

Teachers as Professional Ethical Guides: Perspectives of Madan Mohan Malaviya and NEP 2020

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Abstract

Teaching embraces an important dimension of ethics that often remains unspoken and hence difficult to perceive on and discuss. From the perspective of professionalism, professional ethics and a common knowledge base are important to the quality and status of the teaching profession. Teaching has become a very difficult and complicated job in today's society which is constantly changing day by day. The social structures established over a long period have now changed and the information has been quantified many times in comparison to older periods and it is still increasing very fast. Previously attained knowledge is becoming outdated in a few years and technologies are constantly upgraded.

Keywords

Teaching Profession, Professionalism, Professional Ethics, Code of Ethics, Madan Mohan Malaviya, NEP 2020

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Teachers' role is very important and crucial in shaping students' character and values. Beyond imparting academic knowledge, teachers serve as ethical guides, modeling and nurturing a moral compass in students that can guide them through life's challenges. In this capacity, they encourage students to develop respect, integrity, compassion and a sense of justice – values are essential to creating responsible and engaged citizens. Since the profession of teaching is considered as one of the noblest professions in this world therefore for a strong and effective teaching profession there ought to be a commitment from the teacher to his/her students accompanied with assurance for their best. Like all other reputed professions, there are some ethical standards that are essential for the teaching profession also.

Ethical teaching basically involves the questions of value, i.e. deciding about “good” or “bad” behavior in any specific situation. The standards, values, morals, principles, etc. make ethics that guide one's decisions or actions. Teachers are often the first adult role models, outside of family, with whom children interact closely. By treating students, colleagues, and others with respect and empathy, teachers demonstrate what it means to act ethically in daily interactions. This indirect form of ethical teaching can leave a lasting impression on students as they observe positive behavior in action. Another critical responsibility teachers hold is to create an inclusive and safe learning environment. In such environments, students feel respected and valued regardless of their background, beliefs, or abilities. By fostering inclusivity, teachers help students appreciate the dignity of all individuals and understand the harm caused by discrimination, prejudice, and bullying.

By presenting real-life scenarios and prompting students to consider the perspectives of others, teachers help them develop decision-making skills grounded in empathy and fairness. This type of ethical reasoning is essential in a world that frequently presents individuals with morally ambiguous situations. Such discussions can be particularly impactful in subjects like literature, history, or social studies, where teachers can encourage students to explore the motivations and consequences of individuals' actions within different contexts. In addition to guiding students in understanding the ethical implications of their actions, teachers can foster personal responsibility.

Thus teachers play a multifaceted role as ethical guides, not only imparting knowledge but also modeling positive behavior, fostering empathy, encouraging ethical reasoning, and promoting personal responsibility. Through these actions, they help students develop into compassionate, responsible individuals who can navigate the complexities of the world with integrity. In this way, teachers contribute not just to the academic development of students, but also to the moral fabric of

society. This paper deals with the perspectives of Madan Mohan Malaviya's thoughts on teaching ethics and values by teachers in the context of NEP 2020.

Introduction

Any profession that requires specialized study and training to provide skilled services and guidance to render social services is called a profession. It needs specialized knowledge and practical training and has its ethics to be followed by the professionals. The teaching profession is not only an art but it is a science also because the teacher must know educational psychology to deal with students emotionally and intelligently. The teaching profession helps teachers to Mold the ability and personality of the learners so as to make them productive beings, both nationally and globally. Thus knowledge of skills and training helps teachers to handle individual differences to manage the teaching-learning process and to manage different intellectual needs of learners using different aids and gadgets of learning to make them intellectual, independent beings to serve humanity at large.

Teaching includes an ethical dimension that remains unspoken and so is difficult to reflect on and discuss. From the perspective of professionalism, professional ethics and a common knowledge base are important to the quality and status of the teaching profession. Perceptions of right and wrong might become problematic and teachers rather need to deal with ethics as a grayscale or based on concepts such as accountability and responsibility. Other difficulties in teachers' professional ethics are that demands brought about by diversity in groups of children and among guardians might cause value-based tensions and external regulations might cause moral distress.

The teacher has to observe some professional ethics which are some eternal values that will not change in any circumstances. According to Rabindranath Tagore, "In our ideal life, we must touch all men and all times through manifestation of a truth which is eternal and universal". The teaching profession requires a high degree of academic excellence, repertoire of teaching skills and practical wisdom on one hand and a well-integrated value system on the other, both being oriented towards altruistic service. The teacher should not be honest only when he stands to gain by being honest, but also in situations where he/she is likely to suffer a loss. Being a professional, the teacher should be fully committed to the profession.

Personal values, implicit or explicit, influence teaching regardless of whether the values are based on religion or politics. The demand within professionalism for a professional ethic, formulated as an ethical code in many countries, is practiced based on individual teachers' personal interpretations and positions. The systems and methods for teaching are formulated on a general level and individual teachers' personal interpretations are different about what should be followed in practice.

The teachers' professionalism requires professional ethics to be based on knowledge and ethical knowledge means handling complex situations, being self-aware and aware of one's intentions in teaching. Language is also crucial to understanding, discussing, and developing professional ethics and there are different ways of verbalizing the ethical dimension such as concepts, models, and ethical codes. The teaching profession should be value-based, i.e. what is expected because the question of evidence is only relevant when determining the philosophy of teaching. Teaching always aims to achieve certain goals and is therefore based on the expression of certain values. The results is not just a matter of teaching, but of creating. When teachers justify their actions with evidence, they abdicate moral responsibility. To be ethically responsible, teachers must use their judgement in difficult situations rather than rely on evidence-based knowledge.

Value-neutral teaching is challenged by the fact that teachers' mission in many countries is to guide the children to a democratic approach in practice and speak for humanity. Being a part of teachers' professional ethics, value-based teaching may include both discussing values and incorporating them. Results from studies about value-based teaching show the importance of children being allowed to make their voices heard and being trained to think critically. Thus, the teachers' ethical responsibility is subject to many aspects that require taking a firm stand, but it is not clear how this happens.

Role of Teachers as Ethical Guides

Obligation of a professional is a kind of situation in which a specific kind of accountability is imposed on an individual which is enforced by him on himself. The teachers in general are expected to perform and deliver their specific duties under a teaching framework which is set by specific institutions like NCTE & NCERT or other higher authorities. This kind of framework is directly related to the students, their parents and the entire society. The trauma of the teaching profession is that a teacher has an obligation toward society, parents, students and all the stakeholders. In addition to this, all the teachers therefore have and are governed by certain obligations towards their teaching profession. The Right to Education Act for the Free and Compulsory Education of all children has bound all practicing teachers and entrusts on them with some kind of professional responsibilities and certain obligations which are to be adopted by them within the performance of their teaching and professional duties.

Code of Conduct is an important part of professional ethical standards that the teachers must follow. It is about acting and thinking in situations where their

choices may affect the dignity and well-being of others. It helps to provide them with guidance and direction to enhance the dignity of their professional work. The code of conduct must be followed by teachers. It can help the institution to function smoothly. A code of ethics is a document issued by higher authority that outlines procedures that affect decisions and guide the teachers in fulfilling their responsibilities towards students, parents, colleagues and society. The establishment and management of a code of ethics enables the profession self-regulating and self-governing. The primary purpose of this ethical practice is to ensure that the teacher understands about present and future impact of teaching on students' personality. The promotion of ethical standards is the collective concern of all members of the organization and the profession. School authorities should not only instruct teachers how to teach in a democratically but also how to teach ethically. Teachers should be held responsible for moral behavior. Ethical codes guide him towards honorable and professional behavior and also protect his members from violating the rules of the profession. Code of conduct and Code of Ethics both represent two types of self-regulation. Ethical codes guide decision-making and a code of conduct governs actions. However, both codes govern teachers' behavior in different ways. Code of conduct/ethics that determines how those who use them should behave. Ethical models help teachers in make independent decisions about the most appropriate course of action while conduct standards provide clear expectations about which actions are required, acceptable or prohibited. Generally, it is recommended that institutions must have both types of codes.

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' character and values. Beyond imparting academic knowledge, teachers serve as ethical guides, modeling and nurturing a moral compass in students that can guide them through life's challenges. In this capacity, they encourage students to develop respect, integrity, compassion, and a sense of justice—values that are essential to creating responsible and engaged citizens. One of the primary ways teachers act as ethical guides is through example. Teachers are often the first adult role models, outside of family, with whom children interact closely. By treating students, colleagues, and others with respect and empathy, teachers demonstrate what it means to act ethically in daily interactions. For example, a teacher who handles conflict with calmness and fairness teaches students the importance of approaching disagreements constructively. This indirect form of ethical teaching can leave a lasting impression on students as they observe positive behavior in action.

Another critical responsibility teachers hold is to create an inclusive and safe learning environment. In such environments, students feel respected and valued regardless of their background, beliefs, or abilities. By fostering inclusivity, teachers

help students appreciate the dignity of all individuals and understand the harm caused by discrimination, prejudice, and bullying. These experiences help students learn the importance of empathy and compassion and encourage them to actively support others in need.

Teachers also actively engage students in discussions about ethical dilemmas, offering guidance on how to think critically about complex moral issues. By presenting real-life scenarios and prompting students to consider the perspectives of others, teachers help them develop decision-making skills grounded in empathy and fairness. This type of ethical reasoning is essential in a world that frequently presents individuals with morally ambiguous situations. Such discussions can be particularly impactful in subjects like literature, history, or social studies, where teachers can encourage students to explore the motivations and consequences of individuals' actions within different contexts.

In addition to guiding students in understanding the ethical implications of their actions, teachers can foster personal responsibility. By holding students accountable for their actions—rewarding honesty and diligence, and addressing mistakes constructively—teachers help students learn that ethical choices have real consequences. This sense of accountability is vital for personal growth and the development of a strong moral foundation.

Lastly, teachers must be sensitive to the ethical dimensions of their influence. Recognizing that their words and actions can shape students' beliefs and values, ethical teachers strive to balance their role as guides without imposing their personal beliefs. They respect students' individuality and encourage them to form their own ethical perspectives, providing guidance while allowing students to exercise independent thought.

The profession of teaching is considered as one of the noblest and greatest professions. Along with the other obligations of the teachers there are some specific ones towards his/her profession which are very much essential for all teachers. As a professional it is the foremost duty of a teacher that he must never forget that the nature of the world is dynamic and which considers the teaching profession as noblest one. Therefore it is expected from all teachers as they are supposed to stick to the optimum level of their professional code of conduct. Further they are expected that they must always follow an extreme professional behavior and outlook within and outside the classroom. The teachers are expected that they must respect the profession of teaching on every occasion and all the time. It can't be denied that there are certain barriers which a teacher has to face but in spite of this all the teachers should take their profession with extreme respect and in high esteem. In order to help the

professional growth, a teacher has to ensure the sharing of one's knowledge and experience with other teachers. The environment of discipline is an important and essential aspect of the profession of teaching. There are certain kinds of restricted and confidential information such as academic policy matters, general records of students, confidential examination performance, the content of question papers, and assessment of answer scripts etc. These issues should not be discussed at any cost with any person who is not authorized to do so and also it should not be disclosed before the time is decided to do so. All the teachers are expected not to do anything that is expected to bring any harm or disputation to their profession.

Educational Perspectives - Madan Mohan Malaviya

Madan Mohan Malaviya, an Indian scholar, freedom fighter, and educationist, had a profound educational philosophy that focused on empowering India through quality education rooted in traditional values. His work as the founder of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) is a prime example of his vision. Here are some key elements of Malaviya's educational philosophy:

According to Madan Mohan Malaviya education should integrate India's rich cultural heritage with the scientific and technological advancements of the modern world. He aimed to create a balanced education system that was both progressive and culturally rooted. He emphasized that students should learn from Western advancements but not lose touch with their cultural identity and spiritual heritage. He encouraged that education should foster nationalism and strengthen India's self-reliance. He emphasized that students should not only acquire knowledge but also learn to serve their country and develop pride in their heritage, resist colonial influence, and contribute to India's independence and prosperity to develop the feeling of nationalism and patriotism in them.

Madan Mohan Malaviya focused on character building as an essential part of education and believed that students should be taught values such as honesty, discipline, compassion, and respect for others. According to him goal of education should be to produce not only learned individuals but also morally upright citizens who could lead India with integrity and ethical principles so as to develop moral and ethical values in human beings. Education should impart scientific and technical education to students for progress. His establishment of BHU was aimed at advancing studies in engineering, science, medicine, and agriculture to make India self-sufficient and industrially capable. He believed that technical knowledge is essential for India's economic development and prosperity and a pathway to reducing dependence on the West.

Malaviya ji advocated for accessible education for all, including marginalized communities. He emphasized on inclusive education i.e. to make education available

to women and disadvantaged groups etc to bring social reform in the society free from caste discrimination, social inequality, and poverty.

He believed that educated individuals should dedicate themselves to the service of others. In his vision, universities were not merely centers for academic learning but places where students imbibed a sense of duty towards their nation and fellow citizens so as to serve humanity at large. Malaviya ji believed that education should foster spiritual awareness and self-discipline, as spirituality is an essential aspect of human growth, influencing one's actions and interactions with society. His educational ideals included practices that would nurture the soul and create a sense of interconnectedness and respect for all life.

Malaviya's philosophy shaped Indian education by inspiring generations of leaders, scholars, and reformers who studied under or were influenced by his ideals. His creation of BHU stands as a lasting institution that embodies his commitment to a balanced, holistic, and inclusive educational model for India.

Recommendations of NEP 2020

NEP 2020 has given importance to the role of values in the life of individuals since childhood. Knowledge about Indian society, culture, art, language, traditions and the values and ethics of the young people of India is considered critical for purposes of national pride, self-confidence, self-knowledge, cooperation and integration. This policy has given immense importance to the young minds so that a holistic psychological development can be achieved with the proper inculcation of values and traditions of India. Out of twenty-two principles of NEP 2020, there are three principles that directly talk about the importance of values in the educational system of India. Ethics and human and constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality and justice, life skills such as communication, cooperation, team-work, resilience and a rootedness and pride in India, and its rich, diverse, ancient and modern culture and knowledge systems and traditions are those principles.

NEP 2020 calls upon identifying specific sets of skills and values across domains for integration and incorporation at each stage of learning, from preschool to higher education. It has rightly mentioned ethical and moral reasoning, knowledge and practice of human and constitutional values, citizenship skills and values, along with many other skills and capabilities. Ethical decision-making quality will be taught from a young age following a logical framework to develop the moral character of the student. The students will learn values from the original stories of Panchatantra, Jatak, Hitopadesh etc. along with Indian Constitution as their essential reading. In

the higher education system value value-based education will include the development of humanistic, ethical, constitutional and universal human values and the participation in community service programs will be considered an integral part of holistic education.

NEP 2020 aims to bring transformational changes in the Indian education system with a global perspective. The policy has a multidisciplinary, value-based approach focussing on holistic education along with life skills with special emphasis on skill development to improve the high employability rate among the youth. The policy believes that teachers must play a key role in reforming the entire education system. It aims to re-establish the position of teachers as the most esteemed members of our society because they truly shape the next generation of citizens and the future of our country. It ensures to do everything to empower teachers and help them to do their jobs as effectively as possible. It also addresses almost all the significant issues related to teachers, teaching and teacher education, which are responsible for improving the quality of teaching-learning.

NEP 2020 places emphasis on identifying and fostering unique and specific capabilities in students by sensitizing parents and teachers both. Fundamental concept in policy is to have a flexible system for the learners to choose the learning options as per their interests. This policy envisions strengthening the existing framework to ensure integrity, transparency and resource efficiency with constitutional values and ethics to transform the system into a healthy and vibrant knowledge society. A sustainable walk by providing high-quality education to all will help to make India a global knowledge superpower. The vision of the policy is to instill among the learners a tremendous rooted pride in being Indian in thoughts, spirit, intellect and deeds to develop knowledge, skills, values and dispositions that support the habit of responsible, committed behaviors and activities for the well-being of all human beings and nature.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in India brought significant changes to teacher education to enhance the quality and effectiveness of educators. Some key reforms in teacher education under NEP 2020 include –

1. Four-Year Integrated Teacher Education Program (ITEP)
2. Focus on Multidisciplinary Education
3. Emphasis on Practical and Field-Based Learning
4. Higher Standards and Improved Qualification Requirements
5. Continuous Professional Development (CPD)
6. Establishment of Professional Standards for Teachers (PSTs)

7. Technology Integration and Digital Literacy
8. Teacher Eligibility and Evaluation
9. Strengthening of Teacher Training Institutions

Conclusion

Teachers play a critical role in promoting and upholding professional ethics, both as role models for students and as professionals within the educational system. Here are several key aspects of their role in professional ethics. Teachers set an example for students by demonstrating ethical behavior in their interactions with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. This includes showing respect, honesty, integrity, and fairness. By embodying these qualities, teachers provide students with a clear example of how ethical principles can be applied in real life. Teachers ensure that their grading, assessments, and feedback are fair and impartial, avoiding favoritism or bias. This commitment to integrity helps students trust the educational process and encourages them to adopt similar values in their own work. Teachers help students understand the importance of ethical decision-making by encouraging them to think critically about moral issues and dilemmas. They may integrate discussions about ethical scenarios relevant to various professions, guiding students to develop their own sense of ethical responsibility. Teachers have a duty to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all students, respecting their rights and ensuring their well-being. This includes adhering to confidentiality and privacy policies, as well as being sensitive to students' personal challenges and diverse backgrounds. By fostering an environment of mutual respect and inclusivity, teachers help students learn the importance of respecting differences. They model inclusive language, address discrimination, and encourage open-mindedness, preparing students to be respectful and ethical individuals in diverse professional settings. Teachers adhere to codes of ethics set by educational institutions or professional teaching organizations. This includes following guidelines related to academic honesty, classroom conduct, and professional boundaries. In doing so, teachers contribute to the integrity of the teaching profession and maintain public trust. Teachers instill a sense of social responsibility in students by teaching them about the broader impact of their actions on society. Through projects, service-learning, and discussions, teachers encourage students to consider ethical implications beyond personal gain, fostering responsible citizenship. Thus teachers play a foundational role in promoting professional ethics, shaping students not only as learners but also as responsible, ethical professionals in their future careers.

Both Malaviya's educational philosophy and NEP 2020 underline that the purpose of education extends beyond academics; it is a means to build character,

instill values, and prepare individuals to contribute ethically to society. Malaviya's thoughts laid the foundation for integrating ethical and cultural values in Indian education, while NEP 2020 builds on this legacy by modernizing and institutionalizing these principles in a contemporary context. Madan Mohan Malaviya believes that teachers have a crucial role to play in shaping the character and values of their students and this recommendation of his matches with the recommendation of NEP 2020. A visionary educationist, Malviya ji believes that higher education is the basic building block in the creation of an inclusive, equitable and diverse knowledge in the knowledge society and these views of his educational philosophy are directly reflected in the recommendations of NEP 2020. Malviya ji believes in the amalgamation of ancient and scientific knowledge in higher education which matches with the present vision of NEP 2020. Malviya ji believes that spiritual and cultural heritage is the backbone of our nation, so teachers should develop a sense of pride in students for their cultural heritage and nation which matches with the recommendations of NEP 2020. Quite similar to the educational philosophy of Malviya ji, NEP 2020 recommends for promoting character-building, patriotism and national consciousness in youth through education. Malviya ji advocates for providing education in science and technology for the holistic development of students which is also reflected in the recommendations of NEP 2020. According to Malviya ji, the role of teachers is not just to impart knowledge but also to inspire and guide their students to become responsible individuals who can contribute to society in a positive way. Thus educational philosophy of Madan Mohan Malaviya is still relevant today to create a comprehensive education system that can cater to the diverse needs of the learners so that they can become responsible and enlightened citizens.

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