



ROLE OF A TEACHER IN THE SEL SITUATION FOR GLOBAL COMPETENCIES

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Abstract

The new age teachers' responsibility is to mould and shape the students to become more productive citizens and prepare for life than memorize facts and retain information. However a mere knowledge of facts is not enough to help students to grow and develop socially and emotionally. Today's teacher must inculcate a sense of social responsibility apart from providing theoretical knowledge. Their emotional intelligence has to be nurtured. There are some of the considerations a teacher needs to keep in mind such as promoting four key affective factors like, self-esteem, tolerance, lowering anxiety and enhancing risk taking ability among the learners. In this way a teacher can integrate education with social and emotional skills.

Keywords: *self-esteem, tolerance, anxiety, risk taking, social and emotional learning.*

Introduction

“Learning is not attained by chance. It must be sought for with ardour and attended to with diligence” (Abigail Adams) Who other than a person like a teacher can manifest this ardour and diligence in an educational scenario? The teacher is a person who remains a lifelong learner and leads the students by example. The need of the hour is to adopt a student-centric pedagogical approach as we desperately feel the need for the paradigm shift in the process of learning. With this paradigm shift itself the students can develop the ownership of their learning, instead of being passive recipients of knowledge. In the present scenario it is a well known fact, that the proliferation of open educational resources have a deeper impact on teaching and learning with emerging platforms such as collaborative learning, participative learning and project based learning (PBL) . We as educators need to tap into students' personalities to find hidden strengths, understand their emotional intelligence and use their assets to peak performance.

After much introspection and discussion, the teacher community has come to a consensus that out of all the methods Project-based learning (PBL) method is gaining momentum in bringing forth and supporting students' social and emotional strengths. PBL offers well-structured opportunities to learn decision-making, collaboration, and critical thinking skills that result in deeper learning.

PBL: A great place for SEL

Should the focus always be on academic knowledge? Isn't there a responsibility on the shoulders of the students to be more productive citizens and prepare for life than memorize facts and retain information? Learning cannot be compartmentalized. It needs to be integrated with life. If teaching was an art and a teacher an artist then the role of the teacher would be to



arrange of conditions that help in the pupil's mental and physical growth. Furthermore it may be acknowledged that emotions play a vital role in teaching and learning process thereby making Emotional Intelligence an important consideration. Here SEL occupies a great place in the higher educational system. SEL stands for social and emotional learning. It is the process through which students acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions.

SEL enables the students to set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others. It also helps them to establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions. It has become a coordinating framework for how educators, families, and communities partner to promote students' social, emotional and academic learning. It informs how adults and students relate with each other at all levels of the system, creating a welcoming, participatory, and caring climate for learning.

Role of a teacher

Stress-free environment is absolutely essential for a learner. Environments vary from person to person but the pre-dominant one is the classroom. The sole person responsible to make the classroom a comfortable place for learning is the teacher. A teacher can be very much instrumental in instilling confidence into the minds of the learners by following various strategies.

As a teacher, one has to face quite a few students with varied backgrounds, variety of problems and various temperaments. The teacher's awareness of the affective factors helps him or her in creating an environment that is conducive to learning. Mostly, the learning environment has the tendency to promote anxiety among the learners. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the teacher to promote and prioritize a low-stress learning environment. Reducing anxiety invariably leads to improved performance on the part of the learner.

It is important for the teacher to create an atmosphere of sharing and collaborative learning in the classroom and encourage the individual learner to set realistic learning self-goals. The onus is, therefore, on the teacher to ensure that the learner's anxiety is reduced by creating a non-threatening and conducive environment in the classroom.

STAR-a framework to achieve SEL

The four components of Emotional Intelligence are claimed to fit within the framework of "STAR". The acronym can be decoded as Self-esteem, Tolerance, Anxiety, and Risk taking. These components play a significant role in achieving social and emotional learning among higher education learners.

Self-esteem

Self-esteem is nothing but estimating one's own self-worth. It can turn out to be either positive or negative and it is based on three factors – experiences, what others think about a person, and what one thinks about oneself. Self-esteem can be of three types – global, situational, and task-based. It is closely related with self-confidence and when it comes to learning process, ego comes to the surface. It is the identity a person develops in relation to the environment in which he lives. When there is so much of ego, the person finds it difficult



to get involved in the learning process with empathy. This automatically develops a fear for the learning and related inhibitions.

Tolerance

Tolerance is the ability to endure pain of hardship. It is the practice of accepting the beliefs and opinions of others with patience. A tolerant student has high levels of self-perceptions which drive his learning capabilities. Here the teacher plays a key role in inculcating this value of noble virtue. The seeds of hard work have to be sown among the students at the very early years of learning. They must be given training in endurance and an awareness must be created among the students about the fruits of hardship. They must be rigorously trained to spend more time in learning. Though a teacher too has to face mood swings as any human would, the emotional balance that he or she exhibits is what makes all the difference. In fact in order to inculcate tolerance in the students, the teacher first has to achieve a level of 'self-management or emotional balance and stability.

Anxiety

Anxiety is a big turn-off among learners, especially second language learners. The main cause of this is lack of self-confidence. The students must have the thinking that s/he is a learner and mistakes bound to happen. Some of them might have better grasping capability than the others. This will cause differences of standards in learning. All these problems can be rectified by the teacher in the way she handles students. Moral support is very essential for students with low self-esteem and they must not be forced by the teacher to perform just like the others. They must be given time to analyze themselves by providing necessary inputs for improvement. Their chances to voice out views must not be curtailed and must be encouraged, only when they are ready and must not be forced. An anxious learner is reluctant to take risks, relies heavily on memory, which at times may falter, thereby aggravating the anxiety, which in turn makes the learner inefficient in the recall of the learned items. The negative factors that influence the learner will prevent the blooming of true inner abilities. Personalized training can be given to the students for improvement. Motivation and aptitude can be increased by the collaborative learning process in the classroom irrespective of the varying learning abilities of the students.

Risk Taking

Risk taking is very much needed to learn a new concept. A student must dare to make mistakes and speak out in front of everyone, especially if s/he is a beginner. Loss of face and image must not be a concern at all, if so the concept cannot be learnt at all. It is all about being ready to face mistakes and failures, learn from them, and then move on by correcting them. A student usually takes risk by making intelligent guesses in classes. Only this will lead to peak performances even in times of the toughest tasks.

Conclusion

As part of the paradigm shift in the process of learning, students' active mental participation plays a significant role. The new age teachers of higher education have realized that they can no longer claim to be 'knowledge providers' as all the knowledge that they are capable of



providing is readily available online for the students to access. The true role of the teacher is to equip them with social and emotional learning. This can be achieved by promoting four key affective factors like, self-esteem, tolerance, lowering anxiety and enhancing risk taking ability among the learners. Such a kind of training gives a purpose to an instructional design and guide students learning process.

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