

Responsibilities of an educated person



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In the world that we live in today, education plays an enormous role in cultivating societies and granting younger generations the tools and mindset required to increase their standards of living and contribute to the greater good. However, the term “educated” is a rather loose concept which differs from culture to culture. Having grown up in Western society following an international upbringing, I am naturally biased to attribute certain qualities to an “educated” person that another person from a different culture might not recognize.

These various attributes affect the direct but also the suggested responsibilities that an educated person might hold, the latter being implied and not related to any concrete school of thought (utilitarianism for example.) That being said, the main responsibilities of an educated person are: to contribute to the development of the global society, impart their knowledge on to the next generation, and to achieve personal success in whatever way suits their own personal desire.

For the sake of brevity and to provide a context for the question, the term “educated” will be used acknowledging the following qualities: those who find themselves educated generally have the ability to think critically and provide commentary on the world around them; educated people are literate and have pursued an area of study that they can regularly practice; educated people are aware of the presence of other cultures and are open-minded and tolerant towards the idea of multiculturalism and globalization. These are the main qualities that define an educated person in my opinion.

There are other admirable qualities such as pragmatism and leadership-skills that would fit nicely into the equation, but it has been proven throughout history that one does not necessarily need to be educated in order to be a good leader or pragmatic. It should also be noted that one does not necessarily need to be in possession of all these traits in order to be considered educated. Contributing to the development of the global society is, from a utilitarian perspective, quite possibly the most substantial responsibility of an educated person. This is explained in a variety of ways.

For one, those who are educated are generally in possession of some type of knowledge or skill that society needs. Whether it be medical knowledge, the ability to fix a toilet, or even the poise required to write a speech, the world requires educated persons to fulfill their niches and at least attempt to make the world a more stable place. Happiness in the utilitarian sense is present when the masses are happy. So if educated persons can assure a better living standard for others, than they should make the effort to do so in consideration for the greater good.

It is also essential that the chain of knowledge be imparted from one generation to the next. The demand for specialists and educators would always remain present because of a common acceptance that education leads to a better life. Educated persons generally have some way of proving their worth to society through a degree or a certificate that represents their acquisition of skills related to their topic, but it is often said that once a person can impart their knowledge to another, they've truly grasped the principals of their education. This statement functions as a duality.

On one hand, it allows the educated person to obtain a sense of self-satisfaction in that he or she has fully grasped their education, and on the other hand, it spreads knowledge. Articles such as the First Amendment to the United States constitution stress the ability to obtain knowledge freely and the grave importance of knowledge. The fundamental principal of education exists throughout all cultures; the passing of some type of knowledge to the next generation. Undoubtedly the most subjective and arguably selfish responsibility of an educated person is to achieve success in whichever way they desire.

This could be the acquisition of wealth, fame, happiness, a family, spiritual enlightenment, et cetera. Due to the subjective nature of this responsibility it is impossible to determine a universally agreeable importance, however, there lies a hint of truth which ties back to the previous responsibilities.

One's hopes and dreams are usually reliant on some type of education, and the work spent on getting educated should eventually pay off in a profession or career of some sort. What this implies is that the more one studies, the more their education should pay off.

This is reflected in the increasing demand for Master's degrees in most well paying jobs. However, this phenomenon also occurs due to an "inflation" of education where the presence of bachelor's degrees is so common that it is worth less than when a smaller percentage of people owned bachelor's degrees. In any case however, the main principal of this concept is that one must not waste one's education. When looking at education from a purely objective perspective, it would be hard to say that there are concrete responsibilities that all educated persons must fulfill.

Due to the subjective nature of both education and responsibility, one can only offer opinions morally justified by particular instances in history and accepted ways of thinking. Based on the context that this essay has set for the 'role-model' educated person, the three main responsibilities of an educated person are to contribute to the global society, to ensure that the chain of knowledge continues, and to use their education to guarantee their own success in whichever way they desire, ensuring that their education had not been wasted.