

## Multidimensional Role of Secondary School Teachers

### INTRODUCTION

To a great extent, education serves as a determinant of the development of any society. A good education system usually serves a basis for the powerful society that can overcome various challenges and maintain stability. The education system cannot function without educators: apart from students, teachers are the second important actors in the education process. Educational needs of the society have been changing together with social-economical changes that occur in it; these needs should be addressed by professionals who develop the education system. In turn, teachers should be able to embrace the new tendencies in education and adjust their teaching style to the latest requirements of the education system. Secondary school education is an important stage in students' intellectual formation. At this stage, students decide on the career to choose and choose the best educational options. During this period students get understanding of their interests, preferences and talents. Teaching secondary school students, a teacher acquires more than one role: apart from delivering knowledge, an educator should guide students, direct their efforts most effectively and help them in their searching for the self.

### CHANGE OF A TEACHER'S ROLE

A teacher's responsibilities have been changing with time. Traditionally, the role of teachers was limited to presenting the new information to students. This process is considered to be of great importance for the whole society, as it ensures continuity in information exchange (Ryan and Cooper 31). The significance of this function has not

diminished nowadays due to the increasing significance of high-quality information in the modern world. However, it became clear that the process of acquiring knowledge is interrelated with other processes of a student's intellectual and psychological development, and the discovered linkage between them made educators think about extending a teacher's role. Besides, there have been significant changes in the society that predetermined new conditions and peculiarities of children's upbringing (Wong and Wong 61). For example, social and economical changes have made it impossible for parents to spend much time with their children (Ryan and Cooper 44). Consequently, students spend most of their time with their teachers and rely on their support when making key decisions in their lives. For example, when choosing a career, students tend to carefully consider teachers' opinions and recommendations.

#### TEACHER AS A CO-LEARNER WITH STUDENTS

Today teachers are considered to be not just specialists who provide students with the new information, but rather managers or facilitators of knowledge. Instead of being the principle holders of knowledge in a classroom, teachers are perceived as "co-learners" with their students. With advancement in information technology, information is easily accessible via many other sources, especially the internet. Thus, teachers are no longer the only sources of information; besides, it is not surprising to find some students that possess information that their teachers are not familiar with. However, the role of educators in the teaching process evolves: as a facilitator of learning, a secondary school teacher helps his/her students acquire knowledge and make good use of the information obtained. With many sources of knowledge, students need skills of effective

information utilization. For example, students need guidance on the ways to use various electronic sources; choose reliable sources that can be referred to in an academic research; analyze and compare scholars' ideas that may sometimes oppose to each other. Awakening students' interest towards working with different sources of information is also a part of a teacher's responsibilities.

#### CLASS MANAGEMENT

Traditionally, teachers are responsible for managing the classroom environment and discipline. To a great extent, students' performance depends on the teacher's ability to effectively organize the work in the classroom: comfortable psychological environment is crucial for successful learning. Although students may have strong self-control, their age makes them need external management (Wong and Wong 77). Class management is not only useful to students; it is also important to teachers, as it helps them manage themselves when they execute their role in the classroom (78). Discipline is always advocated for in many areas of life, and education is not an exception. The way a student behaves influences his/her performance, as well as that of the other learners (Merrett 54). Ability to manage a class and guide students in their learning is, in fact, the key characteristic of a successful teacher. Various skills are necessary for successful maintenance of favourable environment (Ryan and Cooper 61). However, class management requires not only skills and experiences, but also an ability to understand students and creativity. The most important determinant in class management is a teacher's attitude towards teaching and students. To be successful and lead students to

success as well, a teacher should perceive teaching as more than a way of earning his/her living, but a call.

There are many established methods that can be used in teaching a lesson. The most popular methods include lectures, discussions and demonstrations. Teachers prefer to combine several methods rather than focus on one of them. The choice of teaching methods depends on the topic and objectives of the lesson, peculiarities of students' psychological needs and behaviour at class, and an educator's teaching style. There are established procedures that proved to be effective in organizing a lesson: the first step is preparing students for participation in learning; this is necessary for making sure that students participate in the class work, right from the beginning of the lesson (Wong and Wong 77). After the preparation, the new information is presented to students. Then, students have an opportunity to use the new knowledge in practice. Finally, they are tested to find out how they have coped with the new material.

## MOTIVATION

Apart from parents who educate and bring their children up from the moment of their birth, teachers have the power to contribute to students' motivation for learning (Ryan and Cooper 117). It is known that motivation has a bigger impact on a student's performance than his/her inherent abilities. Subjects that require students' particular efforts due to their complexity, such as mathematics, chemistry or physics, are successfully learned by secondary school students who have positive attitude towards them. Motivation helps a teacher improve students' attitude towards different disciplines. One of the best ways to motivate students is to have positive expectations (Wong and

Wong 112). The attitude of students is very much influenced by the attitude of the teacher: if a teacher has a positive attitude to students, students also develop a positive attitude towards the teacher and the subject.

#### ROLE MODEL

Teachers are considered to be role models for their students. Students look up at their teachers as role models in their intellectual and social lives. As a role model, a teacher should possess certain features. Firstly, he/she should have good listening skills (Merrett 65). This skill helps the teacher establish rapport with his/her students. Listening is a sign of care; when used towards secondary school students, it encourages them to share their opinions, which is very useful for their intellectual development. It is also necessary for teachers to use their skills of empowering students. Empowering students does not actually mean that the teacher is weak but gives youngsters an opportunity to develop their leadership skills and become more responsible in different fields including learning.

#### CONCLUSION

Talented and hard-working teachers are the core of any educational system. The role of teachers has changed, as educational needs of the society are constantly changing. Today, a teacher's role is not limited to presenting the new information. Due to the growth of the amount of information available via books, magazines and the internet, teachers have become "co-learners" with their students; besides, they facilitate learning rather than limiting their duty to simple lecturing. Class management is a key

component of a teacher's classroom responsibilities: an educator is expected to create a good environment for learning. In addition, teachers act as role models for their students; thus, they should encourage young learners to achieve their goals in education.

## Works Cited

Merrett, Frank. *Positive Teaching in the Secondary School*. New York: Sage, 1999.

Ryan, Kevin, and James Cooper. *Kaleidoscope: Contemporary and Classic Readings in Education*. New York: Cengage Learning, 2009.

Wong, Harry, and Rosemary Wong. *The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher*. New York: Harry K. Wong Publications, 2004.