

**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION IN 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY**

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**Abstract**

***“Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu, Guru Devo Maheshwarah,***

***Guru Saakshaat Para brahma, Tasmai Shri Guruveh Namaha”***

*According to this shloka teaching is a noble profession. Teaching may be regarded as a profession in its own right, and one that demands a great deal of professional expertise. But it also requires its own code of ethics, which may be expressed in a set of ethical principles. Today we are living in the world of globalization and modernization where people have become materialistic and their attitudes leading to a loss of basic values. Teacher educators are preparing teachers of tomorrow there is a need for them to demonstrate professional ethics to inculcate values in the society at large. This code of professional ethics may be defined as a set of self imposed professional ideals and principles necessary for the attainment of professional excellence and self-satisfaction. Day by day professional ethics and accountability of teaching is degraded due to several factor. From our observation in teacher/teaching society, we scientifically analyzed and interpret the recent situation of professional ethics and accountability of teaching. If teachers are to become ethically aware then the pre-service teacher education program is the most important place for the inclusion of ethical content and commitments required in the teaching profession*

**Key Words:** - *Professional Ethics, Teacher, Education, Ethical Standard, Ethical Conduct*

**Professional Ethics:-**

A branch of philosophy dealing with values pertaining to human conduct, considering the rightness and wrongness of actions and the goodness or badness of the motives and ends of such actions. Systematic rules or principles governing right conduct. Each practitioner, upon entering a profession, is invested with the responsibility to adhere to the standards of ethical

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practice and conduct set by the profession. Professional ethics are rules governing the conduct, transactions, and relationships within a profession.

### **Need of Ethics in 21<sup>st</sup> Century:-**

The present educational system has developed only cognitive aspect of a man and left effective and psychomotor aspects starving, which results in sordid rapes, heinous murders, treacheries, chicaneries, frauds and malpractices. One of the corner stones of a true profession is the need of ethics.

- The need of ethics publicly articulates and affirms the profession's core values, beliefs and responsibilities.
- The need of professional ethics acknowledges that the practitioners have responsibilities to our students, the public, employing institutions and fellow professionals.
- In this materialistic era of science and technology, everything except morality has reached to its peak.
- Current system of education is oriented towards giving skills and knowledge that make students saleable products and nothing else.
- Current system of education is devoid of the primary human values of brotherhood, equality, justice, affection, solidarity, generosity, empathy etc. So the problem of value crises seems to be inherent in the system of education itself.

### **Ethics in Teacher Education:-**

The growing complexities and erosion of essential values in society have resulted in the feeling that it would be difficult to teach ethics, especially to teachers, without a formal code, as teaching is primarily a moral enterprise. Introduction of a formal code of professional ethics in teacher education curriculum will not only revamp teacher educational program befitting the needs of 21<sup>st</sup> century but also demand additional knowledge and skills from teacher educators to teach them and enhance their task in this direction.

Teaching in our country cannot be considered as a full-fledged profession like that of medicine, engineering, and law. Teaching stands in a way at the apex of all professions and is considered as the noblest of all professions. The task of teaching profession is geared to create human capital, which directly takes care of other men and materials belonging to other professions. It is said 'nobody can raise above the level of teachers'. Teaching is no more and occupation aimed at making money for a livelihood; rather it is a social service for national development. The Education Commission (1964-66) made a clear-cut and forceful

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recommendation for improvement in teacher education program of the country. It stated -“A sound programme of professional education of teachers is essential for the qualitative improvement of education”.

In recent decades, due to explosion of knowledge and advancement in the field of education, it has become possible to bring a lot of worthwhile reforms in curriculum of teacher education at all levels. All such reforms have mostly focused on enhancing teachers' content knowledge and teaching skills whereas no worthwhile attempts have been made to provide a systematic study of ethics at any level of teacher education, although teachers will be fully accountable for observing ethical behaviour.

Teacher education has a great role in ethics and initial problems can be observed in pre-service programmes rather than expecting educational administration or supervisors to deal with them. Since teacher educators assume responsibility for developing teacher competence, one necessary condition is to observe ethical principles. Teachers need to understand the moral aspects of teaching and how to make ethical decisions relating to their profession and the welfare of their students. It is necessary for the prospective teachers to adopt relevant ethical principles, understand the grounds for holding them and practice them in daily life situations. It is rare that a systematic understanding of ethics can be gained from daily classroom experiences.

It is claimed that teacher education assumes more responsibility for ethics. It is otherwise claimed as well that ethics is not primarily the responsibility of teacher education. It is through the teacher education programme that ethics can be thought to teachers in a systematic manner. Further, any profession to claim before the public concerned, as a profession must essentially have, besides its legal sanction as professional and other desirable characteristic, a code of ethics and teaching profession is not an exception to it. If ethics is lax, the teaching profession is ultimately damaged, students are hurt and the public interest is ill served.

### **Teaching Ethics:-**

In teacher educator programs there are a number of ways to think about the teaching professionals ethics. And each thought has its merits as well as its limitations and some are better than others. The first thing to note about teaching professional ethics is that it should involve all the three aspects of personality: cognitive, affective and psychomotor. The teacher should be made aware of the values enshrined in the code of ethics, to feel the proper emotions and imbibe values in thoughts and works.

There always exists a great risk of **indoctrination** in teaching which aims to inculcate morality. It is very difficult to illuminate about ethical issues in a completely morally neutral way. Ethics refers to human conduct as to make decisions between right and wrong. There are several factors that encourage one to use unethical behaviour, but the right person can differentiate between what is morally good and bad in order to follow the rules and code of professional conduct.

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**Ethical Standards for Teaching Profession at Present Scenario:-**

- Must courteous and respectful
- Must honest, open and transparent
- Must competent and improve continually
- Must respectful of confidentiality
- Set good examples
- Must be ethical
- Must honorable and act with integrity
- Must trustworthy

**Ethics Code for Teachers in present situation:-**

A code of ethics is needed in teaching profession. We influence students and tend to shape their future. The basic ethical principles on which the culture of an organization /institution may be built are honesty, integrity, trust, equity, fairness and justice. The basic principles of ethics mentioned above can be used to frame the ethical code of conduct for teachers as follows:

- 1) **Integrity and Honesty in communication:** - It helps to develop mutual trust between teachers and students.
- 2) **Equity:** - Students must be treated as equals, with justice and fairness in the sense that nobody should be deprived of the opportunities of growth despite their differences in socio-economic status, caste colour or creed.
- 3) **Clean and fair teaching environment:**-To avoid disparity among students, merit, performance, integrity and honesty should be used as key recognition parameters for assessment.
- 4) **Willing:**-Teachers must be willing to develop, adopt and adapt, embrace and enforce a professional code of ethics
- 5) **Duty:** - In the context of education, an ethical teachers' duty is expressed as the duty to care for students. Duty implies that ethical conduct arises from a sense obligation and discipline; whereas ideal would be when the individual wants to engage in ethical conduct i.e. the feeling comes from within.

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### **Purposes of the Ethical Standards for the Teaching Profession in 21<sup>st</sup> Century:-**

- **Honour and dignity:-** To inspire members to reflect and uphold the honour and dignity of the teaching profession
- **Responsibilities and commitments:-** To identify the ethical responsibilities and commitments in the teaching profession
- **Decisions and actions:-** To guide ethical decisions and actions in the teaching profession
- **Trust and confidence:-** To promote public trust and confidence in the teaching profession.

### **Principles of Professional Conduct for the Teaching Profession:-**

Teacher Educators shall be guided by the following ethical principles:

#### **1.) Ethical Conduct toward Students:-**

- The professional educator should deal considerately and justly with each student.
- The professional educator should seek to resolve problems, including discipline, according to law and school policy.
- The professional educator should not reveal confidential information concerning students.
- The professional educator should make a constructive effort to protect the student from conditions detrimental to learning, health, or safety.
- The professional educator should endeavor to present facts without distortion, bias, or personal prejudice.

#### **2.) Ethical Conduct toward Practices and Performance:-**

- The professional educator should apply on the basis of professional qualifications, and adheres to the terms of a contract or appointment (for, accepts, or assigns a position or a responsibility).
- The professional educator should maintain their sound mental, physical, and social growth.

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- The professional educator should continue towards their professional growth.
- The professional educator should be honest and committed to his or her charge.
- The professional educator does not use institutional or professional privileges.

### **3.) Ethical Conduct toward Professional Colleagues:-**

- The professional educator should not reveal confidential information concerning colleagues.
- The professional educator should not make false statements about a colleague or the school system.
- The professional educator should not interfere with a colleague's freedom.

### **4.) Ethical Conduct toward Parents and Community:-**

- The professional educator should have to communicate the parents with all information that should be revealed in the interest of the student.
- The professional educator should respect the values and traditions of the diverse cultures represented in the community and in his/ her classroom.
- The professional educator should manifest a positive and active role in school/community.

### **Raising Ethical Consciousness in 21<sup>st</sup> Century:-**

Some conceive of teaching professionals ethics as raising the consciousness of teachers to the multiple moral realities of their everyday work world. Imagine a case that depicts a situation of theft in a classroom. The teacher detains the whole class after the school hour in the hope that the guilty student will confess, but finally, the teacher goes for a body search of each student when no confession occurs. Discussion of such a case will sensitization teachers to the such as justice, due process, fair punishment and privacy etc. professional ethics course must have a large number of such realistic cases and the teacher educators must learn the art of presenting cases /issues so as to raise the ethical consciousness and sensitivity to the ethical dimensions of teaching. But raising consciousness is only a first step. Teachers also need to develop some strategies and skills for diagnosing ethical issues and making ethical judgment.

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### **Advantages of Ethics for Teachers in 21<sup>st</sup> Century:-**

- Teacher makes the teaching process sensitive by following ethics.
- Teacher performs his job with full self-confidence.
- With teaching ethics, the teaching communication reaches to the brain of the students.
- An effective teacher always studies and he does more than he says.
- Teacher feels commitment in his responsibilities and his sense of devotion can be seen in it.
- Effective teachers communicate their messages in a smiling way.

### **Recommendations and Suggestions for Teachers regarding Ethics:-**

- All teachers should have the knowledge of the code of Professional Ethics.
- Teachers should have a healthy and mature relationship with students and parents. They should be trained to be ethically conscious and professionally competent.
- Teachers should be advised to treat the students and parents with more honour and dignity.
- Teachers should avoid partiality, unfairness, corporal punishment and verbal abuse.
- Various seminars, spiritual discourses, orientation programs and workshops should be conducted on various themes related to Professional Ethics.
- The principal should be impartial, just and treating all teachers as equal with more human dignity and concern.

### **Conclusion:-**

Professional Ethics is recognized as a natural ingredient of teaching profession. It is closely connected to teacher's work performance, absenteeism, burnout and turnover as well as having an important influence on students' achievement and attitude towards school. In India ethics are to be followed only, there is no need of developing them. In the present scenario the teaching ethics are lagging behind from other professions but there is no control on it. It is the most independent profession.

So, we can conclude that teachers in the contemporary society need to be through professionals dully equipped with both, high academic standards, pedagogical and practical skills and ethical and moral values and, above

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all, love for their profession, students and the enthusiasm in being with them. Professionalization in teaching will be encouraged with personal determination and self-motivation, initiatives of government and the implementation of policies with genuine-spirit. Therefore, an increased understanding of ethics and values is important for teachers especially when teaching is essential profession, the one that makes all other professions possible and without ethically sound individuals in such an important profession it becomes difficult for effective functioning of educational systems and improves learning processes.

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