

The Role Conception of A Deontological Code for Teachers – A Study of its Role Performance

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Abstract

The role conception and role performance and their complete correspondence in the light of a Deontological code for the teachers form the theme of the present study. The field of ethics gives place to two approaches – Deontological and Teleological. The first deals with duties, actions and rules to be performed and adhere to them strictly and imperatively in their performance. The second concerns with their purpose or Teleology and, therefore, leans towards their evaluations. These two aspects of duties to be performed by professional teachers were exposed with the support of factual and theoretical studies undertaken by eminent researchers in the field of professional ethics in general and for in-service teachers in particular, enriching the area. Finally it was observed that moral and ethical issues in character education are slowly becoming important as a part of teacher education programs where role conception, role demands in relation to role performance are taking firm grounds in their complete correspondence with evaluations. It is proposed therefore that if one takes teaching as a career, one must be committed to it. 'Be' a teacher, 'Remain' a teacher and 'Make' a teacher in his/her choice as a teacher in promotion of values and in the interest of progress of teacher education.

Key Words: Deontology, Teleology, Role Conception, Role Performance, Moral Maturity.

Introduction

It is a gainsaying that a little good conduct surpasses a ton of knowledge. Obviously, it emphasizes implementation and maintenance of fair conduct over gaining knowledge. This thus pushes the discussion in the field of ethics, the science of conduct that deals with moral principles that control and influence a person's behavior. It is a fact that ethics provide a code of conduct to be followed by persons in all professions imperatively that creates a need for typical performance of special training or skills in that profession. Teacher education too initiates and trains pre-service teachers to enable them to adopt teaching profession. Keeping the whole gamut of ethical training of future teachers in character education in view, it is felt therefore, to highlight its deontological base and its teleological implications with formidable comments on the two aspects of ethical codes for serving teachers- a very important or core theme of teacher education. This is why, in this paper the attempts have been made to highlight professional code of conduct for teachers in the vast field of ethics.

Deontological and Teleological Approaches in ethics

Before analyzing the fact behind it, it is needed to clarify two major approaches that are Deontological and Teleological ethics. The first focuses on duties or actions and rules that may differ from system to system or profession to profession. The second does not deal with actions or duties and rules themselves or how closely they adhere to a system of rules but their purposes. Teleological ethics mostly leans towards consequentialism. It concerns therefore, with the end product or the effects of rules or code of conduct for teachers. Accordingly, in it, the impact of society as a whole is taken into account that determines morality. This approach differs from deontological approach in that there is no set of hard and fast rules in place. Action may be moral or immoral depending on circumstances. The first is the normative ethical position that judges the morality of an action based on the action's adherence to a rule or rules (Hursthouse and Rosalind 2012). It is sometimes described as "duty" or "obligation" or "rule" -based ethics, because rules "bind you to your duty" (Waller and Bruce 2005). This is why, it breaks away from and contrasted to consequentialism, pragmatism, and is akin to moral absolutisms that provides norms, codes or rules for conduct and emphasize obligations and dutifulness in actions or conduct.

Role conception for ethical training

Deontological code provides role conception for ethical training for pre-service teachers to bring them to expectations in fulfilling their role demands well-fully. It serves as solid ontological base for performance of duties by serving teachers to perform positively. Thus deontological code highlights and serves as performance of duties by teachers. It is an imperative for them and for their profession. Its importance lies in the fact that it gives boundaries that one has to stay within in ones career that sometimes become grey areas where answers of the problem/problems remain not so simple.

A number of professional organizations define their ethical approach as a number of discrete components (RICS). To perform duties in any profession in a normal way, smoothly and ethically is not very

easy due to a number of discrete components of the professional ethics. Graphical presentations of these components are shown in figure-1

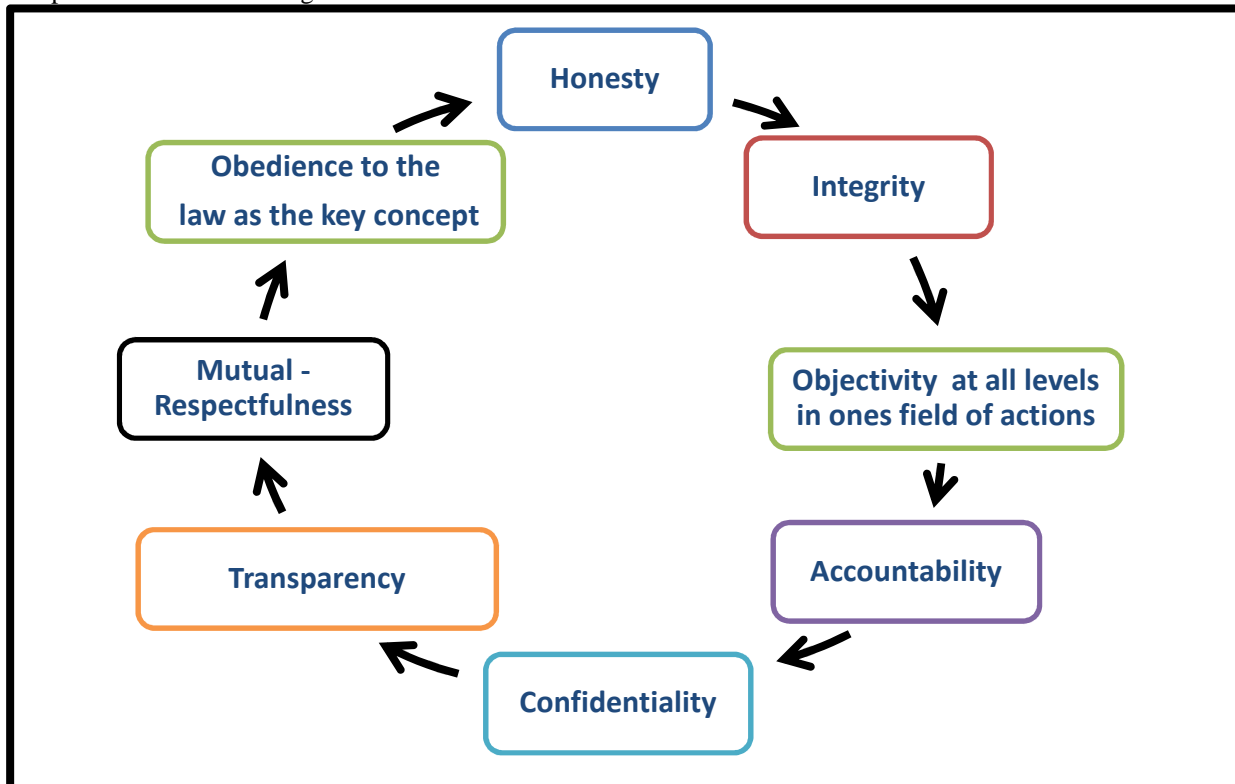


Figure 1: Discrete components of the professional ethics

These components are supplementary to each other. If pursued positively, though difficult in their implementation, regulation- both internal and statutory, their sincere cultivation must lead to enhance the personality of the professionals. To project these components in a simple and clear manner a reference to the study made by Wynne (1995) needs addendum. A teacher's first moral obligation is to provide excellent instruction. Teachers with a high level of moral professionalism have a deep obligation to help students learn. Wynne emphasizes that teachers with the sense of obligation demonstrate their moral professionalism by:

- * coming to work regularly and on time;
- * being well informed about their student-matter;
- * planning and conducting classes with care;
- * regularly reviewing and updating instructional practices;
- * cooperating with, or if necessary, confronting parents of underachieving students;
- * cooperating with colleagues and observing policies so the whole institution works effectively;
- * tactfully, but firmly criticizing unsatisfactory policies and proposing constructive improvement.

On observation of points raised by Wynne (1995), it can be maintained that though codes of ethics may not have played a significant role in teacher preparation programs in the past, professional ethical dispositions of teachers must now be addressed as part of the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accreditation process (NCATE, 2002). To make the point more coherent and clear it can be asserted that a program of ethical education developed is finding adaptations to other professional training programs, including the training of teachers (Rest & Narvaez, 1994). In it the Four-Component Model of Moral Maturity, assumes that moral behaviors are built on a series of component processes (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999). Each component is clearly defined and educational goals, teaching strategies and assessment methods were derived from those definitions. The components are presented graphically in figure-2

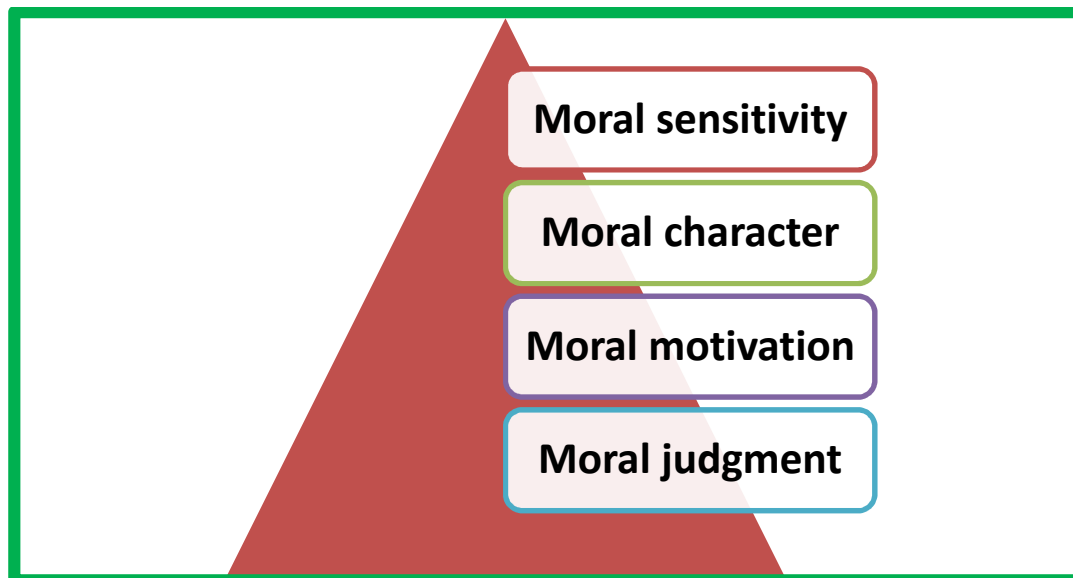


Figure 2: Four-Component Model of Moral Maturity

Moral sensitivity involves knowing cause-consequent chains of events in the real world, and empathy and role-taking abilities. Moral character requires individuals to act on their moral conviction. Moral motivation requires a prioritization of moral values over personal values, particularly in professional settings, and Moral judgment requires adults to make moral judgments about complex human activities.

Issues related to the moral and professional ethical education of teachers are the focus for several book-length treatments (Tom, 1984; Sockett, 1993; Goodlad, Soder, Sirotnik, 1990; and Goodlad & McMannon, 1997). It would seem that this is developing into an area of greater interest to the profession. Moral motivation training might include profession-specific service activities, and the study of professional moral exemplars (i.e., exemplary teachers); and moral character training might include strategies for problem solving and conflict resolution among and between children and adults (Bebeau, Rest & Narvaez, 1999). ERIC Digest (2003) raises some important moral and ethical issues in teacher education that rest on identification and assessment of professional education, foundation and specific models for the pre-service training of teachers of character. To highlight the former, Benninga considers a model of the student teacher to prepare a theme unit and reaches the fact that the teacher may have potential but his/her behavior may be unprofessional or even professionally unethical if one violates principles of professional ethics, norms, values and principles that govern the professional conduct of a teacher. The latter lays emphasis on understanding foundations for moral and character education that rests on emphasis on the habits and motivations of workers concentrating more on the values, a basic sense of right and wrong and accomplishment. It cannot be denied that amid high expectations, rewards, pressure, encouragement and grace etc. intrinsic motivations play key-role. In behavior, impulsiveness stubbornness, belligerency, indecisiveness, overreactions to irritation are to be avoided in one's profession. And be more conducive to optimism and full maturities are to be shown. These two aspects lead to a strong cultural work ethic, temperance, and the ability to cope with frustrations, optimism and empathy creating, psychologically a safe teachers model with exemplary character traits (Benninga, Berkowitz, Kuehn & Smith, 2003) be promoted.

Conclusions

What have been stated above, it appears that moral and ethical issues in character education are slowly becoming important as a part of teacher education programs. Philosophical writings and psychological researches exist to provide guidance for creating models of practice. Majority of the programs overwhelmingly agree that core values should be taught comfortably, practically and effectively at all levels of teacher education. The need is to the profession to ensure brooder and deeper implementation and its perfect maintenance for future teleological evaluations and corrections of the wrong paths for the benefits of educational development in teacher education at large in the light of the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1998) and UNESCO Recommendations concerning the Status of Teachers (1966) whose objectives are:

- to raise consciousness about the norms and ethics of the teaching profession;
- to help increase job satisfaction in education; to enhance status and self-esteem, and;
- to increase respect for the profession in communities.

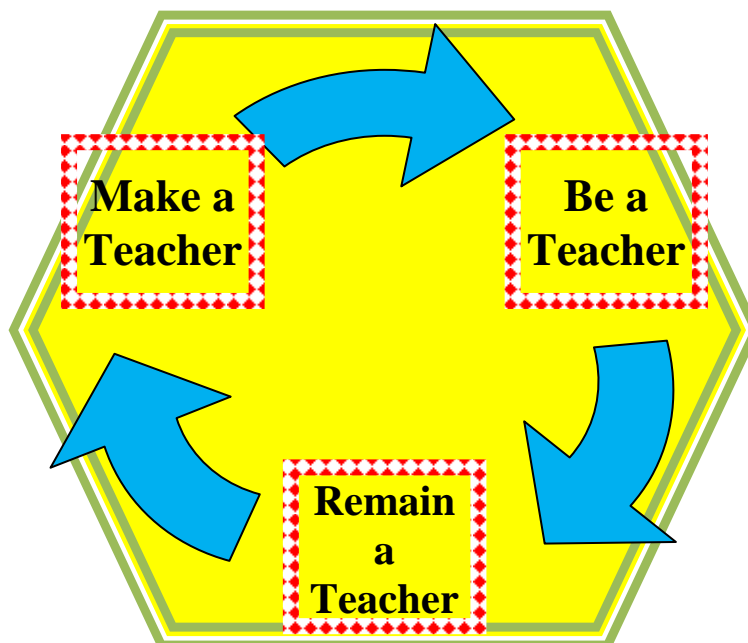


Figure 3: Cycle of maintenance of complete correspondence

Figure-3 shows the cycle of maintenance of complete correspondence between the role conception and the role performance of ethical code for serving teachers. This will make the role conception and the role performance of ethical code for serving teachers to go hand in hand that is incomplete correspondence and harmony. It is proposed therefore that if one takes teaching as a career, one must be committed to it. 'Be' a teacher, 'Remain' a teacher and 'Make' a teacher in his/her choice as a teacher in promotion of values and in the interest of progress of teacher education.

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