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## ENVISIONING PROFESSIONAL ETHICS IN TEACHING PROFESSION

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### **Abstract**

A Teacher plays a key role in the education and also in student's life. Teaching job is a great responsibility than a mere job. It has an impact on the growth and well-being of the nation. A teacher has far-reaching influence on the society; no other personality can have an influence more profound than that of teacher. Because they have a daily influence on the lives of children, teachers are often held to high standards. In the midst of all of their responsibilities, they're required to serve as strong role models and demonstrate ethical behaviors as they interact with students, colleagues, parents and others. For this a teacher must have own professional code of ethics, which may be expressed in a set of ethical principles. These constitute a code of "quality control" for the profession and those who practise it, a response to the trust shown by society at large. The paper deeply explains importance of ethics, why ethics required for teaching profession? At the end it elaborate all the professional ethics must be presented in a teaching professional, which may help him to become a role model for everyone in the society.

**(Key words- Teaching Professional, Ethics, Teacher, Human dignity)**

## **Introduction**

Ethics is a fundamental requirement of any profession. As because Teaching creates all other professions therefore it must consist a high code of professional ethics so that the same values can be developed among students. Therefore a teacher must serve himself as strong role models and demonstrate ethical behaviors as they interact with students, colleagues, parents and others. Developing and following a professional code of ethics helps make sure teachers act in a professional and ethical manner at all times. They are role models within themselves for their students who, consciously or subconsciously, emulate their behavior. They instill values and mores that will influence the lives of their students. Theirs is the responsibility to understand the needs of their student's even outside the school walls and theirs is the responsibility to nurture and to cherish. **Rabindra Nath Tagore Says-** "Teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp never lights another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teacher who has come to an end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge merely repeats his lesson to his students can only load to their mind."

All of us are aware that a teacher's main responsibility is to the student and to the development of his/her full potential. In this respect we need to pursue the truth, devote all our efforts towards excellence, the acquisition of knowledge and the observance of democratic principles. **Mahatma Gandhi, (Young India, 24 January 1925)** emphasized that "The teacher himself must possess the virtues that he wants to inculcate in the students. This means that the teacher must practice these virtues himself, otherwise his words will have no effect." He further highlighted (Young India, April 1929) that „the teacher should be able to establish a heart to heart contact with the students..." The teacher and the students should be in constant communication with each other. In fact, the teachers have to fashion the hearts of the students rather than their brains. About the ethical duties of the teacher, **Sri Aurobindo says,** "The teacher is not an instructor or task-master; he is a helper and guide. His business is to suggest and not to impose... He does not impart knowledge to him; he shows him how to acquire knowledge for himself. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within, he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to raise to the surface."

The relationship between teachers and students is a very important and sensitive one. It must be built on strong foundations, stemming from mutual respect and trust as well as on the highest of ethical standards. But now the scenario is a large no of teachers are fails to establish this sensitive bond because of lack of ethical values in them. **Felicity Haynes (1998)** draws from a broad range of ethical theory to argue for an ethics of consequences, consistency, and care – "The greater part of our learning in the school has been a waste because most of our teachers think their subjects are like dead specimens of once living things with which they have a learned acquaintance but no communication of life and love" The same may be said of the relationship between teachers and other members of the school community that includes, among others, the

administration, other professionals and parents. It's a teacher's duty to maintain a high level of competence and in order to do this we need to engage in continuous professional development throughout our career in the profession.

But now a day's only few no of teachers got success in developing proper understanding, mutual respect and trust with every member of teaching community. This ratio is very low due to the lack of professional ethics in the teaching community and the Educational Institutions. First, let us understand what professional ethics are and how we can nurture it.

### **What Are Professional Ethics?**

Every profession, in order to regulate its terms, conditions, norms and quality of service rendered, has its own professional ethics, which is different from general ethics. In the term professional ethics, the word "ethics" adds to the professional obligation that a profession abides by. Professional ethics is a combination of two words, **Professional + Ethics**.

Here, Professional means an expert, specialized, qualified, proficient, skilled, trained, practiced, certified, proficient, skilled, trained, licensed, mature etc. So, Professional is a term denoting a level of knowledge and skills possessed by an individual or required of an individual to perform an assignment, that is attained through extensive education and training.

Secondly, Ethics means principles, morals, beliefs, moral principles, moral values, moral code etc.. Ethics is a system of moral principles governing the appropriate conduct of a person or a group. Ethics refers to human conduct as to make judgments between what is right and what is wrong. It could be that there are several factors that may encourage one to adopt unethical behaviour, but the right person is he who, despite facing ethical dilemmas, assesses the situations and makes differentiation between what is morally good and bad in order to follow the rules and code of professional conduct. Good ethics causes to gain confidence of superiors while promoting integrity, which means to continue doing right things even when we are not watched.

**Albert Schweitzer says**, "*Ethics is the activity of man directed to secure the inner perfection of his own personality.*"

### **Why ethics for a noble profession- Teaching?**

1. Teachers themselves represent as a role model to students.
2. Promote a positive image of the teaching profession
3. Teaching is now a profession rather than a passion
4. Teacher works as a Friend, Philosopher and Guide
5. Establish a sensitive bond with students
6. Great impact in the molding of the next generation
7. To maintain healthy and supportive ambience at workplace
8. Paradigm shift in the perception of teachers

9. It's no longer a service but an occupation with unclear roles vision and mission
10. Improve Regulation and control of teacher misconduct
11. Erosion in the values, responsibilities, commitment in this profession
12. A Teacher no longer enjoys the same respect and status in the society
13. Perplexed with new development and cultural heritage
14. Commercialization and profit making is the buzz word
15. Availability of varied and financially rewarding opportunities in others sectors has affected teaching profoundly

### **ENVISIONING PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

**A. Maintain trust in the profession-** A member of the teaching profession shall:

1. Base their relationship with students on mutual trust and respect
2. Have regard to the safety and wellbeing of students under their responsibility;
3. Respect the uniqueness and diversity of the learning community they are part of;
4. Act with honesty, integrity and fairness;
5. Take responsibility for maintaining the quality of their professional practice;
6. Uphold public trust and confidence in the teaching profession
7. Create learning experiences which engage, motivate and challenge students in an inclusive setting with a lifelong learning perspective.

**B. Respect the Uniqueness and Diversity of Students:** A member of the teaching profession shall:

1. Demonstrate respect for diversity, maintain fairness and promote equality irrespective of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, appearance, age, language or different needs or abilities;
2. Maintain an up to date knowledge and understanding of, implement and comply with, current child protection procedures;
3. Contribute to the creation of a fair and inclusive school environment by addressing discrimination, stereotyping and bullying.
4. Identify and refer to the competent authorities any issues that might impact on students' welfare at the earliest possible stage.

**C. Maintain Professional Relationships with Students:** A member of the teaching profession shall:

1. Maintain professional boundaries whilst in school and out of school, avoid improper physical contact, avoid inappropriate communication via any form of media and avoid inappropriate relationships with students. The members of the teaching

profession are duty bound and are ultimately responsible to maintain a professional distance.

2. Refrain from taking advantage of professional relationships with students for their own personal benefit. For example, you can't accept expensive gifts from students because it might appear to bias you
3. Follow behavior management and safe schools policies and guidelines as directed by the relevant school, college and education authorities.
4. Act appropriately towards students exercising care in their language, gestures and attitudes, ensuring that they do not act in such a manner that is embarrassing or disparaging and ensuring that they do not use abusive language or offensive names or make inappropriate remarks.
5. Act with a professional attitude and behavior at all times.

**D. Maintaining Quality Professional Relationships:** A member of the teaching profession shall:

1. Deal with other members of the profession in the same manner as he himself wishes to be treated.
2. Respect, support and collaborate with colleagues both in matters concerning the education of students as well as in maintaining relations with colleagues in the highest standards of professional courtesy.
3. Be prepared to help junior colleagues and those in training and induction in all possible ways.
4. Respect the authority of senior professional colleagues while retaining the right to express professional opinion and dissent.
5. Speak constructively of other teachers, but report honestly to responsible persons in matters involving the welfare of students, the school system, and the profession.
6. Not reprimand, censure, rebuke or criticize any colleague, or any other member of the teaching profession, in the presence of students or in public.
7. Maintain active membership in professional organizations through participation.
8. Strive to attain the objectives that justify such organized groups

**E. Obligations towards Parents, Community and Society:** A member of the teaching profession shall:

1. Establishes trust with parents/guardians in the interest of all round development of students.
2. Develop and maintain good relationships between home and school, respecting the role that parents, guardians and careers have in students' education.
3. Resists from doing anything which is harmful for child or his/her parents/guardians.

4. Make every effort to encourage parents, guardians and careers to interest themselves actively in the education and welfare of children in their care
5. Develop respect for the composite culture of India among students.
6. Keeps the country uppermost in mind.
7. Avoid taking part in such activities as may spread feelings of hatred among different communities, religious or linguistic groups.

**F. Act with Honesty and Integrity:** Members of the Teaching Profession shall:

1. Comply with policies and procedures issued at school, college or national education level, regarding to the use of property, facilities, finances and ICT in their educational setting.
2. Conduct assessment- and examination-related tasks with integrity and in compliance with official regulations and procedures.
3. Represent themselves, their experience, professional position and qualifications honestly.
4. Only disclose confidential information within the parameters allowed by legislation;
5. Be mindful of their position as a role model to students.
6. Both in their personal and professional life be mindful of their behavior and attitude, being that these may have an impact on the profession they represent.

**G. Keep their Professional Knowledge and Practice Up To Date:** Members of the Teaching Profession shall:

1. Maintain high standards of practice in relation to teaching and learning, classroom management, planning, monitoring, assessment and reporting.
2. Keep their professional knowledge and skills updated throughout their teaching career.
3. Keep updated their knowledge of relevant guidelines and educational developments in their teaching post and role and in relation to teaching in general.
4. Reflect upon and evaluate their practice as part of their continuing professional development;
5. Be open and respond positively to constructive feedback regarding their teaching practices.
6. Seek support, advice and guidance where necessary.

### **Conclusion**

Teaching is the noblest of all professions. In order to maintain their professional status, teachers have to own certain responsibilities both as individual and as members of a respectable profession. If the teacher bears good professional ethics in relation to his profession, the ethics are automatically transformed to the coming generations. The deteriorating status of the profession will gain back its potential status. Professional ethics will help in the spread of peace and international understanding across the Globe.

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