

COMMENTARY

## Teacher needs manifold skills in the Modern Educational Process

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My journey as a teacher started in 1971, keeping the student's interests in mind. The experiences gained through observing some of the best teachers in mind like Dr. Gopalan (Director General of ICMR) Dr. Srikantia (Director, National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad), and Dr. Copper (Madras Medical College) I developed an interest in teaching. What I learned was to teach in a simple language that is relevant to the field of education. Being a Rotarian as well as having the opportunity of being a Student Advisory Council chairman, IISc, Bangalore, and Ad Hoc President of the Research Scholar's Association, Madras University, I learned the art of speaking and communication. One of the key points of my learning is to learn the ability to develop a rapport with the students whom I teach. The workshops and training imparted by Medical Education Nodal centers, refined and made my teaching relevant to medical students. One of the most important requirements is to have practical skills that help you to adapt your teaching to the needs of the students. I developed this skill as I ran one of the ICMR-recognized diagnostic centers. The center gave me the opportunity to gain my practical skills for basic and clinical Biochemistry.

A teacher needs to be well-versed in the subject you teach. When my journey as a teacher started at Al-Arab Medical University, Benghazi, Libya, the then Professor and Head of the Department told me that I needed to remember the basic concepts of all the areas in Biochemistry. One must be ready to teach whenever he or she is asked to teach. During that time, there was paucity in the number of Textbooks to be given to the students. Your teaching became the most important source of information. My Arab students were very eager to learn. I adopted the method of efficiently using the Blackboard as the medium of communication. To make them understand in English, I used to write the essentials in bold letters on the Black Board. Many of them still have those notes even today as a source of motivation. During that time there were no teaching aids except for overhead projection of material to be taught. My teaching is mostly interactive. I did not use any audio-visual aids. I adopted the method of teaching without any notes or any other source like audio visual aids. It proved very effective for me (Teaching from the learner's point of view).

Apart from that, a teacher must know the strengths and weaknesses of the students who he or she teaches. It is usually said a class consists of three types of students who are brilliant, those who are average, and those who

appear poor in learning capabilities. The teacher needs to deliver and develop the teaching material in such a way it caters to all segments of the students. Such students with poor learning abilities are labeled as Students Needing Additional Curricular Support (academic-SNACS). Some who have been pushed into the system are known as students who additional psychological support (SNAPs). Those students who are committed and successful learners need to be provided with extra information to make them feel rewarded and recognized for their performance. We are living in an era where information is available on the internet, YouTube, and social media. The presence of such facilities on the finger touch of the mobile makes the teacher equip himself or herself with more communication skills and brings that human touch to the delivery of lectures or interactive sessions. That makes the teacher unique and human [1-3]. These remain current and operative in a slightly changed context although some mandatory additional requirements have become necessary. The current write-up will focus on the changes that have come about in these traditional six roles and enumerate some new roles of the modern teacher.

What qualities or what defines a teacher?

1. Teachers instead of being *information providers* need to mentor the student as to how they need to use the information available on social media. The teaching-learning method needs to change from lectures to interactive lectures with more student participation. The teachers need to be familiar with computer-simulated exercises and protocols including using standardized patients to fill in the paucity of clinical resources to teach the students.
2. A teacher needs to be a *role model* wherein he or she devises and designs the lectures in such a way there is room for more interaction. The teacher needs to be amiable to students to approach and clear their queries in the subjects and their social interactions. The use of PowerPoint or other aids needs to be minimal for more open teaching-learning between the teacher and student.
3. If a teacher has to be a *facilitator* small group teaching must be encouraged with discussions using case histories or problem-based learning.
4. The role of the teacher as *an assessor* demands using proper tools of assessment including formative and summative assessments. The assessment should include cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains of learning.
5. For an effective implementation of teaching, a teacher must adopt a competency-based model devising and revising specific learning objectives and intended outcomes from such teaching. Rather a teacher needs to be an *effective planner* to implement the CBME method of teaching.
6. *Career guidance* by the teacher becomes another important avenue to help the students to promote their academic career or their professional career.
7. With the design of modules for curriculum development, the teacher helps to *integrate teaching-learning* through vertical and horizontal integration of subjects being taught at different levels of teaching.
8. Teachers need to be *innovators, researchers, or creators of knowledge*. This function of teachers is important in the interest of their career progression and in the interest of organizational progress in these days of ranking and accreditation besides motivating their students to follow their path [4, 5].

In conclusion, it can be said that in addition to the traditional six roles specified by Harden, new roles have become mandatory for teachers to function effectively. Massive changes have occurred in the traditional roles due to the changing environment, increasing students, reduced number of teachers and new requirements due to the curricular change. New roles not mentioned or expected or experienced earlier have arisen adding to the burden

of teachers. With these changes the functions of a teacher are manifold. The internet has now become the source of information. Therefore, the teacher needs to strengthen the capacity to use the internet judiciously. A teacher, therefore, has multiple roles apart from being a teacher in the classroom. He or she has to be a motivator, skill developer, innovator, policy maker, and finally a role model and mentor.

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