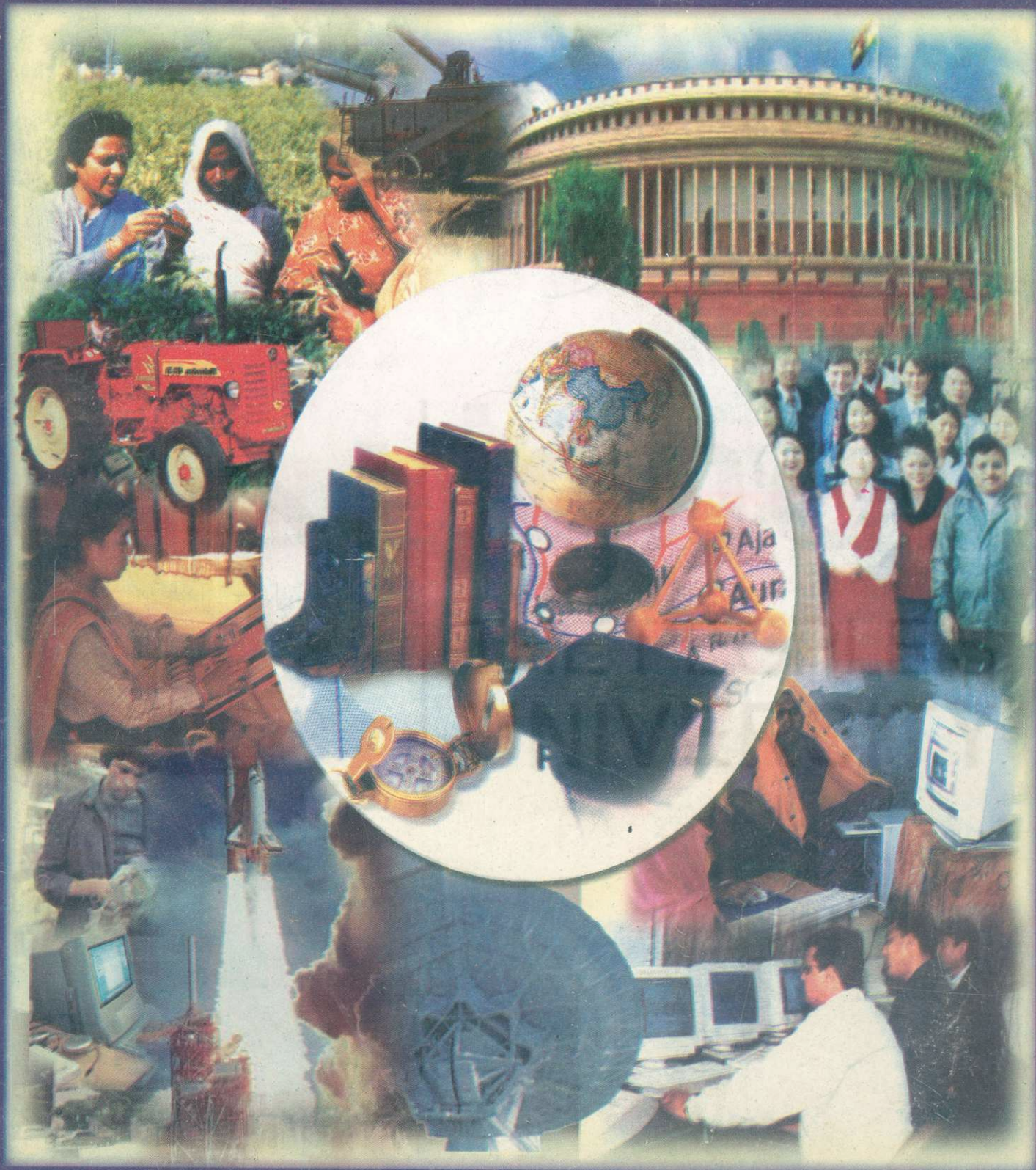




Indira Gandhi National Open University
School of Education

MES-101

Higher Education : Its Context and Linkages



The Progressive Social Role of a
University Teacher in India

4

“शिक्षा मानव को बन्धनों से मुक्त करती है और आज के युग में तो यह लोकतंत्र की भावना का आधार भी है। जन्म तथा अन्य कारणों से उत्पन्न जाति एवं वर्गगत विषमताओं को दूर करते हुए मनुष्य को इन सबसे ऊपर उठाती है।”

— इन्दिरा गांधी



“Education is a liberating force, and in our age it is also a democratising force, cutting across the barriers of caste and class, smoothing out inequalities imposed by birth and other circumstances.”

— Indira Gandhi



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Block

4

The Progressive Social Role of a University Teacher in India

UNIT 13

The Evolving Professional Roles of a University Teacher	5
--	----------

UNIT 14

Teachers' Intervention in Social Change : Some Issues	18
--	-----------

UNIT 15

Teachers' Organisations	28
--------------------------------	-----------

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MES-101 *Higher Education : Its Context and Linkages*

Block 1 Higher Education : Retrospect and Prospects

- Unit 1 Aims of Higher Education
 - Unit 2 Higher Education and Society
 - Unit 3 Indian Higher Education : The Legacy
 - Unit 4 Higher Education and Development
-

Block 2 Indian Higher Education : Policies and Plans

- Unit 5 The Constitutional Provisions Regarding Higher Education
 - Unit 6 The Evolving Policy Perspectives in Higher Education
 - Unit 7 Higher Education through the Five Year Plans -I
 - Unit 8 Higher Education through the Five Year Plans -II
-

Block 3 Indian Higher Education : Concerns and Developments

- Unit 9 Higher Education and Problems of Contemporary Indian Society
 - Unit 10 WTO and Higher Education
 - Unit 11 Emergence of ODL at the Tertiary Level
 - Unit 12 Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education
-

Block 4 *The Progressive Social Role of a University Teacher in India*

- Unit 13 The Evolving Professional Roles of a University Teacher*
 - Unit 14 Teachers' Intervention in Social Change : Some Issues*
 - Unit 15 Teachers' Organisations*
-

Block 4 *The Progressive Social Role of a University Teacher in India*

Introduction to the Block

Scholarship especially at the higher level is concerned with the development and the validation of theories which 'explain' the world in which we live and the way in which we behave in dealing with that world and with each other. This basic intrinsic principal is essential, but it should be capable also of enriching and being enriched by the grasp which society has of the practical problems. However the teaching-learning process, if not coupled out with a concern to draw out (and where necessary research into) the implications for the operational needs of a society, create a serious gap in understanding and communication. This gap represents the outstanding challenge to the teacher in higher education and the fourth Block of this course concerns itself primarily with sensitising the key person, that is, the teacher to the nature of this challenge and his or her role therein. The Block is concerned therefore to identify the nature of problems confronting a society (especially a developing one) and to set out a framework of tasks for teachers-both as members of a profession and professional organisations.

The first unit of the Block opens a discussion on what an occupation or a profession is, with the course of discussion, it becomes clear that at the foundation of every occupation claiming professional status is knowledge and its application. Therefore the relationships between mastering and applying knowledge, education and training, theory and practice are all explored.

Unit 14 is an elaboration of the multiple roles of the teacher but the centre of discussion is the responsibilities of the teacher in social action. The teacher is seized with the responsibility of scholarship and by the responsibility of giving such intellectual leadership as may be possible towards the solution of pressing problems within a troubled society.

The last unit on 'Teachers' Organisations' is an attempt at bringing to perspective for the teachers' associations, the multiple roles of a university teacher. The teacher at higher education can rarely divest himself or herself of the obligations imposed by his or her advanced learning, by his or her position as an exemplar, by his or her membership in a community of scholars. Over the years there has also been a deterioration in the position that teachers have enjoyed within the social and intellectual fabric. A positive concern, therefore, on the part of teachers and their organisations to think through and where necessary, research into the requirements for ensuring a more purposive response to the challenge outlined may be the best way of restoring the status.

The Evolving Professional Roles of a University Teacher

Introduction

'Professionals profess. They profess they know better than others the nature of certain matters and to know better than their clients what ails them or their affairs. This is the essence of the professionals' idea and the professional claim. From it flow many consequences.' (Hughes, 1963 : 656)

As teachers at higher education gained more recognition and status, particularly after the turn of the century, they became more self-conscious, that is, more conscious of themselves as a professional group with distinctive interests and concerns. This led to 'Professionalization'. Professionalization, however took two forms in academic life. One was the profession of specialists - physicists, psychologists, philosophers, etc. who had common interests in a specialized subject. The second was the profession of university teachers who shared similar responsibilities in the university and had presumably the same rights and obligations in that institution.

In the current situation, where because of market-driven reforms, competition for jobs has greatly increased, there are many expectations of the role or roles the teacher must play in the university. Students expect the teachers to be knowledgeable, up to date, well prepared and articulate. Colleagues expect the teacher to be a "productive scholar", engaged in research of some significance. The administration of the university requires the teacher to take part in the committee work of her department/university and carry her share of administrative work. The teachers' professional associations expect her interest, participation, and adherence to their standards. The community and society expect the teacher to make her expertise available when it is sought. How do the academics at the higher education manage these apparently differing roles? What does teaching at the university really entail? How far is university teaching a profession and what are the norms of this profession? This unit examines some of these questions in the context of the evolving professional roles of a university teacher.

Learning outcomes

After working through this unit, you will be able to

- discern what is an occupation and a profession;
- describe the broad characteristics of teaching at the University;
- discuss how University teaching includes the main features of a profession;
- analyse the significance of the social-historical role of a University teacher especially in a developing society;
- discuss what professional ethics and professionalism entail in University teaching.

What does teaching at the university level entail?

Teaching at higher education essentially means acquiring knowledge, generating new knowledge and adding to the existing knowledge, and also transmitting knowledge.

Teaching and research

Teaching is more than the formal transmission of expert, disciplined knowledge; it is both an invitation to and a support for, independent critical learning by both the student and the teacher. The problems that occur in practice are in some respects unique calling upon the teacher's professional knowledge. Learning, that is, knowledge, and practice, that is teaching is constituted by and constitutive of the other. Teaching can itself be understood to include an intrinsic dimension of learning (Winter, 1989) and of invention: it is a form of research and art.

Teaching is semantically linked with the transmission of knowledge. Teaching does not just mean classroom teaching, but also providing a leadership role in the university community in which both teachers as well as students are members. This will include, for instance, organising co-curricular activities. But, the major recipients of this knowledge, viz., the students at higher education, are mostly at the frontiers of knowledge themselves. Therefore, to initiate them into the uncharted areas of knowledge, teachers themselves ought to be constantly exploring new knowledge, both through keeping themselves abreast of the new developments in their area of specialization through professional activities like journals or conferences, and through undertaking research on their own. The widely accepted assumption is that only someone who involves actively in research will be able to perform her role as a teacher at higher education satisfactorily. Thus, in an institution of higher learning, teaching and research become two inseparable components of the professional practice of teachers.

Extension function

In a developing society like India, institutions of higher education have also an active role in evolving and maintaining a highly functional and dynamic link with the community. Creation of excellence is not the only goal of such institutions; it is perceived as an additional legitimate objective of an institution of higher education in a country like India to assume the status of a pivotal or nodal agency or a nucleus of the overall development of the community in which such an institution exists. Teacher in such institutions therefore has an additional duty of making available his or her expertise for the development of various sectors of the community. Increasingly, teachers are also expected to use their expertise in matters of national importance like nation building. The additional dimension of professional practice among teachers at higher education is called '*extension*'. Extension activities could be in terms of field visits, addressing special-need groups from the community or larger social bodies, organizing special extension events, mobilising students for community-oriented activities, and so on.

Managerialism in education

'Teachers as managers'

A number of developments in recent years have led to changes in the ways in which teachers do their jobs and the relationship the profession has both within educational institutions and with the wider community. During the 1960's and 1970's education was accepted as part of public or national good. During the economic recession in the 1970s this perception about education broke down and it was singled out for criticisms as failing in its contribution to the creation of economic wealth. The fallout of this criticism was the direct linking of the activities of education to economic benefits. The general acceptance of such causation meant that for teachers there would, in the future, be an expectation that their professional activities would have to be more efficiently and effectively managed to produce economically tangible results (Kydd, et. al. 1997:113).

These factors contributed to the emergence of managerialism both as a political philosophy and as a set of systems and practices designed for the management of public services.

One of the characteristics of managerialism has been its adoption of the discourse of some idealised notion of business; education is considered as some kind of commodity which consumers purchase (Ibid;115).

The fallout of this is that the curriculum now tends to arrive in neatly packaged positions. Each complete with aims, objectives, tasks and assessment. The curriculum has become more standardized. The prepackaged curriculum compensates teachers for lack of preparation time but in the long term.... they limit the intellectual and emotional scope of teacher's work (Apple; 1993). For teachers this means that where they were able to exercise considerable professional autonomy over the selection of knowledge and the ways it would be taught, their activities in the classroom are now more tightly controlled. This leaves teachers with less room for exercising both professional autonomy and professional authority.

Not only are traditional notions of teacher professionalism being reframed, the role of teachers in managing educational institutions is being moved away from managing the curriculum towards managing tasks and systems. 'As responsibility for designing one's own curricula and one's own teaching decreased, responsibility over technical tasks and management concerns come to the fore' (Apple, 1990). All this pushes the teaching profession away from its traditional concerns and activities towards a new direction.



Conditions are excellent here, young man. He was brought here for experimental purposes and today he heads the Department.

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman.

What is a profession

No definition of a profession - whether through the promulgation of a code of conduct or by other means - is likely to be internalised in that professions own consciousness of itself, unless it corresponds to the profession's own deepest institutions of the service it has to offer and the values which are consonant with that service. (Rodger 1995:84)

What is a profession? And, how does it differ from an occupation? During the past few decades, occupational groups such as teachers' have frequently been labelled unproductive,

as not contributing sufficiently to either the maintenance of 'professional standards' or economic prosperity. It therefore needs to be understood what does the term 'professional' imply and what does it mean to be a professional.

Hoyle and John (1995) have argued that the term profession itself is 'an essentially contested concept'. Indeed, they suggest there is considerable evidence that 'professions are more easily instanced than defined'. Further, Hoyle and John (1995:159) state that in reality the term 'professional' hides a multiplicity of perspectives:

'The unitary notion of a 'professional community' masks a vast array of competing positions which characterise a service profession such as teaching. In this sense, the role of a teacher is never static but is constantly changing according to the particular educational traditions that predominate at any particular historical juncture.'

The term profession is seen and understood as both a concept-in-use and a theoretical underpinning. Hoyle (1980:45) defines a profession as the one that:

- performs a crucial social function;
- demands considerable skills for use in routine and especially non-routine situations;
- required its members to draw on a body of systematic knowledge;
- requires its members to undertake a lengthy period of study which inculcates professional values;
- focuses on clients' interests and has a code of ethics;
- enables professionals to make their own judgements vis-a-vis appropriate practice;
- rewards training responsibility and client centredness, with high prestige and high levels of remuneration

Garrett and Bowles (1997) focus on three aspects of being professional in education ;

- a professional will have undergone a lengthy period of professional training in a body of abstract knowledge (Goode 1960; Hughes 1985; Coulson 1986) and will have experience in the field;
- a professional is controlled by a code of ethics and professional values (Barber 1963, 1978; Huges 1985; Coluson 1986);
- a professional is committed to the core business of the organisation, i.e. the quality of student learning (Coulson 1986).

Recent developments in education especially in the wake of globalisation and economic recession have led to a disagreement about the use of the term 'professionalism'. There are some who see the ongoing restructuring of education as enhancing the prospects for teacher professionalism there are others who see the present scenario as diminishing professionalism, indicating a disregard and disrespect for them. Increasingly professionalism and accountability of teachers is being premised, on managerial models, which many argue, strips away teacher professionalism and teachers opportunities to use professional judgment, leaving them with little more than 'technician' status (Hargreaves 1994:6).

Self-assessment

1. *What are the various roles that a teacher performs at the higher education level?*

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2. *Define a profession. What are its important characteristics?*

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University teaching –a profession

University teaching in the present century has been regarded as more than just an occupation through which a livelihood is obtained. When it is called a “profession”, it is meant that, in some important way, it differs from other occupations, the fortunes of which are to be determined by the vicissitudes of the market or governmental decision even though pressures are increasingly being felt from this direction now. We have already discussed that a profession is an occupation the practice of which requires a more than ordinary amount of complex knowledge, acquired by persistent and systematic study and authoritatively certified. This is true primarily of law, medicine, engineering and the academic profession. The first three are engaged in the practical application of knowledge about particular kinds of situations and objects. The first three professions also deal with relatively restricted parts of the entire body of systematically studied and acquired knowledge while the academic profession, through its internal division of labour, covers the entire range of systematically studied, methodically gained knowledge, parts of which are applied in law, medicine and engineering.

Acquisition, transmission and application of knowledge

The primary task of the academic profession is the acquisition and transmission of knowledge, not its application, though this is changing and the task of application is becoming increasingly important. The academic profession receives, assimilates and discovers knowledge by methodical study, and it interprets and transmits that knowledge; it transmits knowledge about the methods of discovery and especially of the validation of knowledge. Even when the teacher's concern is the application of knowledge to practical uses she herself often does not apply knowledge which she teaches to practical activities. In the teaching of Technology, for example, the teacher is transmitting knowledge about the application of knowledge. She teaches how knowledge of a particular substance is applied and can be applied to particular practical tasks. She is not applying that technological knowledge herself. But this is changing as universities are increasingly being expected to generate their own resources with the decline in State funding. So in applied sciences like Biotechnology or Computer Sciences, the teacher may apply her knowledge to create

new vaccines and computer software, respectively. Teachers of disciplines as varied as Engineering, Medicine, Law, and the Social Sciences are being encouraged to take up projects and consultancies, both to generate resources for the department/university as well as to test the validity of theoretical knowledge in applications in the real world.

The changing character of institutions of higher education no longer justifies the strict dichotomy between knowledge transmission and knowledge application. A teacher *qua* teacher perhaps just transmits knowledge, even if it is knowledge about applying knowledge, viz., technology, but, that is not all that many teachers in higher education institutions do. They are often consultants in application processes outside their teaching institutions as shown above. These different functions in a way complement one another.

University teaching - a second order profession

Higher education is "higher" because its concern is the education of people who are adults or almost adults. It is "higher" again by virtue of its being at the frontiers of knowledge. It also is a means of initiating people into various professions. However, with the development of the praxis that characterise various professions, with the sciences behind the various professions developing as distinct and full-fledged or branches of knowledge, with the industrial revolution and with the establishment of modern universities, this job has now been passed on to the universities. Since university education is the chief means through which aspirants get initiated into professions of Science, Social Science, Engineering, Medicine, Management, etc., the university teacher himself or herself ought to be a professional in one of these above mentioned areas. Since she is called upon to teach others the science behind a profession, she needs to be first of all more than an ordinary practitioner of his or her profession; she needs to have had undergone an advanced professional education, probably mastery over one specialised branch of the profession. In professions where the science underlying is fast extending its territories, the university teacher is expected to be a member of the community of researchers whose efforts result in the extending of frontiers of knowledge in that science.

This makes his or her role as a teacher a more authentic one. In any case, it needs no special explanation for the fact that a university teacher needs first of all to be a member of a professional group characterised by the subject in which she has mastery. In simpler words, therefore, a person needs to be first of all a scientist, social scientist, jurist, medical professional, engineer or a member of any other recognized professional community, for being qualified to teach in a university. This makes sense, doesn't it? A cursory examination of the essential qualifications prescribed in advertisements for faculty recruitment in colleges and universities will prove this point.

Common characteristics of university professionals

University teaching entails certain common experience and challenges; they are mostly related to communication, dealing with youth, creation of educationally meaningful experiences, and often creation of knowledge. University teachers also share a community life on a campus -they are members of a community of scholars -and share a common group that is, the students (although with different characteristics). They also share a common responsibility of acting as watch dogs and conscience keepers of the society and nation. They also share a more or less common set of service conditions.

Communication is a specialized job. So are dealing with youth creation of meaningful educational experiences. All these to be performed effectively entails some understanding of communication process and characteristics of youth, a certain set of competencies and skills, certain attitudes and values. In other words, university teaching per se has a certain quantum of knowledge, competencies and attitudes underlying it. Thus, we find there is a "science" which forms the basis of university teaching as a professional activity.

Self-assessment

3. *Justify how university teaching can be termed as a profession. Discuss its important characteristics.*

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Towards a culture of professional development — professional ethics and values

Every professional group needs to have a certain consensus world-view, in the sense of a outlook regarding the past, present and future of human order and society, its components and linkages.

National Commission on Teachers II

The National Commission on Teachers II (1983 : 56-57) listed some of the elements of the world-view which it felt the teachers at higher education in India ought to have as a professional group. Let us examine a summary of this list:

- i) Principles should have primacy over persons. Universal norms should take precedence over consideration of status, station, class, caste or sex.
- ii) In the scheme of social action, the accent should be on creative rationality rather than obscurantism.
- iii) Man should be viewed as capable of gaining mastery over the physical universe, but with certain outer limits and without disturbing the delicate balance of nature.
- iv) Freedom is necessary for all human beings; what remains to be established is the subjective ethos and objective conditions for the realization of genuine freedom.
- v) Freedom should be coupled with equality, not only for individuals but also for their collectives of different orders.
- vi) Cultural differences ought to be respected; what needs to be minimised are economic disparities and cultural deprivations.
- vii) Man is not just an object and product of history, he is the subject and author of history. An increasing interventionist role should be envisioned for him.

Democracy, secularism and social justice

The National Commission on Teachers II (1983: 57) has emphasized the national values of democracy, secularism and social justice which are enshrined in the Constitution. In addition, it has also advocated for three additional values. One, shifting of past-present orientation towards a present-future orientation. This is not to mean a negation of history, but a firm rejection of harking back to the past than is really necessary, for what concerns us most in existential terms is the living present and the to-be-lived future. Two, the rejection of the principle of individual passivity, servility and compliance, and emphasis on an active and autonomous individual critically examining the goings on in the society and

judging the rights and wrongs of it.

Three, the cultivation of the scientific temper.

Professional values

As for the values particular to the academic profession, the National Commission on Teachers II (1983:57-59) listed the following:

- i) Acquisition, transmission and addition of new knowledge.
- ii) Social relevance of knowledge.
- iii) Establishing an organic link with the community through extension work.
- iv) Continuous renovation with the growing irrelevance of some knowledge.
- v) Decolonisation of the Third World mind.
- vi) Cultivation of excellence.
- vii) Freedom of inquiry and social responsibility.
- viii) Importance of freedom to collaborate and work together.
- ix) Critical awareness and articulation of the tradition
- x) A social consciousness unafraid to undertake social criticism.
- xi) Problem-solving approach and emergence of new social order.

Concerns of teachers

On probing into the actual concerns of teachers at higher education, the National Commission on Teachers II (1983:59-65) found that generally the teachers are more concerned with the security value, that is the concern for better material conditions such as salary, promotion, etc.

Their concern for promoting academic excellence, raising academic standards, readiness to reform and innovate, etc., was found not very satisfactory. The Commission recommended drastic improvement of service conditions, and opportunities for professional growth. But, they felt that the teachers ought to respond by showing greater professionalism.

Professional development

(It) is the ongoing, informal personal relations among staff which provide the cement.
(Maden and Hillman 1996: 346)

The importance of establishing a productive 'culture' and 'climate' for effective management and leadership cannot be underestimated. This is particularly the case in terms of managing and supporting professional development - a core issue for all organizations, whether educational or not. Even the most efficient and well organized professional development programme is likely to be ineffective if it is not rooted within a professional climate that can nurture, sustain and enhance it. (Glover and Law (1996):155) According to Drucker (1988), the full benefits of professional development become possible only when a collaborative culture exists which demonstrates:

- explicit and clearly articulated organizational values;
- a holistic development focus;
- a development focus where the integration of theory and practice informs future actions;

- a focus, on the continuous improvement of both processes and outcomes, for both individuals and the organization itself.

Drucker's emphasis on collaboration reflects Hoyle's (1974) articulation of the importance of developing 'extended professionalism' in teaching over a more narrowly defined 'restricted professionalism' (see Table 1)

Table 1 : Restricted and extended professionalism

Restricted professionalism	Extended professionalism
Skills derived from experience	Skills derived by mediating experience with theory
Limited perspectives based on the immediate time and place of work	Broader perspectives based in wider social and educational context
Focus is on isolated classroom events	Focus on classroom events in relation to institutional policies and goals
Unidimensional and introspective about teaching methods	Comparative approach to teaching methods - shares with others
Personal autonomy valued	Professional collaboration valued
Limited involvement in non-teaching professional activities	Strong involvement in non-teaching professional activities
Limited engagement with professional literature	Regular engagement with professional literature
In-service focus largely confined to 'practical' courses	In-service focus broadly based, including engagement with 'theoretical' concerns
Teaching viewed as largely 'intuitive' activity	Teaching viewed as largely 'rational' activity

Source : Based on Hoyle (1986)

Continuous appraisal?

Discussions on professional development inevitably focus on whether there should be a system of continuous appraisal, what is the need for one and how can this be implemented. Let us begin our discussion by establishing first, a need for a well-run appraisal system.

Research done widely has pointed to the following:

Appraisal is likely to benefit individual members of staff (teaching and non-teaching) by :

- giving them a greater sense of purpose through the provision of clear objectives.
- encouraging self-development and personal initiative
- enhancing their self-esteem and confidence
- reducing alienation and resentment, by providing opportunity for free discussion
- providing opportunity for the dissemination of career advice.

The organisation is likely to benefit by:

- channelling individual effort into organisational goals
- providing the opportunity to initiate problem solving and counselling interviews
- enhancing the communication of organisational aims to all staff and facilitating the coordination of effort
- contributing to the institutional audit or review.

Both individual member of staff and the organisation by:

- helping to build morale
- encouraging better communication both vertical and lateral, and the creation of a more open style of management
- providing the means whereby the individual can influence the organisation
- facilitating the identification of talent
- providing a mechanism for recognition of individual effort and
- integrating the individual and the organisation.

The above clearly presents a picture in favour of an appraisal for an organisation including the University System. The question that needs to be addressed here is which style of appraisal is the best or which type can be adopted. Here we have broadly four types.



Figure 1 : Types of appraisal

There are clear strengths and weaknesses in all four types. The growing influence from the 1970s onwards of humanistic psychology on management theory and practice has promoted the recognition of the value of individuals within organisations and of their autonomy and self-actualising potential. Let us discuss key characteristics of the types discussed above.

Developmental	Managerial
Assumes professional, collegial and collective authority to lie within the profession	Assumes right to manage: hierarchical position confirms authority
Has as its main concerns truth, accuracy, the maintenance of moral, ethical and professional values	Is concerned with doing and achieving, with efficiency and effectiveness
Works through peer appraisal of colleagues	Appraises through line management
Has a bipartite approach towards enabling self-improvement	Makes strong use of incentives and praise and reproach from superior
Seeks to produce agreed programme with shared responsibility for the achievement of objectives	Sets targets in order to maximise organisational objectives
Is concerned with longer-term, professional development	Is concerned with shorter-term assessment of performance

Laissez-faire	Judgemental
Recognises the importance of self- development	Uses appraisal to maintain social control
Allows managerial abdication from responsibility	Assumes managerial authority to make judgements
Encourages subordinates to raise issues	Collects data for the assessment of the subordinate
Demonstrates a lack of focus, direction and purpose	Rates individuals against one another
Has a belief in the importance of self-motivation	Assumes the necessity of extrinsic motivation
Allows appraisee to decide on the need for follow-up	Uses system for merit rating and performance related pay

Figure 2 : Key features of the four basic types

Source : Kydd , (2001) :155

Whatever model a university/community of teachers adopt, there is a set of ground rules to be followed once a model is adopted. Teachers retain responsibility for deciding which changes to make to their practice but are to take account of others' views. Openness, trust, empathy and critical respect are the defining values of any professional approach.

Professionalism as ideology of control

Professionalism has been viewed also as an ideology of control, which would implicitly mean the professional group exercising self-imposed discipline in order to be more and more accountable to the larger society, which in Indian conditions would mainly refer to the Government, since direct community participation in educational governance and finance is almost absent. This tendency to impose greater controls over professional groups has been witnessed in other societies as well, especially during economic crises. Attempts on the part of the Thatcherite government to impose control over the British education system is a case illustrating this tendency.

Self-assessment

4. *Discuss the importance of appraisal in Universities.*

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5. *What type/model of appraisal would you suggest for teachers in higher education. Why?*

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Summary

The University before the Second World War was a small enterprise in which despite changing practices there was a large degree of agreement about the essentials of the role of teacher: worthy scholarship, the importance of teaching, the necessity of the neutrality of the university on political issues; the importance of character, tradition, tolerance. This neat package which contained the traditional concepts of role, ethics and loyalties changed considerably in the postwar period, teachers gained more recognition and status and

became conscious of themselves as a professional group with common interests and concerns. Teaching became professionalized and subsequently more accountable.

The teacher in developing societies in the changed context has come to acquire the significant role of providing leadership and momentum to social movements and also a corrective to political institutions. The position of the professoriate in the Third World is however both precarious and powerful. The final section of the Unit discusses the values and norms that teachers are expected to practice as members of the academic profession. These are to be self-regulating and collectively formulated. And finally, it opens up for discussion the view that professionalism is an ideology of control.

Unit-end activities

1. In terms of status and recognition, how would you rank a teacher among other professionals in society today? Which of the following do you think is important for determining the status of the teacher:
 - i) material benefits
 - ii) professional knowledge and skills
 - iii) moral values
 - iv) personal qualities
 - v) any other?

Suggest priority

2. How can talented persons be attracted and retained in the profession of teaching? Suggest four steps which you consider essential, for this.
3. Is training/orientation necessary for teachers at the higher education stage in order to motivate and inspire students for acquiring knowledge, skills and values.

Points for discussion

1. How can the teaching profession be made to respond to the ideals of secularism, social justice and democracy? Discuss with your colleagues certain concrete steps that can be taken in this context.
2. Initiate a discussion on whether status or recognition is necessary for dedicated teachers.

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Teachers' Intervention in Social Change : Some Issues

Introduction

We have discussed in the previous unit that besides teaching, the social role of the academics in the transformation of their societies is an important one. Both in their capacity as experts and informed citizens, they need to deem it their legitimate professional role to address the problems that confront the society in which they live. In fact, universities and colleges have been cradles of many progressive and secular movements.

Moreover, as the realisation is growing that the tertiary stage of education provides crucial inputs in national development which includes social change, the functions performed and desired to be performed by the faculty have come in for closer scrutiny within as well as outside the academia the world over. Amidst this realisation, teachers and especially college and university teachers are being called upon to play a greater and more conscious role as agents of social change. This social change may imply moving on from where we are at present into directions which are accepted as desirable. This desirability may have been expressed in the form of the contents of the Constitution which the country has adopted as also in the various laws that have been adopted by the Central and State legislatures. It is likely that there will be some issues on which there could be controversies and even conflicts. Teachers can help even in relation to such issues by dispassionate, intellectual analysis of the elements involved in such controversies.

Learning outcomes

After studying this unit you should be able to

- analyses the concept of social change;
- establish a relationship between education and social change;
- discuss the teacher's role in social change;
- appreciate the complementarity of the teacher's three major functions of teaching, research and extension;
- appreciate the integration of the teacher's academic responsibility and social commitment.

Social change and higher education

Education is considered as a very important instrument of social change though some social scientists also hold the view that education could be a means of maintaining the status quo. Education, according to them, is the most important "ideological apparatus" devised by the ruling classes to serve and preserve their vested interests and thus to maintain a status quo in the economic and political power structure.

In the context of the developing countries, education has been considered as a very important instrument of social change. This assertion has been strongly reiterated for instance, in the Education Commission Report (1964-66) where education is seen as the most important prime mover of economic development and social change. The UNESCO has also consistently subscribed to this view of education in its publications.

Compared to other institutions in society, higher education has a much bigger share as a fountainhead of change. Being at the higher level of the educational pyramid and thus able to influence other levels of education, and having wider access to all available knowledge, and therefore better, also to creatively integrate it, it can undoubtedly operate as a powerful instrument to help the process of social change in Indian society. To properly understand the role of higher education in social change, let us examine the concepts of social change, and the crucial features higher education.

Social change

All change implies moving from one position to another; the difficult question is deciding from which position to which position. In a free society there is bound to be some discussion and controversy about this. Social change indicates changes in social attitudes, behaviour, customs, habits, manners, relations and values of individuals, groups of people and institutions. Social change is meant to connote fundamental structural and functional changes in society. It could be in different spheres of human life -social, economic, political, cultural and so on; In a country like ours even inculcation of the true values of democracy in the minds of the young and through them in the larger community, could by itself be an action for social change. Some of the significant forms of social change have been called "westernisation", "industrialisation", "urbanisation", "sanskritisation", "politicisation", "Indianisation" and "modernisation". The explanations of these terms are different as given by different people, and when expressed as goals of change or development, they may represent ideologies. So are the values of secularism social justice, tolerance and scientific temper, which have been enunciated by the Indian Constitution, and have been accepted by common consensus, greatly in need of understanding, appreciation and reinforcement in the present Indian situation. Sometimes problems rising from ideologies, or social realities get compounded and society runs into a crisis. Teacher-scholars could study such issues in depth, they could create conditions for students and the community, to examine them from various angles and could take a stand for constructive democratic action if such action is likely to get some results. Thus higher education, and its institutions and participants assume an important position in society.

Higher education

Higher education is at the apex of the educational hierarchy with the crucial and paramount responsibility of generating and acquiring new knowledge and disseminating it. It nurtures the competency of future leadership in the students who hold the potential to develop the society. It prepares them to successfully carry out different responsibilities for social change and development. Higher education is 'higher' also because it is at the frontier of knowledge trying to further expand these frontiers. This is 'the research function' of higher education. The dissemination of this knowledge involves the teaching function. In the most ideal situation these two functions are completely fused together. Here the teacher and the student work together on a theme of common quest and in the process the student, as a junior associate, also gets initiated into the secrets of this process. Even at levels lower than this highest level, teaching can carry an authenticity of its own if it is inspired by the research orientation and experience of the teacher. At lower levels, she may have the opportunity of dealing with smaller themes but the research attitude is the same and that is the main thing. Besides certain other functions, like administrative work and advice to and consultation with students on different aspects, higher education all over the world is taking on the third function of directly going to the community in order to study its problems. The teacher also has a role to perform in different academic activities inside and outside the campus. At the same time she has also a natural commitment for social change and development.

But we need not suppose that academic responsibility and social commitment must of necessity be in conflict with each other. It would be counterproductive if social commitment and related activity leads to neglect of academic responsibility since it would lower the prestige of the teacher among his or her students. Sometimes the two may be complimentary

to each other and even well-integrated. As for instance, when the teacher is making enlightened citizenry, she is exercising this role over and above her three functions of teaching, research and extension. We have already examined that the teacher through her teaching, research and extension activities can reach out to the masses and can help the process of social change. The following are only a few illustrative examples.

- i) Inculcating in the minds of the students the values enshrined in the Constitution. This can be done as and when issues arise during the course of teaching or discussions.
- ii) Projection of the subject which is being taught against the total background of socio-economic-political-cultural environment prevailing in the country, and encouraging the study of the subject as the forging of an instrument to bring about a desirable change in this environment.
- iii) Bringing out the inter-disciplinary aspects of such problems and setting up study groups of teachers and students to study some relevant local problems in depth and to make available to the authorities and the general public the results of such studies. The presentation should be scholarly and without any political bias; and the remedies suggested should be constructive and within the limits of the possible. It is not precluded, however, to suggest how these limitations can be overcome through appropriate action.

Even basically, as the document Challenge of Education puts it, 'No law and system can survive if even educated people do not have respect for life and a sense of right and wrong. Democracy and civil life will degenerate beyond recognition if people do not understand the importance of tolerance and respect for viewpoints different from their own. How can a country grow if a spirit of adventure and the confidence to innovate and take risks has not been instilled in young people? How can priority programmes requiring mass acceptance and participation for their success, like protection of the environment, energy conservation and population control, make a real headway unless a programme for the improvement of ecological conditions makes the students aware, right from their own welfare with the outcome of these programmes' (NPE, 1985; 4.15).

The social role of the teacher in the Indian context

University teachers have always served a special historic role in the transformation of their respective societies. The academic community has been involved in the anti-colonial struggles in many countries of the Third World. Evidences are many of participation of teachers at higher education in the social movements of nineteenth century Bengal and in the Indian national movement. Their societies have tremendous expectations from them of providing leadership and sustained momentum to social movements and a corrective influence to political institutions. As Altbach (1990) says:

"The professional role in politics is a widespread and important one. Whether as activist or expert, professors play a great role; their expertise, ability to communicate and their access to the mass media and those in power make them a powerful but generally unacknowledged force in many societies."

Let us examine the role played by the teachers in the past. As we saw earlier, teachers in institutions of higher learning had played their roles in the social movements of the late nineteenth and the twentieth century, and also in the national movement. However, the role teachers played perhaps may not have been as important as the one played by two other professional communities, viz., lawyers and journalists. Among teachers, as evidence suggests, perhaps, school teachers may have participated in these movements in larger numbers, and in all probability, with greater effectiveness than those at higher education. Even within the university community, the students perhaps have been better activists than teachers. Of course, those from among university teachers who were active in

these movements gained a great deal of visibility thanks to their scholarship and articulatedness. The post-independence scenario has not been very different. Quite a few college and university teachers took to politics, and occupied very important positions in public life. Others have played a significant role in providing theoretical inputs to social movements. Many others, because of their proximity to political leaders and senior bureaucrats, have been immensely influential. Universities and colleges have been cradles of many progressive, secular movements, including those with leftist leanings. At certain moments in recent history, such as the internal emergency of 1975-77, the role that university teachers as a collective played revealed their political commitment. In the new social movements of women, dalits, adivasis, environment, human rights, etc. teachers have played a significant role. Again, their position is powerful and precarious at the same time, since they are one of those professional groups most vulnerable to co-option by the government, other organisation of the State and the private sector. Thus, some of the most effective critics of the State are teachers of higher education, but, some of its most eloquent apologists are also from among them.

In India, we have something more than just a verbal consensus on the values of democracy, secularism, social justice and the need to eliminate poverty. This is because these values got permeated in the national consciousness during the national movement. It would, therefore, not be easy to subvert these values. The teaching profession can play a vital role in strengthening these. This has to be something different from 'indoctrination'. No educational system can be completely neutral to the value and goals which the nation has set before itself, but the responsibility of the educational system and therefore of the teachers, especially in a country which cherishes the value of democracy based on individual freedom, is to develop rationality among the students and train their minds to critically follow the argument wherever it leads. The teacher must be able to analyse his or her own bias, if any, and should also make it clear to his or her students.

The document 'Education for Our People' spells out in some detail the aspects of this role of the teachers. It says, 'The proper teaching of science and an appropriate technology must be emphasized at all stages of education. Science can be of great help to rid our traditional society of superstition, fatalism, and irrational fear and in promoting the rational temper which a modern society needs'. The teacher faces an awesome task. She must initiate immature minds into a cultural heritage, and train unformed consciences to know and love what is good. At the same time she is bound to respect rationality, potential or actual, which these young people embody. No pedagogical or psychological trick can tell her/him how to balance these difficult obligations. Yet balance he must, and he can hope to succeed only to the extent to which he has balanced these in his own personality'. (Naik, 1978 : 21)

The role of the teacher in the Indian context is circumscribed by the objectives of social transformation as articulated in the national movement and later enshrined in the Preamble to the Constitution, in the Fundamental Rights and in the Directive Principles of State Policy. The approach should encompass a study of the existing social organization and processes and of their strengths and weaknesses as well as of the new social organization and processes which we desire to create. It should also include a critical study of our failures to create a strong, egalitarian and prosperous society, social evils such as unequal status to women, caste or untouchability and the many unhealthy traditions and superstitions that have crept into our social organization. The existing modes of production and production relationships and how they tend to concentrate economic power in the hands of a few individuals and to perpetuate poverty should be made known. In other words, the student should know the major problems facing the country, the alternative solutions for them and the programmes that have to be developed to create the new social order based on the liquidation of privilege, abolition of poverty, decentralization of authority in all spheres and enhancement of individual freedom and autonomy.

Self-assessment

1. *Discuss what, in your opinion, is meant by social change?*

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2. *How can higher education contribute social change? Discuss the role of the teacher in bringing about social change.*

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Teachers' organisations and social action

In the context of the above discussions, let us examine how teachers' organisations perceive this role of the teachers. Educational system forms an important part of the greater societal system. Very often educational system is called upon to bring out various changes in the society. It has the potential to create new and positive changes in social outlook, social behaviour, and social traditions among the people. It may also help to wipe out undesirable and irrelevant customs, taboos, beliefs and traditions from the society. In other words, it constitutes a major intervention in social process which we have already discussed at length earlier which may either strengthen the status quo or bolster social change. We cannot therefore, ignore the role of teachers' organisations, in bringing about social change. This is particularly, most urgent in the present context, when our society is infested with a myriad of problem and is confronted with new challenges of the twenty-first century.

The All India Federation of University and College Teachers Organisation (AIFUCTO) (1976) has spelt out the role of teachers' organisation with regard to society as follows:

Teachers should a) recognise that education is a public service and strive to keep the public informed of the educational programme which is being provided; b) work to improve education in the community and strengthen the community's moral and intellectual life; c) be aware of social problems and should take part in such movements as would be conducive to the progress of the society and hence country as a whole; d) perform the duties of citizenship, participate in community activity's and shoulder responsibilities of public offices; e) refrain from taking part in or subscribing to or assisting in any way any movement which tends to promote feeling of hatred or enmity among different communities, religious or linguistic groups.

In this context, we are also reminded of Education Policy of Government of India (1968), which reiterated that the educational system must produce men and women of character and ability committed to service and development. It also visualised the transformation of the educational system to relate more closely to the life of the people and emphasised development of Science and Technology and cultivation of moral and social values. It further says, that work experience and National Service including participation in meaningful and challenging programmes of National Service and National Reconstruction should become integral part of education.

There are areas where they should act to eradicate certain things and also there are areas where they should act to strengthen certain features.

Areas where they can act as a negative force

- Illiteracy,
- Superstitions,
- Religious fanaticism, fundamentalism,
- Dowry system,
- Sati system,
- Casteism,
- Secessionism,
- Prejudice against the female sex
- Regionalism, .
- Parochialism,
- Communalism.

2 Areas where they can act as a positive force

- National Literacy Mission,
- Adult education programme,
- Environmental education,
- Energy education,
- Family planning and family welfare education,
- Community health education,
- National service scheme,
- Rural development programme,
- Urban sanitation programme,
- Citizenship education.

Higher education: an appraisal of the situation

Higher education in India today, with an apparent decline in its standards, has been not been adequately responsive to the changing needs and demands of the society thus not fulfilling its own larger purposes. This has several aspects to it. There is a general feeling that the caliber of the teachers and quality of instruction in colleges and universities are less than what they ought to be. There is a complaint that a large number of teachers lack professional competence and make a living but do not follow the vocation. It is not unusual to hear of teachers cutting classes and even taking up other remunerative jobs which are not remotely connected with teaching. However, in the light of the working conditions of teachers, where in a number of States, salaries are not paid for months on end, or are arbitrarily reduced, teachers have no choice but to find other sources of income, which negatively impacts on their teaching. Under the circumstances, however, the extent of original, research and good teaching that is the hallmark of a significant number of colleges and universities is quite remarkable.

In some of the affiliating universities and in the colleges, teachers have no control over the curriculum, which is drawn up by a small group and imposed on all. No wonder teaching in many of the colleges and universities is done without any purpose other than that of helping students to somehow pass the examinations. In these cases, the teacher seldom tries to relate her teaching to the actual life situations and to the changing needs of the society. Moreover, not enough teachers take social issues to the classroom and try to solve them. Neither do they take up extension activities for social change and progress nor do they try to make teaching and research an aid to the process of such change and development. To remedy this situation, as teachers' organisations have pointed out, there is a need for democratization of decision making in the university system and making the university administration non-partisan, transparent and accountable, which would make teachers participants in the university system, professionalise the universities and increase teachers' incentives to perform.



This is actually the research lab. But we have such a load of administrative work to do that we can't conduct any experiments.

Courtesy : R.K. Laxman

The conditions of work for teachers in a very large number of places are quite unfavourable; they often do not have even a desk to do their work in the institution much less an office room, they lack adequate housing and transport, their social status is not very high, and they spend a lot of time fighting for better pay and promotion opportunities. Despite the IT revolution, the large bulk of teachers have no access to internet, and are thus denied access to new advances of knowledge in their own disciplines. The vast majority of university/college libraries are poorly stocked and grossly underfunded. Teachers also don't have allowances to buy journals and books, distancing them from advances in the profession. Promotion avenues for a large number of teachers, particularly in the colleges are poor and undermine teachers' morale, and ultimately the professional environment in the university.

The greatest **challenge** to the university system comes from the **process of globalization** in which dominant neo-liberal theory dictates the gradual reduction of State funding and support. Consequently, the Indian universities are increasingly starved of funds, which has led Altbach to estimate that, "it is probably the case that 95 percent of Indian academics work in an environment that is well below international levels. (Altbach, 2002 : 14). Similarly Jayaram notes that, with the structural adjustment reforms and liberalization of the economy, the State is gradually shedding its responsibility for higher education. Educationally, the

Indian university system has progressively become nominalized and marginalized. (Jayaram, : 236). Considering all this, the fact that the Indian university system continues to function as it does, is a testimony to the professional commitment and resilience of the teaching community.

Future directions

After going through the previous section on the situation in Indian higher education, you might appreciate that all these problems do exist and need to be solved in order to improve the tertiary education system. Both the students and teachers of higher education should strive their best to solve all such problems and bring out a well attuned educational system in the country. Let us discuss some aspects of such an endeavour.

It is the call of the hour that the State not abdicate its role in funding higher education. Teachers in the primary and secondary education streams are trained in the higher education stream. Apart from 'educating the educators,' higher education provides the intellectual skills required for labour to be able to compete in a highly competitive globalized world. Most importantly in a society in transition, higher education develops and transmits the plurality of intellectual analyses and approaches that would facilitate both policy makers and the citizenry to meet the challenges of social change. In this it is important to stress the continued relevance of the Social Science and Humanities streams, which some quarters have considered less relevant, or even unnecessary, in the current scenario. The Social Sciences enable an evaluation as well as a future projection of socio-economic developments that are vital to national progress. The humanities address the cultural domain that shapes social consciousness, which in turn substantially impacts on social processes. These disciplines provide the intellectual skills to critically evaluate contending models of development in virtually all spheres, and suggest alternatives suitable for the Indian context. These disciplines in particular and higher education as a whole provide the "historical memory" of a nation. This historical memory is indispensable not only for an appreciation for the past, but also for the insights it gives into the present, and the possibilities for the future.

In view of its critical role in national development as States earlier, higher education must continue to be funded by the State. This is also necessary for an egalitarian and socially just higher education system. Now that State funding has been cut, tuition fees particularly in professional courses have risen sharply. These fees are no longer affordable by poor and lower middle class students. Since there are insufficient scholarships for these strata, they are even more underrepresented than before in such institutions. As such professional degrees contribute to social mobility, restriction of access to them goes against the Constitutional goal of social justice leading to more strife in society. This is yet another reason for State funding of higher education.

Because of lack of internal autonomy and the stifling control exercised by academic bureaucracy, the nature of work suffers. It is, therefore most desirable that institutions have internal autonomy combined with administrative accountability so that a conducive academic atmosphere is created. The academics should also be provided with adequate facilities and an atmosphere of stimulation from peers. A liberal environment should be built in the colleges and universities. This is a prerequisite to the evolution of independent academics, for their professional competence, and for contribution to solving the country's problems. The academics should involve themselves in larger policy-making issues related to education as well as social and economic progress.

The solution to the problem of less pay in private and government colleges leading to demotivation among teachers lies in having a national incomes and wages policy. This should be based on the recognition of the critical role of higher education and teachers in national development. To attract and retain talent, salary and career prospects must be improved and be made comparable to competing careers. Incentives must be provided for quality work done by teachers.

As we have discussed teaching, research and extension work can go hand in hand. Programmes of educational transformation also can go hand in hand with the complementary programmes of social and economic transformation. Change rather than status quo has become the watchword for successful living and education has been recognised as a tool for ushering in changes in an orderly manner. In such a context, higher education has to be both sensitive to the social needs of his students, and willing and competent, to perform a linking function between the academic and the social world.

There is, however, one important snag of which we may not be aware or we may tend to forget. We have not so far visualised the possibility of confrontation with reactionary forces in this onward march to social transformation. This has, however, to be kept in mind and obviously educational institutions and individual teachers will have their own limitations. But that notwithstanding, it should not be forgotten that teachers have a commitment to social transformation. Teachers who are committed to social goals and have established their bonafides, will always find a sympathetic public that comes forward to help such workers. The history of social work abounds in such instances.

Self-assessment

3. *Against the background of the discussion in the last section of the unit, make a critical assessment the situation in higher education as it exists today. What are the limitations that it poses in motivating teachers for action in social change?*

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4. *Discuss, briefly, how a teacher can best reconcile her role as a teacher per se, and as social and political activist.*

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Summary

We can now, after the discussion in this unit, place the role of academic persons and of academic institutions in a perspective. The observation that the obligations of the university teacher are many as her role is multi-dimensional is reinforced after the discussion. Important though the role of the teacher is, the teacher at higher education is not solely a teacher in the classroom sense of the term, her social role and responsibility in providing leadership as the most informed citizen of her society can hardly be undermined especially in the context of developing nations confronting a myriad of problems. The academic responsibility and social commitment of a teacher are however not in conflict with each other, on the other hand, her commitment to the societal cause can be seen as a part of her main functions of teaching, research and extension. Yet within this framework of basic social and professional roles teachers also have obligations to uphold certain academic values that are widely considered essential to the progress of learning and discovery.

These responsibilities include a commitment to maintain an atmosphere within the institution that leaves every member as free as possible to learn, to search for knowledge, to express her own individual beliefs and opinions, strive for excellence and foster professionalism and social relevance in teaching.

Unit-end activities

1. As a teacher in higher education, what values and attitudes would you foster in students to create a scientific outlook and sensitivity to social problems?
2. In our discussions in different Units, we have noticed the need expressed by various Commissions and Committees about fostering meaningful linkages between the teaching community and the rest of the society. [In fact, reforms and changes have also been suggested to make this possible, yet not much has been accomplished in this direction. In the light of your own experiences, list down the major hurdles that stand in the way.]

Points for discussion

1. The role of a teacher extends to research and extension functions as well. Do you agree with this view? Elicit opinions of your colleagues on this.
2. Societal expectations from the teachers are many but necessary conditions for affectively fulfilling these roles are not provided. How far is this statement correct?

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Teachers' Organisations

Introduction

The academic ethos and teaching profession have come a long way since the time when there were no universities but only learned men seeking reliable and fundamental knowledge. We have examined earlier that societies have changed and with them universities have changed too. The obligations of the teachers in the form of discovery, acquisition and dissemination of knowledge have not changed but the conditions in which they are to be brought into action have changed. The decades of the 60s and 70s have been particularly difficult for the academic profession the worldover and this explains to a large measure the tilt towards unionization in the profession. The post World War II period was marked by an increasing dependence on higher education for technological developments, research and training and as a means for solving national problems. Consequently, the latter period witnessed dramatic increases in expenditure on higher education and equally dramatic enrolment increases. The growth in size and numbers had its own set of problems while increased funds implied government interest in the affairs of the academic and demands that universities account for their activities. There was also a growing dissatisfaction with the internal operation of the universities and their increasing bureaucratisation and simultaneously, alongwith a depressed academic job market, university teachers laboured under a general feeling of rapidly declining relative economic position. What we have discussed in the earlier units can be reiterated here, it can be said of the teaching profession that it is a "gentlemanly profession informed by the norms of a democratically self governing guild which is in the process of adapting itself to internal and external pressures". This unit is an attempt at analysing the role and development of teachers' organization against this backdrop. The changing attitudes of university teacher with respect to trade union activities can also be understood only in the context of developments in higher education generally.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this unit, you would be able to:

- define the meaning of 'professional organisation';
- narrate the origin and growth of teachers' organisations;
- discuss the role of teachers' organisations in the promotion of professionalism; and
- evaluate the role of teachers' organisations as a pressure group in representing teachers' causes and interests.

Teachers' organisations

Teaching got its legitimate status as a profession in the landmark work of A.M. Carr-Saunders and P.A. Wilson, (1933), who identified sixteen professions including teaching. Teaching is, as we can recall from an earlier discussion, based on a body of knowledge. The practitioners of teaching pass through a rigorous path of discipline orientation before they are brought into the scope of teachers' profession. They commit themselves for the cause of teaching throughout their life. They are bound by a code of conduct. Persons pursuing a profession, after assessing their occupational situation, come to associate in a 'professionally meaningful' fashion. Such professional organizations promote professionalization of the occupation by contributing towards professional identity, solidarity, autonomy and status.

Teachers' organisations are, thus formed in order to promote their members' interests through activities such as political and social action, collective bargaining, publication, conferences and training. They foster the welfare and security of their members, facilitate information exchange and generate and promote codes of conduct. Some of them even openly operate as direct pressure groups in the formulation of public policy. Teachers' organisations vary in terms of their membership, internal governance, goals and activities, and effects. These variations are found among nations, among organisations within nations, and over time within individual organisations.

The teachers' organisations provide an opportunity for teachers to participate in the affairs of the profession, serve as a liaison between teachers on the one hand and the administrators and the public, on the other, and assist in legislative campaigns has been recognized. Thus it would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of teachers' organisations for the effective functioning of teachers as professionals.

Teachers' organisations and professional associations

Most of the teachers' organisations in India are regional or institutional in nature. In higher education these organisations mainly function at affiliated college and/or university levels. The examples of this kind are Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA), Baroda University Teachers Association, etc. The only two teachers' organisations having a national character at present, are the All India Federation of University and College Teachers' Organisation (AIFUCTO) and the Federation of Central Universities Teachers' Associations (FEDCUTA). AIFUCTO is a much bigger organisation, and unlike FEDCUTA which only represents the Central (government) universities teachers' associations, it represents the very large number of State universities and other institutions of higher learning. The members of the organisations like these have a common work ethos, common or similar service rules, common academic objectives and common issues and views regarding their profession. On the other hand, we find a number of teachers' organisations which are formed on the basis of commonality among the members with regard to their disciplines. The examples of these are All India Science Teachers Association, All India Association for Educational Technology, All India Association of Teacher Educators, All India Association of Educational Researchers, etc. These associations are mainly formed with a view to promoting a particular discipline or some related discipline. These organisations do not fight for the economic benefits of their members. Their major thrust is professional development of their peers.

From the above discussion, it is apparent that one teacher may become a member of several organisations. Firstly, she is the member of teachers' organisation which maintains her service security and secondly, she is the member of those associations which look after her professional development. Although, both types of teachers' organisations exist, the former is active in raising teachers' causes and views, whereas the latter works for the professional development of teachers. In the subsequent discussion, we will discuss the role of these organisations. But let us first study the origin and evolution of teachers' organisations in India.

Origin and development of teachers' organisations in India

Teachers' organisations in India have a long history, longer than that of the trade union movement. The earliest known effort in the direction of organising teachers in the South was the founding of the Women Teachers' Association in Madras in 1890. Five years later, the Madras Teachers' Guild, an organisation representing both male and female teachers was founded. Fourteen years later, in 1909 the first federal organisation known as the South India Teachers' Union was founded.

The first efforts at organising teachers in the North were perhaps the formation of the Non-Gazetted Educational Officers' Association of Uttar Pradesh, and also of what is now the Association of the Heads of Anglo-Indian Schools in India at Allahabad in 1920.

The Uttar Pradesh Secondary Education Association and the Uttar Pradesh Adhyapak Mandal were founded in 1921. During the 1920s, the teachers' movement reached the take off stage and spread to other States and provinces. Among the important organisations that came to be established during this period, mention may be made of the All Bengal Teachers' Association, Bihar Vernacular Association, Bihar and Orissa Secondary Teachers' Association, Central Provinces and Berar Teachers' Association, Bombay Presidency High School Headmasters' Conference, and Baroda Secondary Teachers' Association.

The credit for bringing together, at the national level, teachers of all grades and categories goes to Shri D.P. Khattry and Professor P.Seshadri. The former founded the All India Federation of Teachers' Association (renamed in 1933 as the All India Federation of Educational Association). Since Independence, there has been a phenomenal growth of teachers' organisations in the country. There are also numerous local organisations. The AIFUCTO and FEDCUTA are the only organisations of University and College teachers at the national level. AIFUCTO has been in existence for over a decade now and claims a membership of more than one lakh teachers through its affiliated organisations. Among the more powerful organisations of university and college teachers, are the West Bengal University and College Teachers' Association, the Delhi University Teachers' Association, the All Orissa Teachers' Association, the Bombay University Teachers' Union, and the All Kerala Private College Teachers' Association.

After having an idea about the concept, origin and development of teachers' organisations, we will now examine the role of teachers' organisations.

Role of teachers' organisations

In a democratic society, various professional organisations owe responsibility of contributing dynamism, growth and excellence in their respective professions. Teachers organisations are no exception in this regard. They assume a greater role in nation-building process because teachers participate in shaping the quality of human material which is basic to any concept of national development and social growth. Through their research and critical studies on a wide range of problems they contribute to the national capacity to tackle these problems. They are responsible for the professional growth of their members. They can act as a liaison between the world of knowledge and that of its utilization. In other words, they bring the academic community to the doorsteps of the larger society.

The **Education Commission (1964-66)** conceived of the **role of the teachers' organisations** as a very important input in the professionalisation of teaching. It enunciated the following functions of teachers' organisations.

- i) to secure for their members, individually and collectively, their rightful status—social, economic and professional;
- ii) to safeguard their professional interests and secure satisfactory conditions of work and service;
- iii) to secure the professional growth of teachers through refresher courses, seminars, publications, library service and research;
- iv) to work for the improvement of education in response to the challenge of the ever-changing socio-economic situation;
- v) to improve the teaching of subjects through the establishment of subject teachers' associations and
- vi) to establish a professional code of conduct for teachers to ensure that it is followed by members.

The **National Policy on Education (1986)**, highlighting the role of teachers' organisations states that teachers associations must play a significant role in upholding professional integrity, enhancing the dignity of the teacher and in curbing professional misconduct. National level associations of teachers could prepare a code of professional ethics for teachers and see to its observance. The **Programme of Action** document (November, 1986) which followed the National Policy on Education **reemphasises** that "strong, unified and responsible teachers' associations are necessary for the protection of the dignity and rights of teachers as also for ensuring proper professional conduct of teachers. It is advisable to encourage development of such associations. Professional associations of teachers should be encouraged to develop awareness of teachers towards their professional growth and development. It is necessary to stress the need for democratic functioning of all organisations in the absence of which they tend to break into small groups and their credibility and capacity to serve the cause suffers", (NPE, 1986: 23.10)

Review of the working of teachers' organisations in India

A review of the working of teachers' organisations in India may not be out of place here, since on the basis of the performance of teachers' organisations, we can contemplate the future role of such organisations.

Since the Education Commission's Report, there have been some studies regarding the role played by various teachers' organisations in India. These studies (NCTE-I, 1983, for instance) reveal that:

- i) There is a **multiplicity** of professional organisations in India. This is due to factors like diverse managements, class consciousness, sectional interest, faction fights, group rivalries, ideological differences among the teachers, administrative divisions in the States, regional heterogeneities and elections to the legislative councils through the teachers constituencies.
- ii) The major, and normally, the common objectives these organisations are **promoting socio-economic status** of the teachers, **improving their professional competence** and **securing for them participatory status** in the formulation of educational policies and educational administration.
- iii) In the **economic field** they were successful in getting the salary scales of teachers improved, in achieving parity between government and non-government teachers in the matter of salary, DA, and other allowances, and in securing better security of service for non-government school teachers.
- iv) The growth of professional organisation of teachers in India, the United States and the United Kingdom has, however, followed a similar pattern. Initially they had the sole concern for **academic excellence** but they gradually **drifted** towards **trade unionism**.
- v) Even though the teachers' organisations have not acquired the status of professional consultants, they do **influence** the **formulation** of the **educational policies** and programmes by unilateral expression of their views. Such organisations in the United States and United Kingdom are not only consulted but are also involved in the process of evolving educational policies. In these countries their participation is ensured through statutorily constituted machineries. The impact of our teachers' organisations on educational planning is, in contrast, very limited.

From the discussion above it is clear that the teachers' organisations in India have been more effective in expressing their demands and rights as compared to their role in furthering professionalism and intervening in social change. This is because of their lack of representation in statutorily constituted bodies, and the lack of adequate representation in influential social bodies in which, if represented, they could have created the necessary conditions for professional development.

Self-assessment

1. Trace the evolution and growth teachers' organisations in India

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2. What are the important characteristics of teachers' organisations in India as revealed by a review of their functioning so far?

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- ii)
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- iii)
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- iv)
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- v)
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Role of teachers' organisations in forstering professionalism

As pointed out earlier, the three major functions of teachers' organisations are:

- Fostering professionalism
- Organising teachers for social action
- Representing the teachers' causes and views

Let us discuss these functions at length.

One of the most important functions of teachers' organisations is to bring out professional growth of its members as well as the teaching community at large, so that education as a whole flourishes. It is pertinent to mention here about the National Commission on Teachers I (1983). The Commission had collected opinions of different teachers' organisations at secondary and primary stages in India regarding their activities for professional growth of member teachers. Some of the activities mentioned by them were:

- organise seminars and symposia,
- run orientation and inservice courses,
- form subject teacher associations,
- help teachers in conducting examinations,
- run regular training courses for teachers once in two years,

- publication of a monthly paper like Madhya Pradesh Shikshak Samachar; monthly Adhyapaka-Lokam by teachers association in Kerala,
- provide literature on academic matters of larger interest
- form academic council,
- publish a monthly souvenir,
- conduct research work,
- organize special seminars and meetings to enforce code of conduct among its members.

The teachers organisations at higher education level need to emphasize the following :

- raise the standards of research creating conducive environment for research,
- organize seminars, symposia, debates and workshops, to improve teaching/education,
- form subject teacher association to strengthen various disciplines,
- form interdisciplinary association to exchange views and opinions,
- invite experts from different disciplines to address the teaching community on innovations and new developments,
- help in the curriculum development, conduct of examinations and evaluation,
- publish monthly journal, papers and newsletters evolve a code of conduct or professional ethics for its members and the academic community to follow.

One of the most important dimensions of promoting professional growth is evolving a code of conduct. Let us, now, discuss the need and contents of code of conduct or professional ethics.

Need for a code of conduct

If teaching is a profession then it has to lay down its norms of behaviour for teachers and also devise its own ways to guarantee that these norms are followed. This, as we have discussed in a previous unit (13), is implicit in the definition of a profession. Service rules are but a poor substitute for such self-accepted and self-imposed norms.

Every profession is accountable. It is accountable to society. Academic freedom bestowed upon teachers is premised upon the societal responsibility that their profession carries. Their job involves dispassionate search for truth and its transmission and application as recorded knowledge. They are a model to their clients- namely the students -who are highly impressionable. They have to discharge this responsibility through wise yet stern self-discipline. The public image and standing of the teaching profession will improve if its responsibilities are honestly discharged.

Framing of the code

The NCT devoted considerable attention to the professional ethics and values of the academic community. Its survey covered not only the values that university and college teachers cherish but also those they ought to uphold but do not. The NCT urged teachers to 'scrutinize their own value system' and impose severe restrictions on themselves so as to raise the profession to "to the highest moral level" and earn "the most honourable place" in society (NCT, 1985, pp 55-65).

Ideally, as in any profession, the enforcement of a code of ethics among teachers should be undertaken by their professional organisations. The AIFUCTO does not exercise any authority, moral or otherwise over the members of the profession as regards their

professional conduct. In 1976, it adopted a “note” in this regard though it made the observance of this code contingent in the creation of congenial condition and incorporation of a section on the rights of the teachers (UGC, 1986, App. 3).

While framing the code of professional ethics, the All India Federation of University and College Teachers Organisation (AIFUCTO) in its meeting held in Calcutta in November 1976, considered the following:

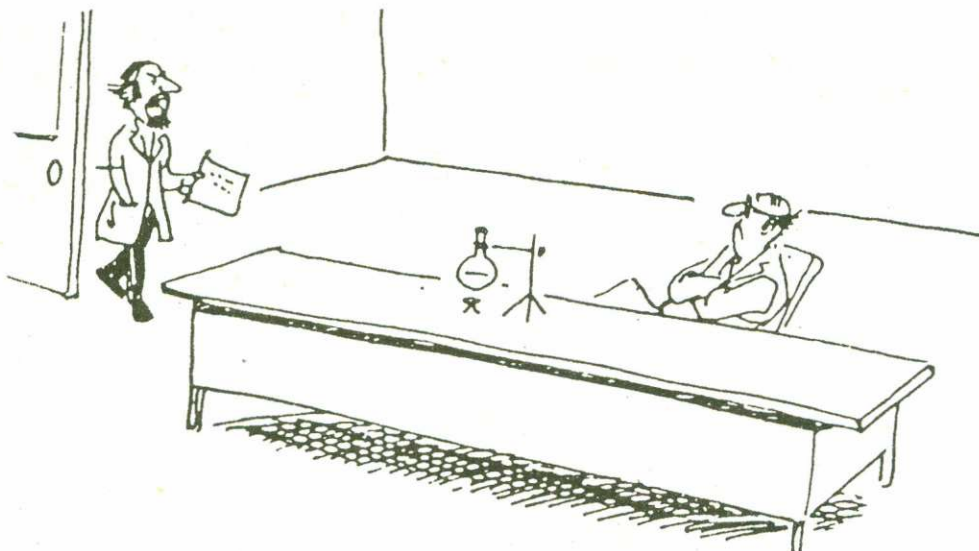
- i) The code of professional ethics is not another set of service conduct rules. Rather, it is such that, while framing service conduct rules, authorities should refer to it. Service conduct rules should so framed as would enable the teachers to properly observe the code. It should be sufficiently broad and its prescriptions should not be legally enforceable; but it should act as a source of constant reference for teachers themselves. It should be morally binding upon the teaching community.
- ii) The code should always be framed with adequate consultation with teachers' organizations and it should be basically self-imposed for betterment of education and profession.
- iii) The code should be framed by the academic authorities, namely, the UGC, in consultation with the universities.
- iv) The code should cover the relations of teachers vis-a-vis the other components of the society with whom they come in contact while discharging their professional responsibilities.
- v) The code will itself have a reference point which is the national goal of education and the basic requirements of teacher much of which we take from our National Policy of Education as accepted by the Parliament.
- vi) The code should also contain a section on rights of teachers since in more senses than one, rights and responsibilities are inalienable.

Code of professional ethics proposed by the AIFUCTO

The All India Federation of University and College Teachers Organisations (AIFUCTO) proposed a code for commitment to professional ideals and career in teaching. Let us examine this code of ethics.

Teachers and their responsibilities

Whoever adopts teaching as a profession assumes the obligation to conduct himself or herself in accordance with the ideals of the profession. A teacher is constantly under the vigilant eyes not only of his or her students but also of society at large. Therefore, every teacher should see that there is no incompatibility between her precepts and practices. The national ideals of education which have already been set forth and which she seeks to inculcate among students must be her own ideals. The profession further requires that the teachers should be calm, patient and communicative by temperament and amiable in disposition. Teachers therefore should: a) adhere to a responsible pattern of conduct and demeanour expected of them by the community; b) manage their private affairs in a manner consistent with the dignity of the profession; c) seek to make professional growth a continuous process through study, research, travel and participation at professional meetings, seminars, conferences etc.; d) maintain active membership of professional organisations and strive to improve education and profession through them; e) perform their duties in the form of teaching, tutorial, practical and seminar work conscientiously and with dedication and integrity f) co-operate and assist in carrying out functions relating to the educational responsibilities of the college and the university such as, assisting in appraising applications for admission, advising and counseling students as well as assisting in the conduct of university and college examination, including supervision, invigilation and evaluation; g) participate in co-curricular activities including community service



A further cut in the research funds, Professor; because we have not shown much in the way of results.

(Courtesy : R.K. Laxman).

Teachers and the students

It seems unexceptionable that teachers should a) respect the right and dignity of the student in expressing her opinion; b) deal justly and impartially with students regardless of their religions, caste, political, economic, social and physical characteristics; c) recognize the difference in aptitude and capabilities among students and strive to meet their individual needs; d) encourage students to improve their attainments, develop their personalities and attend to community welfare; e) inculcate among students a scientific outlook and respect for physical labour and ideals of democracy and peace; f) be affectionate to the students and not behave in a vindictive manner towards any of them for any reason, g) assess most of students on their attainment; students must be assessed with utmost objectivity and integrity, h) make themselves available to the students even beyond their class hours and help and guide students without consideration of remuneration or reward; i) aid students to develop an understanding of our national heritage and national goals and j) refrain from inciting students against other students, against colleagues or administration. (This however should not interfere with the right of teachers to freely express any difference on principle in seminars, meetings or other places where students also may be present.)

Teachers and colleagues

It also seems most fair and natural that teachers should a) treat other members of the profession in the same manner as they themselves wish to be treated; b) speak respectfully of other teachers and render assistance for professional betterment; c) refrain from lodging secret complaints against colleagues to higher authorities; d) refrain from raising questions of caste, creed, religion, race or sex in their relationship with their colleagues or trying to use the same for improvement of their prospects.

Teachers and authorities

As employees teachers should a) discharge their professional responsibilities according to existing rules, and at the same time they may undertake the responsibility to initiate moves and conduct movements through professional organisations for change of any existing rule detrimental to professional interest; b) conduct professional business through proper channels; c) refrain from undertaking any gainful employment or commitment which is likely to interfere with their professional responsibilities or which may impair their standing with students, their associations and/or the community; d) co-operate in the formulation of policies of the institutions by accepting various offices and discharge responsibilities which such offices may demand; e) co-operate through their organisation

in the formulation of policies of the institutions and accept offices; f) co-operate with the authorities for the betterment of institutions keeping in view the interest and in conformity with dignity of the profession; g) should adhere to the conditions of contract until (1) service thereunder has been performed (2) the contract has been terminated by mutual consent; or (3) the contract has otherwise been legally terminated; h) give and expect due notice before a change of position is made; and i) refrain from availing themselves of leave except on unavoidable grounds and as far as practicable with prior intimation, keeping in view their particular responsibility for completion of academic schedules.

Teachers and non-teaching staff

(i) Teachers should treat the non-teaching staff as colleagues and equal partners in a cooperative undertaking, within every educational institution (ii) Teachers should help joint staff-councils covering both teachers and the non-teaching staff

Teachers and guardians

Teachers should a) try to see through teacher's bodies and organisations that institutions maintain contact with the guardians of their students, send reports of their performance to the guardians whenever necessary and meet the guardians in meetings covered for the purpose for mutual exchange of ideas and for the benefit of the institution.

Teachers' organizations, have a great role in fostering professionalism among their members and the teaching community based on a set of natural and moral principles which may be called professional ethics. Most of the universities however have ignored this code. Even those universities that have implemented this code in principle are not enforcing it in practice either due to administrative inertia or the fear of agitation by teachers. Given the inability of universities to enforce such a code, there have been cases of High Court imposing financial liability on universities in the form of damages for negligence arising from acts of omission or commission by their teaching or non-teaching staff. Some universities have also been directed to take action against erring employees (Agrawala, 1992).

Self - assessment

3. *Write a short note on the role of teachers' organizations in fostering professionalism.*

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4. *In the light of your experiences as a teacher, discuss the contents of the code of ethics proposed by the AIFUCTO.*

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Teachers' organisations as pressure group

Teachers' organisations as pressure or interest groups perceive "interests" as prospective advantages or benefits which would accrue to individual teachers under certain conditions. These benefits are usually understood as pecuniary benefits and physical conveniences.

Members of the academic profession like all other members of society have interests. They are interested in having the highest possible salaries, the most congenial working conditions, appropriate social status, etc. How are these interests to be dealt with in the light of the obligations of the academic profession? "Interests" are often in conflict with "obligations". Should interests override obligations? Is there always a conflict between obligations and interests, and if there is how can a way be found which assuages this conflict? These are some of the important questions that the organisations of teachers ought to be addressing themselves to. In this section, however we are concerning ourselves with the "interests" of the academia as perceived by teacher's organisations.

Salary

Salary is one of the most vital aspects which has drawn the attention of teachers' organisations. By and large, they are all one in advocating higher scale of pay, emoluments and other benefits to teachers as compared with other Central Government employees. There have been major revision of pay scales during the last two decades, first, in 1987 (following the Mehrotra Committee Report) and the latest only in 1998 (following the Rastogi Committee Report). Both these revisions were preceded and followed by agitations and negotiations. The pay package set forth by the UGC in 1998 was effective from January 1996. Parity with select categories of government employees has always been a crucial issue at the time of pay-revision. A careful analysis of the Rastogi Committee Report, on which new pay scales are structured, reveals that teachers have at best marginal parity with Central Services Group B officers (Kumar, & Raina, 1997).

While UGC pay package has been accepted in principle all over the country, there are significant variations in its implementation by different States. This was due to the authority vested in the State Governments to alter pay scales and to schedule their implementation. Thus the gross salary of different categories of teachers in terms of their institutional affiliation varies across the country. In other words, though the new pay scales have been introduced, the teachers cannot take the security of their salaries for granted.

Career advancement

In addition to the new pay package, the UGC has incorporated a career advancement scheme based on the professional development scheme. Unlike "promotion" career advancement theoretically at least, is not automatic. The cases of teachers seeking career advancement are processed through selection committees that are generally constituted for direct selection of candidates. Consistently satisfactory performance appraisal reports are a prerequisite for advancement from one level to another. Participation in orientation and refresher courses, publication of books and articles, attendance at seminars and conferences, a good record in teaching, contribution to educational innovation and curriculum development, enhancement of the corporate life of the institution, engagement in extension and field outreach activities and so on are given due credit. While this scheme is well thought out its effective implementation cannot be taken for granted. (Jayaram, : 225)

Workload

The new pay package also prescribed the number of teaching days and the workload of teachers (UGC (1998) 13, 14) A minimum of 180 "actual teaching days" in a year has been stipulated for universities and college. The workload of teachers in full employment has been fixed at not less than 40 hours a week for 30 working weeks (180 teaching days) in an academic year. Of these a workload of 16 hours of direct teaching per week has been prescribed for Lecturers, and 14 hours per week for Readers and Professors. Professors engaged in administration, research and extension are given a remission of two hours. Furthermore, it is necessary for teachers to be available for at least five hours daily at the university/college.

This quantum of work has been more or less accepted by teachers although the reality on the ground indicates otherwise. In a study conducted by the National Institute of

Planning and Administration (NIEPA) on the work ethos in colleges found that the average number of working days were as low as 87 (Indiresan /:313) As late as in 2000, the Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) formally recognised the problem of teacher absenteeism and decided to monitor its members for performance but as sociologist Beteille observes, "The only guarantee of regular and dependable service in their case in the internal censor of each teacher". (2000, 86-87).

Status

'Status' is the word that usually stands for social position and prestige enjoyed by a person in society. When applied to teachers it is invested with a very wide connotation. Unless an operational definition of status is formulated, it is difficult to ensure appropriate status to the teachers. Status is a phenomenon, not of intrinsic characteristics of men or women but of social organisation and is likely to vary from society to society and to differ from one professional group to another. We can define the 'status' of teachers as both the standing or regard accorded to them that is evidenced by the level of appreciation of the importance of their function and of their competence in performing it, and the working conditions and other material benefits accorded to them relative to other professional groups. The central point is that considering the crucial role of higher education, salaries should be such as to make the teaching profession attractive. This will result in some of the best students wanting to become teachers. Working conditions should be such as to enable teachers to give their best to teaching, research extension and other related responsibilities. Freedom of expression particularly through scholarly work must be ensured. This could be through autonomy of universities and colleges/departments as also by legal protection of this right for individuals. Numerous recommendations already exist in all these spheres.

Welfare

Uniform service conditions throughout the country, medical benefits, housing facilities, provisions of loans to construct own house, family pension, free education throughout to the children of teachers and reservation of seats for admission in professional and technical courses, providing job to the dependents of teachers in case of their premature death, old age, injury invalidity and other benefits for teachers are some of the demands of welfare of the teachers in general. Abolition of private managements and provision of efficient administrative set-up to settle cases of dispute or the cases concerning welfare in the minimum possible time are, sometime pressed upon by the teachers' organisations.

To conclude, a few observations about the **working of teachers' organisations** in the Indian situation are as follows:

Inadequate involvement of all members

One of the most striking insights emerging out of data available on the establishment and growth of teachers' organizations and their actual working is that these organisations are fairly strong or complete inasmuch as large percentage of potential members are actually enrolled as members, but they are not as strong in terms of the involvement of members. To begin with some members are indifferent about joining the organisations and when they do so, they are not consistently active and are sometimes only marginally involved.

Organisation

Teacher's perception of the demands and achievements of their organisation and the nature of help sought by them as is revealed in the working of different organisations makes it obvious that these organisations are more effective in dealing with the immediate problems of pay or job security. This is because of the withdrawal of State funding of higher education which has led to non-implementation of UGC pay scales and service conditions including a lower ceiling for retirement. The middle class preoccupation with

economic issues of teachers, pay scales are the only issue on which they can be mobilized. On issues concerning professionalism and their contribution to social change, the teachers' organizations tend to be ignored by most authorities.

Summary

This unit concerns itself mainly with the growth and development of teachers' organisations which is essentially a post World War II development. The 60s and 70s were difficult decades for the academic profession therefore the tilt towards unionisation.

The role of teachers' organizations in fostering professionalism and initiating teachers into social action can hardly be overemphasized given the key position that the teacher holds in a society. The obligations which constitute the academic ethics are not the same as a comprehensive code of conduct for university teachers in all spheres of life. The unit examines, nevertheless, the need for a code of conduct and the main contents of such a code.

A working of the teachers' organizations in India reveals that they have addressed themselves to fulfilling union-type functions. They have been more effective in dealing with the immediate problems of pay or job security than with issues concerning the profession. This is because of their lack of representation in statutory decision-making bodies in which they could contribute to the democratisation of universities and the improvement of professional requirements.

Unit-end activities

1. Write your own experiences of being a member of a teachers' organisations. To what extent do you think are teachers' organisations affected by partisan politics, individual interests of leadership and regionalism?
2. Do you feel that the teacher representatives should be members of statutory bodies that take decisions on higher education? How in your opinion, this would make teachers' organisations more effective in contributing to professionalism and social change?

Points for discussion

1. Discuss the merits of involving teachers' organisations in major government policy decisions concerning education.
2. Should there be a code of conduct for teachers? Suggest the principal contents of such a code.

Suggested readings

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It would be of interest for you to know that, for the purposes of career advancement, the UGC has recognized the PGDHE as being equivalent to one orientation programme for teachers from all disciplines except education and equivalent to two refresher courses for teachers from the discipline of education.



REGIONAL CENTRES - 18

STUDY CENTRES-244

