

QUALITY OF TEACHERS

by:

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The kind of teacher that we presently have are born out of our social mindset of our expectations of them. We look up to teachers because they exemplify some or all these expectations. Teacher is traditionally one with unquestioned integrity. The teacher is one whose word and action are congruent. These are the traditional teachers who have been trained in the old school. This traditional qualification of the teachers is now in edge of extinction.

I think we are in search for the best minds, generous hearts, and strong wills. With these qualities in teachers, we can only rightfully expect the same qualities in the students they serve. Unless you find these qualities in the teachers, it is expecting a miracle to see these in the students. Using the institutional training centers as our source of teachers, trainings that both benefit teacher in their professional aspect and for the students in their learning process.

Put on a screening process, if these student-teachers originate from families who decide the careers of their children, what is the teaching profession narrative that is often repeated by parents: “Wala kang alam, mag-teacher ka na lang.” The message is clear, do not expect anything worthwhile to come out of our educational system.

If one were to teach in the basic education level, I consider four subject areas that need solid competence: Mathematics, Science, English, and Social Science. These are areas young students need some basic competence. Therefore, these basic competences can be used as their foundation to learn the other graduated skills. Basic skills are prerequisites for complex skills. Not following this basic role leads to educational aberrations such as

students reaching grade 11 not knowing how to read. For teachers to be good in content, they must have a good level of intellectual capacity. If the LET (Board Exams for teachers) is as such indicator of what the beginning teacher should know, then the yearly rate of examiner failures for teacher is a bad indicator of the quality of teachers we produce, considering the fact that the LET is probably assumed to be passed by aspiring teachers.

Many teachers end up teaching the content of the subject matter as information materials that simply fill up the head. Hardly, a challenging process that involves critical thinking, creative thinking, inquiry process, application of theories, etc. what educational planners call higher order thinking skills. In effect, the affective domain that eventually compels the learners to action. Action is the end result of a process. Hopefully, teachers facilitate the end result of what has been stated in the Most Essential Learning Competencies (MELCs), students becoming problem solvers, scientists, artists, logical thinkers, faith-filled individuals, creative persons, etc.

One of the main supports to the learner is the teacher as a person. Definitely, at the top of the list of personality traits are: nurturance, diagnostician, caring, loving, just and fair, humble, effective, efficient, etc. All of these traits hit the learners in various ways because each one has a different personality that engages with the teacher and with the corresponding needs.

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