress and promote into next career stage or level and for future development. The contribution from teachers towards the development of others should be taken into account in assessing their levels of skills, expertise, experience and the role in their practice. This should be in addition to the use of up-to-date subject knowledge and pedagogy in the practice. The teacher who are, specially skilled or excellent in profession should be assessed through an external assessment process or body or organization and they are to be rewarded by placing in a higher pay with relevant necessary facilities.

7. Discussion

Good teacher makes things easier while a bad teacher makes it more difficult. Therefore, the perfect role of a teacher is highly essential in order to guide, monitor, coach, teach and facilitate the learner's properly through different learning methods and help them to acquire knowledge and skills in variant situations, environments on relevant tasks. It is said that a human being is not in the proper sense till he is educated. Education is the most powerful instrument whose effective use depends upon role of its teachers. For successful educational process teachers are necessarily required to have strength of will, sense of dedication, little hard work and devotion to their service. Teaching has both quantitative and qualitative contribution towards social change and progress where teachers are the main pillars of the process. There is always need of good teacher for improving one's scientific attitudes and capabilities in research and doing work. An initial learner might have attributed the lack of creativity, innovation, inability to

articulate, lack of clear thinking and decline in verbal and written skills, which a professionalized teacher can only turn into productive way. Therefore, to make the process result oriented teachers must be professional in their practice. This is why the concept of teachers' education and professionalism is one of the central elements of teaching-learning process in present days. It helps teacher to develop desirable habits, skills and attitudes which make them not only competence in their work but also a perfect individual as well.

8. Conclusion

Today in Indian educational system 'Teacher's Education' is one of the cornerstones of whole educational process, because it is the only factor upon whom the responsibility of nation building lays. Teachers in our country necessary to play the crucial role in laying the proper foundation of child's cultural, social, moral, emotional, intellectual, physical and spiritual development for which a true professionalism is rightly desirable. One cannot apply the defensive strategies and techniques to improve its education system. A professional teacher uses his or her maximum potential to shape the youngsters who are the future citizen of a country. Today, quality of a teaching-learning process is to be understood in terms of the degree of professionalism of its teachers in the process of developing knowledge and skills towards learners so that they should be employable properly. Although in the last few years lot of importance has been given on teachers' training and education in our country but proper priority has not been given till now, especially in developing teachers' professionalism which is highly necessary for our collegiate education system. The rapid advancements in science & technology and change of peoples look toward it created a demand for professionalized teaching-learning through existing university and colleges. Therefore, the need of the hour is that our universities and colleges should adopt professionalized attitude from teachers specially those of formal discipline in their undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, so that young professionals could be trained with sufficient knowledge and skills who can serve the nation better in coming years for social and scientific development of our people. Further, the advancement in science and technology especially in information technology and related fields the idea of professionalized teaching-learning becomes much more relevant and necessary. Today, the idea of professionalized teaching-learning is very crucial in many cases of decision making process.

Moreover, societies are also becoming more and more complex. Therefore, a definite and productive curriculum based on philosophy of professional teaching-learning and proper implementation of it through our collegiate system is the need of the hour and vital for greater interest of the young people.

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