

## Teacher as a Role Model to Meet Global Challenges

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### ABSTRACT

As a result of quick economic growth, influence of western culture, over mechanization, urbanization and craving for materialistic life there has been a loss of values and of the value system at the individual level and in the society as a whole. History speaks and universally accepted, the teachers are unchallenged custodian of the society and embodiment of evolutions and revolutions of the world. The kingpin in the schooling process is the teacher. If the teacher is personally committed to the values and practices them in his/her own life, the students will imbibe the values for which teacher stands. It is for this reason only those teachers who leave deep impact on their students are remembered and also revered.

Therefore, if values have to be nurtured in children it would be crucial that their teachers function as role models. The participation of teachers in the formulation and implementation of educational plans can yield rich dividends, especially in institutional planning and programmes of qualitative improvement. Several of the community improvement programmes and school programmes such as improvement of text books, adoption of better methods of teaching and evaluation, intensive utilization of available facilities, maintaining contact with community, individual guidance to students, inculcation of social and moral values etc do not need much investment in physical or monetary terms. But their success depends essentially upon the competence of the teachers, their sense of dedication and their identification with the interests of the students committed to their care. But unless they make every effort to cultivate these skills and values they shall not be able to participate effectively in educational programmes and to discharge their responsibility to students and the society.

*(Key Words: Teacher Education, Diversity, Educational programmes and Global Challenges.)*

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### INTRODUCTION

There have been a great number of changes in education systems worldwide recently. However, in Europe we have experienced a great change with the enlargement of the European Union and its consequences. The European Union has published several papers on the future of education, both at compulsory and higher education levels.

In this essay we are going to examine the influence of the changes and its consequences on teachers in compulsory education. If we aim to have a closer look at the characteristic features of the changes, we have to examine what they are. What everybody can see at first sight is that not only European societies, but also their schools went through relevant changes. Schools used to be the source of knowledge, a place where children were educated more or less without parental control. Schools used to prepare learners for exams (both final exams in secondary education and entrance exams for university admissions).

Thus, teaching was mostly exam preparation or exam training, especially in the final years of the secondary schools. Together with the changes, new expectations appeared towards our schools. Nowadays schools need to teach their learners how to gain information and how to select and use them. This happens so quickly that students learn how to use the Internet together with their teachers. Parents are involved in decision -making so they take part in the life of the school. It is no longer enough to send the kids to school in the morning, pick them up in the afternoon. Parents -have to have a view of what is happening in the educational institution. Exam preparation is still important, but for example in Hungary the entrance exams are 'past tense', the final examinations(Matura) have changed, and the concept of learning to learn has slowly become a very important element of teachers' job.

**Focus on the Teaching process:** we still realize that there are a great number of changes in this field as well, and all of them have an influence on the role of teachers. First of all, teachers modern classrooms are no longer lecturers, they are facilitators, their main task is to set goals organize the learning process accordingly. Then, in the past, teachers used to follow a syllabus which was compulsory for them. Now a days, teachers have a National Curriculum, a Core Curriculum and a local (school) curriculum that they have to consider, but - on the other hand - they have independence to choose the teaching materials (textbook), make up a syllabus of their own and teach their pupils so that they can perform well both at examinations and in life. Curriculum design is a task teachers have to be prepared for, although the present generation of teachers has been growing into making up syllabi for years. Another difference between the past and present tasks of teachers is represented by the technical background they need to be able to use and handle effectively (computer, photocopier, power point, projectors, etc).

One of the biggest challenges for teachers is that their role in the school management has also changed. The school needs them as individuals, who can make decisions and cope with the stress of the changing world of schools. At the same time teachers need to be able to work in teams, co-operate with colleagues and parents, they have to write projects to gain money for the school programmes, they have to be PR experts and need to do all these things for a modest monthly income.

The main question is how these changes manifest themselves for the society; for the participants (teachers, learners, parents) of education. One of the mentioned European Union documents deals with teachers' role in the changing process. This summarizes the characteristic features of future teachers who are to face a brand new situation in future education. According to the document, teachers realize the changes, but it is not sure whether they are able to face the new requirements or not.

### **Teacher Education for the Future**

In my view, teacher education - rather than teacher training - needs to change in the near future. Some experts say it is too late to begin the changes, as we need new competencies in teaching right now. However, if teacher education in Hungary follows its best tradition, and it remains practical, flexible and child -centred, there is a hope that the next generation of learners will get the support and skills they need in life during their schooling years from their own teachers.

The need of a generation of teachers who aim to develop learners instead of teaching them, who help their pupils to become independent (learning to learn), who provide students with motivation and interest for life-long learning and urge them to become autonomous learners, is essential in the education of the future. The responsibility of governments, higher education institutions, and mostly teacher educators both in pre -and in-service education, is huge. European Union member states take part in several projects which help us to prepare for taking the responsibility in achieving relevant change.

### **Diversity in Teacher Education Programs**

College of Education is committed to a core set of values that are reflected in a culture that promotes development of personal and professional integrity and engagement for the benefit of our society.

#### **As an academic community, the faculty and staff of College of Education values:**

- The Pursuit of excellence in discovery, learning, and engagement
- Respect for the individual and divergent perspectives that challenge us
- Diversity in all of its manifestations,\* Creativity in thought and action
- The entrepreneurial spirit

### **Ten Roles for Teacher Leaders**

The following 10 roles are a sampling of the many ways teachers can contribute to their schools' success.

#### **1. Resource Provider**

Teachers help their colleagues by sharing instructional resources. These might include Web sites, instructional materials, readings, or other resources to use with students. They might also share such professional resources as articles, books, lesson or unit plans, and assessment tools.

#### **2. Instructional Specialist**

An instructional specialist helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies. This help might include ideas for differentiating instruction or planning lessons in partnership with fellow teachers. Instructional specialists might study research -based classroom strategies (Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001); explore which instructional methodologies are appropriate for the school; and share findings with colleagues.

#### **3. Curriculum Specialist**

Understanding content standards, how various components of the curriculum link together, and how to use the in planning instruction and assessment is essential to ensuring consistent curriculum implementation throughout a school. Curriculum specialists lead teachers to agree on standards, follow the adopted curriculum, use common pacing charts, and develop shared assessments.

#### **4. Classroom Supporter**

Classroom supporters work inside classrooms to help teachers implement new ideas, often by demonstrating a lesson, co-teaching, or observing and giving feedback.

#### **5. Learning Facilitator**

Facilitating professional learning opportunities among staff members is another role for teacher leaders. When teachers learn with and from one another, they can focus on what most directly improves student learning. Their professional learning becomes more relevant, focused on teachers' classroom work, and aligned to fill gaps in student learning. Such communities of learning can break the norms of isolation present in many schools.

#### **6. Mentor**

Serving as a mentor for novice teachers is a common role for teacher leaders. Mentors serve as role models; acclimate new teachers to a new school; and advise new teachers about instruction, curriculum, procedure, practices, and politics. Being a mentor takes a great deal of time and expertise and makes a significant contribution to the development of a new professional.

#### **7. School Leader**

Being a school leader means serving on a committee, such as a school improvement team; acting as a grade-level or department chair; supporting school initiatives; or representing the school on community or district task forces or committees. A school leader shares the vision of the school, aligns his or her professional goals with those of the school and district, and shares responsibility for the success of the school as a whole.

#### **8. Data Coach**

Although teachers have access to a great deal of data, they do not often use that data to drive classroom instruction. Teacher leaders can lead conversations that engage their peers in analyzing and using this information to strengthen instruction.

#### **9. Catalyst for Change**

Teacher leaders can also be catalysts for change, visionaries who are "never content with the status quo but rather always looking for better way". Teachers who take on the catalyst role feel secure in their own work and have a strong commitment to continual improvement. They pose questions to generate analysis of student learning.

#### **10. Learner**

Among the most important roles teacher leaders assume is that of learner. Learners model continual improvement, demonstrate lifelong learning, and use what they learn to help all students achieve.

## Roles for All

Teachers exhibit leadership in multiple, sometimes overlapping, ways. Some leadership roles are formal with designated responsibilities.

## CONCLUSION

The variety of roles ensures that teachers can find ways to lead that fit their talents and interests. Regardless of the roles they assume, teacher leaders shape the culture of their schools, improve student learning, and influence practice among their peers. Other more informal roles emerge as teachers interact with their peers.

The changes that took place in schools have changed the roles of teachers, too. In the past teachers used to be the major source of knowledge, the leader and educator of their students' school life. Teachers would organize after-school activities. They used to be the authority in the class and often took over the role of parents. Nowadays, teachers provide information and show their students how to tackle them. Although they are still considered to be a kind of leader in the class, they can be thought of as facilitators in the learning process. They are supporters rather than educators and also advisors towards parents.

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