

Roles on the Roller Coaster-Need to Rethink and Redefine Teaching

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ABSTRACT

Technology has taken the world by its single swipe, which is not merely functional and promising but also very dangerous and shockingly inevitable. In a scenario, as this, education and the educational institutions have a very big role to play apart from producing engineers and tech giants with multi-digit salaried jobs, but also help in the evolution of responsible human beings who could make a better society. Here comes the question of the real validity of education in promoting the welfare of its inhabitants.

There is a great surge, undoubtedly in the adoption and implementation of technology in imparting education to the learning community. Teachers and students are getting well equipped with the LMS platforms that help in easy transmission of information and knowledge in an effective way. But, above all this, is a growing need to prepare the youngsters not only to combat the challenges of job but also that of life, even more significantly. The threatening rise in the number and frequency of suicides and cases of depression and anxiety even at the young ages, underline the necessity of imparting life skills to students of the present generation. The absence of elderly people at home add to the impetus that is on the teachers of today. The present paper is an attempt to unfathom the method through which students can be trained in life and coping skills.

Keywords: online learning, digital fatigue, technology, need for guidance, life skills

Guru Brahma Guru VishnuGuru
 DevoMaheshwaraGuru SakshatParam
 BrahmaTasmaiShriGuraveNamah

- SkandaPurana

Gone are the days and times when a teacher was looked upon as next only to God. The absolute faith in the Guru being the one and only source of moulding the wards' lives remained unquestioned and also undoubted till recent times. With the unavoidable advent of technology and modernisation as its outcome, things changed radically giving little place and authority for teachers to guide the students. It switched the role of teachers as topsy-turvy and even limited it to a greater extent. Teachers no longer are taken as role models, guides or guardians as they used to be and not even as the one who dispenses knowledge. The world which has shrunk so small to be fit inside one's pockets and palms in the form of android phones diluted the role of the teachers as teachers even. This is the pivotal point where sea changes began to happen generally in the outlook and mind-sets of people especially the growing adults and adolescents.

Technology has taken the world by its single swipe, which is not merely functional and promising but also very dangerous and shockingly inevitable. The growing number of technological branches of study and institutions providing specialized courses are no doubt promising a very advanced and knowledgeable generation but this leads us to probe into the other side of the scene too. There is a very grave question – if the students who graduate out of the educational institutions are competent enough to face life outside the campus which is definitely neither rosy nor green as they dream it to be. Life, in general, has turned out to be too complex and the so are the problems both social and personal. The younger generation of the cryptocurrency era are unfamiliar to or even disinterested in the responsibilities that are laid before them as adults. Adolescent boys and girls alike, are unwilling to shoulder the responsibilities their fathers and mothers have carried forward and want to live as carefree individuals, not caught up in the myre of familial bonding. Even the few who get into a conventional relationship are not able to cope up with the new roles they have to adopt, in order to have a smooth life, end up as failures. Frustrated and desolate, they hastily seek a way out of the tangles. Few others make a mess unable to handle the pressures of work-life conditions. In a scenario, as this, education and the educational institutions have a very big role to play apart from producing engineers and tech giants with multi-digit salaried jobs, but also help in the evolution of responsible human beings who could make a better society. Here comes the question of the real validity of education in promoting the welfare of the younger generation.

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getting well equipped with the LMS platforms that help in easy transmission of information and knowledge in an effective way. But, above all this, is a growing need to prepare the youngsters not only to combat the challenges of job but also that of life, even more significantly. The threatening rise in the number and frequency of suicides and cases of depression and anxiety even at the young ages, underline the necessity of imparting life skills to students of the present generation and here is where there is a strong need to reconsider and redefine the role of a teacher inside the classroom and in the lives of the students.

One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child. –Carl Jung

This perspective of Carl Jung underpins the thesis statement of this paper. The teachers need to find a balance between building a human relationship and simultaneously sticking to the curriculum. Jung recognized that it's just as important to get involved in students' lives as it is to implement an effective teaching. It is the crucial need of the hour to teach beyond the pages of the academic texts and instill the ability to fight life with all its ups and downs. Putting aside all boring moral values as perceived by the modern generation, it is even more important to teach coping skills to the budding teenagers, because life skills develop right attitude to think smartly, act smartly and to live consciously.

Life skills are the personal, interpersonal and cognitive psychosocial skills that enable people to interact appropriately manage their own emotional states and make decisions and choices for an active, safe and productive life. The United Nations Children's Fund considers the imparting of life skills under sustainable development goals and focuses on developing a child as an integrated human being- "Life skills education is an important vehicle to equip young people to negotiate and mediate challenges and risks in their lives, and to enable productive participation in society. (UNICEF) In an article posted on 17, July 2021, World Health Organization comes out with shocking survey that over 700000 people die of suicide every year. "...many suicides happen impulsively in moments of crisis with a breakdown in the ability to deal with life stresses, such as financial problems, relationship break-up or chronic pain and illness."

(<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/suicide>)

The teachers of the present generation should realize that they have a more serene duty to

perform than just to dispense knowledge. The absence of adult guidance and monitoring at home through parents and grandparents adds to the necessity of that responsibility being carried out by the teachers. Youngsters nowadays though well informed seem to be lacking coping skills to handle the pressures of everyday life. There is very little tolerance, and they lack the ability to confront issues or face failures. They are for quick success and they also believe not in hard work like the previous generation; rather they want to taste the flavour of luck and quick success. It is the prime duty of the teachers to establish a good rapport with the students; sure there won't be much positive result at the outset but never-minding they should continue doing it as their long term goal.

Classrooms have to be interactive not the conventional monologues on stage, the teacher delivering the lecture till the last minute. The teachers should be able to connect the curriculum with life. In this regard, language classrooms have a wide range of opportunities to transfer life skills to students. The curriculum of English language teaching or teaching literature allows scope for including activities like group discussions and debates, and presentations. The language teachers have a very great chance of bringing life in close

proximity with the syllabus. Every content they deliver has some relevance to the life of the students involved.

The conventional interactive instructional methods like Group discussions and debates may sound cliché and outdated but we cannot deny the fact that they facilitate articulation of thoughts and argumentation through the use of language. They enhance the students' self-confidence and ability to think and organize their ideas and also observe other's viewpoints. Students are open to know the various facets of the same problem and they are exposed to the surprisingly different perspectives with which it is looked upon or analysed by others. This inevitably leads to the understanding that life is a kaleidoscope and no individual is comparable with the other. Even the most reserved student tries to open up for a talk when he/she is exposed to such discussion forums.

Situation analysis enables students to analyse various problems and dilemma encountered by others; the same situation may come to anyone at any time. In the whole process of situation analysis, the students explore, analyse and discuss situations together and think of solutions. This gives them hands-on training in decision making skills, critical thinking and interpersonal relationships. Case Studies give the opportunity to experience the 'lived reality'. The issues that are viral in the social networking platforms can be taken as case studies and students can be asked to come out with their own suggestions. This will give them the opportunity to relive the experience of the people involved in the case study and help them to look for better solutions than that was sought after by the exemplary situation.

The much professed ICT platforms that are said to facilitate better understanding of concepts through technology are in a way making them more dependent on AI tools rather than sharpening their intellectual, creative and critical thinking. Students are no longer having the need to squeeze their brain to arrive at an innovative idea or think of something original rather they become photocopy machines to produce the much used content online globally.

The younger generation today needs no professionals to teach them technical skills; rather they need mentors to teach them life skills where there is undoubtedly a very huge lapse and an acute lack. Students must be trained in life skills that "may be defined as abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life." (qtd. in Module VII, Life Skills)
Equally important level of contribution should be from the parents who should enable the children grow up in an atmosphere which gives moral support and confidence but always

with the

bitter pill of reality that failures and pitfalls are an indispensable part of life. Bitterness has to be borne in order to taste the sweetness of success as in the words of Emily Dickinson in her poem 'Success is Counted Sweetest'

Success is counted
sweetest By those who ne'er
succeed. To comprehend a
nectar Requires sorest
need. (1-4)

Life is beautiful and meaningful, if only it has all components positive and negative, good and bad, in a good proportion without which it will become a very boring game or journey with no players or counterparts and it has to be taken as it comes in one's way. There lies the beauty and purposefulness of living. The teachers are not intended to produce tech-savvy generation but a lively and competent batch of socially responsible citizens who will be in themakefor better human beings, building a better society.

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