

Change Management and Its Importance in The Changing Working Environment of Teachers : A Post Covid Study

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ABSTRACT

The process of preparing, assisting, and guiding people to embrace new procedures, technologies, and systems is known as change management. The COVID-19 epidemic has had a huge influence on the educational field and has compelled educators to implement new teaching strategies and technological advancements. Change management has become more crucial for instructors in the post-COVID era as they adapt to the shifting workplace. This paper explores the importance of change management in the context of teachers' changing working environment. This study also tries to understand the awareness of current change among teachers and also their ability to withstand change. Specifically, the study was aimed at determining the effects on educators of the change from offline to online education. This study also understands the theories and concepts related to the change and its management. The purpose of this study was to investigate the concerns and viewpoints of educators on the management of the abrupt change during the pandemic and also determine the level of knowledge and skills provided to teachers to adapt to the changes in their teaching environment. The research focused on educators in selected universities in Kerala. The data for the research was collected through an online questionnaire for teachers of district in Kerala Palakkad. The findings indicate that the variables had an important impact on change.

Keywords : Change management, Teachers, Awareness, Desire, Pandemic, Knowledge

I. INTRODUCTION

Change management refers to the process of managing and implementing changes in an organization or system. It involves a structured

approach to transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state, while minimizing disruptions and resistance to change. The COVID-19 pandemic has created significant changes in the working environment of

teachers. With the shift to remote learning and the need to adapt to new technologies and teaching methods, teachers have had to adjust their teaching styles and strategies to meet the needs of their students. This has required a significant amount of change management to be implemented in order to ensure that teachers are able to effectively navigate these changes. The importance of change management in the changing working environment of teachers during COVID-19 cannot be overstated. Teachers have had to adapt to new technologies and teaching methods, which can be challenging and overwhelming. Effective change management can help to minimize resistance to these changes, provide support and guidance to teachers, and ensure that they are able to successfully navigate the transition. Effective change management also helps to minimize disruptions to the learning process. This is particularly important during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, when continuity of education is critical. This study aims (1) To assess the level of awareness among teachers, (2) To study, the desire to support and participate the change, (3) To check the ability to implement required skills, (4) To study the reinforcement to sustain the change, (5) To study the reinforcement to sustain the change. As e-learning combines both instructional and visual design for the course materials to be effective, formal training in producing and presenting materials may be required for educators. This study significantly addresses in examining educators' awareness, knowledge, adaptability, and desire as well as their capacity to deal with the changes in the educational environment that have happened over the past years (i.e., during the pandemic). The purpose of this study is to comprehend the changes that occurred in our educational system throughout the pandemic time as well as the changes in the instructional strategies that teachers employed to deal with the changes.

This study tries to understand the change that happened in our educational sector during the

pandemic period i.e., the sudden change from traditional learning to digital learning. Educators must modify instruction right now in light of the rapid Covid-19 outbreak. Change management is more crucial than ever in the COVID-19 pandemic setting because instructors all over the world have to adjust to a fast-changing working environment. The way they organise, deliver, and assess learning has had to shift significantly as a result. Teachers may go through this process with the aid of change management if they are given a clear framework for doing so. Change management involves a number of key steps, including identifying the need for change, planning the change, communicating the change, implementing the change, and evaluating the change. By following these steps, teachers can ensure that they are able to adapt to the new working environment effectively and efficiently. ADKAR's Change management model is used in this study.

Literature Review

The pandemic has forced educators to adopt new technologies and teaching practices at an unprecedented rate. The authors note that change management is critical in helping educators to navigate these changes and ensure that they are able to provide high-quality education to their students Byrne and Smyth (2020) Similarly change management can help teachers to overcome resistance to change and ensure that they are able to adapt to new working environments Brydges and Butler (2020). The importance of effective change management in the context of COVID-19 McKinsey & Company (2020). The study notes that effective change management can help to ensure that teachers are able to adapt to new teaching methods and technologies, maintain student engagement, and support student well-being. The authors also note that change management can help to ensure that teachers have the resources and support they need to make the transition successfully. Several studies have highlighted the importance of communication in

change management. For example, in a study by the authors argue that effective communication is essential in helping teachers to navigate the challenges of the pandemic. The authors note that communication can help to build trust, provide clarity, and create a shared understanding of the changes that are taking place Liu and Cavanaugh (2021). change management is crucial in helping teachers cope with the challenges of the pandemic. The authors note that change management can help teachers to identify the need for change, plan and implement changes effectively, and evaluate their impact. The authors also highlight the importance of providing training and support to teachers to ensure that they are able to adapt to new teaching methods and technologies Alqurashi and Almohanna (2021). The change from offline to online teaching though not preconceived, had to be effectively managed. This qualitative study sought to explore educators' concerns and perspectives related to how the rapid unplanned transition from in-person teaching to online teaching was managed. It focused on educators in urban areas of Ghana. Results indicated that educators made use of institutionally supported as well as open-access technologies to engage students despite the fact that prior to the pandemic; most educators were reluctant to use such technologies for teaching. Challenges such as expensive cost of data, unstable internet connectivity and limited interaction between students and educators were proven not to be just perceived challenges but real and can be addressed through strategic partnerships between educational institutions and telecommunication companies as well as intensive training for both educators and students Bans-Akutey, Anita. (2020). The experiences of private TVET college instructors with virtual learning during the Covid-19 school lockout were investigated in this study. This study's theoretical framework is the Kanter theory of change. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews and participant observation were used to obtain the data. Content analysis was used to examine the collected data. The results show that while most

participants did not receive adequate training on how to use technology to support virtual teaching, they did have a positive opinion toward the process of change necessary in moving from a traditional environment to one that is virtual. strategies for managing change that are emphasized and intended to get teachers ready for the inevitable changes in technology in the classroom Adebunmi Yetunde Aina & Ayodele Ogegbo (2021)

Research Problem

Change management has become crucial for teachers to cope with the challenges of the new normal in education. Therefore, the research problem is to explore the importance of change management in the changing working environment of teachers post-COVID. The ADKAR's model of Change management raises questions in the study are shown below.

1. What is the level of awareness of current change among the teachers?
2. What is the level of desire among teachers to support and participate in the current change?
3. What is the level of knowledge among teachers about the current change?
4. To what extent are teachers able to implement the required skills?
5. What is the level of reinforcement among teachers to sustain the change?

Objectives of the study

- To study the awareness of the current change
- To study, the desire to support and participate the change
- To study the knowledge about the change process
- To check the ability to implement required skills
- To study the reinforcement to sustain the change

Research Methodology

The questionnaire was developed from ADAKAR's change management model. The sample consist of teachers of Kerala. The combination of judgemental sampling, convenient sampling and simple random sampling are used as sampling techniques. Judgmental

sampling is used to select teachers as they have dealt with most of the challenges during the pandemic according to Anita-Bans-Akutey's paper "Change Management Amid Pandemic-A Case of Educators ". The district of Palakkad is chosen using the convenience sampling method. The samples are chosen randomly from teachers in Palakkad. The sample was sent to 80 teachers in Palakkad district but only 67 responded. A 5-point Likert scale was used to show the agreement/disagreement on each question. To determine how closely related variables are to change, the correlation analysis was carried out.

Results

The changing working environment of teachers post-COVID-19 requires effective change management to ensure a smooth transition and successful adaptation to the new reality. The ADKAR change management model provides a useful framework for managing change in the post-COVID-19 working environment of teachers. The model focuses on the key elements of Awareness, Desire, Knowledge, Ability, and Reinforcement.

Table:1 showing the Correlations between Awareness and Desire of teachers

		Awareness	Desire of teachers
Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1	.617**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	67	67
Desire of teachers	Pearson Correlation	.617**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	67	67

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation Table :1 shows that the variables have a positive correlation of .617 between awareness level and desire of teachers (i.e., as awareness level goes up the desire of teachers also goes up) and this relationship was statistically significant at the .001

Table : 2 showing the Correlation of Ability to change and Reinforcement

		Ability to change	Reinforcement
Ability to change	Pearson Correlation	1	.491**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	67	67
Reinforcement	Pearson Correlation	.491**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	67	67

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation Table :2 shows that the variables have a positive correlation of .491 between ability to change and reinforcement level of teachers (i.e., as ability to change goes up the reinforcement level of teachers also goes up) and this relationship was statistically significant at the .001.

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