23
THE ROLE OF THE ETHICAL EDUCATOR IN THE LEARNING COMMUNITY

Dr. Cynthia Catherine Michael, *Associate Professor & Head PG and Research Department of English, Fatima Mata National College (Autonomous), Kollam, Kerala State, India*

Abstract:
       This study reflects on the ethics, standards, and experiences of learning to develop responsive pedagogy. The dimension of ethics and values is an underdeveloped topic in education, despite being one of the fundamental pillars of professional practice. Training has a key place in developing the ethical dimension. To serve students equitably, teachers must support the holistic needs of all learners, especially targeting the needs of students who are furthest behind. To become successful educators in the classroom, educators need to examine assumptions, explore multiple ways of knowing and being in a community. They need to reflect on the ethics, standards, and experiences of learning to develop responsive pedagogy for learners in their classrooms. These learners need to be confident, connected and actively involved.

Key Words: Ethics, Pedagogy, Training, Educators, Intellectually, Vision.

Introduction: Reflecting on the ethics, standards, and experiences of learning to develop responsive pedagogy -

       The word ethics derives from the Greek "ethos", which means custom. It is the set of good customs that become obligatory norms in people's daily behaviour. It is a reflection on human acts from the field of personal freedom that judges these as good or bad. This gives rise to a certain way of acting that leads people to make decisions and choose a certain form of behaviour, practice and relationship. Ethics seeks the dignity and happiness of all people. Specifically, ethics applied to education connects professional knowledge with moral reflection and the real problems of practice (Riberas & Vilar, 2014; Vilar et al., 2016). It therefore regulates the activities of a profession insofar as it is more linked to duty and a commitment to people's well-being and dignity. In addition to this, it is composed of internalized values that govern the professional practice. In the socio-educational field, the ethical view is characterized as an individual or collective process where behaviours and attitudes are introduced with the aim of achieving social cohesion and promoting collective well-being. Campillo & Sáez (2012) were more specific and directly link ethics to the educational relationship, conceiving it as a practice that materializes within the professional relationship. From these definitions we understand the ethical view as an individual and collective process; as a relationship with oneself and with others, and as a process that allows realities and contexts to be mobilized with the aim of improving society and achieving collective well-being. Incorporating an ethical view into everyday practice will provide (1) a guide for educators' daily practice and action; (2) the possibility of building an ethical relationship with the other, and (3) an aid for decision-making in the face of moral dilemmas in the relationship with the other.

       The dimension of ethics and values is an underdeveloped topic in education, despite being one of the fundamental pillars of professional practice. Ethics is a complex and difficult topic to connect with professional practice and one on which there is not sufficient reflection. In fact, they perceive the ethical dimension to be of greater importance than the theoretical or practical one, even though, conversely, it is the least developed pillar at the theoretical-empirical level. Training has a key place in developing the

ethical dimension. There are three reasons for this: firstly, educators express the need to develop the ethical dimension but do not know how to implement it in practice. Secondly, scholars and educators agree that training in ethics is necessary but insufficient and traditionally focuses on conflict. And thirdly, the more training and experience educators have, the greater their perception of the need to develop the ethical dimension. Having more specific training on the subject would provide educators with more tools to work on the socio-educational relationship from an ethical perspective and not only when a conflict of values is already present, as well as ensuring a practice consistent with the three pillars of social education (theory, practice, values). We can conclude that there is a need to promote ethics training within education from a practical perspective. This would allow educators to be aware of the ethical perspective, to have strategies to implement it in practice and to become aware of which values are worked on in the socio-educational relationship. This perspective focuses on the educator, ignoring the fact that the centre of all educational action should be the subject of education, as indicated by the code of ethics itself. This divergence of perspectives hinders the connection between theory and practice called for by both discourses, so it is necessary to take into account the practical perspective if we are to develop an ethical dimension in the socio-educational relationship.

In every classroom, students come in having a spectrum of abilities, talents, and growth areas. Though teachers want to meet the needs of every learner, they often find that whole group instruction is not always sufficient. In order to differentiate instruction and support every learner,
teachers can create systems - such as station rotation - to support small group instruction. However, educators and leaders are often apprehensive to push an "innovative model" because they are unsure about where to start or how successful the shift away from a traditional model (both with infrastructure and instruction) will be. Educators need to understand why a 'one size fits all' approach to education does not support all learners and how stations can be a great first step to personalizing for students. They need to explore various approaches to space, culture, and routines when implementing a station rotation model. They would also need to be able to implement a basic station rotation in a traditional structure by utilizing key strategies, tools, and research?

To serve students equitably, teachers must support the holistic needs of all learners, especially targeting the needs of students who are furthest behind. Using data effectively helps educators better understand learners, build relationships, and personalize instruction to meet unique needs.

However, translating data insights into instructional decisions can be challenging, particularly when students have a wide variety of growth areas to target. Given the number of potential sources to pull from, educators can often feel overwhelmed by a deluge of data. Educators need to use tools, create time, and collaborate with instructional teammates to analyze and identify actions from data. They then need to use various types of data, including structured, unstructured, behavioral, and personal data, to understand their students holistically and leverage mixed groups and leveled groups to best support student learning.

In many blended and personalized learning environments, traditional materials are too inflexibly designed, expensive and often outdated to easily be used by educators seeking to personalize and utilize technology to meet the needs of all students. The availability of Open Educational Resources provides an opportunity for educators to find the right content for their students and adapt it based on needs and instructional approaches. There are many places to find openly licensed, authentic resources from which you can build a coherent, rigorous curriculum. This work can be challenging, however, given the breadth of materials available. Educators need to research how Open Educational Resources might fit into their coherent plan for student learning across the year and also if they want to replace their current materials with full-course Open Educational Resources or if they are interested in developing a core set of materials from a variety of sources.

Conclusion: Vision of our Learners

To become successful educators in the classroom, educators need to examine assumptions, explore multiple ways of knowing and being in a community, and reflect on ethical actions that contribute to a more equitable, sustainable, and democratic educational environment. Learners are in the process of developing their capacity to reason, make judgments, engage in more complex social interactions and are becoming more aware of themselves and how they are the same or different from others. They are gaining a wider reference of relationships and are beginning to recognize the multiple roles they participate in through their interactions with others. This period of education can be particularly challenging for many students. Firstly, it is in these years that many learners face the increased social and emotional changes of adolescence. Secondly, the period coincides with many learners transitioning from one stage of life to another.

Intellectually, learners are curious, motivated to achieve when challenged, and capable of critical and complex thinking. They should have opportunities to be curious and to have their thinking extended and challenged. Socially, they have an intense need to belong and be accepted by their peers while finding their own place in the world. They are involved in forming and questioning their identities on many different levels. Students' need to be social and to know about themselves, can be met through a culturally responsive program and a classroom culture that celebrates diversity. Psychologically, learners are vulnerable and self-conscious, especially during the first years of the transitioning period and often experience unpredictable mood swings. Educators must be sensitive to the emotional and psychological changes that are happening to students. With their new sense of the larger world around them, learners are idealistic and want to have an impact on making the world a better place. Educators have the responsibility to provide opportunities for students to participate in decision-making that affects their life within the classroom and prepare them for the outside world.

Transitions are not just a defined period of time in which specific orientation activities are put in place to support learners to know about education systems, their teachers and their peers. Transitions are most successful for learners where there is a social culture that progressively supports students to adapt to the ongoing educational and social changes at secondary school. Transitions take time, and students respond differently as they adjust to a changed environment, teachers and peers. Educators need to reflect on the ethics, standards, and experiences of learning to develop responsive pedagogy for learners in their classrooms. These learners need to be confident, connected, actively involved and lifelong learners. Effective transitions are an important part of this process. Educators need ongoing and different approaches to respond to the diversity of all the students that transition to their school. Learners who do not experience this support during the transition are at greater risk of disengaging from learning. The most vulnerable of these students are those who do not have a history of successful primary education, students with learning difficulties, and those from low income families. There are likely to be serious implications for their achievement, employment prospects, and well-being if they are not well supported through their transition.

We can therefore once more confirm the importance of educational intentionality and training, since they are what make ethics tangible in the relationship, and the learner really aware of those values. Being aware of which values are important and into which dimensions of the relationship they can be incorporated can help socio-educational professionals to have a broader and more reflective view of practice and the relationship with the other. Educators need to understand and embody care, trust, respect and integrity, critically explore issues related to cultivating a responsible, sustainable, and increasingly democratic learning environment, be able to critically examine self-as-teacher and self-as-learner to extend pedagogy and practice and engage with aspects of collaborative inquiry and engage with equity, sustainability, and democracy to foster rich learning environments.

References

1. Campillo, M., Sáez, J. & Sánchez, M. 'Situational ethics and the professionalization of Social Education'. *Ethics and Education.* (2014). 9(1), 315. DOI: 10.1080/17449642.2014.890321.
2. Davis, B., Sumara, D., & Luce-Kapler, R. "Democratic Citizenship Education". *In Engaging minds: Cultures of education and practices of teaching.* New York: Routledge. (2015).
3. Donohoo, J. "Why Collaborative Inquiry". *Collaborative inquiry for educators: A facilitator's guide to school improvement.* Corwin Press. (2013).
4. https://us.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/55369_Donohoo_Ch_1.pdf
5. Janer, A. & Úcar, X. (2016). 'Analysing the dimensions of social pedagogy from an international perspective'. European Journal of Social Work, 20(2), 203218. DOI: 10.1080/13691457.2016.1188782.
6. Storo, J. (2012). 'The difficult connection between theory and practice in Social Pedagogy'. *International Journal of Social Pedagogy*, 1(1),1729.
7. Vilar, J., Riberas, G. & Rosa, G. (2016). How social educators manage conflicts of values. *Ramon Llull Journal of Applied Ethics,* 7, 207230.
8. https://amberroweblog.files.wordpress.com/2016/11/brent-davis-dennis-sumara-rebecca-luce-kapler-engaging-minds_-cultures-of-education-and-practices-of-teaching-routledge-2015.pdf