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## Facing New Challenges: The Role of Teachers as Agents of Change in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The 21st century is marked by significant changes in the world of education, especially in terms of technological advances, cultural changes, growing educational needs, and social changes. Therefore, teachers must take a more proactive role in shaping the future of education. The purpose of writing this article was to provide an overview for teachers who want to understand their role as agents of change, as well as concrete steps that can be taken in facing educational changes in changing education for a brighter future. The writing methodology used a qualitative research approach that involves literature analysis and an in-depth understanding of issues relevant to the role of teachers as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The role of teachers as agents of change was approaching change with an open attitude, mastery of educational technology, development of critical thinking skills, increased social and cultural engagement, a differentiated approach, lifelong learning, a role as a model, and the ability to create a responsive learning environment.*

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## INTRODUCTION

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized by rapid technological change and inevitable social change. This has brought new challenges in the world of education. Today's students are growing up in a very different environment than previous generations. According to Sani (2017), flexible and adaptive competencies are needed, to take initiative and be independent, have social and cultural abilities, be productive and accountable and have leadership and responsibility, for life and career in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. According to Abdullateef (2021), the toughest challenge in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is to make students motivated, productive, and responsible. The use of digital learning tools can empower students where significant changes in pedagogy occur. The use of digital tools can encourage 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

Along with the development of technological advances in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the role of teachers in teaching, guiding and motivating students must also change. According to Tarihoran (2019), teachers must be able to increase students' competence and enthusiasm for learning so they can overcome global

challenges by improving critical thinking skills, and the ability to communicate effectively, innovate, and solve problems through negotiation and collaboration.

Teachers, in their role as the main pillars of education, must transform into agents of change who can adapt quickly to the changes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They are no longer just conveyors of information, but must also be facilitators of learning that can prepare students for an ever-changing world. Teachers must be able to understand, integrate and teach technology in the learning process, while still maintaining traditional values and skills. According to Brown et al. (2021), a change agent is someone who successfully makes changes in various aspects of an organization's operations. According to Sugara and Mutmainnah (2020), currently guru PPKn not only functions as an innovative and creative presenter but also as a role model in taking advantage of the changes that are occurring.

In addition to technological challenges, cultural and social changes also influence the way education is directed. Students' needs and society's demands for a relevant and inclusive curriculum are increasing. Teachers must be able to answer this challenge by creating a learning environment that is safe, and inclusive, and supports students' social and emotional development. Jailani (2014) stated that some studies show that the condition of teachers and education in Indonesia is worrying. For example, the implementation of a certification program, even though teachers have received certification and received additional salaries through certification allowances is not in line with the achievement of student learning outcomes. This article aimed to explain and analyze the role of teachers as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well as the ways teachers face challenges and pursue positive changes in education and provide views on the importance of teachers' roles in shaping a sustainable and relevant educational future.

## **METHOD**

This article was written using a qualitative research approach methodology which includes literature analysis and an in-depth understanding of issues relevant to the role of teachers as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The methodological steps taken were as follows: (1) Look for literature on the role of teachers in facing challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century as well as literature on technological changes in education, cultural and social changes, and the role of teachers in overcoming these changes; (2) Analyze the literature to identify the main challenges teachers face and to understand the concept of the teacher's role as an agent of change. It involves investigating views from a variety of sources, including scientific journals, books, research reports, and online sources; (3) Identify strategies and practices that can assist teachers in carrying out their role as agents of change. This includes training strategies, collaboration, and building a responsive learning environment; (4) Analyze the challenges teachers face in their role as agents of change as well as the support required from the education system and society.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has caused changes in the world of education. To be in tune with these changes, teachers must know what challenges they will face. Some of the main challenges faced by teachers in these changing times include rapid technological changes, cultural and social changes, demands for relevant curricula, social and cultural involvement of students, understanding student development, relevant evaluation, professional advancement and training.

The rapid development of technology has changed the way students learn and interact. Teachers must face the challenge of integrating technology into their learning and ensuring that students have the digital skills necessary to compete in an increasingly connected world.

Changes in culture and social values influence the way education is managed. Teachers must understand the cultural and linguistic differences that exist in their classrooms, and also promote inclusivity and

diversity. Technological developments have caused society to increasingly demand a curriculum that is relevant to the skills needs of the industrial era 5.0. Teachers must respond to these demands by presenting materials that prepare students for the real world, including an understanding of global issues and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as problem-solving, communication, and critical thinking. Today's students are often involved in complex social and political issues. Teachers must help students develop a deep understanding of these issues and stimulate their positive involvement in society. Teachers must understand students' physical, emotional, and social development, as well as the ways they learn effectively. This requires adapting teaching strategies to meet individual student needs. According to Amirahlilis (2023), 21<sup>st</sup> century learning emphasizes student-centred teaching based on information technology so teacher expertise is needed, especially regarding abilities and skills.

Changes in the learning process also require changes in the assessment of learning outcomes. Traditional assessments that are still carried out by teachers today often do not reflect student progress well. Teachers must find more relevant and contextual ways to assess student understanding, such as performance-based projects and portfolios. Teachers need to continue to update their knowledge about the latest developments in education, technology and teaching methods by participating in ongoing training and professional development. These challenges require teachers to act as active agents of change in education, leading innovation and adapting to changes occurring in their educational environment. This means teachers need to have deep skills and knowledge, as well as a passion for creating relevant and meaningful learning experiences for their students.

### **Teacher Challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Technological developments and digitalization have fundamentally changed the educational landscape in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers around the world are faced with significant challenges due to these changes. Several main aspects related to technology and digitalization that are challenges for teachers include easy access to information, use of digital tools and applications, online-based learning, students' ability in technology, protection of privacy and security, adaptive learning, attention lapses, and lack of connection. consistent internet. According to Mardhiyah et al. (2021), 21<sup>st</sup> century education emphasizes a student-centred approach to developing thinking skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, metacognition, communication, collaboration, innovation and creativity, and information literacy. Haryanti and Saputra (2019) explained that teachers have an important role in facilitating the development of creative thinking abilities by implementing learning practices that can familiarize students, thereby achieving educational goals.

Students now have easier access to various sources of information via the Internet. This forces teachers to teach information sorting, source evaluation, and critical skills so that students can sort the information they obtain. Teachers must be able to use and integrate digital tools and applications in their teaching. This includes the use of mobile devices, learning software, e-learning platforms, and other digital resources. Teachers need to master these tools to provide engaging and effective learning experiences.

After the Covid-19 pandemic has passed, online-based learning has become a necessity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, teachers must understand how to design and deliver online learning, including managing virtual classes and interacting with students via online platforms. Students are often more skilled at technology than their teachers. This can be a challenge for teachers who must continue to learn and develop technology skills to remain relevant and competitive. According to Rahayu et al. (2022), digitalization spurs the learning process in schools following technological developments. This requires teachers and students to be digital technology literate.

One important factor that teachers must pay attention to when using technology in the learning process is ensuring that student data is safe and that they comply with privacy regulations in the use of technology. This involves understanding the laws and regulations regarding privacy and data security. Technology allows the development of adaptive learning systems that can adapt the curriculum to

students' level of understanding. Teachers must work together with this technology and understand how they can utilize it to improve learning. Technology can also be a source of distraction in the classroom. Teachers must overcome this challenge by creating an environment that motivates students to focus on learning and minimizes distractions. In some areas, internet connection may be unstable or even unavailable. Teachers must find creative solutions to overcome these problems and ensure that all students have access to digital learning resources.

In facing these challenges, teachers must continually update their knowledge of technology, undertake relevant training, and collaborate with their colleagues in the development of effective solutions. Learning how to effectively integrate technology in teaching can improve the quality of education and prepare students for success in this digital era. According to Meillia and Murdiana (2019), to face the challenges of globalization, professional teachers must master various up-to-date learning methods and media by raising actual topics that occur in real life so that they can arouse students' interest in thinking critically and creatively in dealing with economic problems and prepare them to compete in the advancement of 21<sup>st</sup> century education.

Technological advances also cause cultural and social changes in society which have a significant impact on education and teachers have to face some challenges related to these changes. Some of the main aspects related to cultural and social change that are challenges for teachers include cultural and linguistic diversity, inclusivity and equality, changes in values and ethics, the influence of social media, social involvement, sexual education and mental health, uncertainty of the future, and the need for collaboration.

Digitalization causes today's society to become increasingly diverse in terms of culture and language. Teachers must be able to understand and appreciate this diversity in their classrooms, ensuring that all students feel welcome and respected. Demands for inclusivity and equality in education are increasing. Teachers must ensure that all students, including those with special needs, receive an equitable and meaningful education. Social values and ethics can change from one generation to the next. Teachers must help students understand and respond to these changes, as well as develop positive social values. Social media has a huge influence on students' culture and society. Teachers must help students understand the influence of social media, teach media literacy, and develop a critical understanding of information encountered on social media platforms.

Students are often involved in complex social and political issues. Teachers must create an environment that supports open and critical discussion of these issues, as well as teach critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Cultural change can also include changes in sexual education and mental health. Teachers must ensure that students receive accurate and up-to-date information on these topics, as well as supporting their mental health. Cultural and social changes can create uncertainty about the future. Teachers must help students develop adaptation, resilience and problem-solving skills so they can face future challenges. In an increasingly connected world, collaboration skills are becoming increasingly important. Teachers must facilitate collaboration among students and teach the social skills necessary for successful teamwork. Stetsenko (2017) stated that the process of exploring innovation in education encourages the active participation of teachers and students in pedagogical approaches. Continuous development in professional innovation by individuals helps improve their skills, advance professional development, and shape their identity as potential innovators.

In facing these challenges, teachers need to have a deep awareness of cultural and social change, and they must strive to understand the perspectives and experiences of their students. Successful education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires teachers to be learning facilitators who promote inclusivity, diversity, positive social values, and the skills necessary to succeed in an ever-changing world.

Changes in the world have brought changes in educational needs. Teachers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must face some challenges related to continuously developing educational needs. Several main aspects related to

changing educational needs that are a challenge for teachers are 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, namely understanding global issues, project and experiential learning, the ability to cope with change, multilingual skills, creativity and innovation, mental health and well-being, relevant curriculum, and an inclusive approach.

Regarding changing needs in the world of education, teachers should stimulate the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that students must have after they complete their education, such as problem-solving abilities, critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and digital literacy. Teachers must integrate these skills into their curriculum. Global issues such as climate change, social inequality and world peace are increasingly important. Teachers must help students understand these issues, stimulate their involvement, and help them formulate solutions. Active learning through projects and hands-on experience is increasingly prioritized. Teachers must design learning experiences that provide students with opportunities to participate in relevant projects.

These digital technological advances require students to learn how to deal with the changes, uncertainties and challenges they may face in the future. Teachers must teach adaptation and resilience skills. In an increasingly connected world, the skill of speaking multiple languages is becoming increasingly valuable. Teachers need to support the learning of additional languages and multilingualism. Creativity and innovation are important assets in facing change and solving problems. Teachers must provide opportunities for students to develop their creativity and think out of the box. Students' mental health is a major concern. Teachers need to understand the possible signs of mental health, and schools need to provide resources and support for student well-being. Teachers must ensure that their curriculum is relevant to students' needs and interests, and includes subjects that prepare them for the future.

The 21<sup>st</sup> century has seen more and more schools move towards an inclusive approach that supports all students, including those with special needs. Teachers must understand how to design instruction to meet the needs of diverse students. In facing these challenges, teachers must continually update their education and collaborate with their colleagues to develop relevant and meaningful learning approaches. They must be learning facilitators who can meet the unique needs of each student and prepare them for success in an ever-changing world.

### **The Role of Teachers as Agents of Change**

The quality of education in Indonesia can be improved by improving the quality of teachers through teacher certification and making teachers agents of change in the world of education (Siregar, 2020). Teachers are the key to change in global learning programs and projects (Bourn, 2016). Because teachers have a key role in shaping the future of education and facing the challenges that have been identified in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. They must be active agents of change, able to adapt quickly to changes in the educational environment and shape learning experiences that are relevant and meaningful for students. The teacher's role as an agent of change includes approaching change with an open attitude, mastery of educational technology, development of critical thinking skills, increased social and cultural involvement, differentiation approach, lifelong learning, role as a model, and the ability to create a responsive learning environment.

In the educational context, the role of teachers as agents of change is increasingly recognized as a very important element for the successful operation of schools and school systems that continue to develop (Brown et al., 2021). Teachers need to have an open attitude towards change. They must be ready to learn, master new technologies, and integrate them into teaching. A positive attitude towards innovation is key in playing the role of an agent of change. Teachers must be proficient in educational technology, including relevant hardware and software. They must be able to use these tools to enhance student learning, facilitate engagement, and provide effective feedback. Teachers must teach students the skills of critical thinking, information evaluation, and data analysis. They should stimulate deep questioning and discussion, allowing students to understand complex issues. Teachers must create learning environments that support students' social and cultural engagement. They should promote cooperation, intercultural dialogue, and respect for diversity. Teachers should adopt a differentiated approach, which



allows them to teach students with varying levels of understanding and learning styles. This requires careful planning and use of diverse resources. Teachers must be examples of lifelong learning. They must continually update their knowledge and keep up with developments in education and technology. Teachers are models for their students. They must practice the positive values, ethics, and skills they teach. Good role models can have a positive influence on student development. Teachers must be able to create a responsive learning environment, which allows students to participate, collaborate, and feel accepted. This includes planning teaching that suits students' needs. The teacher's role as a change agent is not only about following change but also about taking the initiative in shaping positive change. They must work together with their peers, administrators, and other stakeholders in designing relevant and inclusive education. This teacher's role is the key to creating a better educational future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

One of the most important aspects of the role of teachers as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the ability to approach change with an open attitude. An open attitude is an attitude that allows teachers to accept and adapt to changes in education easily. Here are some principles and practices that can help teachers approach change with an open attitude. First, teachers must have a deep understanding of why change is necessary. They need to realize that the world of education is constantly changing, and change is key to ensuring that education remains relevant and effective. Second, teachers must view learning as a continuous process, not as an end goal. They must be ready to continue learning, responding to feedback, and developing new skills throughout their careers. Third, teachers must seek training and professional development that is relevant to the changes that are occurring. This can include courses, workshops, seminars or even online training. Fourth, collaborating with fellow teachers is key in approaching change. Sharing experiences and ideas with fellow teachers can help in overcoming the challenges of change. Fifth, teachers must accept that they are also learners. They can learn from students, fellow teachers, and other sources. On the other hand, they are also teachers who are responsible for teaching critical thinking and adaptation skills to students. Sixth, change can be challenging. Teachers must build resilience skills to overcome possible obstacles and frustrations that may arise during the change process. Seventh, an evidence-based approach is important. Teachers must use data and empirical evidence to support the decisions and changes they propose. Eighth, open attitude and innovative thinking. Teachers must have the courage to look for new solutions and experiment with different teaching methods. And ninth, transparency in communication with students and parents. Teachers must explain the reasons behind the changes and involve students and parents in the change process.

Approaching change with an open attitude is not only about accepting change but also about being a driver of change. Teachers who have an open attitude can shape the future of education by leading innovation and creating dynamic and relevant learning environments for students. Mastery of educational technology is a key component in the role of teachers as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Teachers must be able to use technological tools and resources effectively to improve student learning.

What should teachers do to be able to master technology in the field of education? The following are several steps that can help teachers gain mastery of educational technology, namely first, teachers must seek training and self-development in the use of educational technology. Second, teachers must be active in exploring educational technology and trying out various tools and applications. Third, collaborating with fellow teachers can help in learning together and sharing experiences. Fourth, teachers can join digital education communities to gain support, resources, and inspiration. Fifth, teachers must always follow the latest developments in educational technology by reading scientific publications, following the news, and attending relevant conferences or seminars. Sixth, teachers must apply technology to student learning, such as creating online assignments, developing collaborative projects, or using digital tools to provide feedback. Seventh, teachers must teach digital literacy to students and help them understand how to use technology ethically, safely and effectively. Eighth, teachers need to evaluate the impact of technology on student learning. Ninth, teachers must understand the principles of pedagogy. Technology should be used as a tool to support learning, not as an end in itself.

### **Teacher Strategies for Carrying Out the Role as Agents of Change**

As agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, teachers have a big responsibility in shaping the future of education. Several strategies that can help teachers carry out their role as agents of change are as follows: First, teachers must have mastery of educational technology which is integrated into teaching by utilizing digital tools to improve student learning. Second, teachers must adopt a lifelong learning attitude by continuously updating knowledge, following educational developments, and participating in training and professional development. Third, teachers must collaborate with colleagues in planning teaching, share resources, and support each other in carrying out their roles as agents of change. Fourth, teachers must identify the challenges that exist in the educational unit environment and look for innovative solutions to solve problems related to the curriculum, technology or social problems. Fifth, teachers must involve students in the learning process such as providing opportunities to participate in selecting lesson materials, expressing their ideas, and taking the initiative in educational projects. Sixth, teachers must teach 21<sup>st</sup> century skills such as critical thinking, communication, and collaboration. Seventh, teachers must have the courage to try innovative teaching approaches. They can adopt project-based learning methods, flipped classrooms, or other strategies that motivate students to be active in learning. Eighth, teachers must build parental and community involvement in the educational process by holding meetings with parents, asking for their input, and establishing partnerships with the community. Ninth, teachers must understand the social and cultural challenges that may affect their students which includes an understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity and efforts to create an inclusive environment. Tenth, teachers must evaluate the impact of the changes they propose or implement which involves collecting data and measuring how the changes affect student learning. Eleventh, teachers must be an inspiration for students, provide examples of positive change, motivation to achieve success and help students develop self-confidence. Twelfth, teachers must play a role in forming a vision of education that is progressive and relevant for the future.

Teacher training and development is an important element in preparing educators to carry out their role as agents of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This involves a series of efforts to update teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can face changes in education and meet the demands of the times. The benefits of teacher training and development include updating educational technology, developing critical thinking skills, using innovative teaching methods, inclusive education, developing interpersonal skills, teaching digital literacy, evaluation and feedback, understanding global issues, sustainable learning, and developing resilience skills. and adaptation.

Effective education for teachers also requires support from schools and the government. This involves allocating resources for training and professional development, as well as creating an environment that supports teacher growth. With strong education and the right support, teachers can fulfil their role as agents of change more effectively and lead innovation in education.

Collaboration between teachers is one of the key elements in improving the quality of education and helping teachers carry out their role as agents of change. Collaboration allows teachers to share knowledge, resources, and innovative ideas to improve teaching and learning. Collaboration between teachers can be improved by holding regular meetings, forming teaching teams, sharing resources, mentoring and guidance, holding joint learning sessions, using digital platforms such as online discussion forums or social media groups, collaboration between subjects, forming research teams, exchanges experience, as well as awards and recognition from the school for teachers who collaborate well and make positive contributions to school development. Collaboration between teachers is not only beneficial for teachers but also for students, because it improves the quality of teaching and learning. By sharing knowledge and working together, teachers can be more effective in carrying out their role as agents of change in the world of education.

Good relationships between teachers, students, and parents are also key to creating a successful and positive educational environment. Several strategies that can be used to help build strong relationships with students include first. Teachers must listen and understand students' needs, interests and challenges.

Second, building open communication where teachers must create an environment so that students feel comfortable to talk and express their questions or concerns. Third, teachers must provide positive and constructive support to students. Fourth, creativity in learning by trying various teaching methods and strategies that are interesting and support student learning. Using creative elements in teaching can help maintain student interest. Fifth, encourage students' active involvement in learning by providing opportunities for students to participate in class, collaborate with friends, and take the initiative in learning projects.

The following are several strategies that teachers can use to help build strong relationships with parents. First, teachers must maintain regular communication with parents by holding regular parent-teacher meetings, sending student progress reports, and responding to questions or concerns. parents quickly. Second, teachers must also be transparent about what is learned in class, how parents can support learning at home, and student progress. Transparency helps parents feel more involved in the learning process. Third, teachers must listen to and respect parents' views and concerns. Understanding parents' perspectives can help teachers work with them to support student development. Fourth, collaboration in education means that parents can be seen as partners in student education. Teachers and parents can work together to identify student needs, evaluate progress, and design better learning strategies. Fifth, teachers can provide parents with information about resources and support available to students outside the school environment such as suggestions about reading books, additional courses, or mental health support. Sixth, teacher appreciation and recognition for parents who are active in supporting student learning. Strong relationships between teachers, students, and parents create a positive educational environment and enable students to reach their maximum potential. Good collaboration and effective communication are the keys to achieving successful educational goals.

Building a responsive learning environment is important in carrying out the teacher's role as an agent of change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This environment must support student diversity and promote inclusive learning. Strategies for building a responsive learning environment include respect for diversity, learning with disabilities, social and emotional involvement, equal opportunities, differentiation approach, use of relevant materials and literature, parent participation, conflict management, reflection on one's practice, involvement of students in planning, collaboration with fellow teachers, evaluation of the learning environment. Building a responsive learning environment is an ongoing task. This requires the teacher's commitment to creating an environment that supports the development of all students and provides opportunities for them to grow and learn optimally.

## **Teachers' Challenges in Playing the Role as Agents of Change**

### **1. Obstacles that Teachers May Face**

Advances in knowledge and innovation require teachers to better master information and be creative in delivering learning (Pratika, 2023). Only a small part of teachers have the skills to integrate technology into their classroom environment (Daud et al., 2019). As an agent of change, the teacher has a very important role in bringing about beneficial changes. However, in reality, teachers face several challenges when working as agents of change, namely: first, many teachers have not utilized the potential of lifelong learning and available technology. Some teachers face obstacles such as not understanding and not mastering technological developments. Second, lack of resources: Teachers must be given adequate training and resources to master technology and integrate it well into learning. So that they can act as agents of change, teachers must understand the characteristics of social structures, norms, and important people in a social system. Third, lack of understanding of the characteristics of social structure. To play a role as an agent of change, teachers must understand the characteristics of social structures, norms, and important people in the social system. They also need to get support from the school. However, many teachers have not fully exploited the potential of lifelong learning and available technology, which leaves them facing challenges in improving the learning culture. Attention and awareness of this problem must be increased. Teachers must continue to improve their skills and knowledge, and they must receive support from schools and the government. Fourth, lack of support from the school: Teachers must be encouraged to continue to improve their abilities to adapt to changes occurring in the



world of education. They must also understand technology and master the necessary skills. However, many teachers have not fully exploited the potential of lifelong learning and available technology, which leaves them facing challenges in improving the learning culture. To overcome these challenges, teachers need to expand their knowledge and skills, getting support from governments and schools. They also need to understand social structures and utilize technology.

According to Sedana (2019), teachers need to improve their ability to carry out their professional duties actively, not passively. They should not wait for opportunities to come, but should actively seek opportunities for their professional development. According to Damayanti et al. (2022), every teacher is advised to carry out self-reflection to evaluate the extent to which they apply their competencies during the teaching process. According to Andrian (2018), as agents of change, teachers are professional individuals who play a role in influencing students' innovative decisions to improve the quality of their competencies through Citizenship Education, which includes aspects of citizenship knowledge, citizenship skills and citizenship attitudes.

## **2. Required Support in the Education System**

For teachers to play their role as agents of change in the education system, the system needs to provide the following support: (1) Training and professional development: Teachers need to be provided with adequate training and professional development so that they can master technology and integrate it well in learning. Apart from that, teachers also need to be trained in leadership and classroom management so that they can play their role as agents of change in the education system; (2) Availability of resources: Teachers must be provided with sufficient resources, such as reference books and technology so that they can improve their skills and knowledge to face the changes occurring in the world of education; (3) Support from schools: Schools need to support teachers in their role as agents of change, by giving them the freedom to design the curriculum and use innovative learning methods. Apart from that, schools need to provide rewards and incentives to teachers who succeed in making positive changes in learning. The government needs to establish education policies that support the role of teachers as agents of change.

Talking about the education system, Finland is the country with the best education system. According to Reinius et al. (2022), teachers in Helsinki have a role and experience that is similar to the instructional role of a coach or teacher leader. The Finnish education system is based on trust in the skills of teachers, who are required to have a master's degree. In addition to having independence, teachers in Finland are actively involved in the process of local curriculum design and implementation as well as in assessing student progress. The condition of the education system in Finland can be used as a reference for related institutions and educational units so that education in Indonesia becomes better and can produce a generation of people who have 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

As agents of change, teachers must approach 21st century change with an open attitude, mastery of educational technology, development of critical thinking skills, increased social and cultural involvement, a differentiation approach, lifelong learning, a role as a model, and the ability to create a responsive learning environment. However, in reality, teachers face several challenges when working as agents of change, such as not yet mastering technology, not understanding changes in social structures and a lack of support from the school. To play their role as agents of change, teachers must be given adequate training so they can master technology and integrate it well into learning. Teachers must also be provided with sufficient resources so they can improve their skills and knowledge to face the changes occurring in the world of education. Schools need to support teachers in their role as agents of change, by giving them the freedom to design the curriculum and use innovative learning methods.

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