

The Role of Passion in Effective Teaching and Learning

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Abstract: Passion has a motivating factor; therefore, it is a significant need for high quality learning and teaching. Passion is seeking for the new, and experiencing new ideas. Passion is on the basis of effective teaching. Passion which is indispensable for learning and teaching facilitates learning thorough desire and enthusiasm it creates. Passionate teachers via creating effective learning environments endeavor to increase learning potentials of their students. This study focuses on differences passionate teachers make, and points out the effects of passion on effective learning and teaching.

Keywords: Passion, Passionate Teacher, Effective Learning and Teaching, Commitment

1. What is Passion?

Passion is caring and learning new things. Passion is motivation and seeking for the new. It is the inclination somebody shows towards an activity in which he/she invests time and energy (Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet & Guay, 2008). Learning, experiencing new things and passion are closely related to each other. Day (2004) states that passion is associated with hope, commitment, caring and enthusiasm. Passion is a significant factor as it inspires and motivates teachers.

It is noteworthy that passion is a contributing factor in education. It not only pushes teachers to teach effectively but also drives students to learn efficiently. Teaching with passion brings about care, motivation, and willingness which are indispensable elements in a learning environment. It is true that techniques employed while teaching make difference in the learning process but the role of passion while teaching influences learning more. Passion has a motivating factor that allows learners to pay more attention to learning.

2. A Passionate Teacher

Passionate teachers are characterized by excitement about ideas that can change the world for the better, enthusiasm that can make a difference to achievement of learners and commitment to their intellectual capacities and work performance. Thus, passionate teachers always seek to bring about change not only in their teaching profession but also promoting learning. They like the job they are performing (Zehm & Kottler, 1993). It should be noted that passion is one of the most critical factors for effective education. Passion sustains enthusiasm and energy of teachers for the teaching profession. It contributes to creativity; hence passionate teachers have more thinking skills and can come up with new ideas. A strong connection between passion and teacher commitment has been drawn (Day, 2004). Teacher

commitment includes commitment to the school, students, teaching profession and professional knowledge (Tyree, 1996; Yong, 1999; Huber, 1999).

Teacher commitment has been considered as a passion to the work. Passion is at the core of effective education. Day (2004) argues that passion is a need for a high quality education. Passion encourages teachers to act as it is source of motivation (Vallerand, 2007). For that reason, passionate teachers can create excitement for learners to achieve better. Hargreaves (1997) points out that without passion all pedagogical approaches fail. Therefore, the effect of passion on learner achievement is widely recognized. Hansen (2001) in his attempt to define passionate teacher states that passionate teachers can encourage learners to become more willing and accomplish better. Fink (2003) stresses that learners achieve better as long as they care and are enthusiastic for learning.

Fried (2001) argues that there is a strong link between passionate teaching and effective learning and lists the reasons as:

- 1) If learners see that teacher cares about what he/she is doing then the students take learning process seriously. At this point, teaching is no longer a job done by force but turns out to be an inspiration for learners.
- 2) Unless a learning environment that includes cooperation is created, respect and trust between teacher and learners cannot be built.
- 3) Unless learners know how to adopt things they have learnt in their real lives, their motivation towards learning cannot be increased.

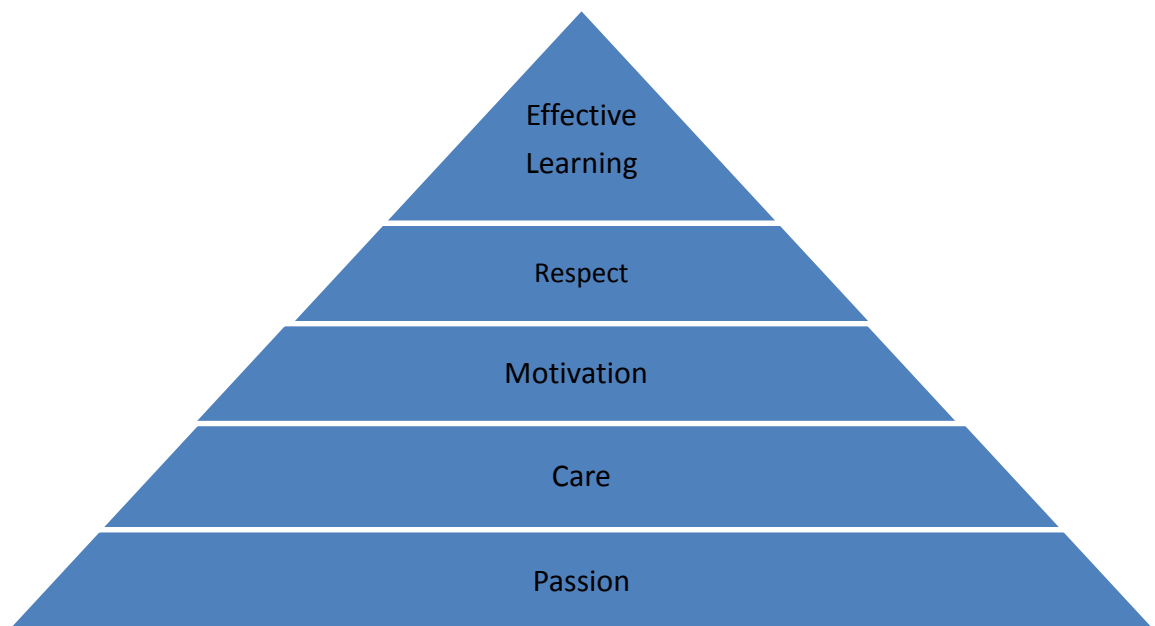


Figure 1: The link between passionate teaching and effective learning. Source: Author

Passionate teachers are well aware that it is their responsibility to encourage learners to achieve thus they always care about their teaching performance and development of their students. They know that effective teaching motivates learners. These factors are important in that they build respect between teacher and the learner.

Day (2004) lists the five features passionate teachers have as:

- 1) Deep subject matter knowledge, teaching techniques and the ability to build empathy with their students.
- 2) Passionate teachers care about their students and see them as an important part of their job.
- 3) Passionate teachers always reflect on their goals and beliefs and motivate learners.
- 4) Passionate teachers are able to understand people around them. Effective teaching requires the use of knowledge and emotion simultaneously.
- 5) Passionate teachers are hopeful.

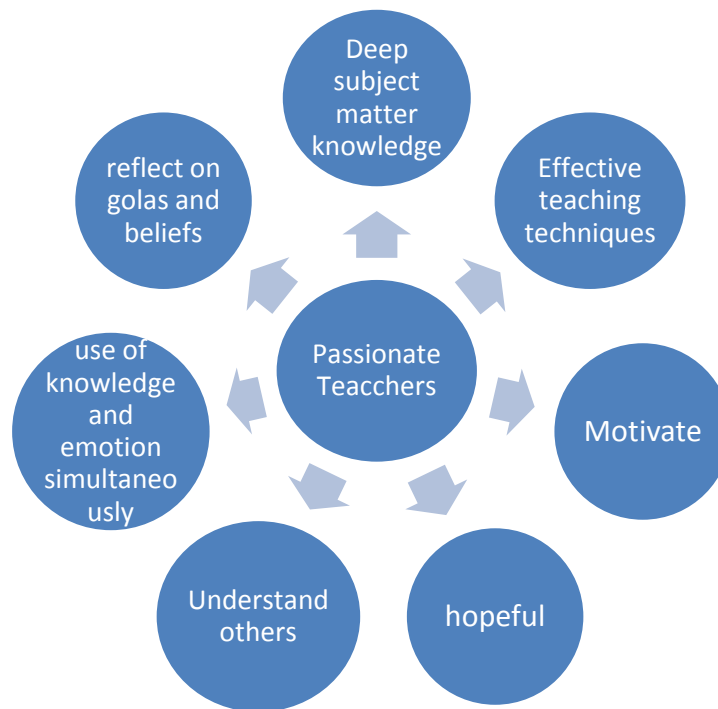


Figure 2: Features of passionate teachers. Source: Author

Passionate teachers cooperate with their students about classroom decisions to involve them in the learning process. They help their students produce quality work and endeavor to enable them to develop good habits of work. Passionate teachers focus on the needs of students and take great responsibility to

prepare the students for the future. The love passionate teachers have for teaching motivates them to make difference in the lives of their students. The emotional attachment to their profession enables them to reflect on their goals and beliefs in their job. Passion sustains their commitment to the profession and aids them to contribute to the learning of their students.

3. Conclusion

Passionate teachers love the job they are performing. They care about the development of their students and constantly seek for new ideas to better their learning. Passionate teachers are aware of things around them and reflect on them skillfully in their job. They take their job seriously and are very sensitive about habits their students develop. They work cooperatively with their colleagues and students and engage their students in the learning process.

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