



The ethics of the teacher an important factor in the relationship teacher-learner

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Abstract

This article is focused on the importance of two essential components of teaching: professionalism and ethics. Both components are strongly linked as the professional qualification and the ethic behavior of the teacher enable the successful realization of the teaching process. The teacher’s ethics involves some specific features and it is at the center of all other human fields through emotive participation during the learners molding and the rational organization of the teaching process for a better knowledge acquisition. In the professional work, the teacher builds up relationships with his partners: learners, colleagues, school directors, parents and representatives of the community. During the learning and teaching process the relationship teacher-learner becomes difficult due to the teaching process itself. Anyway, the teacher should use methods in order to minimize the obstacles, which in a way are a means of revealing the moral pedagogical expression. The core of the matter is the maintenance of the inner balance in the relationship teacher-learner. It is necessary to harmonize the official and human aspect in the attitude towards the learners. This article will give instructions and guidelines concerning issues like: the personality of learners, the ability of the teacher to control his own manners towards his learners, colleagues and community. We are mostly concentrated on the transmission of these theoretical norms into a practical behavior which is a real ethical relationship.

Key words: professionalism, ethics, teacher, learner, relationship.

Introduction

The ethics of work. The professional ethics is considered as rather important in all aspects of life. The ethics regards the human society within the frame of productive engagement by considering work as a value, an individual and collective goal. Ethics involves many aspects, relationships and elements like: responsibility, devotion, competence, solidarity, quality at work, communication etc. The greatest part of these aspects and elements are significant for every profession. Acknowledgment and observance of these elements are essential factors that help everyone to have a successful career and also these requirements constitute the basis for the Ethics of a Teacher. Like in every profession two fundamental components of the teaching

process are: professionalism and ethics. The *qualification, professional standards and perfection* are closely related to the ethics of a teacher. We can also say that the ethical *behavior* is a very important element of professionalisms in this human activity. In order to achieve a qualitative performance of the main aims of the pedagogical activity, which is the education of learners, of course, it is required pedagogical proficiency, professional competence, certain teaching standards etc. Along with this proficiency and competence, the ethical aspect of the teacher's behavior towards all the compound elements, constitute a necessity for the teaching progress. Professional ethics is a term which defines the particular standards of conduct within the teaching profession. This profession should be respected and self-respected, thus, its members should act according to these standards.

Characteristics of teacher's ethics

The teacher's ethics has its own characteristics in relation to other ethical systems in other professions.

Firstly, the teacher's profession itself is a practice of moral, as one of the main goals of school is the development and moral education of learners. So, the role of moral dimension is crucial in the learner's molding, while the deficiency in the scientific and technical knowledge is a less important aspect during this process. School is a place that children spend a great part of their time and that is why they are grown as personalities at school. Professional teachers do not only give or transfer their knowledge, but they also do lessons of ethics.

Secondly, the teacher's role ranges from teaching the learners to make the appropriate moral choices, to being obliged to demonstrate practically by behaving according to the oral rules and regulations. Every teacher in himself, in spite of his field of study, is a teacher of ethics, as his words and behavior entail or convey messages of moral and educative values.

Thirdly, the specific characteristics of the profession of a teacher lie in the fact that the persons, who he works with, are mainly children or the young. Due to this fact, there are other factors that are combined as: family, community, state and other systems. This derives a number of conflicts concerning for instance: the conception of children rights.

Fourthly, unlike other professions, the whole pedagogical process is a process of individual interactions:

- The learner, who is at the same time the subject, participator in the process is an individual;
- The working means (the teacher with the personality, molding, abilities, behavior, methods and forms of education) is an individual;
- The product of pedagogical work (the personality of the molded learner) that is also an individual;

This explains the fact that ethical communication and behavior become very essential during the whole teaching process. Thus, this profession is a "science" and an "art" as it implies rules, but also being creative, as it lies at the center of human interaction.

The teacher's ethics towards the learner

During his professional pedagogical work, the teachers create relationships with some partners: the learner, learner's group, colleagues, director, parents or representatives of the community. Naturally, the relationship teacher-learner is determinative in the overall process. The structure of this relationship is very complex. This relationship is not selected; they are dictated by the necessity"

The teacher teaches and the *learner* learns; none of them chooses the other. Gradually with the passing of time, this relationship is of a conscious type; aiming at a balanced relationship in accordance with the goals and assigned tasks. Despite this, the relationship is influenced by the aspect of content, because they reflect the entirety of relationships in a society, as well as the system of values that this society bears. The whole system of morals, political, economic, family, mentality, after all include within the relationship teacher-learner. The present level of development of the pedagogical activity is characterized by the fact that, it is not a simple process of influencing directly on the learner (knowledge giving or educative values), but, simultaneously an organization of an active and exploring activity on the part of the learner himself. Anyway, the role of both sides is not equal on the aspect of influence power. Naturally, the teacher is the important and more active side. It is exactly his view, emotions, feelings and especially his moral behavior, which exerts definitive influence on the ethical side of this relationship.

With regard to the content of the relationship teacher-learner, it can facilitate or on the contrary hinder the progress. The learner should believe that the advice, recommendations, the reprimands are fair and for his good. Otherwise, the ironical, capricious and cynical behavior triggers off inner dissatisfaction to the learner, who will reflect it in the attitude towards the subject, learning and school in general. At this stage, we have a negative and contradictory attitude. It is the time when the pedagogical ways and means cease to operate.

Difficulties in the relationship teacher-learner

Existence of the contradictions within the process itself causes difficulties during the teaching-learning process. Some of the difficulties are:

- The teacher and the learner are in different positions in the process, in an opposite direction, the teacher leads, organizes, asks, evaluates, decides etc.; whereas the learner

obeys, listens, answers, is evaluated. So, the learner seems to have more duties and would like to work less and be better evaluated. But, the teacher aims at hard work for the learners, motivating the learner to be interested in the lessons and trying to be objective. So not always, teacher's requirements are kindly accepted.

(e.g. *From the observations in different schools of Gjirokastra we were told by some learners that their teacher was giving to them a lot of homework, she was a new teacher, unsatisfied with the learner's progress and she tried to assign a lot of task. The reaction was quick, contradictory, disapproving although it was for their good. Thus, they did not like this thing*)

- The teacher and learner belong to different generations, with different experiences, mentalities and interests. So the difference lies in the big gap existing in the knowledge, experience and social maturity. So his pupils belong to the generation of his nieces and nephews.
 - Another difficulty, which is a source of various conflicts, is the fact that the *learner* (children, teenagers or young) are characterized by a high emotional sensitivity and often face psychosocial problems related to their age, gender or growing up. They are easily hurt, react impulsively even to the things that favor them. Changes in the way they (the *teacher* and the *learner*) both experience different phenomena, create difficulties in their relationships.
 - Absence or lack of the information of the teacher about the learner, leads to incorrect evaluations and misuse of the appropriate means or methods: (e.g. *After being very good at school, a child changes quite unexpectedly, he does not do his homework, seems not to be interested in learning and is distracted or confused. The teacher may reprimand him, and use him as a not a very good example in front of others. The strange fact is that, the teacher is not aware of the family problems he is facing, which may hinder his progress.*

Contradictions may be constant, stable, occasional, and relevant to teachers or learners everyday problems and caused by other factors or different sources. If this conflict increases, the teacher is not using the correct methods and after all they are an expression of the pedagogical moral.

How to cope with the contradictions teacher-learner

The above mentioned contradictions show aspects of relationships that need the moral regulation and which have as an essential goal to preserve the inner balance of the system teacher-learner, very important for the efficient accomplishment of the pedagogical process. Some of the general norms to be considered are:

- The interrelation teacher-learner should be *formal* and *human* at the same time
- The teacher should respect the learner's *personality*, his inner world and individual characteristics of every learner.
- He should be *patient* and able *to control* his behavior in all situations he might face.

If we clarify these norms, we would say that we have to combine the formal and human aspect. The relationship is organized, scheduled by the lesson planning, curricula or school program and

turn out to be within the framework of formal obligations of the teacher. Moreover, in front of a teacher, there is a human personality, who thinks, experiences and feels like him.

(E.g. In a situation like: *a learner has been absent for a long time due to his illness*: -1.the teacher says: *Welcome! We are happy to have you back, or don't worry we are going to help you about everything you have missed.*

2. The teacher says: *I know you have been sick, but you have to try to catch up with others and not to be absent anymore, as actually you have so many absences.*

So it is evident that as the human and formal aspects are components of this relationship, it is important to have the unity of both aspects.

To respect the learner's personality means not to hurt or offend him, which is a general requirement. This requires not only acknowledgment of problems of their age, but also use of time and energy. In situations when the teacher shouts, is irritated, offends, intimidates, the result may be immediate: he is controlling the situation, while the learner becomes silent, obeys to his words, and is offended or hurt. This attitude implies further social and moral consequences. (E.g. In the questionnaire distributed to a good number of learners (*who are not very good at school*) in different schools the greatest part thought that: *it is better to get not a very satisfactory mark or either failing, than getting an offence or being hurt by the teacher*). Practically, among the moral requirements, we point out:

- Respect of learner's opinion is a requirement of the teacher towards himself.
- Patience to listen to the learner's independent opinion, his manners even they may seem not appropriate for the teacher
- Reliance on the positive sides of the learner, his attempts and abilities towards progress
- Attention towards every learner
- Requirements towards the learner are seen as an expression of respect

Concerning the teachers behavior control, during the whole teaching process he is faced with various situations, which cause negative emotions. Not to lose the control of the ethical behavior, he should take into consideration:

- Their age and their individuality.
- The social importance of his duty as an educator for the personality molding of the learner.
- His age and maturity are higher than his pupils.

As a conclusion the teacher should transform these negative feelings into positive ones in relation to learners: *understanding, tolerance, forgiveness fondness, encouragement, motivation* for them, otherwise anger and dissatisfaction lead to revenge.

Communication

To respect the Code of ethics means that the teacher has build the bridge of communication, very crucial in the teaching and other aspects of human life. From the pragmatic point of view, the problems of communication should be dealt within a new framework, of humanism and democratization of the inner school life. The natural, human and careful communication between all sides, harmonizes the influence of school and family education, softens the negative effects and minimizes the inhibiting messages for the learner.

In this universe of relationships, the child feels secure, confident and surrounded by care and affection. The parents are treating their children differently, establishing indirectly norms of communication; at school, (between main partners of education teacher-learner-director-administration); there are created relationships of understanding and exchange of messages between school-family, school-surroundings and so on.

This communicative context motivates the process of value transmission and characteristics of a society, a new democratic society. The relationships between individuals are characterized by humanism, tolerance, the spirit of dialogue, responsibility, self-control, discipline, result and avoidance of conflicts. All these values transmitted through continuous communication produce results in the molding of future citizens of democratic culture.

Results of the questionnaire and the observations made in some schools in the town of Gjirokastra

- When conducting a class a good teacher should cultivate mutual respect and absolute tolerance.
- Teacher's ethics should not allow teachers choose "favorites" in the group and differentiate students.
- Learner should grow in a healthy atmosphere, surrounded by professional teachers that would be able not only to provide with knowledge, but also give lessons of ethics.
- The teacher should be aware of his role as an educator in the personality of learners.
- Ethics can be inborn but it can and should be developed. Some are born tactful; some are taught how to behave to correspondent to requirements.
- Most of learners thought that teachers did not understand them; they are interested only in the lesson and not in what they think or feel.
- A low percentage of learners said that teachers are supporting and helping them in every step they make.

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