

EMERGING CHALLENGES FOR PRINCIPAL – THE PERSON IN THE OFFICE

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With the advancement of Science & Technology, urbanization and industrialization and changing of role of Guru (The Teacher) from “Guru” to “E-Gurucol.Com”, an emerging trend of challenges has entered in the office of the Principal. The expectations of the society, management, teachers and students who are the direct beneficiaries have increased enormously. There is no denying the fact that the Principal – the person in the office, has also equipped himself/herself with the modern techniques of leadership and is using the modern technology to counter these challenges but still satisfaction level in most of the cases is lacking.

There was a time when education was considered a simple, peaceful activity. It was a serene, meditative affair. Globalisation was also there but the pursuit of excellence did not emerge the way it is being seen now a days. No body is trying to compromise with a bit less than the best. This “the best” has put an extra challenge for the educational leadership. Infrastructure wise, the schools are being established with all the amenities not less than a 5-star hotel. The launching of the school is done with all fan-fare and after that the person in the office i.e. the Principal is left alone to achieve the organizational goal, which in 100% cases is to be the centre of excellence. The definition of the term excellence has also got transferred with the “Cloning” ideas of the scientists. We want a 15 years (reducing every year) old kid to come out of school after +2 having shown his colours in each and every field that can be thought of.

In this era, it is very difficult for the Principal to maintain the school environment in accordance with the teaching, which is being done in the moral science lessons in the classes. He/She is regarded as the most pious person on this earth who will prepare a recipe of all expectations fulfilling the need of each and every one and give it to the child who is admitted in the institution. While expecting all this from a single person we are sidelining the much discussed Education Commission’s Report of 1966 which States “The efficiency of the teaching profession and its contribution to national development in general and educational improvement in particular will depend largely on its social status and morale”.

Like many aspects of life, education, is undergoing constant changes under the effects of globalization. The introduction of information technology and communication is changing the delivery of education; changing the roles of students and teachers and producing a shift in society from industrialization towards information based society. The changes in education due to globalization have also had profound effects upon a broad spectrum of cultures leading to suggestions of a new form of cultural imperialism. In addition, the structure of education is being altered to enable it to compete in an open global market, leading to the “Commodification” of education. Educational institutions around the world are being forced to compete globally by engaging in entrepreneurial activities to sustain themselves in an uncertain competitive world.

Globalization allows students to study overseas. This can improve their studies by placing them closer to the field in which they are studying as well as allowing them to study at universities that specialize in the area of their study. Another way that globalization has improved the way we are taught through technology. The branch of defining globalization would be trade between the countries. Most of us would know those products such as computers, overhead projectors and VCRs, which are vital tools in today’s classroom whether it is Primary, Secondary or Tertiary Classroom.

It affects many facts, including education. Rapid developments in technology and communication are foreseeing changes within school systems across the world as ideas, values and knowledge, vital to education, cross-nation states and boundaries.

The rise of a global society driven by technology and communication developments are shaping children, the future citizens of the world into “global citizens”, intelligent people with a broad range of skills and knowledge to apply to competitive information based society.

Globalization is also creating a fast paced, competitive environment through technology and communication, which education systems must keep up with. Children cannot be effective in tomorrow’s world if they are trained in yesterday’s skills.

INTERNATIONALIZATION OF INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM:

Already a considerable number of Universities and Colleges from foreign countries are making organized efforts to enhance their presence by offering alluring packages of academic programs for the gullible Indian students-always in search of foreign degrees. Not all of the institutions are accredited in their own countries. In School system also O_Level and A_Level – British Higher Education Council I.B. (Int. Baccalaureates Diploma) Geneva has already established itself in the form of so called International Schools in almost all big cities and the parents are queuing up in front of them for admission with hefty fees. There is, therefore need for drawing up well thought out policy guidelines so that only genuine educational institutions from foreign countries are allowed enter into India. This will necessitate subjecting foreign institutions to a pre-entry academic audit to assess the quality of infrastructure,

faculty, equipment and fee structure etc. Further, an element of reciprocity needs to be insisted upon so that Central Board of Secondary Education are also encouraged to open their schools there. The exchange program of the faculty and students should be encouraged.

PRIVATISATION:

Globalization has given a boost to privatization of Indian education system. Its not a recent phenomena but now – a –days in this age of globalization privatization does not mean only to open a school out of the Government control but also offering the courses of foreign Boards which has a demand in India –the Frankenstein’s of Indian Education! It is moot point as to what extent privatization should be encouraged. I think that while private participation in education should be encouraged, complete privatization of education is going to counter productive. It will introduce elements of mercerization of education under which a number of Industrial players will come and by the way they have already started their root. Further, it may also lead to commercialization in more perfect and legitimate way will start as is evident from the mushrooming of so called schools with prefix St. in villages.

CONTENT OF EDUCATION:

“The breath-taking advances in knowledge to him, he shows him how to acquire it. He does not call forth the knowledge that is within; he only shows him where it lies and how it can be habituated to the surface...Taking a cue from Aurobindos’ perception the content of education has been shifted to following paradigm:

- Learning to know
- Learning to do
- Learning to live together
- Learning to be

TEACHER PERSPECTIVE:

Teacher is one of the tools to achieve this goal. The role of “GURU” (TEACHER) has always been realized and praised in the Indian Culture from the very beginning. The relationship of the teacher and the taught has got transformed according to the passage of time. From Past GURUKUL to present E-GORUKOOL.COM, the teacher is everywhere. We have invented a brain, which can think 100 or thousand times more than our own gray matter depending on the RAM and GB present in the invented brain, but still we are unable to get a substitute for teacher. May it be Computer Aided Learning or Computer Aided Teaching, the role of teacher is increasing day by day. No teaching machine can replace a teacher. All of us are aware of the Ivan Illich theory of “Deschooled Society” but the fate of the same was seen in the same decade and now it is an educational jargon used for research purposes only. Man, is a social being shaped by his culture, his potential, and his responses. It is principally because of his potential that he can, within limits, which we do not still

know, become whatever his perceptions of himself allow and whatever his culture provides him as a basis for his aspiring. Man, by no means, can be regarded as a victim of his heredity or of his environment.

The role of teacher, if viewed, is almost the same. Although the explosion of knowledge and information, abilities and skills has changed a lot but the basics of a teacher to help at any stage to make his society understand the reality of the hidden truth is the same. Although the diversities and polarities involved in the world of today demand creation and cultivation of a new “Culture of Competitions” that believes in “Striving for Excellence”, the theme remains the same as it was i.e. to develop awareness in the society about the same.