

Beyond the Blackboard: A Theoretical Outline of Elementary School Teachers' Diverse Responsibilities

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ABSTRACT: *Elementary education is the first stage of schooling, in which children learn the fundamentals of reading, writing, arithmetic, and other basic life skills. Students at this stage are highly dependent on teachers, as they have begun developing their basic learning skills. Here, teachers help students in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values and modify their behaviour. Effective teaching-learning is only possible when teachers spend enough time and attention on their pupils and engage completely in teaching responsibilities. Early on, the teachers' role was to educate students and assist them in their holistic development. But over time, the governments' new policies, integration of technology, reforms within the curriculum, inclusive teaching practices, and numerous non-academic activities have made teachers' jobs even more complex and diversified. In this context, the present study seeks to review the increasing roles and responsibilities of elementary school teachers and to analyse the possible opportunities and challenges related to these evolving duties. This study is based on secondary data gathered from books, existing literature, research publications, government reports, and documents. The present study highlights how recent governmental policies, integration of technology, reforms of curriculum, and administrative duties have changed the roles of teachers and increased their burden. By reviewing both the opportunities and challenges related to these expanding duties, the study provides a balanced overview of teachers' teaching experiences at present. This study can provide valuable insights to policymakers, educators, researchers, and educational administrators aiming to improve the teaching-learning process in India.*

Keywords: *Elementary School Teachers, Evolving Teachers' Roles, Opportunities, and Challenges*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Education is a lifelong process of acquiring knowledge, values, skills, behaviors and attitudes. It promotes holistic development and prepares individuals to cope with a variety of settings. Education allows a person to constructively contribute to society while living a meaningful life. In the educational process, teachers, students and the learning environment are the three most important components. The teaching-learning process becomes effective when these three components work together in harmony. So, one of the most important components of the educational process is the teacher. A teacher is a qualified professional who assists pupils in learning new information and skills, changing their behavior, and adjusting to their surroundings. Teachers have a primary role, especially at the elementary level, when children are completely dependent on them. With teachers' help, children understand fundamental concepts and try to modify their behavior.

Education has changed drastically in recent years because of technological integration, curriculum reforms, and the implementation of new policies and programs. This change is primarily intended to enhance the quality of education. This major shift in education also influences the roles and responsibilities of teachers. When teachers' roles and responsibilities expand, they are required to execute multiple roles simultaneously. Managing multiple tasks simultaneously may create problems by increasing teachers' workload. Teachers' involvement in various roles can also have an impact on students' learning.

Teachers at the elementary level are expected to give the maximum time to their students, as this is the beginning of formal education, and children rely on them. Effective teaching-learning is only possible when teachers can spend time solely on academic activities with no other work interference. However, we can lately witness elementary teachers handling a variety of other roles along with teaching. Therefore, the theoretical analysis of teachers' duties and responsibilities in the current context is the main emphasis of this work. It also analyses the opportunities and challenges that are related to their evolving roles.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Teachers are one of the most essential components of the education system. They play a crucial role in the overall development of students. Teachers help pupils with their physical, mental, social, and emotional

development, in addition to their academic success. If we compare the duties that teachers performed in the past and today, we can observe a huge difference. Traditionally, teachers' roles were limited to giving students instructions and evaluating their performance. But now, alongside teaching, teachers also need to perform a variety of other tasks. Teachers who perform too many tasks may experience stress and burnout, which eventually affects the teaching-learning process. The present study will help in understanding the diverse roles and responsibilities of teachers from different countries by identifying the common patterns and shared challenges. It will provide insights to policymakers and educational administrators regarding teachers' duties and challenges, which will help them in formulating new supportive policies for teachers. Overall, through this study, the researcher tried to provide a comprehensive understanding of teachers' roles, changing demands, and their consequences on the educational process.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To review the evolving roles and responsibilities of elementary school teachers in the present context.
2. To analyze the opportunities and challenges teachers face as a result of their evolving roles and responsibilities.

IV. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Valli & Buese (2007) explored a study on primary teachers' expanding roles, especially in an age of high-stakes accountability policies. The researchers analyze changes in teacher responsibilities in a mid-Atlantic school district from 2001 to 2005. The study identified three major changes in teachers' roles over time: greater workload, extended duties, and increased work pressure. The researchers stated that instant policy changes have a negative influence on instruction quality, teacher-student interactions, and increase teacher stress levels, especially in high-poverty schools. Ultimately, it creates obstacles in the students' learning process.

Hepsiba et al. (2018) systematically reviewed the changing roles of teachers in today's society, influenced by rapid social, technological, and educational developments. The study found that teachers' roles evolved from knowledge transmitters and controllers of learning to facilitators, collaborators, and co-learners. The study further highlighted that education is now regarded as a tool for social change, with teachers holding an important role as agents of change. Teachers can assist students in developing attitudes such as equality, modernism, and social mobility.

Nasreen & Naz (2019) investigated the effect of non-teaching duties on the teaching practices of primary school teachers in Pakistan. The study was descriptive in nature. The researchers revealed that teachers were extensively involved in non-teaching duties, such as election duties, census work, administrative tasks, dengue campaign, and exam supervision. All these non-teaching duties negatively affect the classroom teaching-learning process. The study also claimed that non-teaching duties increase teachers' stress and workload.

Chakravorty & Singh (2021) assessed the correlation between burnout, work-family conflict, and job demands of primary school teachers in Chhattisgarh, India. The study was quantitative in nature. The researchers found that teachers' burnout is caused by rising demands of their jobs, which includes administrative duties, non-teaching tasks, policy pressures, concerns related to students, and other professional tasks. The study also revealed that job demands fueled work-family conflicts, which further increased the risk of teacher burnout. Teachers' increasing work demands negatively influence their psychological well-being and teaching effectiveness.

Jedoroh & Thitavaddhano (2022) examined the teachers' roles and responsibilities in the 21st century. The study was based on secondary data. The researchers claimed that teaching has become a diverse profession with responsibilities beyond just instruction. Moral guidance, cultural transmission, human relations, research, evaluation, and social service are now part of the teaching process. Furthermore, the authors stated that teachers must now operate as facilitators, coaches, and co-learners, enabling students to develop critical thinking skills, creativity, and collaborative abilities.

Dorji & Wangchuk (2022) researched the workload of primary school teachers and its influence on classroom teaching in Punakha Dzongkhag, Bhutan. The researchers used a mixed-method design to conduct the study. The result revealed that, at present, primary school teachers have to handle administrative and co-curricular duties alongside teaching. It increases teachers' workload. The study further stated that teachers' excessive workload negatively affects their teaching and learning processes, as they have limited time for lesson preparation and task evaluation.

Stacey et al. (2022) performed a study on school teachers' workloads, focusing on the nature of the workload, how it evolves, and how teachers manage the growing demands of work. The researchers collected data from 31 teachers at various schools in New South Wales (NSW), Australia. The study revealed that teachers' workloads have increased over time, including administrative duties, data gathering, meetings, and extracurricular activities. Teachers' extended tasks limit the time available for core teaching, negatively affecting teaching quality and teachers' well-being. Researchers also highlighted the role conflicts and work stress that teachers face as a result of their multiple workloads.

Sheokand (2023) analyzed the provisions of the Right to Education (RTE) Act in India, specifically focusing on pupil-teacher ratios, corporal punishment, and workload criteria. The researcher gathered data from 600 primary school teachers in both the public and private sectors. The result revealed that the public-school teachers are overburdened with non-academic duties such as monitoring mid-day meal, population census work, election duties, keeping records and report writing. The study further stated that private school teachers experience over workload due to paperwork, frequent meetings, and extra-curricular activities. Overall, the study concluded that expanding workload negatively influences primary teachers' job satisfaction and well-being.

Jumatullailah et al. (2024) conducted a study on the increasing duties of primary teachers that go beyond academic teaching. The study's primary goal was to examine how teachers serve as role models in shaping children's character. The researcher highlighted several roles of teachers that influence learners' character building. Teachers perform a variety of roles in a school, such as instructors, facilitators, guides, evaluators, researchers, and role models. These duties help learners' overall development. Overall, the research noted the primary role of teachers in nurturing positive character traits in students.

Hulme et al. (2025) investigated a study on how increased workload impacts the well-being of primary school teachers in Scotland. The researchers adopted a mixed-methods design and gathered data from 971 school teachers. The study found that primary teachers' responsibilities had increased drastically in recent times. Teachers are now ordered to handle administrative tasks, data management, behavior control, and parent interaction in addition to teaching. Teachers' multiple workloads cause mental stress, emotional tiredness, and burnout. It ultimately affects teachers' overall well-being. Moreover, researchers stated that a high percentage of teachers thought about quitting the profession due to rising job expectations.

Aliyyah & Amalia (2025) examined a study on primary school teachers' perspectives on the integration of AI into curriculum management. The researchers performed the study in Indonesia with 55 primary school teachers. The findings showed that teachers' tasks extend beyond merely teaching to include managing technology-integrated curriculum practices, giving personalized learning support, observing students' progress through digital tools, and adapting to novel educational changes. Teachers use AI to determine students' learning needs, design innovative learning activities and filter the learning content. Furthermore, the study claimed that teachers' administrative duties, limited AI literacy, poor infrastructure, and limitations of time create hurdles in AI integration.

Nguyen and Oblina (2025) examined how AI influences teachers' roles in Vietnamese classrooms. It analyses teachers' roles in the age of AI. As indicated by the study, AI significantly supports teachers and students in their teaching and learning processes. It improves teachers' instructional design and enhances personalized learning. AI shifts teachers' role from knowledge transmitter to facilitator, digital content designer, mentor, counsellor, ethical guide and emotional support provider. It enables teachers to be more creative, flexible, and innovative in their field, which helps improve teaching effectiveness and contributes to the holistic development of students.

V. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

5.1. RESEARCH DESIGN

The present study employs a systematic literature review approach to conducting the research. A systematic literature review is a research method used to gather, identify, and critically examine available research works (e.g., articles, conference proceedings, books, dissertations) in a systematic manner (Carrera-Rivera et al., 2022). This approach is aligned with the study objectives that mainly focused on teachers' roles and responsibilities, which have changed over time, and the consequences that teachers face.

5.2. DATA COLLECTION METHODS

a) LITERATURE SEARCH

The investigator searched for relevant literature related to the study utilizing certain database search engines, including Google Scholar, Science Direct, Research Gate, Connected Papers, Consensus, Research Rabbit, and other relevant scholarly publications.

b) SELECTION CRITERIA

Criteria	Inclusion	Exclusion
Scope of the study	Changes of teachers' roles and responsibilities, opportunities and challenges as a result of teachers' evolving duties.	Studies that are not directly related to teachers' duties and the problems they face in the working environment.
Time periods covered	2007	2025
Geographic scope	Within the country and outside the country	Inapplicable
Type of sources	Research papers, reviews, and empirical studies published in peer-reviewed journals that are fully accessible	Seminar papers, conference papers, proceedings which are not peer-reviewed

Language	English	Languages other than English
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5.3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The present study was performed in accordance with ethical research norms. The study ensures proper acknowledgement of all sources observed by the researcher to avoid plagiarism. Every piece of literature analyzed came from reliable, openly accessible, peer-reviewed sources.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

6.1. EVOLVING ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

The present study reveals that the role of elementary school teachers goes beyond traditional instruction. Changes in students' demands, technological improvements, changes in educational policies and programs, and curriculum updates all contributed to the transition of teachers' roles. Teachers' duties have shifted from knowledge transmitter to facilitator, guide, coordinator, mentor, technology connector and lifelong learner.

Elementary school teachers are now responsible for more than simply teaching; they are also collaborators, co-learners, guides, agents of social change, evaluators, researchers, and role models (Hepsiba et al., 2018; Jumatullailah et al., 2024). Similarly researchers (Jedoroh & Thitavaddhano, 2022) stated that elementary school teachers' roles extended to guide, researcher, cultural transmitter, and agent of social change. They also argued that teachers must act as facilitators, coaches, and co-learners.

Furthermore, elementary school teachers' multiple administrative duties and non-teaching tasks have significantly increased their responsibilities. (Chakravorty & Singh, 2021; Dorji & Wangchuk, 2022; Hulme et al., 2025; Nasreen & Naz, 2019; Stacey et al., 2022) found that now the primary teachers have to perform a variety of extra duties in addition to teaching. It includes non-teaching duties such as election duties, census work, administrative tasks, exam supervision, co-curricular duties, data gathering, data management, and interaction with parents. A similar finding was observed by (Sheokand, 2023) Regarding teachers' increasingly diverse duties. He stated that the primary teachers now have to perform a range of non-teaching duties, including population census, mid-day meal supervision, election duties, co-curricular duties, record-keeping, and report writing.

Additionally, in this era of Artificial Intelligence, teachers' roles are again expanding into a wider range of perspectives. Now, teachers play the role of technology integrators in curriculum practices, giving personalized learning support to students, monitoring students' progress through digital tools, designing digital content, mentoring students while using AI, and serving as ethical guides (Aliyyah & Amalia, 2025; Nguyen & Oblina, 2025).

6.2. OPPORTUNITIES ARISING FROM EVOLVING RESPONSIBILITIES

The evolving responsibilities of primary teachers in the 21st century provided teachers with many opportunities for professional development while also contributing to the teaching-learning process. As stated by (Jumatullailah et al., 2024) Primary teachers operate as role models in the character nurturing of their students. Teachers' many roles as facilitators, monitors, and role models contribute to students' holistic growth. It ultimately helped to modify students' behavior, which is a key goal of teaching.

Moreover, the evolving educational context enhanced primary teachers' roles as mentors or counsellors. (Jedoroh & Thitavaddhano, 2022; Nguyen et al., 2025) highlights that teachers' roles have extended to moral guidance, maintaining human relations, and interaction with parents. In addition (Nguyen & Oblina, 2025) stated that now teachers play the role of emotional supporters, counsellors, and ethical guides of students. By giving emotional, moral, or academic support and guidance, teachers can improve their relationship with students.

In today's technological age, education is evolving into a personalized learning system. It assists students in individualized learning by employing AI. Furthermore, AI transforms teachers' roles from knowledge transmitters to facilitators of learning. It also helps teachers in designing teaching content, providing personalized learning support to students, and monitoring and assessing students' performance through digital tools (Aliyyah & Amalia, 2025).

6.3. CHALLENGES EMERGING FROM DIVERSE RESPONSIBILITIES

Despite the advantages that come with teachers' evolving duties, they also face numerous difficulties while managing multiple duties in addition to teaching. Extended non-teaching activities or other administrative duties lead to work overload and work pressure among elementary teachers. Managing diverse responsibilities at the same time raises teachers' stress levels (Dorji & Wangchuk, 2022; Nasreen & Naz, 2019; Sheokand, 2023; Valli & Buese, 2007).

Teachers' transforming roles, which are not directly related to teaching, create major problems in their personal and professional lives. (Chakravorty & Singh, 2021; Hulme et al., 2025) argued that teachers' additional

duties increase the risks of burnout and work-conflict among them. It leads to mental stress and emotional tiredness, which affects the overall well-being of teachers.

Moreover, sometimes teachers face challenges in the equal distribution of time among all duties. Involvement in multiple duties negatively affects teachers' teaching performance, which ultimately creates obstacles in the students' learning process (Dorji & Wangchuk, 2022; Stacey et al., 2022; Valli & Buese, 2007).

Additionally, in this technological era, digital tools or AI are becoming an important component of the education system. AI may reduce teachers' administrative workload to an extent. However, due to digital illiteracy, poor infrastructure, and limited resources, teachers struggle to integrate AI effectively (Aliyyah & Amalia, 2025).

VII. CONCLUSION

The present study reviewed the diverse roles of elementary school teachers in the current educational system. It also examined the opportunities and challenges related to teachers' several roles. The findings showed that, due to changes in time, technological advancements, changes in educational policies, and reforms in the educational context, teachers' roles also undergo drastic changes. Now, teachers play the role of facilitators, mentors, counsellors, agents of society's change, ethical guides, and emotional supporters for students. Elementary teachers are also involved in administrative duties, non-teaching duties, including mid-day meal supervision, population census, election duties, polio vaccination, and parental meetings. Moreover, the integration of AI in the education system also contributed to the change of teachers' roles.

These transforming roles of teachers help in their professional growth, as well as the innovation of effective teaching methods, content design using AI technologies, improving teacher-student interaction, and providing students with individualized learning support. It extended the scope of the future teaching-learning process. However, these diverse responsibilities also create several obstacles in teachers' personal and professional lives. Sometimes, diverse duties lead to work overload, stress, burnout, emotional tiredness, work-family conflicts, and job dissatisfaction among teachers. These challenges negatively influence the whole teaching-learning process.

In conclusion, the present research indicates that, in today's modern education era, the transformation of teachers' roles is necessary to meet the current needs of the students and the education system. Meanwhile, supportive educational policies, adequate training, proper institutional support, collaboration among teachers, and adequate resources are also necessary to help teachers successfully adapt to the current, changing educational environment. Balancing teachers' teaching and non-teaching duties and providing sufficient support to teachers can make a substantial contribution to enhancing educational quality.

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