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The Idea Of A Teacher**Khader M A****Calicut, Papaya Books, 2023, Page 202 (All Inclusive),****Rs. 350, ISBN: 978-81-955689-1-8****Reviewed By****Anant Vijaya Soni**

The book, under review, is an important and meaningful attempt to understand sociology of education and sociology of academic profession in Indian Context. The book is the revelation of the processes by which the relationship between ‘the teacher’ and ‘the taught’ acquires shapes. It also reveals the process by which a ‘teacher-in-making emerges’ with pluralistic viewpoints. How a person undergoes the process of development through ‘personal world’ and ‘global world’ is the basic objective of the book. The book reminds me the statement of Antonio Gramsci who says, ‘all men are potentially intellectuals in the sense of having an intellect and rising it.’ Similarly, it can also be said that all men are potentially teachers because they have ideas and activity-centric perceptions. Khadar's book stresses the fact the ideas which a person develops since childhood due to interaction and tries to use these ideas and respective behaviours constitute the idea of a teacher.’

The book is divided into seven chapters which cover one hundred and ninety-four pages. Prof. Khadar in the First Chapter (Getting Started) imagines the idea of a teacher through own biography. A teacher communicates languages and its meaning to the children through

various forms of learning procedures. How a teacher slowly and gradually becomes role-model for students can be understood through this chapter. This chapter becomes more purpose-centric when author enters into the world of ideas of Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Ibn Tufayl, Immanuel Kant, Rousseau, John Dewey, Buddha, Vivekanand, Gandhi, Tagore etc. The views of these scholars express that state-specific perspective by which a teacher acts as an agent of knowledge and information in the context of globe-society interface. These sets of activity of teacher contribute to the construction of curriculum and of pedagogy in that way which makes children (Students) the critical and accountable ‘potential citizens’

In Second Chapter (The Idea) the author who have acted as a teacher educator and was instrumental in framing various aspects associated with National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF-2005), tries to construct the relationship between status/office of a teacher and her respective roles. The relationship between social background of a teacher and subject background of that teacher is an important issue which invites the attention of the author. Generally, this relationship is ignored by and large in Sociology of Education ‘If no teacher exists, the idea of teacherness cannot exist’ (page 68), in my humble opinion, is one of the philosophical roots of this book. This philosophical root has been expressed through the personality of ‘Muthuki Sir’ (old lady teacher is meaning of Malayalam word ‘Muthuki Sir’).

In Third Chapter (Basics that matter) Khader tries to examine the issue of access to education for all which is one of the cores of democratic system of governance. This aspect leads to a debate between quantity and quality. This debate becomes complex when regional variations are given importance. Khadar has touched this aspect only marginally. These sets of variations make an impact on the personality and roles of a teacher. In my humble opinion these variations can stimulate any teacher-educator to construct ideas on the bases of Paulo Freire’s thoughts associated with ‘Pedagogy of the oppressed’ because quantity-quality debate is organically linked with domination, subordination and identity issues of the individuals and of community. How does a teacher become the Catalyst of liberation centric

education? becomes an important question in neo-liberal India in which hierarchies have got formal legitimacy. Khader indicates that schools now look for specialist teachers (Page 81). But it is also a fact now that specializations are directly and indirectly decided by the market economy and corporates. As a result, there is a discontinuance between interest, hobbies and independent views. Specialization since beginning is imposed by market forces which make education 'selective' and 'conditioned.'

Fourth Chapter (Nurturing the knowledge base) is based on the logic that teacher is a person with whom 'we' nurture deep relations with the entrance in school life. Knowledge of how learners learn matters here. At this stage student having 'questionable mind-set' acquires significance. Unfortunately, 'questional mind-set' is considered an act of indiscipline by policy makers, parents and teachers. Thus, the learning process becomes indifferent towards the values of enlightenment and autonomy.

The Fifth Chapter (Experience is closely linked with the fourth chapter, Khader narrates own experiences as well as the experiences of other teachers who regularly interact with Khadar. Khader clearly states that the behaviour of a teacher must be decided on the basis of the biography of students. Without understanding of lifeworld of the students, teacher's behaviour becomes 'mechanistic-a cause of distance between students and teachers, Khader rightly states that experience is a source of gaining professional knowledge provided teachers are willing to learn. Such gaining cannot take place without human touch, Khader States.

The Sixth Chapter (Relations) is the reflection of multiplicity of interaction and reciprocity in all social circumstances. Khader in this context indicates the dynamics of relation during Covid-19. Khader's interpretation of relationships goes beyond society. He introduces nature, the solar system etc. while examining relationships. This wider perspective must be known to a teacher so that he/she could communicate with multiplicity-a prerequisite to a 'committed teacher'.

The Seventh Chapter (Rays of hope and concern) produces concluding remarks. He gives importance to knowledge base which makes teachers professional. Khader states that culture of intellectual engagement constructs the roles of a teacher, but corporations have converted knowledge into private property which has become pathological structure for both the teachers and the people.

The book should be read by teachers of all categories. It is thought provoking and a light house for teachers to know own self. The cover page of book gives a message. 'THE IDEA OF A TEACHER' title depicts HE and SHE in red colour. A teacher must synthesise the cultural attributes of male and female then only a teacher can understand the meaning of learning, relationship and roles.

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