

Dynamic Role of 21st Century Teacher towards Character Building of Students

* Dr. Muhammad Idris, Assistant Professor

** Dr. Maksal Minaz, Lecturer

*** Dr. Shaista Irshad Khan, Assistant Professor

Abstract



The quantitative study was intended to investigate the dynamic role of the 21st-century teacher in the character-building of students at the secondary level in District Swabi. For the purpose to achieve the objective all Girl's Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) and students of grades 9th and 10th in District Swabi were selected as the population of the study. A sample size of 164 SSTs and 373 students of grades 9th and 10th were selected through a convenient sampling technique. Two separate questionnaires one for students and one for teachers were developed based on the previous literature. The data were collected by the researcher after trial testing and validity and reliability were tested. Collected data were analyzed by Mean, Standard Deviation. The results of data collected from teachers showed that teachers have a dynamic and strong role in the character-building of students; on the other hand, the students also agreed with the statement. Based on the findings it was recommended that government should take serious steps for the involvement of teachers in character building of students through pre-service and in-service training, workshops, and refresher courses.

Keywords: Dynamic, Character Building, Involvement of Teachers in Service & Pre- Service

Introduction

Strong nations need a strong system of education in all aspects of life. There is a drastic need for a strong nation to equip with modern knowledge and the ability to face the challenges of the modern world for this purpose therefore, it is the need of the day to educate the students in all aspects that is social values, norms, modification of behavior, and character building (Berkowitz, 2011; Notman, 2012; Rens, 2005; Freeks, 2015). The term character building refers to assisting individuals emotionally stronger, helping them to make more independent, and to guide them to deal better with the problems of life (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). Supporting an individual to handle all of his/her problems either education-related or practical life is known as character building. According to (Freeks, 2007; Agboola & Tsai, 2012) Character-building and character education have the same meaning. As cited by (Rens, 2005) Character building includes the habits and changes of behavior that are commonly needed for an individual to live and adjust himself in society. An individual learns from his parents and teachers the way of spending a good life (Berkowitz, 2011; Helterbran & Strahler, 2013. All of the responsibility lies down on the shoulder of a teacher if a student does better or worse in society (Helterbran & Strahler, 2013; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2006; Freeks, 2015). Berkowitz (2002) assumed that a set of Psychological characteristics, the behavior, mindset up, and feelings of an individual, and the ability to handle the problems of life morally is known as character development. Therefore developing the quality of truthfulness, loyalty, good citizenship, makes a sense of responsibility can make a student a better member of society through instilling values, and way of mentoring (Sayin, 2014. The mentioned qualities are developed in the students by the teacher, a teacher as a role model, and his personality, actions truthfulness morality, ethical way of talking, and teaching styles must be influential and ideal for the learners (Arthur, 2011).

The manifestation of values in the character, actions, behavior, language and teaching style of teachers can motivate the learners toward the development of social and ethical values. Therefore, teaching as a profession is very threatening because (Campbell, 2003) teachers are anticipated to possess a moral professionalism that is demonstrated in their behavior with all aspects of life. Following all of the professional values and beliefs either in the classroom or out of the classroom is not multifaceted but positive and appropriate life standards held by the teacher stimulate the students

* Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

** Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

*** Department of Education, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan

towards the development of positive character building. As a mediator, the students communicate all of the values, actions, skills, beliefs, and ethical reflections learned by the professional teacher and try to apply these in his/her practical life (Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui 2021).

As (Arthur, 2011) concluded that teaching proper values and standards constitutes a certain part of teaching and affects the overall life of a student including positive thinking, carefulness for society, patience, good citizenship, the well-being of the human being, and academic achievement. Therefore, it is the utmost responsibility of a professional teacher to serve as a representative function and demonstrate moral mediators towards the character building of the students (Campbell, 2003). Teachers, in all phases, need to see themselves as moral agents and demonstrate the kind of positive exemplary moral behavior that society wants to see in students as future citizens (Arthur, 2011).

In the Pakistani context (Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui, 2021) there is a dire need to integrate moral education following the Islamic value in academic education to prepare the best bunch for the future to diminish the multiple violence and hip hazard in society.

As research was studied by (Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui 2021) that character building of an individual is the most trending need of the day. However, in the context of Pakistan, most institutions are focusing on the cognitive aspects of pupils rather than the character building that is important for success in the real life. The behaviors of learners are molded by the guidance and examples given by the teachers in multiple ways that as dealing with life problems, valuing ethical and moral issues, relationship with equivalent teachers, and communicating with students (Ávalos, Flores & Araneda, 2021). As a result, teachers have a substantial stimulus on the character-building of students beyond the academic content they teach in the classroom

Keeping in view the dynamic role of a teacher in the character-building of students the following objective was aimed;

Research Objective

1. To examine the dynamic role of 21st-century teachers in character building of students at the secondary level in District Swabi Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Research Questions:

Is the 21st-century teacher play a dynamic in the character-building of students at the secondary level in District Swabi?

Statement of the problem:

The third standard of the National professional standard for Teachers in Pakistan (2009) emphasizes "knowledge of Islamic ethical values/social life" the standard focuses that 21st-century teachers having the skill to incorporate Islamic ethical values, beliefs, and practices that are universally recognized and are being endorsed. The teacher should know Islamic values in a true sense, value and be committed to respect for individuals, appreciate the basic worth of individuals, and know the value of tolerance. The professional teacher has the skill to involve the students in activities that stimulate ethical values, avoid confusion in the classrooms and create a harmless and protected learning environment. Therefore, the major aim of the study was to examine the dynamic role of 21st-century teachers in the character-building of students at the secondary level in district Swabi.

Theoretical Background of the Study

Berkowitz (2002) and Bandura (1977, 1991) emphasized the internal dispensation and overt behavior of students demonstrating the ethical and moral values in character development that can be placed in social cognition. Opportunities and classroom practices should be provided to the students to express their expectations and thoughts of positive behavior and to be acknowledged for doing so. The reinforcement theory of Skinner as cited by Cherry, (2022) stressed on the rewards for doing positive behavior in the classroom are encouragement for the other students to espouse similar behavior.

According to the social cognitive theory of (Bandura, 1977, 1991), moral development and self-regulation happen regularly from transaction to environment. Major emphases of social cognitive theories were on human behavior, thoughts, and actions including the application of consequences, the observation of models, and acculturation by social agents. In the light of social cognition theory actions of an individual reflects the internal and external behavior and thoughts that provide a serious route toward character building and moral development. According to Vessels, and Huitt, (2005) social cognition approach is more intensive on the development of moral change rather than on content during the teaching-learning process.

Literature Review

A detailed review of the theories related to character building of students was conducted by Vessels, and Huitt (2005). A very comprehensive review of moral and character building provides the philosophical and psychological base for the researchers. They deliver guidelines for the historical perspective of character-building theories. Besides these, the review highlighted the definitions of multiple terms related to the moral and character development of students along with the educational implications of social cognitive theories. They concluded that moral and character developments are the border terms and empirical learning opportunities must be available for students within the school premises. They summarized that character-building education should focus on surreptitious behavior and explicit behavior of an individual by the implementation of values, way of thinking, expressions, taking decisions regarding ethical and social values, and explicitly putting knowledge and commitments into action.

A research study was conducted (Agboola & Tsai, 2012) to bring character education into the classroom. They discussed the descriptions given by different researchers and give the historical perspective of the term character building and moral education. They emphasized multiple moral issues of 21st-century students. They summarized that only character education is not responsible for character reshaping but other factors also affect the decency of students like family, friends, parents, and social and cultural issues. Character education is not a slogan but they stress considering it as a mission for the future of the nation.

Free (2015) studied the influence of role-players on the character development and character-building of South African college students. The major purpose of the study was to determine to find out college students' lives were influenced by role-players in character development. The researcher tinted multiple social problems and issues that can influence the life of college students. A total number of eight hundred and forty college students were selected from different colleges. Statistically, results showed that role players like mothers, fathers, siblings, teachers, and all social relatives can influence the character of college students. Results of the study revealed that the character building of the students could be used effectively to strengthen the nation. Observing the attitude and behavior of teachers in the lives of students, it was extraordinary that students specified who and what they came about because of the role of God in their lives.

In a qualitative research study, the teachers' model in building students' character (Lian *et al*, 2020) was inspired by an incident when a teacher was murdered by his student. The main aims of the research were to establish and strengthen the character of school students at the elementary level. They selected principals, teachers, and elementary school students of SD Negeri 2 Gelumbang, Muara Enim, South Sumatera as a sample. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation related to the school activities of students. Results of the research showed that teachers and principals have an active role in the character-building of students by providing activity-based teaching. Teacher as a role model illustrates his role not only in the theory of learning but shows a positive attitude towards issues and problems related to everyday life. The teacher should demonstrate positive students get an idea of model life. It was concluded that the principal and the teachers consider that teachers having constructive character will make children more confident and more successful in life in society.

A qualitative Research study was conducted by (Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui 2021) with the topic of character building of students: perceptions and practices of private school principles. The objective of the study is to explore the perceptions of principals regarding the character-building of secondary school students they use semi-structured interviews and interviewed several ten principals to collect data. Descriptive coding was used for data analysis. Results showed that the holistic development of a student is a primary responsibility of education. They identified that character building is very essential for our future generation for this purpose it is also important to provide all the facilities and behavioral support to students. School principals believed that teachers play an important role in character building. The researchers focused on the professional development of teachers and also find that games, social activities, and strong communication with teachers and students were also essential for the character building of students. They recommended that the appointment criteria of teachers should be revisited and necessary changes make sure for the betterment of future students.

A quantitative research study Effects of Teachers’ Personality on Character Building of Students at Secondary Level in Sanghar, Pakistan was conducted by Shah *et al*, (2021) the major objective was to know the influence of the personality of teachers on character building of secondary school students. Data were collected from several one hundred and twenty secondary school teachers. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. Results of the data show that participants agreed that the role of a professionally trained teacher is remarkable in the development of students' behavior and character building. They recommended that further reach should be conducted on the role of the teacher in the character-building of students.

The conclusion drawn from related research studies

After studying literature it was found that slight effort of research available in Pakistan on the role of the teacher in character building or character education of students. As (Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui, 2021) highlighted some researchers from the area and analyzed the results, and Shah et al, (2021) recommended further research on the mentioned topic. Furthermore (Gallien & Jackson, 2006) concluded that an inter-disciplinary approach from different viewpoints and specific cultural groups should be taken for a better understanding of the importance of the dynamic role of the teacher in the character building of students. Therefore the present research study was conducted.

Methodology

According to the positivist paradigm, an individual can be an independent observer of the research. Post-positivist paradigm rejects the positivist approach. Post-positivism follows objective answers by attempting to identify, and search out for the theories and knowledge that develop the theories (Panhwar, Ansari, & Shah 2017). Therefore the research paradigm was based on the post-positivist paradigm. The population of the study was 9th and 10th class girl secondary school students and girls' secondary school teachers (SSTs) in District Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A sample size of one hundred and sixty-four secondary school teachers (SSTs) and three hundred and seventy-three 373 secondary school girls of grades 9th and 10th were randomly selected for data collection. The deductive method was used for data collection as suggested by the post-positivist paradigm. A self-administered Likert Scale questionnaire was developed. The questionnaire was distributed among the selected secondary school teachers (SSTs) and secondary school students. Two distinct self-made questionnaires were developed by the researcher and validated by the experts (Department of Education Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan). Data was collected from the SSTs and Girls' secondary school students regarding the dynamic role of 21st-century teachers in the character-building of students at the secondary level. The questionnaire was pilot-tested and reliability was found 0.78 acceptable for social sciences (Babbie, 2016).

Different statistical analyses descriptive statistics mean, and standard deviation were applied in the research study for the achievement of objectives. SPSS version 21 was used after collecting the data from female instructors and schoolgirls and analyses accordingly.

Data Analysis

The main objective of the research was to explore the dynamic role of secondary school teachers in the character-building of students at the secondary level in District Swabi Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Descriptive statistics, Mean, and Standard Deviation was used for data analysis.

Classification for Mean

Above Average	4.51to 4.00
Average	3.99 to 3.00
Below average	2.99 to 1.00
(Minaz, Shah, & Habib,	2021)

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Responses of Teachers regarding the role in character building of students

<i>Description of Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Character-building activities carried out by teachers enhance the social skills of the students</i>	4.441	0.681
<i>Ideas and opinions of teachers for activities of strengthening students' character improve the social skills of the students.</i>	3.712	0.882
<i>Strengthening students’ character promotes the social development of the students</i>	3.621	0.731
<i>Teachers play a vital role in students' character building.</i>	3.321	0.631
<i>Teachers engage students in character-building activities which promoted</i>	2.131	0.761

<i>students' socialization.</i>		
<i>Overall Results</i>	3.445	0.7372

The result of the above table 1 shows responses of secondary school teachers regarding the dynamic role of the teacher in the character building of students. The responses in the light of the statement that teachers regularly carried out activities that enhance social skills and were helpful in character building of students (Mean=4.441 and SD=0.68). According to the given categorization, the result shows the mean score as above average. The statement regarding Ideas and opinions of teachers for activities of strengthening students' character and improving social skills (Mean=3.712 and SD=0.882) showed average according to the categorization. Statement regarding strengthening students' character promotes social development having (Mean=3.621 and SD=0.73) showed the average results. Teacher plays a vital role in students' character building (M=3.31 and SD 0.631) showed the average results. On the other hand, overall mean scores of the statements regarding the dynamic role of the teacher regarding character building showed (M=3.445 and SD= 0.74) also put in the category of average. The results showed that teacher plays a multiple and energetic role in posturing the positive character of students (Freeks 2015; Lian *et al*, 2020; Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui 2021).

Table 2: Responses of students regarding the dynamic role of Teacher in character building

<i>Description of Items</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>Teachers always inspire and realize the best the students can be</i>	3.88	0.881
<i>Teachers always involve the students in activities that improve character building</i>	3.41	0.731
<i>Teachers stimulate the students toward career development</i>	3.22	0.801
<i>Teachers know how to develop character building the students</i>	2.71	0.671
<i>Overall results</i>	3.305	0.771

The above table 2 showed the results of the responses of students regarding the dynamic role of a teacher in character building. Statement regarding the personality and behavior related to teacher having (Mean= 3.88 and SD=0.88) the results support average category. Responses of the statement Teachers always involve the students in activities which improve character building (Mean=3.41 and SD=0.73) showed that active learning provides support towards character building of students. Teacher stimulation towards Career development results also showed average results having (Mean=3.22 and SD=0.801). Overall results scores of the statements showed average scores in the categorization. From the above results, it is clear understand that a professionally trained teacher is remarkable in the development of student's behavior and character building (Agboola & Tsai, 2012; Shah et al, 2021; Yasmin, Muhammad, & Siddiqui 2021).

Summary

The post-positivist paradigm was used in the term of quantitative research design to explore the dynamic role of secondary school teachers in the character building of students at the secondary level in District Swabi Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The population of the study was 9th and 10th class girl secondary school students and girls secondary school teachers (SSTs) in District Swabi, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. A sample size of one hundred and sixty-four secondary school teachers (SSTs) and three hundred and seventy-three 373 secondary school girls of grades 9th and 10th were randomly selected for data collection. The deductive method was used for data collection as suggested by the post-positivist paradigm. Two separate questionnaires one for students and one for teachers were developed based on the previous literature the data were collected by the researcher after trial testing and validity and reliability were tested. Collected data were analyzed by Mean, Standard Deviation. The results show character-building activities carried out by the teacher to enhance the social skills of the students, 21st century teachers always involved students in active learning which increase character-building.

Findings

Results from teacher's responses

1. The results indicated that an "above average mean score" was found by the students regarding the statement that Character-building activities carried out by teachers enhance the social skills of the students.
2. The results indicated that the average mean score" was found by the teachers regarding Ideas and opinions of teachers for activities of strengthening students' character and improve social skills of the students

3. The data revealed that the majority of teachers agreed with the response regarding Strengthening students' character promoting the social development of the students and showing "average" mean scores.
4. The data revealed that the majority of teachers agreed with the response regarding Teachers playing a vital role in student's character building students and showed "average" mean score

Results from student's responses

1. The data revealed that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement regarding teachers always being inspired and realizing the best the students can be and showed average mean scores.
2. The data revealed that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement regarding Teachers always involving the students in activities that improve character building and showed an "average" mean score.
3. The data revealed that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement regarding Teachers always involving the students in activities that improve character building and showed an "average" mean score.
4. The data exposed that the majority of respondents agreed with the statement regarding, teachers' stimulus to the students toward career development and showed an "average" mean score.

Conclusions

It is concluded from the current research study that 21st-century teacher plays a dynamic role in the character-building of students in the sense of education and apply multiple classroom activities along with the application of modern teaching methodologies and technological equipment.

Recommendations:

Based on findings it was found that character building is a significant aspect of student's life therefore, it is recommended those special training sessions, workshops and seminars should be launched for teachers and students on regular bases to encourage them.

References

- Agboola, A., & Tsai, K.C. (2012). Bring Character Education into Classroom. *European Journal of Educational Research* Vol. 1, No. 2, 163-170 ISSN 2165-8714 Copyright © 2012 EUJER <http://www.akademikplus.com/eujer/index.html>.
- Arthur, J. (2011). Personal character and tomorrow's citizens: Student expectations of their teachers. *International Journal of Educational Research* Volume 50, Issue 3, 2011, Pages 184-189. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S088303551100053X#>.
- Babbie, E. (2016). *The Practice of Social Research*. Fourteenth Edition. Australia Brazil Mexico. Singapore United Kingdom United States. © 2016, 2013 Cengage Learning WCN: 01-100-101
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social learning theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1991). *Social Cognitive Theory of Moral Thought and Action*. In W. Kurtines & J. Gewirtz (Eds.), *Handbook of moral behavior and development* (Vol. 1, 45-103). Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum. Retrieved December 2002, from <http://www.emory.edu/EDUCATION/mfp/BanSCTMoral.pdf>
- Berkowitz, M. W. (2011). What works in values education? *International Journal of Educational Research*, 50(3):153-158. Doi: 10.1016/j.ijer.2011.07.003.
- Berkowitz, M. W. (2002). *The science of character Education*. In W. Damon (Ed.), *Bringing in a new era in character education* (43-63). Stanford, CA: Hoover Institute Press.
- Cambridge University Press. (n.d.). Upcycling. In *Cambridge dictionary*. Retrieved September 12, 2022 from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/character-building>.
- Campbell, E. (2003). *the ethical teacher*. Maidenhead, UK: University Press, 2003.
- Cherry, K. (2022). *History and Biographies.B. F. Skinner's Life, Theories, and Influence on Psychology*. Verywellmind Retrieved from: <https://www.verywellmind.com/b-f-skinner-biography-1904-1990-2795543#:~:text=ABCs%20of%20Behaviorism-.B.%20F.,is%20what%20conditions%20our%20behaviors>.
- Freeks, E. F. (2015). The influence of role-players on the character development and character-building of South African college students. *South African Journal of Education*, Volume 35, Number 3, August 2015. Art. # 1086, 13 pages, Doi: 10.15700/saje.v35n3a1086

- Gallien, L. B., & Jackson, L. (2006). The character development from African-American perspectives: toward a counter-narrative approach. *Journal of Education & Christian Belief*, 10(2), 129-142.
- Govt: of Pakistan. (2009). *National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan*. Policy and Planning Wing Ministry of Pakistan Islamabad. Retrieved from <https://www.nacte.org.pk/assets/download/NationalProfessionalStandardsforTeachersinPakistan.pdf>
- Helterbran, V. R. & Strahler, B. R. (2013). Children as global citizens: A Socratic approach to teaching character. *Childhood Education*, 89(5):310-314. Doi: 10.1080/00094056.2013.830902.
- Lian, B., Kristiawan, M., Primasari, A D. G., & Prasetyo, A. M. M. (2020). Teachers' Model in Building Students' Character. *Journal of Critical Reviews* ISSN- 2394-5125 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31838/jcr.07.14.165>.
- Lickona, T. (1997). The Teacher's Role in Character Education. *The Journal of Education*, 179(2), 63–80. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/42741723>.
- Minaz, M. Shah, R. & Habib, M. (2021). An Exploration of the Multiple Role of Library in the Educational Activities at the University Level. *International Research Journal of Education and Innovation* ISSN 2710-043X, 2710-0448 Published on 2021-09-20. Vol. 2 No. 2 Pp. 153-166.
- Panhwar, A. H., Ansari, S., & Shah, A. A. (2017). *Post-positivism is an effective design for social and Educational Research*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317605754>.
- Rens, J. A. (2005). Riglyne vir waarde-opvoeding in Suid-Afrikaanse skole. *Unpublished PhD tesis. Potchefstroom: Noordwes-Universiteit. Beskikbaar te* <http://dspace.nwu.ac.za/handle/10394/524>. Geraadpleeg 23 Julie 2015. Notman R 2012. Implementing values in the New Zealand curriculum: four years on. *Set: Research Information for Teachers*, 3:41-49.
- Sayin, E. (2014). A look at the sophistic notions in terms of education of values. *Energy Education Science and Technology Part B: Social and Educational Studies*, 6(1):25-32.
- Shah, S. H.R., Naveed, S., Nahrio, M., Parhyar, A., & Solangi, A. B. (2021). Effects of Teachers' Personality on Character Building of Students at Secondary Level in Sanghar, Pakistan *Ilkogretim Online - Elementary Education Online*, 2021; Vol 20 (Issue 6): pp. 608-619 <http://ilkogretim-online.org> doi: 10.17051/ilkonline.2021.06.065.
- Vessels, G., & Huitt, W. (2005). Moral and character development. Paper presented at the *National Youth at Risk Conference, Savannah, GA, March 8-10*. Retrieved [date], from <http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/papers/chardev.pdf>.
- Ysamin, S., Muhammad, Y., & Siddiqui, M. F. (2021). Character building of student: Private Secondary School Principals Perceptions and Practices. *Global Educational Studies Review*, VI (1), 103-120. ISSN: 2708-2113.