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Change Management Practices and Academic Staff Readiness for Organizational Change in Pakistani Secondary Schools

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between change management practices and academic staff readiness for organizational change in public secondary schools in Lahore, Pakistan. The study used a quantitative cross -sectional design. Data were collected from 500 secondary school teachers using a researcher-developed, 25-item questionnaire with a five-point Likert response scale. The instrument was reviewed by five experts and piloted with 15 teachers; the thesis reports a Cronbach's alpha of .903. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were used alongside group-comparison analyses. Teachers generally reported positive perceptions of change management practices and high readiness for change. The principal relationship of interest was positive and statistically significant, with a moderate correlation between change management practices and staff readiness ($N = 500$, $r = .512$, $p < .001$). Change management practices were also positively associated with perceived organizational change ($r = .617$, $p < .001$), while perceived organizational change was positively associated with staff readiness ($r = .567$, $p < .001$). The results suggest that clear communication, professional development, structured planning, stakeholder participation and ongoing support are relevant features of school change. Because the sample was drawn from public secondary schools in Lahore and the design was cross-sectional and self-reported, findings should not be interpreted as proof of causation or generalized automatically to all Pakistani schools. The study discusses practical implications for school leadership.

Introduction

Schools are expected to respond to curriculum revisions, changing assessment requirements, digital technologies and evolving expectations of teaching and learning. These reforms do not become effective simply because a policy has been announced. Their implementation depends in part on how the change is planned, explained, resourced and experienced by the people expected to carry it out. Teachers occupy a central position in this process because they translate school-level decisions into classroom practice.

Change management refers to the organized actions through which an institution prepares for, implements, and sustains a transition. In schools, these actions can include communicating a clear purpose, involving staff in planning, providing relevant professional development, assigning responsibilities, and responding to feedback. Staff readiness for change refers to teachers'

willingness and perceived ability to support and implement a proposed change. Readiness can be influenced by whether teachers understand why change is needed, believe that the proposed approach is appropriate, feel capable of implementing it, and trust the leadership responsible for it (Armenakis et al., 1993; Weiner, 2009).

When change is introduced without adequate explanation or support, teachers may experience uncertainty, additional workload, or limited ownership. By contrast, communication, opportunities to develop skills, and meaningful participation may help staff understand the purpose of reform and see how they can contribute. Change frameworks such as Lewin's staged approach and Kotter's change model similarly emphasize preparing people for change, creating direction, enabling action and reinforcing new practices (Kotter, 1996; Lewin, 1947). Such frameworks provide useful concepts, but their application needs to account for the resources, leadership structures and everyday realities of schools.

In Pakistan, secondary schools operate within a changing policy and administrative environment, while often facing practical constraints related to resources, professional learning and staff participation. Evidence focused specifically on secondary-school teachers can help school leaders understand how teachers perceive change management and how these perceptions relate to readiness. The present article draws on a quantitative study of public secondary-school teachers in Lahore to examine these relationships.

Purpose and research questions

The study aimed to examine change management practices and academic staff readiness for organizational change in Pakistani secondary schools, with data collected in Lahore. It addressed the following questions:

1. What organizational change and change management practices do teachers report in their schools?
2. How ready do secondary-school teachers report themselves to be for organizational change?
3. What is the relationship between change management practices and staff readiness?
4. How are change management practices and perceived organizational change related to one another?

Conceptual framing

The research treats change management practices as a set of connected school-level actions rather than as a single intervention. The questionnaire covered change-related management, professional development, planning, and stakeholder involvement in decision-making and academic staff readiness. These dimensions reflect the practical idea that readiness requires both willingness and enabling conditions. Communication can help teachers understand the rationale and direction of change; professional development can strengthen the knowledge and skills needed to act; planning can clarify roles and timelines; and stakeholder involvement can increase staff voice and feedback.

This framing is consistent with organizational readiness perspectives that emphasize shared commitment and confidence in a group's capacity to implement change (Weiner, 2009). It also aligns with (Armenakis et al.'s (1993) argument that readiness is influenced by beliefs about the need for change, the suitability of the proposed change, the ability to implement it, leadership support, and the value of the change to those affected. These concepts guide interpretation of the survey results; the study did not experimentally test any one theoretical model.

Methodology

Research design and participants

A quantitative descriptive survey design was used. The study reports a sample of 500 teachers from 23 public secondary schools in Lahore, comprising 256 men (51.2%) and 244 women (48.8%). The sampling description refers to a multistage approach involving district, tehsil, and teacher selection, with Model Town and Cantt identified in the study as the selected tehsils.

Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire. It included demographic questions and five-point Likert-type items covering change management practices, professional development, planning, stakeholder involvement in decision-making, and academic staff readiness. Responses ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The study states that five experts

reviewed the instrument and that 15 secondary-school teachers participated in the pilot study. It reports Cronbach's alpha = .903 for the 25-item questionnaire.

Data collection and analysis

Questionnaires were distributed and collected in person after approval from the relevant authorities. The study states that participants were informed that the data were collected for research purposes. Data were analysed in SPSS. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, were used to summarize responses. Pearson correlation was used to examine associations among change management practices, organizational change, and staff readiness. Independent-samples t-tests and one-way ANOVA were also reported for comparisons across demographic groups.

Because this was a cross-sectional self-report survey, the results show associations between teachers' reported perceptions at one point in time. They cannot establish that change management practices caused readiness to increase.

Results

Sample profile

The sample comprised 500 teachers. The study reports that 200 teachers (40.0%) held a BA/BSc qualification, 233 (46.6%) held an MA/MSc, 39 (7.8%) held an MPhil, and 28 (5.6%) held a PhD. In terms of experience, 179 teachers (35.8%) had fewer than five years of experience, 149 (29.8%) had 6–10 years, 105 (21.0%) had 11–15 years, and 67 (13.4%) had more than 15 years. The reported age distribution was concentrated in the 25–30-year group (45.6%).

Teachers' perceptions of change management practices

Item-level means in the study indicate generally positive teacher perceptions of school change management. The highest reported mean among the listed change-management items concerned communication of the vision for organizational change (M = 4.53, SD = 0.511). Teachers also reported that management support was available when challenges arose (M = 4.46, SD = 0.499), that teacher feedback was considered during planning (M = 4.47, SD = 0.500), and that information about upcoming changes was shared in a timely manner (M = 4.39, SD = 0.487).

Professional development was also viewed positively. Teachers agreed that professional development courses were necessary (M = 4.19, SD = 0.813), that management provided relevant resources for professional-development workshops (M = 4.11, SD = 0.752), and that professional-development activities offered opportunities to collaborate with other participants (M = 4.04, SD = 0.788). For planning, teacher involvement in school-improvement activities received a mean of 4.13 (SD = 0.699), while the structure of the planning process received a comparatively lower mean of 3.88 (SD = 0.939). This difference suggests a useful area for closer examination: staff may perceive themselves as involved while still seeing room to improve the consistency or structure of planning.

Survey item	Mean	SD
Vision for change is clearly communicated	4.53	0.511
Teacher feedback is considered in change planning	4.47	0.500
Management supports staff when challenges arise	4.46	0.499
Information about upcoming changes is timely	4.39	0.487
Professional-development courses are necessary	4.19	0.813
Teachers are involved in school-improvement planning	4.13	0.699

Planning process is carefully structured	3.88	0.939

Academic staff readiness

Teachers reported high readiness for organizational change in the study overall interpretation. Item-level results included strong motivation toward change efforts (M = 4.34, SD = 0.680), willingness to use different teaching strategies to improve learning (M = 4.22, SD = 0.745), and willingness to participate in workshops to update professional knowledge (M = 4.12, SD = 0.838). Teachers also tended to agree that they accepted change for school benefit (M = 4.08, SD = 0.704) and had a positive attitude toward change and innovation. These responses suggest a generally receptive self-reported stance, while not necessarily demonstrating that every change can be implemented successfully in practice.

Relationships among the study variables

Pearson correlation results reported in the study showed a positive, moderate association between change management practices and academic staff readiness (N = 500, r = .512, p < .001). Change management practices were also positively associated with perceived organizational change (r = .617, p < .001). Perceived organizational change was positively associated with academic staff readiness (r = .567, p < .001). The study prints p = .000; this is conventionally reported as p < .001 because a probability value is not literally zero.

Relationship	N	r	p
Change management practices ↔ staff readiness	500	.512	< .001
Change management practices ↔ organizational change	500	.617	< .001
Organizational change ↔ staff readiness	500	.567	< .001

These correlations indicate that teachers who gave more positive ratings to change management practices also tended to report greater readiness for change. The associations are meaningful but do not establish direction or causality. For example, supportive management may contribute to readiness, but teachers who are already receptive to change may also evaluate management practices more positively.

Differences across demographic groups

The study reports statistically significant differences in several comparisons by gender, qualification, experience, and age. For example, one-way ANOVA results are reported for differences by qualification in change management practices (F = 4.746, p = .003) and staff readiness (F = 4.646, p < .001), and by experience in change management practices (F = 12.375, p < .001) and staff readiness (F = 6.088, p < .001). Staff readiness also differed by age (F = 4.274, p = .002), whereas the reported age difference for organizational change was not statistically significant (F = 1.715, p = .145).

Discussion

The central finding is a positive, moderate association between change management practices and academic staff readiness. This supports the practical proposition that staff readiness is connected to the way a school organizes and communicates change. Teachers in the sample reported relatively high ratings for communicating the change vision, considering feedback, and providing management support. These practices may help reduce uncertainty by explaining what is changing, why it matters, and what teachers are expected to do.

The results also point to professional learning as a relevant part of the change process. Teachers rated professional development positively and expressed willingness to participate in workshops. However, a workshop alone may not be enough to change classroom practice. Schools may need to combine training with follow-up coaching, peer collaboration, time to practice, and

opportunities to discuss implementation challenges. This is consistent with the broader readiness literature, which treats capability and organizational support as important alongside individual willingness (Armenakis et al., 1993; Weiner, 2009).

The relatively lower mean for the structure of the planning process, compared with several communication and support items, deserves attention. It may indicate that positive communication does not always translate into consistently structured planning. School leaders could make plans more concrete by clarifying responsibilities, timelines, available resources, success indicators, and review points. Including teachers in these decisions may also help ensure that proposed changes fit classroom conditions.

The correlation between change management practices and perceived organizational change was stronger than the correlation between change management practices and staff readiness, although all three reported relationships were positive. This pattern is compatible with the idea that school-level processes are closely related to how staff perceive change, while readiness is also shaped by other influences such as confidence, prior experience, workload, resources, and trust. The study did not directly test these possible mechanisms, so they should be considered explanations for future research rather than established findings.

Overall, the findings argue against treating change as a one-way administrative announcement. School change is more likely to be workable when leadership communicates consistently, invites staff feedback, supports professional learning, and uses planning processes that acknowledge teachers' everyday responsibilities. The results are encouraging, but high self-reported readiness should not be equated with proven implementation fidelity or improved student outcomes, neither of which was directly measured in this survey.

Implications for school leadership and policy

Communicate the purpose and expected outcomes of each reform in clear, practical language, and repeat key messages through staff meetings and written guidance.

Give teachers a meaningful role in planning and reviewing change, rather than seeking feedback only after decisions have been finalized.

Align professional development with the specific skills teachers need to implement the reform; supplement workshops with coaching, peer observation, and follow-up.

Clarify roles, timelines, resources, and indicators of progress so that staff understand what is expected and how implementation will be supported.

Build in regular feedback loops and use teacher feedback to adjust implementation rather than treating plans as fixed.

Check staff workload and resource needs before introducing multiple initiatives at once.

Evaluate change using more than staff attitudes: include implementation evidence, classroom practice and, where appropriate, student learning indicators.

Limitations and future research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study focused on public secondary schools in Lahore; its findings cannot automatically be generalized to private schools, other districts, or the national school system. Second, the cross-sectional survey design captures perceptions at one point in time and cannot establish causal effects. Third, data were self-reported and may be influenced by social desirability or shared response tendencies. Fourth, the questionnaire was researcher-developed; although the study reports expert review and high internal consistency, further evidence of construct validity would strengthen confidence in the measures. Finally, the study did not directly measure implementation quality or student outcomes.

Future studies could use longitudinal designs to examine whether readiness changes during implementation, include public and private schools across multiple districts, and combine surveys with interviews, observations, and school documents. Researchers could also test whether professional development, leadership support, or teacher participation statistically mediates or moderates the relationship between change management and readiness. Reporting effect sizes, confidence intervals, scale validation, and transparent data-cleaning procedures would improve interpretability and reproducibility.

Conclusion

This study of 500 public secondary-school teachers in Lahore found generally positive perceptions of change management practices and high self-reported readiness for organizational change. The main result was a positive, moderate correlation between change management practices and staff readiness ($r = .512$, $p < .001$). Communication of the change vision, consideration of teacher feedback, management support, and professional development received favourable ratings. The findings suggest that school leaders should approach change as a supported, participatory process rather than as a directive alone.

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