

21ST CENTURY TEACHERS IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF MODERN AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION: ANSWERING THE CHALLENGES OF THE DIGITAL ERA AND GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract: *Education today is a very crucial aspect and a major need, especially in this modern era. To remain relevant, education must be able to adapt to the development of digital technology, so that it can produce competent students through collaboration between schools and teachers in the learning process. The rapid advancement of science and technology has brought great changes in human life. The role of teachers in the 21st century has undergone a significant transformation from the traditional model that is authoritative and teacher-centered, to a modern model that is student-oriented, collaborative, and adaptive to the times. 21st century teachers are no longer just transmitters of knowledge, but also facilitators of active learning, spiritual and moral guides, and agents of social change who can shape students' character to be ready to face global challenges. In the face of the challenges of the 21st century, teachers must have a deep understanding of digital technology to carry out their roles effectively. The competencies required include personality, professionalism, social skills, and pedagogic abilities that must be continuously updated to be able to meet the learning needs of students and the demands of society in this era.*

Keywords: *teachers, the role of teachers, 21st-century, teacher, learning.*

INTRODUCTION

Currently, the general perception in society states that the low quality of education is caused by the limited ability of teachers to educate, teach, and train students. In addition, existing data shows that the role of teachers is often limited to delivering material, without being able to manage the learning process according to predetermined stages [1], [2].

In the context of education in schools, the role of teachers is crucial because they are the main implementers of the teaching and learning process [3]. The success of education as a whole is highly dependent on the effectiveness of teacher teaching. Therefore, it is natural for the government and the community, especially parents, to have high hopes for teachers in realizing the success of education in Indonesia.

The government has made various efforts to improve the quality of education and graduates at various levels, including through the construction of physical facilities, the provision of facilities and infrastructure, curriculum updates, improvements in the teaching and learning process, and improving the quality and number of teachers. Among all these efforts, significant attention is paid to improving the quality of teachers, considering that they not only carry out teaching duties but are also fully responsible for the implementation of the teaching and learning process in the classroom.

The role of 21st-century teachers is no longer just a conveyor of knowledge, but also a facilitator of active learning, spiritual and moral guides, and agents of social change who can shape the character of students to be ready to face global challenges in facing the challenges of the 21st century, teachers must have a deep understanding of digital technology to carry out their role effectively [4], [5]. The competencies required include personality, professionalism, social skills, and pedagogic abilities that must be continuously updated to be able to meet the learning needs of students and the demands of society in this era [6], [7].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education in the digital era has undergone a fundamental shift triggered by advances in information and communication technology. Many studies show that the integration of technology in learning is changing conventional educational models to be more adaptive and flexible [8]. According to Wellty Mely Betesda Br Sinaga, today's students are digital natives who have different learning characteristics compared to the previous generation, so it requires a more interactive and technology-based learning approach. Digital learning has provided space for students to access a wide range of learning resources independently, strengthening lifelong learning skills (lifelong learning), as well as encouraging the creation of a collaborative and creative learning atmosphere [9].

In addition to changes in learning methods and media, the educational curriculum has also undergone a significant reorientation. The Merdeka Curriculum launched by the Indonesian government is one of the responses to the need for flexibility and relevance of education to global challenges. In this curriculum, project-based learning (project-based learning), emphasis on soft skills, and technology integration is an important component [10]. As explained by E. Thorihoran, 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, information literacy, and creativity are the main competencies that students must possess to be able to compete in a dynamic and knowledge-based world [11].

However, the literature also notes that there are serious challenges in the implementation of digital education. Some of the obstacles that are often mentioned are inequality in technological infrastructure, low digital literacy among teachers and students, and digital gaps between regions and between individuals [12]. In addition, continuous training is needed for teachers to be able to adapt to their new role as digital learning facilitators. Therefore, the development of digital education policies needs to be holistic, paying attention to pedagogical, technological, and socio-cultural aspects so that educational transformation is not only limited to technology adoption but also to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process as a whole.

METHOD

The author uses the research method of literature study or literature study [13], which is a series of activities related to the method of collecting library data, reading recording, and processing research materials [14].

The data collection method for data collection is from various sources of journals and articles that are by the discussion in this research [15]. The process of this research uses an analysis technique in the form of reading data and then discussing it to come to an overall conclusion [16].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Teacher

In general, the definition of a teacher is a professional educator who educates, teaches knowledge, guides, trains, provides assessments, and evaluates students. The definition of a teacher is someone who has devoted himself or herself to teaching science, educating, directing, and training his students to understand the science he teaches [17]. In this case, teachers not only teach formal education but also other education and can be a figure who is exemplified by their students. The following is the definition of a teacher based on several Western experts and Islamic figures, namely [18]–[21]:

Table 1. Definition of Teacher based on Western Figures and Figures

No	Character Name	Definition	The focus of the Discussion
1	John Dewey	Teachers are facilitators who encourage active and reflective learning experiences.	Emphasizing experiential learning.
2	Howard Gardner	Teachers are mentors in developing the multiple intelligences of each student.	Focus on a personal approach based on each individual's potential.
3	Linda Darling-Hammond	Teachers are learning professionals who are constantly evolving to meet the needs of students.	Emphasizing teacher professionalism and lifelong learning.
4	Michael Fullan	Teachers as agents of <i>change</i> who encourage educational transformation through collaboration.	Focus on the role of teachers as leaders of change in education.
5	Ken Robinson	Teachers are inspirers of creativity and the builder of a flexible learning environment.	Emphasizing creativity and flexibility in modern education.
6	Ibnu Sina	A teacher is a person who educates the mind and soul to attain virtue and truth.	The juxtaposition between science and morality in an integral way.
7	Al-Ghazali	Teachers are the continuation of the duties of the prophets in fostering the character and spirituality of students.	Focus on moral education and teaching as worship.
8	Ibn Khaldun	Teachers are the shapers of civilization through the transfer of knowledge and cultural values.	Emphasizing the relationship between education, history, and civilization.
9	Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas	Teachers are educators of adab (ta'dib) and maintainers of the correct and valid order of knowledge.	Focus on adab education and the formation of Islamic personality.
10	Fazlur Rahman	Teachers are the connector between revelation and rational thinking for the progress of the ummah.	Aligning traditional Islamic education with modern challenges.

Based on the explanations of some of the figures above, it can be concluded that teachers are a servant of students and a profession that requires certain skills for the development of spiritual values, morals, individual potential, and creativity in facing developments in the global and modern context [23]-[25].

A professional teacher is essentially a teacher who has a complete awareness of his position as an educator [26]. In addition, a teacher must have a good example, a good example that needs to be applied by teachers can be from speech, karmic systems, and examples of good behavior in daily life. Karso stated that students will learn from what they see, hear, experience, and feel [22].

The Role of Teachers in The 21st Century

The 21st century demands an increasingly high and optimal role of teachers. More teachers Acting as a companion mentor, mentor, and coach with policies, knowledge, and experience. As a consequence, teachers who cannot keep up with the times are increasingly left behind so they cannot play their role optimally in carrying out their duties and carrying out their profession [27]. 21st-century teachers have specific characteristics compared to teachers in the previous era. The characteristics in question include 21st-century teachers having specific characteristics compared to teachers in the previous era. The characteristics in question include:

- 1). Have a high spirit and work ethic accompanied by the quality of faith and piety.
- 2). Able to utilize science and technology according to the demands of the surrounding social and cultural environment
- 3). Have high professional behavior in carrying out duties and carrying out professions d. Have a broad perspective and are not short-sighted in looking at various problems
- 4). Have a moral example and a high sense of aesthetics
- 5). Develop the principle of competition and side by side [28].

One of the roles of teachers in schools is to develop the potential of students to become knowledgeable, faithful and devoted human beings to God Almighty and have noble morals. Teachers have several roles in the world of education.

The following are the roles of teachers in the world of education in general which are shifting changes due to the development of the times and science and technology, including the following:

- 1). The role of teachers as educators and teachers The role of teachers as educators means that teachers must guide and foster mature attitudes in students.
- 2). The role of the teacher as a mediator/learning resource and facilitator The role of the teacher as a mediator/learning resource is that the teacher must be able to convey the material well to the students.
- 3). The role of the teacher as an exemplary model The role of the teacher as a model is that the teacher can be impressed and imitated by students both from their attitude and their words.
- 4). The role of teachers as motivators The role of teachers as motivators is that teachers play a role as drivers for students to make students enthusiastic about learning.
- 5). The role of teachers as supervisors and evaluators The role of teachers as supervisors is that teachers have the task of accompanying and directing students related to the growth and development of students which include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects [29].

Based on the description of the role of 21st-century teachers above, it can be mapped in a table related to the change in the role of traditional teachers with 21st-century teachers, namely:

Table 2 Changes in the Role of Teachers (Traditional to the 21st Century)

Aspects of the Role of Teachers	Traditional (Old)	Modern (Abad 21)
Knowledge Delivery	Informant (teacher-centered)	Facilitator and mentor (student-centered)
Teaching Methods	Ceramah (one-way communication)	Collaborative, discussion, problem-solving
Technology	Lack of technology, textbooks	ICT integration, interactive digital media
Valuation	Written tests and memorization	Authentic appraisals, portfolios, projects
Learning Objectives	Transfer ilmu	Competency and character development
Relationship with Pupils	Otoriter, formal	Democratic, personal, empathetic
Role in Learning Communities	Individual closed	Collaborators in the professional learning community
Response to Change	Resistant to change	Adaptive and innovative to the changing times

So, in the transformation of the role of teachers in the 21st century, teachers have a role:

1. Competency and character development

Character or morality becomes the final evaluation of student success. So intellectual intelligence must be framed with spiritual intelligence and character to become a great human being in the development of science technology and modernity. This is an important role for teachers today [\[30\]](#).

2. Active Learning Facilitator

Teachers must create an interactive and participatory learning environment. Active learning engages students in discussions, problem-solving, collaborative projects, and activities Hands-on that encourage exploration and discovery. Research by Hattie shows that active learning can improve students' understanding and retention of material [\[31\]](#).

3. Mentor in the Use of Technology:

With the integration of technology in education, teachers play an important role in guiding students to use technology effectively and wisely. Teachers must be able to teach digital literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. According to Mishra and Koehler (2016), mastery of ICT by teachers can improve the quality of learning and expand access to various learning resources [\[32\]](#).

Teacher Teaching in the 21st Century

With the global movement proposing innovative learning models for the 21st century, it is becoming increasingly clear that formal education needs to change [\[33\]](#). This transformation is important to present learning methods that are in line with increasingly complex global demands. Identifying the competencies that students must develop is crucial so that they are ready to face the challenges of modern times. Students need to hone skills such as critical thinking, communicating effectively, innovating, and solving problems

through cooperation and negotiation, but 21st-century students are required to become agents of change or agents of change [34].

This learning experience must empower students as individuals and citizens as well as agents of change who are responsible, creative, innovative, and able to contribute to society, nation, and [35], [36]. Among the various competencies and skills that are expected to develop in students so that they need to be taught to students in the 21st century include personalization, collaboration, communication, informal learning, productivity, and content creation. These elements are also key to the overall vision of 21st-century learning. The National Professional Certification Agency (BNSN) formulated 16 learning principles that must be formulated in the 21st-century education process. Meanwhile, Permendikbud No. 65 of 2013 states 14 learning principles, related to the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum. Meanwhile, Jennifer Nicols simplifies it into 4 principles, namely: 1). Instruction should be student-centered, and 2). Education should be collaborative, 3). Learning should have context, 4). Schools should be integrated with society [37], [38].

Table 3. The Role of Teachers in the 21st Century

21st Century Learning Principles (Jennifer Nicols)	Explanation	Developed Learning Motede
Student-Centered Learning	Focus on students' needs, interests, and learning styles. Students actively build their knowledge, teachers are only facilitators.	Student-Centered Learning, Project-Based Learning dan Personalized Learning
Education is Collaborative	Students learn together through group work, discussion, and sharing ideas. Train teamwork, empathy, and communication.	Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Projects, and Peer Teaching
Learning Has a Context	The subject matter is linked to real life to be more relevant, meaningful, and applicable.	Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL), Problem-Based Learning (PBL)
Integrated Schools with the Community	Schools are not separate from the community. Involve the social environment in the learning process and form socially concerned students.	Service Learning- Community-Based Learning, Magang (Internship)

The Challenges of The Role of Teachers in the 21st Century

Although the role of teachers in the 21st century offers many opportunities, some challenges must be faced. Some of them are:

1. Equal Access to Technology

Not all students have equal access to technology. Teachers must be creative in finding solutions to ensure all students can engage in digital learning. According to Warschauer, the digital divide is still an issue that needs to be overcome in modern education [39].

2. Continuous Professional Development

Teachers must continue to develop their skills and knowledge to stay relevant in an ever-changing world. A continuous, needs-based professional development program is essential. Research by Darling-Hammond et al. shows that training that focuses on practice and collaboration can improve teacher-teaching effectiveness [40].

3. Effective Classroom Management

Managing a diverse and dynamic classroom requires special skills. Teachers must be able to create an inclusive and responsive environment to the needs of students. According to Weinstein and Romano, an effective classroom management strategy can increase student engagement and discipline [41].

CONCLUSION

Based on the study of various thoughts of Western and Islamic educational figures, the role of teachers in the 21st century has undergone a significant transformation from the traditional model that is authoritative and teacher-centered, to a modern model that is student-oriented, collaborative, and adaptive to the times. 21st century teachers are no longer just transmitters of knowledge, but also facilitators of active learning, spiritual and moral guides, and agents of social change who can shape students' character to be ready to face global challenges. In this context, teachers are required to master technology, apply contextual learning methods, and instill the values of manners and faith as the basis for developing students' competencies. Therefore, the role of 21st-century teachers is a combination of professional skills, spiritual maturity, and the ability to adapt to rapid technological and social changes, so that teachers become key actors in creating a generation of learners who are competitive, and moral, and contribute to modern civilization.

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Author's Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the publication of this paper, all authors read and approved this paper, and all authors declare no conflict of interest.

Conflict Of Interest

All authors state that there is no conflict of interest.

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