



IMAGE OF AN EFFECTIVE TEACHER IN 21ST CENTURY CLASSROOM

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Abstract

The task of the teacher in current era is not just to impart content based conceptual knowledge. Rather a teacher of the day has to deal with net generation who are equipped with information communication related knowledge and skills. In teaching and dealing with such type of generation the teacher of the day needs some special skills. So the image of the teacher has been changed from tradition to transformational. The present research intended to highlight the image of an effective teacher in 21st century classroom.

Key Words: Image, teacher, 21st century, interpersonal skills, professional.

INTRODUCTION

Education and Training of the upcoming generation to cope up with the change has become a challenge for the educators as well as the parents. The present research intended to highlight the image of a teacher in 21st century classroom. The qualitative study was done to find out whether the expectations attached to the teacher's role are realistic or not. The demands of current era learner are very high. The main objectives of the study were to explore the needs and attributes of the 21st century and the skills that are essential for the teacher to work effectively in the class. Through the qualitative study some of the needs and attributes of the 21st century learner came in limelight such as curiosity and creativity, rational thinking and problem solving tactics, leadership skills and influence, effective interaction and conversational skills, examining and manipulating information skills. To present effectively with these students some of the skills of the teacher along with having up to date knowledge were underscored such as honest, efficient, diligent, good communicator and a lifelong learner who is willing to go extra mile.

Teaching is one of the noble professions of the world. Histories are the evidence of the significance and sanctity of the teacher and teaching process. The goals of teaching in a complex society are diverse and it has been an important topic of the educationists for over the past several decades.

Teachers can be categorized as effective or ineffective. We have a traditional image of an effective teacher such as kind, caring, rigid, authoritarian etc. Effective teaching has a remarkable diversity in its definition. Different people have different perspective of an effective teacher. Some says teacher who can establish a rapport with the students. Some people define an effective teacher as a person who has a superior command over a particular subject; who has an ability to transmit his or her subject effectively to the students. Others are of the view that can activate students' energy and could make them work in a better way.

Citizen of every society expect that the schools their children are going to should accomplish many goals; such as teach basic academic skills, build students' self-esteem, prepare students for future life, promote global understanding, transmit cultural heritage etc. Therefore the ultimate goal of a teacher should be to fulfill the demands of the parents and to help the students become independent and self-regulated learners.



The effective teaching requires that the teacher should have full command on the subjects; keeps her updated with new emerging technologies; should know that the knowledge is not fixed; but it has to be actively constructed through personal and social experiences and to enable the students to learn how to learn. The teacher should care about the wellbeing of the students and should be result oriented.

Richard I. Arend (1986) mentioned the four higher level attributes of an effective teacher. According to him, Effective Teachers have personal qualities that differentiate them with others. Their charismatic personality makes them stand out and attracts the students' attention and makes the students listen to them. The interpersonal skills of the teacher make him/her popular among the students and build a rapport between the teacher and the students.

"Teaching learning process is based on direct interaction between the students and the teacher. To perform this task effectively and efficiently the teacher needs to be proficient in interpersonal skills" (Dr. K. Malik, 2012).

Some of the interpersonal skills are mentioned below:

The effective communication skills of the teacher make her/him comprehensible by the listener. Her/his self-confidence and instant decision making enables her/him to resolve conflicts instantly. Is always patient and motivating. Excellent at collaborative work when involve students in some practical work. Has command on her language and spoken style. Is able of intellectually convincing arguments. He/she always uses his/her knowledge positively and wisely and above all respects emotions of the students. Creates a democratic atmosphere in the classroom.

Effective teachers have positive disposition towards knowledge. They have command on at least three broad knowledge bases that deals with subject matter, human development and learning and pedagogy. These skills are reflected in their teaching practice (Richard I. Arends).

Current teachers are reflective practitioners. They produce higher level thinking in the students that they are able to analyze and synthesize.

Effective teachers have a repertoire of effective practices. Repertoire is a word used mainly by the musicians in the theaters for operas and reading numbers. etc. a person is prepared to perform. It is obvious that more experienced people and experts have more diverse repertoire than the new inexperienced ones. This goes for the teachers also. Effective teachers possess a repertoire of teaching practices known to stimulate students' motivation. They have a variety of activities and teaching techniques to make learning fun for the students. He/she plans her lessons based on strategic thoughts that involves the conscious selection and use of tools of thought from her repertoire. Her skills include making children self-motivated. Teachers are not restricted to the few practices instead they have a pool of new ideas and techniques to handle the hand on situations. They are not bound to only the prescribed methods of teaching and problem solving. He/she remains on the toes all the time in and outside the classroom. Vigilant enough to judge students' problems that are academic as well emotional and tries to resolve them on the spot. This new concept of teaching no doubt contradicts the idea of one approach superior to another e.g. inductive vs. deductive teaching, lecture vs. discussion method or use of phonics to teach reading vs. a whole language approach. From this we conclude that no single teaching methodology is consistently superior to that of other in all situations. Teaching approach is superior when it is selected at the appropriate time on a specific group of learners (Belasco, James A, 1991).

Effective teachers are themselves at a life-long learning process. They are able to diagnose situations and use their professional knowledge appropriately to enhance students' learning and to improve their personality in order to make a better a society.



Qualities of an Effective Teacher

A calling for the program

Teaching job when done for the sake of perks and advantages becomes a real hindrance in achieving the required goal; effective teacher owns her profession; deeply involved in her students. She is the one who takes pains and work devotedly. For her/him teaching is not a mere job being done for the sake of earning money instead she/he does it to light up thousands of candles with his/her sole effort.

Professional knowledge

Having knowledge of the subject matter is not enough in this field. A teacher is a reservoir of knowledge that can be passed to anyone at any time. Professional knowledge is the awareness of the commitment she/he/has with the students. She/he is the role model for not only the students but also for the society they are living in. She/he knows the character she/he portrays has a deep impact on the students

Personal Qualities

Personal qualities make the teacher stand out in the crowd. The communication skills, the way he/she talks, emotions, honesty, intelligence, reliability, enthusiasm, curiosity and efficiency add beauty to her/his personality and compliment his/her effectiveness. Through these qualities she/she can establish an efficient and mutually beneficial working environment with the colleagues and students. This skill is attained with the passage of time and the experience in the field (McEvan, EK2002). Effective teachers liberate themselves from prescribed teaching materials and develop customized tasks for their students. They do not rely upon only the regular teaching methodologies rather they become self-sufficient in efficiently and effectively controlling and handling time to time changing situations.

Instructional Effectiveness

An effective teacher has the ability to teach well; she possesses an excellent degree of versatility along with a lot of experience over her techniques. She applies one teaching strategy on a particular group of students and get the maximum response but at the same time. She is mentally prepared that the same strategy would be a night mare on the other group. She is capable enough to teach one lesson with a variety of methodologies.

Good Communicator

One of the very important qualities of an effective teacher. It is a bit tricky one as teacher gets her/his feedback immediately. This characteristic spreads among the staff members and the management like a jungle fire through students and their parents. As all of us know that communication is not always done through words. The nonverbal communication which is also known as the body language does count a lot. This communication is usually subconscious; we do it unintentionally or sometimes intentionally (Hubley J. London; Mcmillan; 1993).

An effective teacher interacts with a child physically and mentally; she/he makes them learn what emotions are by being affectionate with them. She/he is responsible for overall personality development of the children. Their sound intellectual, emotional, physical and social developments are the outcomes of her/his tremendous efforts throughout the teaching- learning process. "A teacher is a complete person within; curious about her students feelings, passionate, sociable, loveable and super comprehensive" (UNESCO 1996).

Willing to go extra mile

Such teachers never think of doing the work they are paid for. They are always willing to go out of the way, put in all of their energies and time. They try to do their best for their students to make them feel comfortable, understand and reproduce what they are taught. Her parental behavior makes her do every impossible thing for her students. Well aware of the psychology of the children she resolves all their conflicts amicably.

Life- long learner

Teaching-learning process is a lifelong process. Along with the students the teachers are themselves learning throughout their teaching career. Good teachers are always in search of the activities that help them in their professional development.



Life outside the classroom:

Teachers know their duty is not just finished when the class is over. They take responsibility to take care and help their students even outside the classroom. They generate refined, polished products whose life outside the classroom reflects what they have learnt throughout their educational career. They not only become successful citizens in their lives but also are the active and beneficial members of the society ([http](http://)).

The attributes of 21st century classroom

Dr. Douglas Kellner rightly says “This technological revolution has a great impact on society” (UCLA). The new millennium emerged with a drastic technological revolution. It is an era of increasingly diversified, globalized and complex media infused society. We have to prepare our kindergarten students for the life in the world after 20 years when they are expected to be the graduates. We have to think what the life would be after five to twenty years. At present they are facing issues like global warming, famine, poverty, health issues, exponentially increasing human population and other cultural, environmental and interpersonal problems. The student in this era needs to be able to handle to these issues and to develop adjust personally socially, economically as well as politically on local, national as well as international levels.

Our small kids of today can bring about a drastic change by participating in real life and real world simulation projects. New technologies can provide enhancement in medical advancement; restoration of environment and development of new forms of energy.

We need at least seven skills for 21st century classroom. These are:

- Rational thinking and problem solving tactics
- Collaboration across social circles and networks
- Leadership skills and influence
- Adaptability skills
- Efforts and Entrepreneurialism
- Effective interaction and conversational skills
- Examining and Manipulating information skills
- Curiosity and creativity ([http](http://)).

In many countries the students of today are called “digital natives” and teachers are referred to as “digital immigrants”.

Our students live in the world of information technology IT; having around mobile phones; video games; I pads; laptops; I pods all the time. A survey by the Henry J. Kaiser (n.d) Family Foundation found that young people (ages 8-18) are on continuous multi-tasking- listening to music while surfing on the web; playing video games along with instant messaging to friends; using face book updating present status for face book friends around the world.

According to Dr. Wesch there should be proper guidance for these children to make the use of these devices positively. These tools are essential with regard to the study of new social communities as well as studying authentic up to date media literacy.

The comparison below shows the difference in time as mentioned in Developing the Curriculum by Peter Oliva and William Gordon (n.d).

20th Century Classroom vs. 21st Century Classroom



USA 1960's typical classroom typical class - teacher-centered, fragmented course-work, college students doing work in solitude, memorizing details



A classroom at the Environmental Studies, aka the particular Zoo University, in Minneapolis. A great example of real-life, related, project-based 21st century education and learning

Time-Based	Result-Oriented
Concentrate on memorization regarding facts	What students already know; can do; Keep in mind whenever almost all information is generally forgotten.
Lessons regarding on the lower amount of Bloom's Taxonomy : understanding, comprehension and also program	Understanding is designed on higher degrees of Blooms': synthesis, evaluation and also analysis (and include reduce levels since program is designed down from the top).
Textbook-based	Research and experience driven
Passive learning	Active Learning
Learners work in solitude – isolated classroom in a closed campus	Learners work in groups with course mates and others around the world – the Global Classroom.
Teacher-centered: teacher is center of focus and source of all information transmission	Student-centered: teacher is a supporter, coach and facilitator.
Limited or no freedom to the learners	Learners enjoy freedom
"Discipline problems" – No trust of teachers on learners and vice versa. Lack of motivation among learners	No discipline problems. Students and teachers are co-learners. High motivation among learners.
Fragmented course-world	Integrated and Interdisciplinary curriculum
Grades averaged	Grades based on what was learned
Low expectations	High expectations – all students perform to a high level. Some go even higher and educators support them flourish.
Educator is the evaluator and judge for all learning activities.	Self, Group and Other assessments. Public audience, authentic assessments.
Learners are least interested in school and curriculum	Curriculum is directly connected to learners' interests, expertise, skills and the real world Source: (Developing the curriculum 1996).

Projects and Researches are the key aspects of the 21st century curriculum. It is not only connected to the community but also meets the global needs. It incorporates higher order thinking skills; multiple intelligences; technology and media etc. The students are self-directed and prefer working independently. They are ready to face the new practical challenges rather than mere reading of the text books. They learn through their own research and application of their projects. Knowledge for them is not memorization of facts and figures rather they construct their own knowledge on the basis of their previous experiences.

Skills required for a teacher to present effectively in a 21st century classroom

Days are gone when the teachers used to deliver their prepared lectures in the classroom using chalk boards; dictating notes; ask students to rote the answers to the questions given at the back of their text books. Then the evaluation was done in the traditional way.

Managing a 21st century classroom is a challenging task for the teachers. The knowledge with which they graduated to become a teacher has become insufficient now. They need to keep them updated with the fast paced world.

Teaching profession needs a diversified set of skills. Teachers need to have broad horizons to cope up with tremendous era of science and technology. The following holistic and student centered model by Andrew Churches shows the characteristics of the 21st century teachers:





CONCLUSION

This article was written in order to highlight the educational trends all of the 21st century. The fast paced world is moving towards development and progress of new technology. After every 15 days a new product is invented and after every 15 seconds a new web site is launched. This is the speed of progression and advancement of the 21st century.

Education and training of the upcoming generation to cope up with the change has become a challenge for the educators as well as the parents. Educators and teachers are keeping themselves abreast with the advancement, expansion and growth. Teachers' competence and educational standards are being promoted to highest degree.

Text book reading and lecture based teaching is becoming obsolete and is being replaced by practical problem solving and critical thinking involved activities. Computer and internet are the main sources of knowledge collection and dissemination. New subjects are being added to the curriculum. 3rs once used to be reading, writing and arithmetic is now replaced by new 3Rs i.e. Resilience, responsible and rigor. Teaching is done for active learning; for collaborative work and for construction of meaning. Improvement of effective oral and written communication skills is given extra attention. Teacher centered and subject centered classrooms are now converted into student centered and result oriented ones. Concept teaching is overcome by cooperative learning and classroom discussions. Teachers are proactive rather than reactive. They give professional training to the children in order to prepare them for social life. Teachers keep in mind the diversified human abilities while teaching. According to Howard Gardner (1983, 1993) and Robert J. Sternberg (1985, 1995), intelligence and ability are considered better rather than the single dimension of language and logical thinking. Human Mind consists of a set of multiple intelligences (Howard Gardner and et al) namely:

Linguistic Intelligence, Bodily Kinesthetic Intelligence, Interpersonal and intrapersonal Intelligence, Naturalistic Intelligence, logical mathematical Intelligence, visual-spatial intelligence, existential intelligence and musical intelligence.

Student's mind is a combination of all these intelligences and one, two or more of these intelligences, however are stronger than the others making the student excel in that respective fields.

We are living in an underdeveloped; third world country of the world having the population of 190,291,129 (July 2012) and the illiterate adults are 49.5 million, which is the 3rd highest rate in the world. Female literacy rate is 61% at the age between 15- 24 and is expected to rise up to 72% in 2015. In adult female it is 42% and is expected to rise up to 47% by 2015.

Teachers are said to be the largest workforce in Pakistan comprising of approximately 1.5 million of the total population. Teachers are the key persons who contribute in achieving the international educational goals of Education For All (EFA). Presently the alarming situation is the shortage of qualified teachers that has become a challenge and an open threat to the education sector. Teachers tend to leave their profession due to low salary status, poor teaching and learning conditions and inadequate professional training. But still there are teachers who despite of these facts encourage students and motivate them to excel in their fields.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Many national and international organizations are working day and night to empower the teachers of Pakistan. There is a grave need to make the teachers aware of the importance of enhancing and improving their professional skills.
- Teachers may attend In service Teachers Training Programs and Continuous professional Development programs. They may realize that it is an essential component of their professional career.
- More programs to improve the quality of the teachers in which their personality development is focused may be introduced.



- Mastery over the subject; ability to adjust and update skills according to changing times; keeping them updated with the modern technology is the need of time.
- Competency is a combination of three things, namely, Knowledge, skills and attitudes. Schools and teachers have to face numerous new changes and challenges rising from their internal and external environment. To enable the teachers keep abreast with the newly arising trends more Continuous development Programs may be introduced.
- A sizeable budget should be reserved for CPD Programs.
- This is not in regards to the 'best method' 'the ideal book' 'the excellent author', the very best publisher', instead it really is about who you are and where you are within the great procedure for your professional growth (Russell Tarr, 2009).

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