

“The pupil is in the center.” But, What about the Teacher?

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Nowadays, Social Education is a central component in Israeli schools system. This is based on the understanding that schools are responsible not only for academic achievements of the pupils but also for their personal and social advancement, which can be done by the transformation of classrooms into communities. Moreover, “**The pupil is in the center**” has been one of the strongest mottos of both social and educational evolution policies in the school setting over the past century and is acknowledged as essential for addressing the global challenges facing humanity. One of the indirect, long term and dangerous consequences of this policy is marginating the teachers. Correspondingly, teachers have become gatekeepers, their main job is to watch over the pupils and simply be one of imparting facts and sharing knowledge.

The child’s rights have been implanted in the Israeli society in general, and in the Arab community in particular with no previous preparation. Our society is not ready enough for a genuine perception of child’s rights. It is essential for every human community to ensure protection of children from all corporal punishment forms. But this is being enforced only on teachers. As part of their daily lives, children are being physically punished mainly from their parents. This mixed messages that the pupil gets create a fractured image of the teacher. On one hand, the pupils must respect the teacher as one of their parents, and consonantly being told that teachers love and care for them as one of their children. But on the other hand, if teachers punish or insult them, they have the right to sue them; one possible result of this situation is that pupils unconsciously, try to get revenge from their parents through their teachers. Therefore, there must be united attitude towards corporal punishment in the different settings in the pupils’ life starting at home and ending in schools.

It is true that in order for the student to receive a high-quality education and increase their academic achievement and school districts, there must be capable teachers, and the educational administrators must post standards ensuring that all teachers are highly qualified to teach. But it isn’t enough. Moreover, policy makers and administrators must be aware of the fact that by itself

good instruction delivered by highly qualified teachers is not enough to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed at school.

Teachers' engagement and disengagement are poorly addressed in most efforts to improve schools and schooling. Most reform practices often work against enhancing teachers' fundamental engagement and result in many teachers disconnecting from classroom instruction. Their actual role is to deliver the instruction they have received as part of their job requirement. They have nothing to say in the contents of these instructions and through the different reforms they have only got a variety of fixed methods to deliver these contents. Teachers don't have a voice in policy making, despite the fact that teacher's level of engagement is interrelated with school performance. Alienated and disengaged teachers are much more likely to exhibit poor performance. This disengagement is reflected in both behavior and attitude and on the different levels of academic, social, behavioral, and psychological engagement. I believe that it's the government's responsibility to recognize the integrity and professionalism of qualified teachers and cease asking them to prove everything every day, through reports, exams and explanations they have to give to parents, supervisors, instructors and principals. A mutual trust foundation must be built between teachers and their authorized personas, a new educational culture must be built in which teachers perceive themselves as professionals who should be left alone to teach and not spend hours filling in forms, plans and evidence sheets.

In a material world, where the individual achievement is measured by financial standards such as his car, his house, his monthly payment and his bank account. Teachers who once used to be proud with their profession and consider themselves as part of the high status professions through being responsible high performing profession, have now doubt and regrets for choosing this profession and don't usually recommend it to anyone. If we look at the situation of the Israeli labor market we can see that teaching is a low ranked profession in term of both job conditions and job payments. For a long period teachers have been alarmed that the income of many blue-collar workers has caught up and even exceeded their own. Such a situation threatens teachers' sense of self-worth and social location.

Moreover, teachers tend to underestimate the esteem in which their profession is held by others, which is resulted from two main sources. First, Teachers usually judge teaching to receive less reward and respect, to be less likely perceived as a trusted, trained and high performing

profession, and to be more subject to external control .Secondly, teachers perceive their status to have fallen faster and to a lower level over the years.

Another important point is the teacher's perception of the students. The main reason for choosing to become teachers should be overwhelmingly to do with working with children, that is, vocational rather than professional and the desire to give children a good start in life. All along the history of the education system in Israel, it has been said that "teachers know students better" but actually teachers were always being told how to treat their students. The teachers' perception of the pupils should be based on equity whereby they would respond to a student based on individual effort and not stereotypes. Unfortunately, students' equity appears to be rarely accomplished in classrooms despite official policies calling for equity. Teachers interact with some pupils more frequently, they ask them more challenging questions, call on them more often, and give them feedback that is more precise. There is an extensive in the Arab community to treat students depending on their background.

Mike Rose said, the teacher student relationship is very important for children. Children spend approximately 5 to 7 hours a day with a teacher for almost 10 months. We ask ourselves what is considered a good teacher? All of us have gone through schooling, and if fortunate had a favorite teacher. A positive relationship between the student and the teacher is difficult to establish, but can be found for both individuals at either end. The qualities for a positive relationship can vary to set a learning experience approachable and inviting the students to learn. A teacher and student who have the qualities of good communications, respect in a classroom, and show interest in teaching from the point of view of the teacher and learning from a student will establish a positive relationship in the classroom.

Hence, I believe that there must be a new approach for the planning of the social education programs in which the teachers are taken into account as an engine of social and cultural change within the community. Moreover, the new approach must work on transforming the school from a place where teachers were in essence "exiled", into a respected institute that is admired both within and outside of the community. Teachers must feel a strong educational responsibility to become involved in education as a vehicle for social change.

Primarily and due to a vast extension in roles and responsibilities, a teacher has to display high order of professionalism inside and outside the classroom. It is impossible for a teacher to possess all competencies in perfect, but through training and experience that the new social education approach must offer we can lead teacher towards proficiency. A competent teacher is temperamentally warm and cordial. Furthermore, before starting any social program a teacher must have clear vision of the set objectives, execute meticulously whatever is planned, Manage affairs effectively inside and outside the classroom, his/her skill of presentation of subject matter is able to seek attention of students and is capable of motivating the back benchers.

Furthermore, the financial aspect should also be taken into consideration, because it would not only promote the teachers' extrinsic motivation (i.e., reinforcement concepts) but also their intrinsic motivation (i.e. teaching motivation is driven by internal rewards and the motivation to engage in a behavior arises from within the individual because it is intrinsically rewarding.)

This position is based upon the assumption that teachers are the prime implementers of any program that is connected to pupils (**Cardona, 2009**). Numerous of previous studies have posited that the teachers' attitudes have a significant influence on the student performance (**Forlin, 2010; Winter, 2006**). Negative teachers' attitudes cause to lower expectation from the pupil while positive attitudes cause higher expectations (**Angelides, 2008; Palmer, 2006**). For instance, when teachers have negative attitudes towards certain group of pupils this may lead to reducing the pupils opportunities to learn and interact. Moreover, these negative attitudes may weaken pupils' self-beliefs and lead them to reduce their own expectations from themselves and the learning process in general. But positive teachers' attitudes may increase the student opportunities for learning and enhance the pupils' performance, self-expectations and self-esteem (**Woolfson, Grant & Campbell, 2007; Palmer, 2006**)

When talking about the teachers we must emphasize the role of the school principal. The principals must worry that classroom teachers understand and support the social education program's purpose in order for the program to be effective. Disconnect between the school day and the social education program can be frustrating for both entities and hinders the social education program's ability to meet its goals, especially academic goals. As Liaisons, principals can ensure that curricula and expectations of pupils are consistent both before and after the bell rings (**Samuelson, 2007**). Moreover, the principals' ability to communicate their vision to classroom teachers and parents, as well as to social education program staff, is an important component of program success. One envisioned a principal who can lead their staff and have them all understand the importance of a great comprehensive social education programs would make things a lot easier. Though the role of Visionary may be largely symbolic, it holds significant implications for practice (**Rinehart, 2003**).

From my own experience and from the scientific literature that I have read so far I came into an important conclusion, any new program is a change in the daily routine of the school and this change usually produces a barrier between the teachers and the new program. Principals should be aware of the fact that adapting any new program is in fact a process of change and most people resist change because it is threatening and uncomfortable especially when the outcomes of change are unknown or unfavorable. It is important for the principal to know the factors for the resistance in order to eliminate it. (**King & Anderson, 2002**).

Providing training opportunities can reduce the resistance towards change. Training can make teachers more flexible. The principal must work out a staff development program related to the proposed change. The training should have the effect of drawing out the individual from entrenched positions, forcing him/her to look at the problem from several angles, and making him/her more receptive in general. Moreover, staff members can move from the acceptance phase into the commitment phase if they perceive that the benefits of the change exceed the costs of disruption. Training is a vital component in the acquisition of managerial competence as is a clear understanding of how to ensure the successful implementation of change. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of training before implementation of any program. Teachers need to make sense of it before being able to take any control over the process. The principals

should consider a fundamental shift in their developmental philosophy and practice (**Cooter, 2004**).

Another important issue is adequate teaching and learning resources, which are some of the requirements for successful implementation of any program. Principals need to make significant decisions which determine the effectiveness of their schools in meeting their aims. The term 'resource' can be interpreted in a variety of ways depending on context, it can include teaching staff, support staff, materials, services, premises as resources, knowledge, technology, power, material, people, time, assessment, information and finance. In order to achieve the core purpose of the school, which is teaching and learning, financial resources need to be transferred into other forms of resources. The most important resources in this context are the resources that will enable educators to implement the program. The principal must lead the process of drawing up the budget and prioritizing items on the budget as part of resource allocation. The process of drawing the budget should consider the way in which learning outcomes will be achieved through the deployment of particular resources. Furthermore, the principal is responsible for the task of setting the budget involves drawing together a range of information about the likely outcomes from the present budget period as well as requirements and expectations about the next one. The next step of the resource management is the resource utilization which is concerned with putting the budget plan into operation. The principal should ensure that enough human resource have been employed and teaching and learning materials have been supplied and distributed in such a way that curriculum implementation will be successful. The final process in the resource management cycle (acquisition, allocation, utilization and evaluation) is the evaluation of the past use of resources with a view to informing future decision-making (**Eres, 2011**). Teachers and tours should be informed of the intention to bring changes in the curriculum and be given reasons for such changes. The principal and the management team should embark on curriculum change awareness through meetings, seminars and pamphlets so that teachers and tours can accept the changes in the curriculum before they go for training. The curriculum change awareness campaign will help to instill commitment to the changes on one hand and to minimize resistance during curriculum implementation, on the other (**Winter& O'Raw 2010**).

Moreover, during the implementation of any program the principal should move from a reactive diagnostic-oriented performance improvement approach to a proactive, preventive approach that focuses on identifying what educators do well and creating growth and development plans that maximize their contributions. This approach suggests that excellence is the result of the training that builds on strengths while managing their weaknesses. Thus, the principal should adopt a developmentally oriented philosophy whereby his/her efforts are dedicated to employees' continuous improvement based on their strengths **(Du Plessis, 2005)**.

Therefore, it implies that in order to transform and improve the school, the principal should ensure that teachers understand what they are going to do. The principal should also focus on changing the mindset of all stakeholders, improving the internal functioning of the school and improving the key function of the school, namely teaching and learning.

The principal and educators should take the opportunity of an era of change as a chance to achieve positive development in their curriculum. However, it is important for the principals to know that even if change is received enthusiastically, there is no guarantee that it will be satisfactorily implemented. The principal should have instructional leadership skills in order to manage the implementation of any new program effectively.

For conclusion, I firmly believe that by highlighting the crucial role played by the involved educators and teachers in the social education programs we can guarantee that the scope of success of any program will be much wider.

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