

## Academic Profession --- Some Random Thoughts on Teaching and Research

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Largely, a very informal talk on a variety of issues, three of which are the following:

**Observation and asking questions:** this will be discussed using some examples from different areas, including from what we observe in society. Careful observations may often help discern the actual patterns in apparent randomness. While recognising existing patterns is only one outcome of asking questions, asking often requires a critical approach which we should all inculcate.

**Challenges in teaching:** it is rare that people talk about any challenge in teaching. We have all had good teachers and not-so-good teachers. What entails teaching --- challenges and rewards. Success in abstract communication and igniting minds are the biggest rewards of teaching.

**Ethics and integrity:** are these really relevant in academics? What are the issues that we need to think about. One of the most talked about is the fairly common malpractice of plagiarism. We may all have plagiarised, inadvertently, and need to think about this consciously --- cite wherever possible, really. Remember that honesty is a virtue, and acquiring this precious trait demands a huge price.