

Letter to the Editor

Teacher as a hacker: A dramatic change in the education process

Mahla Salajegheh ¹, Azadeh Rooholamini ^{*1}

¹ Department of Medical Education, Medical Education Development Center, Kerman University of Medical Sciences, Kerman, Iran.

Article Info



Article history:

Received 8 Aug. 2023

Accepted 21 Aug. 2023

Published 16 Mar. 2024

*Corresponding author:

Azadeh Rooholamini, Department of Medical Education,
Medical Education Development Center, Kerman
University of Medical Sciences, Kerman, Iran.

Email: a.rooholamini@gmail.com

How to Cite This Article:

Salajegheh M, Rooholamini A.
Teacher as a Hacker: A Dramatic
Change in the Education Process. J
Med Educ Dev. 2024; 16(52): 82-83.

Nowadays, modern technologies and advancements in the digital world are making dramatic changes in various processes of human life faster than ever before. Amid this, education also strives to keep up with the technological world in response to the needs of the new generation of students (1). In the past few years, with the increasing expansion of educational technologies, the new concept of "teacher as a hacker" has emerged as a metaphor to demonstrate a new model of teaching and learning reforms in education. At first glance, the meaning that this concept brings to mind appears to be negative and associated with the world of computers. Nonetheless, in recent years, hacking has also become a part of educational terminology. This essay aims to explore the hidden aspects of the concept of "teacher as a hacker" to provide a new lens for empowering university professors and improving educational processes.

The word "hacker" traditionally refers to an individual who seeks vulnerabilities in a computer system or network and intends to exploit them. In past decades, this term has had both negative connotations, referring to criminal activities, and positive connotations, involving the use of creativity to achieve a goal. Hackers are expected to identify vulnerabilities, create innovative solutions, and collaborate with others. Hackers are described as passionate professionals who enjoy their work. Nevertheless, 21st-century university professors should act in exactly the same way (2).

The concept of teachers as hackers in education started from the use of several terms, such as "leaders" or "change agents," to describe teachers who take the initiative and change their teaching methods in their instructional practices. When the concept of leadership is used, it mostly refers to teachers who accept formal roles related to educational management and leadership in educational contexts. In addition, the term "change agents" is often used to describe individuals who have influence over others in organizations. However, considering that many teachers in universities have innovative instructional practices and influence others without having formal leadership roles or being "change agents," the term "hacking" is used to describe the behavior of teachers who act innovatively in the 21st-century educational system. In other words, the innovative behavior of teachers who have the power to improve education is actually hacking the educational system (3).

Hacking is used to describe the actions of professors who change their teaching methods and teach using new methods while acting as entrepreneurs. The personality traits of professors who act as "hackers" include having a strong passion and enthusiasm for teaching, being flexible in teaching processes, and being ready to work in uncertain situations, signifying that they have high resilience in teaching-learning processes. They are risk-takers and have a strong motivation to use technology to achieve



educational goals. Their behavioral characteristics include constantly reflecting on their teaching performance, having critical thinking skills, and being lifelong learners. They also have a tendency to use innovative teaching methods and new teaching resources (4).

It is important to note that the term "hacking" in education refers to a mindset or approach to finding creative and innovative solutions to improve educational practices, systems, and outcomes. It involves identifying and utilizing unconventional approaches, tools, or strategies to enhance teaching, learning, and administrative processes within the educational domain. This could include leveraging technology, redesigning curriculum or assessments, implementing new instructional methods, fostering collaboration and critical thinking, or addressing systemic issues. Teachers' understanding of hackers can help all stakeholders of the educational system to change their perspectives and actions. This can be performed by encouraging teachers to explore and utilize innovative teaching methods or empowering them in this area.

In conclusion, the concept of "Teacher as a Hacker" offers a golden opportunity for transforming the

education process. This approach empowers teachers to break free from traditional constraints, personalize instruction, and foster a culture of innovation. By embracing hacking techniques, we can create a more engaging, inclusive, and effective educational experience for students.

References

1. Kim HJ, Jang HY. Sustainable technology integration in underserved area schools: The impact of perceived student change on teacher continuance intention. *Sustainability*. 2020; 12(12): 4802. [Doi.org/10.3390/su12124802]
2. Wize M. Oops! The critical role of risk-taking and failure in educational change and teacher education. *Education and New Developments* 2019: 79-83. [Doi: 10.36315/2019v1end017]
3. Wize M. Preparing educational hackers. In: Weinberger Y, Libman Z, editors. *Contemporary pedagogies in teacher education and development*. United Kingdom: IntechOpen; 2018: 101-118.
4. Wize M. Teachers as hackers: Implications for 21st Century Teacher Education [Doctoral dissertation]. London: Lesley University; 2019.