Research Paper

Role, Contribution and Importance of Teachers in Implementing Education in the Grass Root Level of Bangladesh

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Abstract
Teachers, students, guardians, and authorities constitute major stake holders while institutions and curriculum being some major components in any education system in the world. Speaking truly, if there were only teachers and learners, education would have taken place. In fact, the role, contribution and significance of teachers are of massive, vital and, undeniable especially in classroom education at any level-primary, secondary or tertiary. Teachers play the role of a maker, an actor, classroom manager, guardian, mentor, groomer, psychologist, nurse, leader, commander, philosopher, problem-solver, spiritual leader, organizer, sports-man, judge and a knowledge giver. The paper intends to investigate the role, contribution and importance of teachers in education system from colossal point of view with a reflection of qualityeducation, skilled manpower production and nation building.
Key Note: Teachers' role, classroom manager, cognitive role, affective role
education-philosopher

I. Introduction

Though the role of teachers have always been underrated, undervalued, ignoredand underestimated in third world countries like Bangladesh, teachers have a tremendous contribution in materializing the education philosophy and ultimately making the education system operational and successful. Teachers, on the one hand, impart knowledge to the learner, help them develop their skill and groom them to grow up as complete men. On the other hand,teachers play key the role as a vital component in implementing the education philosophy of the government and building up the nation. Experts and researchers are divided into many segments on the question of teaching methodology, effectiveness of classroom teaching but none of them generally do possess any derogatory attitude about the role, contribution and significe of teachers in implementation of education policy of the government and their importance in classroom activities. Rather, experts have often highly commended the role and contribution of teachers in any society (Huang: 2020).However, an inclusive assessment of the role and contribution of teachers has been carried out in this paper in terms of classroom activities, in implementation of education policy, grooming the learners and building up of the nation. Teachers' role can be categorized into different segments- cognitive roles, affective role, managerial role, and classroom activities.Cognitive roles include intellectualor academic activities, affective roles include emotional, spiritual and ethical activities whereas classroom activities and managerial activities include classroom management, disciplinary activities and also co-curricular or extra-curricular activities. In defining teachers' role Fareh (2018) states that teachers' roles are the duties, functions and responsibilities that teachers assume in the teaching-learning process. Keiler (2018) produced a very simple definition of teachers' role and contribution: "What teachers do in classrooms". The definitions given above reveal that teachers' roles are more concerned about teachers' actual behaviors in practices.

Teachers' Cognitive Role in Classroom Activities and Beyond:

Potential teachers play multidimensional roles in education and classroom activities rank top among teachers' responsibilities. Though, theories of classroom teaching hardly recognize teachers' role as the central and pivotal in classroom teaching, their role is immensely important to make the classroom teaching and

learning effective, lively and meaningful. Traditionally, teaching and learning are concerned with three 'Ms', that is, men or teachers, methods and materials (Gautum: 1988). Classroom practices are neither fixed nor static(Jackson & Burch, 2017) rather classroom practices are believed to be multidimensional, fluid, flexible and dynamicand learners are at the center of classroom teaching and learning (Branden, 2009; Krashen:1985). Therefore, there is always a huge gap between theoretical principles in relation to educational practices and classroomrealities. In real life situation when teachers conduct classes, they encounter numerous circumstances either occurring unexpectedly, instantly or recurrently. Besides, socio-economic condition, cultural background, age level, large class size, learners' beliefs, experience, expectations, time constraints, lack of confidence and motivation from the part of learners have still laid opportunities open for classroom teaching and learning driven, controlled, dominated and constructed by teachers (Branden: 2009;Shahidullah: 1998; Mead: 1970; Howitz:1983;Gay:1978). They are still viewed as knowledge providers though theoretically they are supposed to play the role of a moderator, facilitator, mediator, guide, monitor, trouble shooter, problem solverand situation setterin classroom teaching and learning (Krashen:1981;Breen and Cadlin:1980). Teachers, especially in third world countries, exercise their authoritative roles while conducting classes and students consider them as the sole source and imparter of knowledge.Learners are supposed to learn through negotiation, pair and group discussion, through scaffolding, brainstorming and by taking active part in the process of teaching and learning rather sitting passively in the classroom (Ellis: 2009; Andon &Eckerth: 2009). Deviating from the theoretical practices teachers in our country explain the task, discover, choose, adapt, evaluate, decide what to do and not to do in the classroom besides setting the situation and construct the context (Li: 2002;Newman:2017; Huang: 2019, 2017; Collins& Muoz:2016).They make the difficult things easier, unknown things known to the students. They also play the role of a good manager by managing the class maintaining time limitand discipline. Teaching and learning happen fruitfully when goodrapports are established between these two vital stakeholders (Shahidullah:1998). Teachers' knowledge of the theory of classroom teaching and learning, their pedagogical knowledge, schematic knowledge, peripheral knowledge, skill of comparison and contrast, skill of teaching by giving examples rather than teaching the abstract theories;involving learners in the process of teaching and learning have a great impact in making class room teaching and learning effective. Moreover, motivating the learners, conducting classes following a lesson plan; teaching point by point and clarifying the unclear points raised by the students through question and answer sessions; giving feedback by carrying out various tests and by checking scripts and also evaluating learners' performance on the basis of reward and punishment (Punishment and reward do not necessarily mean physical one. It may reflect in awarding good grades or poor marks based on the performance of the learner or even saying thanks.) workprofoundly in making classroom teaching meaningful (Hymes:1972; Halliday:1973; Widdowson:1979). Teachers' cognitive knowledge, preplanning, schematic knowledge, critical review of the material and contextual and discussion going beyond the context coupled with the latest development of knowledge mean a lot in classroom teaching and learning. Constructive teachers set problems and monitor learners' progress, exploration, assist to resolve learners' query by giving hints or direction to discover the answer. Teachers also play the role of a "midwife in the birth of understanding" as opposed to "mechanics of knowledge transfer"(Mahoney:2004). Hence teachers' responsibility is not to dispense knowledge but to provide students with opportunities and incentives to build up meaning, knowledge, and new interpretation of a text (Fosnot: 1996).Having a clear perception of the latest development of knowledge and information coupled with the use of technology like multimedia, computer or electronic boards and the use of different teaching and learning tools like graphs, charts, pictures etc. make the classroom teaching more thrilling and acceptable to the learner(Srivani and Manhar:2020; Arslan:2003).Use of advanced electronic and information technologyin classroom teaching and learning has been reflected as a paradigm shift in the field of education (Rahman,H.M.:2014) Hence, teachers' roles and contribution are highly commendable across the world.

It is pertinent to mention here that teaching is not a one way track and, therefore,for successful materialization of classroom teaching and learning holistic efforts are required from both teachers, learners, institutions and guardians facilitated by a well-designed syllabus or curriculum. Besides, fossilization of teachers' knowledge, teachers' physical fitness, lack of professionalism, extreme workloads, suffocating working environment, absenceof sense of belongingness and ownership, discriminatory institutional policies naturally negatively impact on teachers' performance, roles and contribution. Furthermore, absence of proper or the least infrastructural facilities, unnatural and congested seating arrangement,large class size, learners' passivity to take part in the process of learning; learners' lack of curiosity, lack of motivation, lack of pre knowledge, indifference to learning, beingindiscipline and creating noise or chaotic environment in the classroom may negatively affect teachers' performance. Again, allocation of unusually short or long time for class conduction, learners' age difference, difference of learners' mentality and attitudes and difference of socio-economic and cultural back ground of learners also hamper teachers' performance in the classroom (Shahidullah: 1998). Hamper of teachers' performance results in hampering quality output and thereby may make the standard and the whole purpose of education questionable.

Affective Roles of Teachers:

Affective role refers to teachers' influences on the relationship between students, teachers and the classroom atmosphere (Huang:2020; Huang:2021).It also incorporates establishing a rapport anddeveloping emotional bonding between two major stake holders of education called teachers and learners; confidence building, adopting with new or adverse socio-economic and cultural conditions, overcoming language barriers etc. In mega cities like Dhaka, Delhi, Hong Kong, London or New York where learners come from different countriesor from diverse socio-economic, cultural and religious background and participatein the process of classroom activities may find it initially difficult to adjust with the new or changing situation (Bassano:1986).

In big cities families are often breaking down and learners who come from broken families may face funding problem and may attend classes doing part time jobs and may go emotionally wry. Besides, learners whose parents remain engaged majority of their time of the day by doing jobs or business or living inforeign countries often feel psychologically dehydrated forone or more reasons as well. Again, learners cometo attend classes with their own sets of expectations, beliefs, and with low motivation and confidence level (Claxton and Murrel: 1987; Bassano: 1986; Davis: 1984).Ultimately, all these socio-economic and cultural variables slow down their learning ability and hence lies the role of a teacher. Teachers may play the role of a psychological mentor, psychiatrist anda nurse to help them come back to normalcy and do well in classroom activities and tests without creating any pressure on them. Teachershave a great responsibility to infuse confidence in learners, motivate them to adjust and work hard citing examples the life of great men or their the predecessors who achieved success facing similar unfavourabe circumstances in their life. They may inspire, encourage and guide learners to the right path through counselling. Mental or psychological support and motivation may have a tonic effect on the learners in such circumstances to get out of their dismayed and dismal mental and physical conditions (Gardner, R. & W. Lambert: 1972).In primary, secondary and higher secondary level where tender learners come to attend classes in their premature age, this type of mental and psychological support from the part of teachers are much needed. At this level,learners come with a lot of curiosity and enthusiasm but they neither have much control over them nor have much pre knowledge about classroom activities. They have hardly any idea about the learning out comes, its consequences and about their future life. They are not aware of the complex adult world. Good teachers treat andapproach the students taking their age level into considerations and groom them in a sophisticated way. At this stage, teachers must be caring and guide the learner to get involved in various class activities and show how to develop self-learning.(Woods &Hammersley: 1987). Thus, teachers may offer a great help in such cases to overcome the psychological barriers of the kids, adolescents, teens and adult learners (Jahan: 2010). This chapter may be closed by citing a Chinese saying reflecting teachers' performance. "A bad teacher teaches; a mediocre teacher lectures; a good teacher involves whereas great teachers inspire."

Managerial Roles:

Managerial role evolves round the course management that includes tasks such as course planning, organizing, leading, organizing events, co-curricular, extracurricular activities, club activities, conducting tests, checking scripts, giving feedbackand controlling the whole or part of institutional activities(Huang:2017, 2019, 2020). Teachers are to manage events by themselves in all educational institutions. They play the role of a judge in solving any disputed issue occurred either among the teachers or the learners. In solving disputed issue amicably they need to be neutral, impartial and have a clear knowledge of that particular event. To carry out all these responsibilities, they may have to form a committee, carry out investigations and solve the problem without any bureaucratic complexities. They also carry out the responsibility of organizing various events like cultural and sports events, activities centering round clubs like language club, science club, sports club, and debate club; organizing study tours, excursions and organizing scout camps. Under the leadership of teachers all curricular, extracurricular and academic activities are performed. Teachers with their leadership and managerial capacity initiate all these events and successfully perform those. They get the students involved in those programs and instruct them how to develop leadership quality and manage events. Thus, teachers make a valuable contribution to produce skilled manpower and nation building. Human resource management, course planning, preparing routine, conduction of examinations, tests and giving feedback to the learners are few among academic activities mentioned here.

II.   Conclusion:

Teachers who do not remain grounded to teaching theories only or the material as it is rather render maximum efforts in discussing and teaching the practical implications of the material which will be profitable in learners' real life situation, social interactions and in their professional field may be identified as best teachers. Experienced teachers make their class lively by relating their teaching with real life situation focusing with socio-economic, religious, political, environmental and cultural context. In-service training, out-job training, teachers' cognatic knowledge, schematic knowledge, contextual discussion and going beyond the context,

teachers' sense of humour, liberal and compromising attitude, use of technology and above all professionalismgive teachers extra privileges to maximize their roles and contribution. Moreover, job satisfaction in terms of salary, timely promotion, opportunities of extra allowances,appreciation and condemnations and overall job environmentand relation between and among the colleagues and treatment from the authorityadversely or positively affect teachers' roles and contribution. Existing socio-economic and political circumstances may also curtail or expedite teachers' overall performances, role and contribution. Developing a congenial atmosphere of check and balance in the institution, ensuring professionalism in organizational activities, liberal and sophisticated attitude, avoiding bureaucratic procedures in institutional activities, ensuring maximum teachers' facilities within the limited opportunities available; organizing professional training, quick problem solving capacity with justice andwithout being biased and credulous; clear knowledge about every individual teacher's potentiality by the authority, ensuring accountability at all levelsetc. may work to extract the best from the teacher community. Ensuring the abovementioned variables ultimately results in ensuring quality education and nation building. Over time and ages the teacher community has evolved into the most dynamic and as the most reliable and available source for mentoring and producing skilled individuals to build up a knowledge based society and a civilized nation with a sustainable economic growth.

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