



Teachers' Role and Responsibilities in the 21st Century

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Abstract

Education, without a question, plays significant role in the development of a nation. To impart education effectively with the use of different teaching techniques and strategies, it is the major responsibility of teachers. Teachers play crucial role in shaping the future of the students. In today's modern era teacher's role has changed extensively in the 21st century due to technological advancements and development of new pedagogical approaches. Educators are no longer just transmitters of knowledge but also facilitators of learning. The main aim of this conceptual paper is to explore the expanded responsibilities of teachers, including knowledge of digital tools, learner-centered instruction, and professional development. Additionally, it examines challenges such as managing diverse classrooms, use of technology according to classroom environment and to look after the mental health of students according to their age.

Keywords: Teachers' role & responsibility, 21st-century education, student-centered learning, Introduction

Education is the cornerstone of social and economic development of any country and to fulfill this aim, teachers are at the heart of this transformation. The 21st-century classroom is vastly different from the traditional model, as digital technology, globalization, and diverse student needs redefine how knowledge is delivered and acquired. Teachers must not only impart subject-specific knowledge but also foster critical thinking, creativity, and social responsibility. Teachers have to face various challenges from their internal and external environment. This paper examines the evolving role of teachers, their responsibilities, and the challenges they face in adapting to modern educational demands.

Role of Teachers

- **Professional Ethics:** If a teacher follows the professional ethics such as maintain dignity, human values and good conduct at work place only then he can play the role a torch bearer for students. Professional ethics are helpful to create a interactive and collaborative environment in the classroom where students feel free to express their ideas regarding the concept taught in the classroom. Teacher must try to inculcate professional ethics among students which will be helpful for them to adjust themselves in transformative modern world.
- **From Knowledge Providers to Learning Facilitators:** The traditional role of teachers as sole knowledge providers has shifted toward a more facilitative approach, where students actively engage in constructing knowledge. Educationists suggested that students can perform better in group discussion, project based assignment and in inquiry based interactions. These kinds of instructions improve their critical awareness. Teachers have to prepare lessons that are easy to understand, helpful in personalized and experiential learning. Teachers must create an academic climate where students can create knowledge with collaborative efforts and teachers work with them as a facilitator of learning.
- **Digital Literacy and Technological Integration:** The skill of digital literacy is most important for teachers because they have to teach in virtual classrooms and other online modes in the era of artificial intelligence. Teachers have to learn how the new technology is integrating with pedagogy. Teachers must have the knowledge of using different digital education tools such as google meet, google form, zoom, kahoot and learning management system (LMS) to enhance students' learning and their engagement during the classroom.
- **Promoters of Inclusivity and Diversity:** Modern classrooms consist of students with different cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning abilities. To address these diversities, inclusive curriculum and flexible teaching methods are required. Teachers must implement differentiated instruction strategies, provide support to the students with their disabilities, and create an inclusive environment in the classroom.



- **Development of Critical Thinking:** The 21st-century skills framework (P21, 2007) highlights the importance of the 4Cs: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication. Teachers must organize problem solving and project based activities for students to develop critical thinking among them. It will also be helpful for students to develop analytical skills which is essential for growth and success in the changing scenario.
- **Lifelong Learners and Continuous Professional Development:** If a teacher wants to perform their duties well in an organized and effective way he/she must engage in lifelong learning through professional development programs like refresher course, mooc course, faculty development program, orientation program etc. Knowledge of advancement in education research and latest trends in teaching methodology enhance educators' skills and instructional practices.

Responsibilities of Teachers

- **To Improve Poor Academic Performance of the Learners:** A major reason behind the poor academic performance of the students is the lack of requisite academic background, non availability of academic resources. So it is the teacher's responsibility to improve their academic performance by providing them with academic facilities such as books, training to use digital educational apps.
- **To Organize Academic Activities:** Teachers must organize academic activities such as debate, group discussion, discussion on reflective educational journals to enhance their conceptual knowledge. These activities build confidence among students and a confident student can cope up with the academic challenges.
- **Curriculum Construction:** Teachers must design a curriculum that includes real-world applications, interdisciplinary learning and according to ethics, values and academic and evaluation system of the nation. The most important point is the adoption of curriculum according to the needs of the diverse learner and to integrate new educational technology and teaching instructions.
- **Mentorship and Emotional Support:** Teachers play a vital role in students' emotional and social development. The American Psychological Association (APA, 2020) highlights that if there is a positive relationship between students and teachers, then it will lead to a great improvement in their educational achievement, mental well-being and the students will be able to solve the academic problems they face in the field of education. Mentorship, support, guidance and counseling of the teacher provide a way to the students to resolve their personal and academic problems.
- **Ethical and Social Responsibility:** Teachers have an ethical social responsibility to instill values such as honesty, integrity, respect, self discipline and empathy.
- **Education for Digital Citizenship:** Digital literacy is very much required to save students from online frauds and to maintain responsible online behavior (Ribble, 2011). There is a lot of information available on different digital platforms so it is teachers' responsibility to provide guidance to students for critical evaluation of the available information.
- **Classroom Management:** In a technology driven classroom, it is the major responsibility of the teacher to manage screen time and concerns of cyber security. To manage a classroom effectively, teacher must provide clear guidelines to use technology and there should be a blend of online and offline teaching and other activities which will be helpful to create interest among students for their learning.
- **To Understand Individual Differences Among Students:** Teachers are the great pillars of the society who shape the students according to the changes occur in the society. Task of positive changes in the society is never done without knowing the individual difference among the students. So after knowing individuality among students, teachers can disseminate knowledge according to their mental level which is really helpful in students' growth and development.



- **Helpful in Developing Advance Teaching Instruction:** In the modern world students have different types of skills and abilities and they are also very curious to know more about the concept taught in the class. So in this regard it is teacher's responsibility to develop new teaching methods and instruction according to the bloom taxonomy.

Challenges

- Various digital tools are available for online instruction and these tools are updated from time to time for new features to facilitate learning. So it is a challenge for teachers to update their knowledge of digital tools and other platforms within limited time in the institutions.
- It is really a challenge for teachers to manage a classroom with full of students even when they are from different social and economic backgrounds. It requires emotional, cultural and social sensitivity.
- Another challenge for teachers is to balance their academic and administrative workload. As we know that the first priority of the teacher is teaching but side by side he/she have to do official paper work, attend meetings, to take remedial classes, provide guidance to students and to learn new technology. It is really a tough task for them to make a balance among all duties.

Conclusion

There has been a huge change in teachers' role and responsibilities in 21st century. So teachers are not just educators but they have to play the role a guide, mentor, digital content creator and facilitator. They must learn the way of looking over their own shoulder. While challenges such as adoption of technological devices and curriculum, individual differences, issues of mental health, a teacher can overcome these obstacles through continuous professional development and innovative pedagogical approaches. All educational institutions government or private must organize professional development activities for teachers and also invest on educational resources to strengthen the educators with latest teaching skills and strategies which will helpful to prepare students for this changing world.

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