

UNIT – X: TEACHING AS A PROFESSION AND VALUES OF TEACHERS

Unit 10: Teaching as a profession and values of teachers Profession – **meaning, characteristics – professional ethics and values - code of ethics – critical analysis of teaching as profession, job and occupation, profession and professionalism, Skills and competencies required for a**

teacher, Teacher as a purveyor and facilitator of knowledge and Essential qualities of a teacher.

What is a profession?

The word “profession” means different things to different people. But at its core, it’s meant to be an indicator of trust and expertise.

Traditionally, a “professional” was someone who derived their income from their expertise or specific talents, as opposed to a hobbyist or amateur. This still carries through to fields today, such as sport.

But given today’s fast-changing environment of knowledge and expertise, it’s now generally understood that simply deriving an income from a particular task might make you an “expert” or “good at your job” – but if you’re a “professional”, this has a broader meaning.

There’s a long history of attempts to clarify this meaning, and to define the functions of professions. These attempts typically centralise around some sort of moral or ethical foundation within the practice of a specific and usually established expertise.

This section is designed to give you an insight into some of the historic and academic ways of defining professions, as well as some regulatory perspectives as to how a group can ultimately become a profession.

Key definitions

A **profession** is a disciplined group of individuals who adhere to ethical standards. This group positions itself as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised body of learning derived from research, education and training at a high level, and is recognised by the public as such. A profession is also prepared to apply this knowledge and exercise these skills in the interest of others¹.

A **professional** is a member of a profession. Professionals are governed by codes of ethics, and profess commitment to competence, integrity and morality, altruism, and the promotion of the public good within their expert domain. Professionals are accountable to those served and to society².

Professionalism comprises the personally held beliefs about one’s own conduct as a professional. It’s often linked to the upholding of the principles, laws, ethics and conventions of a profession as a way of practice.

Professionalisation is the pattern of how a profession develops³, as well as the process of becoming a profession.

THE FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF A PROFESSION:

1. **Great responsibility**

Professionals deal in matters of vital importance to their clients and are therefore entrusted with grave responsibilities and obligations. Given these inherent obligations, professional work typically involves circumstances where carelessness, inadequate skill, or breach of ethics would be significantly damaging to the client and/or his fortunes.

2. **Accountability**

Professionals hold themselves ultimately accountable for the quality of their work with the client. The profession may or may not have mechanisms in place to reinforce and ensure adherence to this principle among its members. If not, the individual professional will (e.g. guarantees and/or contractual provisions).

3. **Based on specialized, theoretical knowledge**

Professionals render specialized services based on theory, knowledge, and skills that are most often peculiar to their profession and generally beyond the understanding and/or capability of those outside of the profession. Sometimes, this specialization will extend to access to the tools and technologies used in the profession (e.g. medical equipment).

4. **Institutional preparation**

Professions typically require a significant period of hands-on, practical experience in the protected company of senior members before aspirants are recognized as professionals. After this provisional period, ongoing education toward professional development is compulsory. A profession may or may not require formal credentials and/or other standards for admission.

5. **Autonomy**

Professionals have control over and, correspondingly, ultimate responsibility for their own work. Professionals tend to define the terms, processes, and conditions of work to be performed for clients (either directly or as preconditions for their ongoing agency employment).

6. **Clients rather than customers**

Members of a profession exercise discrimination in choosing clients rather than simply accepting any interested party as a customer (as merchants do).

7. **Direct working relationships**

Professionals habitually work directly with their clients rather than through intermediaries or proxies.

8. **Ethical constraints**

Due to the other characteristics on this list, there is a clear requirement for ethical constraints in the professions. Professionals are bound to a code of conduct or ethicsspecific to the distinct profession (and sometimes the individual). Professionals also aspire toward a general body of core values, which are centered upon an uncompromising and unconflicted regard for the client's benefit and best interests.

9. Merit-based

In a profession, members achieve employment and success based on merit and corresponding voluntary relationships rather than on corrupted ideals such as social principle, mandated support, or extortion (e.g. union members are not professionals). Therefore, a professional is one who must attract clients and profits due to the merits of his work. In the absence of this characteristic, issues of responsibility, accountability, and ethical constraints become irrelevant, negating any otherwise-professional characteristics.

10. Capitalist morality

The responsibilities inherent to the practice of a profession are impossible to rationally maintain without a moral foundation that flows from a recognition of the singular right of the individual to his own life, along with all of its inherent and potential sovereign value; a concept that only capitalism recognizes, upholds and protects.

Professional ethics

Professional ethics encompass the personal, organizational and corporate standards of behavior expected of professionals.

The term professionalism originally applied to vows of a religious order. By at least the year 1675, the term had seen secular application and was applied to the three learned professions: Divinity, Law, and Medical.^[2] The term professionalism was also used for the military profession around this same time.

Professionals and those working in acknowledged professions, exercise specialist knowledge and skill. How the use of this knowledge should be governed when providing a service to the public can be considered a moral issue and is termed professional ethics.^[3]

Professionals are capable of making judgments, applying their skills and reaching informed decisions in situations that the general public cannot because they have not attained the necessary knowledge and skills.^[4] One of the earliest examples of professional ethics is the Hippocratic oath to which medical doctors still adhere to this day.

Components

Some professional organizations may define their ethical approach in terms of a number of discrete components.^[5] Typically these include:

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Transparency
- Accountability

- Confidentiality
- Objectivity
- Respectfulness
- Obedience to the law
- Loyalty

professional ethics and values

Values can be defined as those things that are important to or valued by someone. That someone can be an individual or, collectively, an organization. One place where values are important is in relation to vision. One of the imperatives for organizational vision is that it must be based on and consistent with the organization's core values. In one example of a vision statement we'll look at later, the organization's core values - in this case, **integrity, professionalism, caring, teamwork, and stewardship**- were deemed important enough to be included with the statement of the organization's vision. Dr. John Johns, in an article entitled "The Ethical Dimensions of National Security," mentions honesty and loyalty as values that are the ingredients of integrity. When values are shared by all members of an organization, they are extraordinarily important tools for making judgments, assessing probable outcomes of contemplated actions, and choosing among alternatives. Perhaps more important, they put all members "on the same sheet of music" with regard to what all members as a body consider important.

The Army, in 1986, had as the theme for the year "values," and listed four organizational **values**-loyalty, duty, selfless service, and integrity-and four individual **values**- commitment, competence, candor, and courage. A Department of the Army pamphlet entitled *Values: The Bedrock of Our Profession* spent some time talking about the importance of **values**, and included this definition:

Values are what we, as a profession, judge to be right. They are more than words-they are the moral, ethical, and professional attributes of character . . . there are certain core values that must be instilled in members of the U.S. Army-civilian and uniformed soldier alike. These are not the only values that should determine our character, but they are ones that are central to our profession and should guide our lives as we serve our Nation.

Values are the embodiment of what an organization stands for, and should be the basis for the behavior of its members. However, what if members of the organization do not share and have not internalized the organization's values? Obviously, a disconnect between **individual and organizational values** will be dysfunctional. Additionally, an organization may publish one set of values, perhaps in an effort to push forward a positive image, while the values that really guide organizational behavior are very different. When there is a disconnect between **stated and operating values**, it may be difficult to determine what is "acceptable." For example, two of the Army's organizational values include candor and courage. One

might infer that officers are encouraged to "have the courage of their convictions" and speak their disagreements openly. In some cases, this does work; in others it does not.

The same thing works at the level of the society. The principles by which the society functions do not necessarily conform to the principles stated. Those in power may covertly allow the use of force to suppress debate in order to remain in power. ("death squads" are an example.) In some organizations, dissent may be rewarded by termination-the organizational equivalent of "death squad" action. In others, a group member may be ostracized or expelled.

Group members quickly learn the *operating values*, or they don't survive for long. To the extent they differ from *stated values*, the organization will not only suffer from doing things less effectively, but also from the cynicism of its members, who have yet another reason for mistrusting the leadership, or doubting its wisdom.

THE PUBLIC TRUST

If ethics and morality are important for groups and organizations, they should also be important for public officials, and for very much the same reasons. York Willbern, in an article entitled "Types and Levels of Public Morality," argues for six types or levels of morality (or ethics) for public officials. By public officials, he means those who are in policy making positions in public institutions; in other words, strategic decision makers in the government, including the national security arena. The six levels he differentiates are: basic honesty and conformity to law; conflicts of interest; service orientation and procedural fairness; the ethic of democratic responsibility; the ethic of public policy determination; and the ethic of compromise and social integration.

WILLBERN'S LEVEL OF PUBLIC MORALITY

- Ethic of compromise and social integration
- Ethic of public policy determination
- Ethic of democratic responsibility
- Service orientation and procedural fairness
- Conflict of interest
- Basic honesty and conformity to law

BASIC HONESTY AND CONFORMITY TO LAW. "The public servant is morally bound, just as are other persons, to tell the truth, to keep promises, to respect the person and the property of others, and to abide by the requirements of the law" (Willbern). In many ways, this level only describes the basic adherence to moral codes that is expected of all members of a group or society. There are some basics of

behavior that are expected of all if a society is to function for the collective good. For public officials, there is an additional reason why it is important to adhere to these basic moral codes and laws: they have more power than the average member of the society, and hence more opportunity for violation of those codes or laws. There also is the negative example that misconduct by public officials provides.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST. This relates to public officials, because it deals with the conflict between advancing the public interest, which a public official is charged to do, and advancing one's self-interest. The duty here is to ensure that the public interest comes first, and that one does not advance his own personal interest at the expense of the public.

Willbern uses embezzlement of public funds, bribery, and contract kickbacks as examples of pursuing personal interests at the expense of those of the public. The requirements for public officials to divest themselves of investments that might be influenced by the performance of their duties (or put them in trust) and to recuse themselves in situations where they have a personal interest are designed to help public officials avoid conflicts of interest. Ultimately, it still comes down to the individual making an ethical decision.

Avoidance of conflict of interest is often difficult because it is often hard to separate personal and public interests, and because individuals as private citizens are encouraged to pursue private interests through any legal means. One of the areas where there is the greatest potential for conflicts of interest is where public officials deal with private organizations which are pursuing their private interests, and where any decision by a public official on allocation of resources will favor some private interest. The fields of government contracting and acquisition are two areas where the possibility of conflicts of interest is high.

SERVICE ORIENTATION AND PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS. This level relates closely to the last, and deals with the responsibility of public officials to ensure their actions serve the public, and that the power they wield is used only for that purpose. It is easy to abuse the power that comes with public office. Procedural safeguards are designed to prevent that abuse. The moral obligation of public servants is to follow established procedures, and not to use their power to circumvent those procedures for their own convenience or benefit. Power must be used fairly and for the benefit of the public. One can again think of examples of public officials who have violated this moral charge by using their influence and power for their own benefit or for the benefit of special interest groups, or who have circumvented established procedures for their own benefit or convenience. One frequent example is the use of government vehicles or aircraft for nonofficial business.

These first three levels of public morality share one important characteristic: they all relate to the behavior or conduct of public officials. These three levels are the areas that get most of the attention in discussions of ethics, this is where public officials are most likely to get in trouble. However, there are three additional

levels of public morality equally important. These deal with the content of what public officials do, "the moral choices involved in deciding *what* to do, in pursuing the purposes of the state and the society" (Willbern).

THE ETHIC OF DEMOCRATIC RESPONSIBILITY. Given that public officials are operating within a democratic system, they either are elected by the people or appointed by an elected official. This confers upon them the obligation to carry out the will of the people. However, public officials also have the responsibility to make moral choices consistent with their own values, and that may be in conflict with what they perceive to be the will of the people.

Willbern contends that the public official acts according to his or her own judgment, rationalizing that it would be the will of the people if they were well enough informed on the issue. To give one example of this level of public morality, consider whether or not the representative in Congress is morally bound to support policies and legislation which his constituents overwhelmingly support but he personally opposes.

THE ETHIC OF PUBLIC POLICY DETERMINATION. This level involves the most difficult ethical choices, because it concerns making moral judgments about public policies. The responsibility is to make moral policies; the difficulty is in determining how moral a policy is. Public policies almost always deal with very complex issues, where ethical choices are rarely clear, and it is often difficult to determine if a policy is right or wrong. For example, many public policies deal with the distribution of limited resources. Is it right or wrong to slash funding for one program, or to increase funding for another? In almost any decision, there will be winners and losers, and there will be some benefit for some and cost to others. "Right" and "wrong" may not apply. Equity and fairness are important considerations, but not always easy to discern. The determination of how much funding to provide for national security, and which social programs to fund, involves ethical choices of the most difficult type. What is the difference between equality and equity? Consider the controversy around affirmative action programs: are they examples of moral public policies?

THE ETHIC OF COMPROMISE AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION. This final level deals with an area not as salient as some of the others. It deals with the necessity for compromise in a society. A society with irreconcilable differences on fundamental issues will be torn apart. Hence, it becomes a moral obligation of public officials to engage in give and take, working toward compromise in the policies they develop. One often sees legislators in our political system establishing positions where they may not get all they want from particular legislation, but will settle for some of what they want. Willbern contends that compromise, rather than standing on principle, is moral, because without compromise there will be discord and conflict, and disintegration rather than integration of the society.

Public officials are given the trust of the public to develop and carry out policies that are in the public's best interest. Living up to this trust has a significant impact on the national will; public confidence is essential to the exercise of national power. Public officials have a moral duty to act in a trustworthy manner.

CODE OF ETHICS

Code of Ethics

The Code of Ethics states the principles and expectations governing the behavior of individuals and organizations in the conduct of internal auditing. It describes the minimum requirements for conduct, and behavioral expectations rather than specific activities.

Introduction to the Code of Ethics

The purpose of The Institute's Code of Ethics is to promote an ethical culture in the profession of internal auditing.

Internal auditing is an independent, objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes.

A code of ethics is necessary and appropriate for the profession of internal auditing, founded as it is on the trust placed in its objective assurance about governance, risk management, and control.

The Institute's Code of Ethics extends beyond the Definition of Internal Auditing to include two essential components:

1. Principles that are relevant to the profession and practice of internal auditing.
2. Rules of Conduct that describe behavior norms expected of internal auditors. These rules are an aid to interpreting the Principles into practical applications and are intended to guide the ethical conduct of internal auditors.

"Internal auditors" refers to Institute members, recipients of or candidates for IIA professional certifications, and those who perform internal audit services within the Definition of Internal Auditing.

Applicability and Enforcement of the Code of Ethics

This Code of Ethics applies to both entities and individuals that perform internal audit services.

For IIA members and recipients of or candidates for IIA professional certifications, breaches of the Code of Ethics will be evaluated and administered according to The Institute's Bylaws and Administrative Directives. The fact that a particular conduct is not mentioned in the Rules of Conduct does not prevent it from being unacceptable or discreditable, and therefore, the member, certification holder, or candidate can be liable for disciplinary action.

Code of Ethics — Principles

Internal auditors are expected to apply and uphold the following principles:

1. **Integrity**

The integrity of internal auditors establishes trust and thus provides the basis for reliance on their judgment.

2. **Objectivity**

Internal auditors exhibit the highest level of professional objectivity in gathering, evaluating, and communicating information about the activity or process being examined. Internal auditors make a balanced assessment of all the relevant circumstances and are not unduly influenced by their own interests or by others in forming judgments.

3. **Confidentiality**

Internal auditors respect the value and ownership of information they receive and do not disclose information without appropriate authority unless there is a legal or professional obligation to do so.

4. **Competency**

Internal auditors apply the knowledge, skills, and experience needed in the performance of internal audit services.

Rules of Conduct

1. **Integrity**

Internal auditors:

1.1. Shall perform their work with honesty, diligence, and responsibility.

1.2. Shall observe the law and make disclosures expected by the law and the profession.

1.3. Shall not knowingly be a party to any illegal activity, or engage in acts that are discreditable to the profession of internal auditing or to the organization.

1.4. Shall respect and contribute to the legitimate and ethical objectives of the organization.

2. Objectivity

Internal auditors:

2.1. Shall not participate in any activity or relationship that may impair or be presumed to impair their unbiased assessment. This participation includes those activities or relationships that may be in conflict with the interests of the organization.

2.2. Shall not accept anything that may impair or be presumed to impair their professional judgment.

2.3. Shall disclose all material facts known to them that, if not disclosed, may distort the reporting of activities under review.

3. Confidentiality

Internal auditors:

3.1. Shall be prudent in the use and protection of information acquired in the course of their duties.

3.2. Shall not use information for any personal gain or in any manner that would be contrary to the law or detrimental to the legitimate and ethical objectives of the organization.

4. Competency

Internal auditors:

4.1. Shall engage only in those services for which they have the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience.

4.2. Shall perform internal audit services in accordance with the *International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing (Standards)*.

4.3. Shall continually improve their proficiency and the effectiveness and quality of their services.

Critical analysis of teaching as profession, job and occupation

Certainly, teachers and their supporters want teaching to be seen as a profession. They've won the linguistic battle. If you Google 'the teaching profession,' you'll get 153,000,000 references, while 'teaching as an occupation' and 'the teaching occupation' produce only 67,000,000.

Social scientists have no doubt about status of teaching, according to Richard Ingersoll of the University of Pennsylvania. "We do not refer to teaching as a profession. It doesn't have the characteristics of those traditional professions like medicine, academia, dentistry, law, architecture, engineering, et cetera. It

doesn't have the pay, the status, the respect, the length of training, so from a scientific viewpoint teaching is not a profession."

The only feature that ever really distinguished the professions from other occupations was the "professional" label itself. What we are is knowledge workers, and as such we have a responsibility to both ourselves and to the public to become reflective practitioners. As reflective practitioners we can reassert, first our ability, and then our right, to assume responsibility for the educational enterprise. We must stop worrying about unimportant issues of status and focus instead on the real and present danger of deskilling.

What is the difference between professional and professionalism?

Profession is a noun describing a job type, usually reserved for a recognized specific career, i.e. Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Psychologists, Social Workers, Vets, Military Officers. It conveys expertise and/or education. Professionalism is an adverb. It generally describes the type of behavior that should be the gold standard for a profession. It can, however, also be used to describe expertise in a career that is not commonly considered a "profession." Professionalism is an adverb that can be applied to almost any job. It can be a description of a single momentous act or used as a description of job performance on a review.

A **professional** is a member of a profession. The term also describes the standards of education and training that prepare members of the profession with the particular knowledge and skills necessary to perform the role of that profession. In addition, most professionals are subject to strict codes of conduct enshrining rigorous ethical and moral obligations. Professional standards of practice and ethics for a particular field are typically agreed upon and maintained through widely recognized professional associations. Some definitions of "professional" limit this term to those professions that serve some important aspect of public interest [1] and the general good of society.

Professionalism:

the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person"; and it defines a profession as "a calling requiring specialized knowledge and often long and intensive academic preparation."

These definitions imply that professionalism encompasses a number of different attributes, and, together, these attributes identify and define a professional.

The Competencies & Skills Required for Teacher

Commitment

Dedication to students is of utmost importance when one is considering the teaching profession. Overall, a teacher must stop at nothing to provide the best instruction he can to the students he serves. Personality traits that support this core proposition are determination, compassion and empathy.

Know the Subjects

This is where proper teacher education comes into play for the would-be educator. Good teaching programs are widely available across the country, and it is imperative that the coursework include necessary instructional practice pedagogy (the method and practice of teaching) and content preparation for the student teacher. Once certified, a teacher should make it a point to stay abreast of new content and teaching strategies that could benefit her students. Personality traits that support this core proposition include flexibility and passion for the content being taught.

Classroom Management

This is often the most difficult area for new teachers to master. Although classroom management techniques are being taught in colleges across the country, it is significantly different when you are suddenly wholly responsible for the 25 or 30 students sitting in front of you. Experience is the most important factor for this proposition; however, certain personality traits such as the ability to multitask and stay organized will help the new teacher succeed.

Creative Thinking

Teachers are required to keep immaculate records on their students and to reflect regularly on the progress (or lack of progress) that students are making. To use the data successfully, teachers must possess a knack for creative thinking, reteaching concepts in different ways to meet the needs of students.

Leadership

Teacher certification candidates must be willing to be active participants in their community. Teaching isn't only about what happens in the classroom. Relationships with parents and community members are important factors in building positive instructional relationships. Teachers must be willing and able to be seen as experts in their fields. Personality traits that support this core proposition include leadership and the ability to inspire others.