

Commitment to the Teaching Profession

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Abstract: Commitment is a very important characteristic; therefore, it is a paramount need for the profession of teaching. A committed teacher is never satisfied with what she or he already has; rather always seeks for the new ideas and ways to contribute to the students. A committed educator will have the passion and enthusiasm for teaching and learning, as well. As she or he develops himself or herself, this fact will have a direct result on the learners' academic success and personal development. Such a teacher will be successfully able to create authentic and effective learning and teaching and consequently, the learning process as well as the teaching will be facilitated automatically and this will promote both the potential of the students and learners. This study puts a light on the committed teachers and effects of commitment on the process of learning and teaching.

Keywords: Commitment, Passion, Committed Teacher, Authentic and Effective Learning and Teaching, Dedication

1. Teaching Profession

Teaching is a process in which educators have an inevitable role. It is even true to say that the awareness and curiosness of some educated people about their environment and the events happening around them have created the act of teaching, because they have wished to share their own experiences on the objects or phenomena with the people around them. In the course of time, this has turned into a system that we have been calling 'education'. Wherever we go, although the way how people teach, that is to say their methodology and styles, changes, there is one thing remaining the same; it is the need for teaching. Each society today, as in the past times, has given a very important significance to the act of teaching and those societies who have made the greatest investments in the education and educators are the ones that are ruling the world today in terms of philosophy, technology, policy and methodology.

In a world in which technology bears a paramount place; capitalism dominates on the many ideology; the life is flowing very fast and distances are getting narrow so is the culture, the educators are supposed to adapt themselves to the needs of the age. This adaptation requires a commitment to the profession of teaching to able to promote the success of the students, the educator himself or herself and the education

itself. In other words, any educator without being committed to the teaching will not be able to cope with others; either she or he will remain in the same level or place, or she or he will be squeezed under the realities and changes of the current era.

2. What is Commitment?

In the literature, it is possible to find various definitions of the commitment. Buchanan (1997) defined the commitment as the fact that an individual feels an emotional connection to an organization in terms of the goals and values of the organization without expecting any interest (as cited in Meyer & Allen, 1997). Similarly, Celep (2000) also makes the definition of the commitment as it is the attitudes of an individual towards the organizational values and goals beyond the formal and normative expectations of an organization.

Commenting on these definitions in terms of education, it can be inferred that the education system is the organization on the top; the individual is the educator; formal and normative expectations of the organization is the process of teaching and learning; and the attitudes beyond the formal and normative expectations refer to the commitment, enthusiasm, and passion of an educator towards the regular educational processes and the learners.

On the other hand, Altun (2017) handles the concept of commitment from a direct perspective of education. He expresses that teacher commitment has been considered as a passion to the work. Passion is at the core of effective learning and teaching. Mart (2013) argues that passionate teachers are distinguished by their commitment to achievement of their students. Considering this definition of 'commitment', it is likely to say that the commitment is to dedicate one's self to the task, job to be performed. It can be a physical or non-physical effort; however, it requires the readiness of mind to do the action. In this sense, when we talk about any committed teacher, we understand that she or he is both physically and spiritually ready to do the act of teaching. In other words, the motivating power in his or her spirit is complete to push the educator to take the necessary steps to teach. Here, the focal point is that the committed teacher is an educator with passion, desire, enthusiasm and dedication.

3. A Committed Educator

Committed teachers are those who have excitement, passion, desire, enthusiasm and energy. Thanks to these adjectives, such educators are ready to challenge to alter the things in their environment; create a difference in terms of their methodology and profession of teaching. Due to their commitment to the teaching and learning, they will be able to generate something new, something permanently-changing and something authentic. As Zehm and Kottler (1993) mentioned, those teachers carrying such passion of commitment will always seek for more in teaching and learning, because they are fond of the profession they are holding.

Likewise, Serin (2017) stated that one of the most important elements in the development of passion for teaching is the commitment and dedication of teachers to students and their learning. Passionate teachers are strongly committed to their work and can inspire their students and awaken their desire to learn. According to his perspective, committed teachers can create a difference thanks to their dedication to their profession.

It is to state that commitment is one of the overwhelming characteristics of the educators who have left an unforgettable impact upon their learners. According to Huber (1999), such educators will have strong bonds with the school, learners and their profession. Such a commitment contains passion, enthusiasm, motivation and dedication to the job and tasks to be performed and the outputs of this dedication will be automatically visible in the academic successes of the learners.

A committed teacher is never satisfied with what she or he already has; rather always seeks for the new ideas and ways to contribute to the students. A committed educator will have the passion and enthusiasm for teaching and learning, as well. As she or he develops himself or herself, this fact will have a direct impact on the learners' academic success, as said above, and personal development. Such a teacher will be successfully able to create authentic and effective learning and teaching and, consequently, the learning process as well as the teaching will be facilitated automatically and this will promote both the potential of the teachers and learners.

Hargreaves (1997) suggests that teaching is a pedagogical phenomenon and an incommitted teacher will not be able to show sufficient achievement, because the educator is the one guiding the learner into the success. In this sense, if the educator himself or herself lacks the commitment and the passion which is highly required, then the learner will not yield as expected. In other words, the organizational expectations will not be fulfilled due to the lack of dedication to the job description of the profession. Some scholars have mentioned that such teachers equipped with the peculiarity of commitment, passion and zeal can give enough courage to the learners to do better because their success is subject to the fact that they are keen, willing and careful (Hansen, 2001).

4. What is the Role of Commitment in Learning and Teaching?

Commitment is one of the adjectives which are indispensable ones for any educator. As claimed by Day (2004), there are some items that can be optional for education, but a committed passion is not one of those for the process of education. Passion creates motivation, hence encourages teachers to act (Vallerand, 2007). For this reason, passionate teachers can create excitement that influences learning. Hargreaves (1997) emphasizing the link between learning and education argues that all pedagogical approaches fail unless passion is created in the classroom. Passionate teachers like their job, and they are aware of the effect of passion on student success. The influence of passion for learning and teaching is indisputable, for this reason passionate teachers are always in an effort to increase student achievement. Hansen (2001) defines passionate teachers as people who truly believe that teaching energizes them compared with those who have lost faith and put less effort into their jobs. An enthusiastic teacher can encourage students and turn them into passionate individuals to achieve more successful outcomes. Fink (2003) states that when students attach importance to something they become more energetic and willing to learn.

One of the most important elements in the development of passion for teaching is the commitment and dedication of teachers to students and their learning. Passionate teachers are strongly committed to their work and can inspire their students and awaken their desire to learn. Fox (1964) states that the power of a profession is measured by the commitment of those who do it and he goes on to say that it is the same with teaching. Fox emphasizes that passion is a distinctive feature for teachers and that it has a positive effect on student achievement. Kushman (1992) found a link between teacher commitment and student

achievement. Fried (2001) supports this idea by saying that there is a relationship between passionate teaching and quality education. The reasons can be listed as follows:

- The students discerning the enthusiasm of the teacher will be much more interested and careful and the teaching will not be something to be done by push, rather a product with inspiration.
- The commitment helps teacher to create a collaborative environment through the effective methodology, and in such an environment, a natural interaction is established between the learner and teacher.
- The passion and commitment will increase the active participation of the students in the lessons, because of the interaction and motivation provided by the teacher.
- Not only the implementers of education but also the learners will carry the education out of the four walls of classroom due to the mutual self-respect occurred among the learner and teacher.
- The teachers will be much more innovative which will prevent students from getting bored.

Conclusion

Commitment to the teaching will directly and positively contribute to the teaching methodology, comprehension, personality, characteristics and attitudes of the educators. The teachers equipped with commitment, passion and enthusiasm will be role models for not only the learners and but also for their colleagues. Even, it can be said that learning environments are shaped by these education implementers who seek for more. Commitment has a key function in terms of success in education. Within this context, it can be concluded that our lives are better shaped by those teachers with passion and enthusiasm. The commitment to their profession ignites the passion, desire and motivation within them. Metaphorically, speaking while they are burning in positive meaning, they burn the things and the persons -students and the colleagues- around them. The success, that is why, is not a matter of problem for such educators and for their students. Committed teachers have direct impact upon their students and the profession of teaching. As mentioned above, such teachers will bring new ideas into the life; never will be satisfied with what they have.

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