

# Research Proposal Development

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**Research Proposal**

**on**

**Teachers' Perspectives on Implementing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills at  
Tertiary Level Education: An Exploratory Study**

**Submitted by**

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Date: 21.12.24

**Research Topic and Title:** Teachers' perspectives on implementing 21st-century skills at tertiary-level education: An exploratory study.

## **Research Questions**

### **General Question**

- What is the present condition of 21st-century skills at the tertiary level of education?

### **Specific Question**

1. How do educators view the talents that children will need in the future?
2. To what extent do educators wish to impart future-ready skills to their students?
3. In what ways can teacher training assist educators in imparting future-ready abilities to students?

## **Statement of Problem**

The world is now moving faster than we can even imagine. We cannot think of a world without using 21st-century skills in our academic life and beyond academia. Moreover, Bangladesh is a third-world developing country, and it is developing day by day. Nevertheless, it is still lagging because of some problems in the infrastructure of applying the 21st-century skills at tertiary-level education. There are universities where these skills are not addressed yet, and teachers are not aware of them. They are not motivated enough to learn and adopt new changes. As a result, students are unable to get the proper learning from their teachers.

Besides, teachers' play a vital role in tertiary-level education as a stakeholder, and their viewpoint helps us to find out the drawbacks in this regard. Furthermore, to explore new skills, it is

necessary to gain knowledge that is up to date according to the new era. Teachers' motivation to teach these skills is one of the influential factors regarding this issue. There are challenges and opportunities while training the teachers to teach 21st-century skills. In addition, teachers' can always apply effective and suitable methods and approaches to provide better learning opportunities for the learners.

In addition, classroom management plays a vital role here. Stakeholders who are associated with this can change the curriculum and include 21st-century skills. These skills are sometimes overlooked, whereas these should be addressed more, and learning should be informative and fun for the learners. Teachers' training policy can be enforced strictly so that teachers are trained. This study will discover some possible ways to find out if the teachers are well trained and familiar with the skills or not. As a result, the learners needs may be fulfilled.

### **Objectives of study**

#### **Primary Objective**

- To investigate the present situation of 21st-century skills at tertiary-level education.

#### **Secondary objective**

1. Find out what educators believe students should learn for the future.
2. Find out what encourages and supports educators in imparting future-ready skills to kids.
3. Analyze the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in assisting educators in imparting future-ready skills to students.

**Purpose of the study**

This study's main goal is to examine how 21st-century skills are now being implemented in Bangladeshi higher education, with a particular emphasis on professors' viewpoints. This study intends to uncover the potential and problems related to incorporating these abilities into the curriculum by looking at teachers' perceptions, motivations, and training experiences. The main goal here is to provide guidance for tactics aimed at improving tertiary students' acquisition of 21st-century abilities.

**Significance of the study**

Tertiary-level education plays an important role in a student's life. It is necessary to develop the skills at the tertiary level. The study is beneficial for the teachers to discover some possible ways to develop the students and create them as better professionals. It is mandatory to help the students in developing 21st-century skills. Besides, 21st-century skills must be compulsory rather than being locked away. This study finds out whether the students will be more benefited if they acquire these skills correctly. Furthermore, whether they can be more efficient if they are more skilled in these 21st-century skills will also be explored. Nowadays, the way of learning has changed. The assessment system has also changed more than before. Now, education is not only based on memorization in Bangladesh like it was a few years ago. It has become more creative and thoughtful. So, this study explores that by addressing and acquiring 21st-century skills, we will eventually bring success and motivation for the students in their language classroom. It may create more learning and working opportunities for the students.

In addition, adapting these skills eventually brings success and makes the students confident enough to face new challenges in the upcoming days of their lives. As a result, students can become independent professionals in the future, and they will be creative individuals. This study

reveals that learning these skills makes them sufficient to use their brains in the right ways, and they will come out of memorization. Therefore, teachers are the essential stakeholders, and their perceptions, motivations, and attitudes towards 21st-century skills matter the most. So this study finds the possible ways to discover the necessity and proper enforcement of these skills in the language classroom.

Lastly, this research finds ways to help the stakeholders understand the necessities of 21st-century skills. Not only stakeholders but also the students can get to know the exposure of these skills by this study. Even if these skills are added to the curriculum of any institution at the tertiary level, many students are not aware of these skills entirely, as these are not addressed and recognized appropriately. That is why this study can help these individuals to understand and acknowledge the value of 21st-century skills in the language classroom at tertiary-level education and beyond academia.

## **Literature Review**

### **The significance of 21st-century skills**

Many of the 21st-century skills have existed for a long time. Creating better learning opportunities and teaching 21st-century skills in the academic setting is necessary to create better professionals.

However, McComas has suggested that the success of the 21st-century skills movements depends on an essential factor. The factor is that the teachers are supposed to deliver the content efficiently and skills simultaneously. In addition, he stated that "21<sup>st</sup> century skills" is a term frequently used to explore the students' future. It means that their future workforce and decision

making abilities depend on their skills in this updated upcoming world.

### **The role of teachers to implement 21st-century skills**

Common Core State Standards have addressed academic knowledge in science for English Language Arts (Council of Chief State Officers, 2010). Here it is also mentioned that there should be a relation between science teachers and academic language learning. As a result, students will cope with the new terms, symbols and phrases, and discourse patterns.

However, national organizations and the Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills (P21) and the National Research Council (NRC) have come together to define 21st-century skills. They want to explore this idea of 21st-century skills within the education system.

### **The impact of 21st-century skills**

Andrew and Willingham (2010) state that critical thinking and problem solving are two essential elements for human civilization to succeed since the beginning of history. These skills, such as information literacy and global awareness, are nothing new amidst the elites in various societies.

Digital literacy and 21st-century learning capabilities are strongly related. These abilities include creativity, problem-solving, and critical thinking. They include the capacity to see issues and find effective solutions, to think critically about systems, and to approach difficulties creatively and curiously. Gaining these talents entails learning how to solve issues, evaluate data, and improve critical thinking skills using digital tools like spreadsheets. The modern world's changing needs are met by this emphasis on digital literacy and its incorporation into education (Judy Salpeter, 2003).

## **Challenges and opportunities**

In order to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century, the National Research Council (2011) highlights the significance of critical thinking, problem-solving, and systems thinking. These abilities help professionals succeed both academically and professionally by enabling them to handle challenging situations that arise in the workplace. This idea is further supported by Alismail and McGuire (2015), who point out that 21st-century abilities help students and teachers prepare for their future employment in addition to helping them reach academic goals. They stress the need for more creative approaches to evaluation and call for a move away from conventional tests that inhibit creativity. Additionally, Zafari (2019) emphasizes how education is dynamic and influenced by ongoing scientific and technological developments. Knowledge of information and communication technology (ICT) is essential in today's society for a successful life.

ICTs have a significant impact on human existence, as acknowledged by Coklar (2011). Thus, 21st-century abilities are essential for surviving in the contemporary world. To educate young people for success in the workplace, these skills must be incorporated into postsecondary education.

Neglecting to incorporate 21st-century skills into tertiary education curricula is no longer an option in the modern day. These abilities are referred to by Ali and other researchers as "generic skills," which are necessary for all skilled professions.

In addition, the importance of 4C skills of the 21st century in 4 language skills in EFL classes is important (Erdogan, 2019). It is also mentioned that the 4Cs are communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking skills, which are the main skills of learning and innovation that must be included in the education system and curriculum at the tertiary level. It is mandatory to add these skills because students can be creative-minded and effective as well by implementing



these skills in their academic life and beyond academia. So, these 4Cs actually enable the students to interact and help them to think critically in this fast-forward era of communication.

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