

# Role and Responsibility of a Teacher in Higher Education

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## Abstract

Every awakened mind in India asks questions such as: “why do some nations take off into rapid educational, social and cultural development while others stand still or go on a decline”? “why did the U.S.S.R., which was ahead of the U.S.A. in launching the Sputnik end up lagging behind it”? “why did Japan but not China take off economically, in the 19th century”? These and similar questions have fascinated some educationists and sociologists. Such, comparisons can be multiplied endlessly, but the question always remains the same: What makes the difference? This paper is an attempt to present an explanation for this mystery that may lie in the quality and efforts of the teachers in their academies and, in turn, in the country’s government and administration.

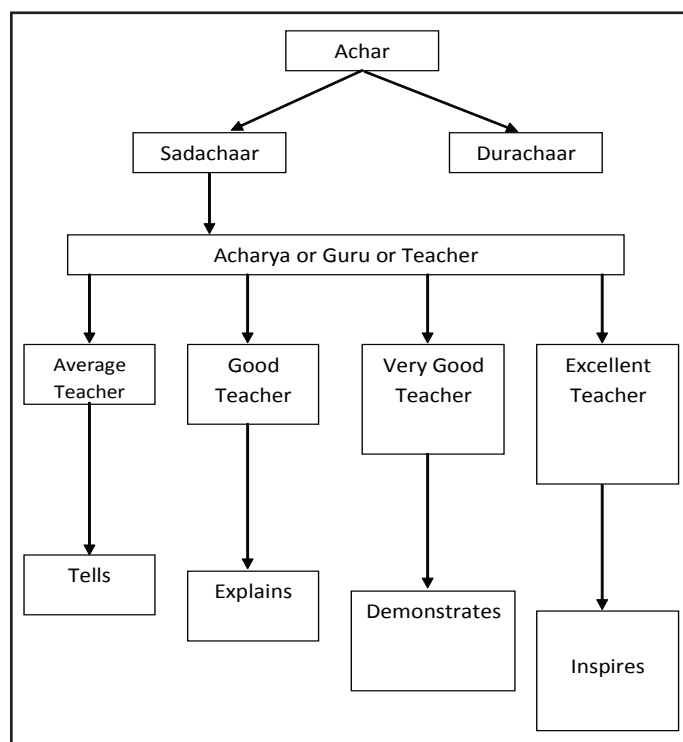
## I. Introduction

Since time immemorial, volumes have been written about the importance of teachers in the life of his pupil. It has rightly been said that behind all sparkles of excellence, there have been teachers who ignited spark. Nowadays the young teachers join the universities as teachers without any training. Region considerations are taken into account in their recruitment. Status and money making has become the motto of this profession. Most of the teachers are demoralized, easy going uninspiring, and uncommitted. They lack serious intellectual and pedagogical interest which has enhanced their pre occupation with internal university politics. Teachers must not forget that they are the role models (god or bad) for their students. He is not mere communicator of knowledge but also the director of learning, transmitter of culture and values, a social engineer and an architect of the future society.

Indian Higher Education System is facing different problems ranging from its quality of education, which is going down with every passing year. It is in need of a total overhauling. Be it examination system, fee structure, curriculum designing, teaching methods and other infract rural facilities. Students are no longer interested in attending classes. First of all, attendance requirement is not strictly followed. In some institutions of higher education, teachers themselves do not like to go to their classes. Learning to generate knowledge is no longer seems to be the motto in higher education particularly at the undergraduate levels. In such a scenario, global zing Indian Higher Education seems to be a mere futile exercise. According to the UNESCO’s Education Report, while a large number of Indian students go abroad for their higher education, the number and the percentage of students coming to India from other countries is very less.

Teaching is a noble profession. In India, teachers have been always held to be a very high and venerated class of people. In ancient time, they are regarded as next to God. We look upon teachers as gurus or acharyas: What do these words indicate? Acharyas is one whose achar or conduct is good i.e. an example of sadachaar. If a person is victim of durachaar then he/she isn’t an acharya. The person, who is able to remove the spiritual blindness is called a guru. Are we deserving of that noble appellation of an acharya or a guru? This is the first thing that everyone of us will have to realise. The same ideas are depicted in illustration No. 1 as given below:

**Illustration – 1**



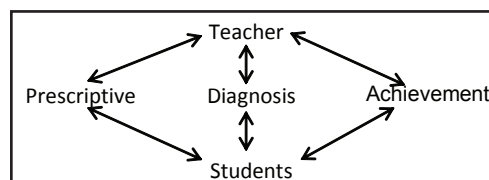
## II. Meaning of Teacher

Teaching today is the most difficult task and it is like a walk on water. Individual respect of teacher depends on the sincerity of purpose behind his/her efforts. Teacher is always under a constant watch-both microscopic and telescopic by the every person seeks to help and guide. The minutest of dots on his/her work and character assume a far greater measure of visibility and notice ability than in the case of an ordinary person.

*“Daaman hai gar saaf to khas aiteat rakh,  
Is pay Zara bhi dag chhupaya na jaye gaa”.*

An unimpeachable character, sense of discipline, dedication, devotion, hard work and clean life are pre-requisite in the case of teacher who leads and guides others and more particularly the generations that have to assume charge of the country in the times to come. A teacher’s life is a life of great Sadhana and great responsibility. According to Lord Krishna in Holy Geeta, this is the path for complete Moksha. For that, a teacher should always stick to the path of truth and righteousness. In the present situations, a teacher plays the role of doctor to protect the students.

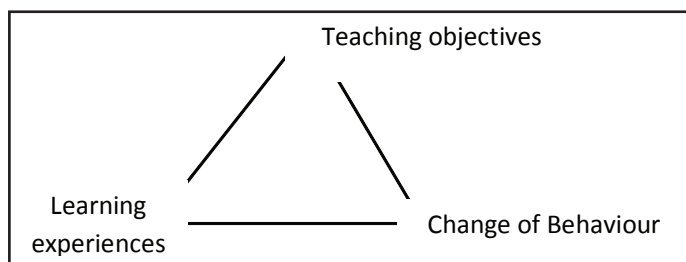
**Diagram – 2**



### III. Role of Teacher as a Doctor

Like a doctor, a teacher diagnoses the need of students i.e. where they stand, prescribes prescription by giving them proper guidance for the mastery of subject. The achievement is related with teacher as well as students. If students get reward that reward also goes to the teacher. If students fail, teacher again starts the process of diagnosis for better results. This cycle of teaching and learning process goes on. While it true that excellent teachers are born not made, yet it is also true that every teacher can improve his/her teaching efficiency significantly, if he/she is willing and if he/she receives special help in the process. For this, it is the responsibility of every teacher to attend orientation courses, refresher courses or any other training which not only improve the personality but capability also. Moreover, the effectiveness of the teacher depends upon three teaching operations given in diagram as below:

**Diagram - 3**



### IV. Teaching Operations

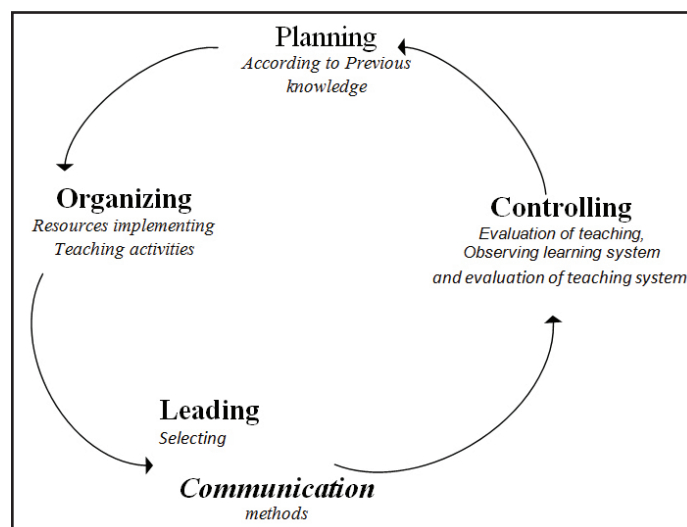
It is the responsibility of a teacher to be clear about the teaching objectives that is, whenever one starts teaching, one should be very much clear in mind that what content he/she is going to deliver in the class room. If a teacher becomes an original thinker about his/her subject matter, the content of his lectures will not only improve, but may become brilliant. Yet because there is a truth in campus comment frequently heard, "He/she knows but cannot teach". It is profitable for all teachers to consider ways of improving the presentation of subject matter. For that it would be better to plan a field trip, set up a demonstration, use slides or motion pictures, conduct discussions, have four or five bright students to present a panel or even write out the materials and distribute them in mimeographed form. Teacher's personality also plays an important role in effective teaching. A good teacher welcomes questions from the floor and answers them with completeness. It may help if he/she says, "I am going to try to make it clear, but I want you to feel free to ask questions about any point that you don't understand".

Humorous examples have a special appeal for the student. The opportunity to laugh gives him/her a chance to relax and tackle a new the serious instruction to follow: The best type of humour is that which grows naturally out of the subject - a turn of phrase or a flash of wit that illuminates a subject without distracting from it. A teacher should be aware of his/her voice especially when it was not loud enough. A teacher with the interest of his/her students at heart, however, should try to speak distinctly and with sufficient volume to be heard. Pronunciation and enunciation are another prime requisite of good delivery. Although the real test of a teacher's effectiveness is measured by lasting quality of his/her instruction - the impressions, recollections and habits of thinking that persist years after graduation - the opinions of students at the time they take the course are valuable. Teacher may hand out questionnaires and invite frank comments. It is

essential to develop trust, faith and confidence of students in a teacher. For that, it is the responsibility of the teacher to create interactive environment. It can be possible if the teacher involve talk, teach and guide the students at their level.

The teacher's part in fostering the students' use of library is very important. The students should be led to understand that library and its resources will play an exceeding important role in the academic activities in which the faculty will engage. It is necessary that teacher make sure that enough duplicates copies of a certain publications are available before making heavy reading assignments into a very large class. Above presentation of role of effective teacher by effective teaching process can be shown by diagram 4.

**Diagram - 4**



### V. Effective Teaching Process

Teacher is continuously a senior learner. Investigations have proved that lecture method alone cannot bring out the desired goals only by the teaching learning process. It doesn't always motivate the students. For the motivations of students the various media techniques like T.V., Film, radio programmer, programmed learning materials, newspapers, modules, radio vision etc. help in the students in classify concept, stimulating group and individual activities, changing attitudes and encouraging creativity'. Use of different media when utilized in different disciplines make the teaching effective e.g. use of projectors to illustrate Geography and General Science lessons, use of film for teaching of Science and technology and Art subjects, use of radio vision for teaching Mathematics, use of radio in teaching Music or pronunciation and use of programmed learning encouraging self study habits in different subjects etc.

Teaching is an art without question. Some people may born with it but others have acquire and cultivate. Sometimes the teacher has to pass the qualitative test conducted by the student e.g. in practical. Special attention needs to be paid to improve the quality of the practical works. The responsibility of the teacher is to integrate the practical work with the learning and acquisition of theory. It will be a good thing if every teacher before embarking upon owns work in classroom is to be given a short course in basic laboratory technique and workshop practice. Student for the most part blindly follows what the teacher tells them. So it is the responsibility of the teacher to be accurate.

For most of the university teachers, there is a continuous conflict between their responsibilities in respect of teaching and research.

They are paid for teaching, but their promotions and reputations in the scientific world depend on their research and publications. The salary is guaranteed even if one does bad teaching, but promotion is not guaranteed unless one does publishable research. As such, many teachers tend to neglect teaching and concentrate on research. Of course a good researcher need not be a good teacher. But always remember, a good teacher may be a good researcher. So it is the responsibility of a teacher to take balanced interest in teaching as well as in research.

A further area where a teacher should demonstrate to the students that he/she takes them seriously is in evaluating their written materials, especially answer papers written during examinations. For students evaluation is very much a part of their work and learning process and while they hate the examination, they are very eager to know what outcome is. Every answer paper should not only be marked but be carefully gone through in such a way that the teacher should be able to discuss with each student his or her performance. In so doing the teacher will also be able to convince the students expect of teachers.

There is yet another dimension of teaching which cannot be ignored. The most influences in the life of anyone are those of the mother and the teacher. The mother's influence stays as long as one lives. In the case of the teacher the influence is much more diffused and somewhat patchy. As a student one is taught by several teachers. While quite a few of them can be influential, it is usually one teacher at a time whose influence dominates and it is that particular influence which to a large extent shapes a student's destiny. Or it is putting it too strongly? It is rightly said,

*“Ek Pathhar ke bhi takdeer sanwar jati hai,  
Shart yeh hai kareene se trasha jaye”.*

The teacher's role is to scatter the seeds. Two may sprout or two hundred. One cannot be sure of what will happen, if anything; but one should not despair. It should not be necessary to analyze the situation any further in detail. Every teacher functions with a given social and cognitive frame work. When the situation turns unfavorable. On the social ground there is little that the teacher can do. On the cognitive surface, he/she can do much more; for that is his/her own sphere of action.

Salvation for the country can be achieved through excellence in education, which can be achieved by dedicated person who consider it a privilege to be a teacher. May the tribe of dedicated and committed teachers increase and may the example of such dedicated teachers inspire generations of students to work for the welfare of humanity.

Inevitably most of the teachers feel more comfortable acting like the country's political leaders. Self-interest and lust for power among the political leaders, is resulting in undue interference in everything that touches the teachers. This has forced the teachers also to learn and play the roles which would place them in an advantageous position. The conditions produced by democracy-linked socio-political ecology of the country have adversely affected the teachers' lives, their personalities, their values and ways of thinking. In this kind of socio-political set-up it is futile to tell the teachers what their roles and responsibilities are. One can only hope that eventually of their own accord, they will learn where they are, where they should be and what will become of them if they continue of function in the existing pattern. If I can read their mind correctly they, without using words, are saying

“We know what we should do, but we will not do so for the reasons you know too well”.

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