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21ST-CENTURY MANAGEMENT SKILLS IN ADDRESSING RESISTANCE TO CHANGE IN MABUHAY DISTRICT: A SPRINGBOARD TO ORGANIZATIONAL MODIFICATION

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ABSTRACT

Resistance to change is a common challenge in educational organizations, particularly when school leaders introduce new policies, programs, and management practices. Addressing this challenge requires effective leadership, strategic planning, transparent communication, and sustained support for personnel. This study examined the 21st-century management skills employed by school administrators to address resistance to change in Mabuhay District, focusing on five areas: resistance prevention planning, raising awareness about change, unifying the technical and people sides of change, comprehensive training and support, and leadership and sponsorship. A descriptive survey method was utilized, involving 19 school administrators and 162 elementary teachers selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a validated 25-item questionnaire-checklist and analyzed through weighted mean, ranking, and t-test. Findings revealed that the five management skill areas were generally rated as always practiced. Resistance prevention planning obtained the highest average mean of 3.61, followed by raising awareness about change (3.60), comprehensive training and support (3.59), unifying the technical and people sides of change (3.57), and leadership and sponsorship (3.56). The overall average mean was 3.57, indicating consistent

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application of the identified management practices. Furthermore, the computed t-value of 3.846 exceeded the critical value of 2.306 at the 0.05 level of significance, indicating a significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening change-management practices through proactive planning, open communication, employee participation, continuous capacity-building, and visible leadership support. These practices may serve as a foundation for meaningful organizational modification and continuous improvement in schools.

Keywords: *21st-century management skills; resistance to change; resistance prevention planning; organizational modification; school leadership; change management; educational administration*

INTRODUCTION

Change is an inevitable part of organizational development. In the education sector, schools continuously respond to new policies, curriculum reforms, instructional innovations, technological advancements, and evolving expectations for improved learning outcomes. These developments require school administrators and teachers to adjust their practices, strengthen their competencies, and embrace new ways of performing their responsibilities. Although change provides opportunities for growth and improvement, its implementation may also create uncertainty, anxiety, and resistance among personnel.

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Resistance to change occurs when individuals or groups hesitate, oppose, or refuse to accept new organizational directions. Such reactions may arise from fear of unfamiliar responsibilities, inadequate information, limited resources, insufficient training, or concerns about how proposed changes will affect established routines. When these concerns are not properly addressed, organizational initiatives may encounter delays, misunderstandings, reduced participation, and ineffective implementation. Consequently, school leaders must recognize that successful change involves more than introducing new programs; it also requires understanding the people who will carry them out.

In this regard, 21st-century management skills are essential in guiding educational institutions toward successful organizational transformation. These skills include strategic planning, effective communication, collaboration, adaptability, employee engagement, and leadership support. Administrators who demonstrate these competencies are better equipped to anticipate possible resistance, communicate the purpose of reforms, involve personnel in decision-making, and provide the necessary assistance throughout the change process.

One important management practice is resistance prevention planning. Rather than waiting for opposition to emerge, school administrators need to identify possible sources of resistance and develop appropriate strategies before implementing organizational changes. Proactive planning enables school leaders to anticipate challenges, prepare contingency measures, and establish clear implementation procedures. This approach helps reduce uncertainty and promotes a more organized transition.

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Another essential practice is raising awareness about change. Teachers and other school personnel are more likely to participate in organizational initiatives when they understand the reasons behind the changes, their expected benefits, and their respective responsibilities. Transparent communication and orientation activities can strengthen trust, minimize misconceptions, and encourage personnel to become active partners in school improvement.

Moreover, successful change management requires the integration of technical and human considerations. Organizational improvements may involve new systems, procedures, technologies, or instructional approaches; however, these developments must also consider the experiences, concerns, and capabilities of the people expected to implement them. Encouraging collaboration, sharing knowledge, considering employee feedback, and addressing personnel concerns can help ensure that technical improvements are supported by meaningful human participation.

Comprehensive training and support also contribute to effective organizational modification. Personnel need opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills required by new programs and procedures. Continuous guidance, technical assistance, and relevant professional development activities can help teachers adjust to changing expectations and perform their responsibilities with greater confidence. Equally important is leadership and sponsorship, which involves demonstrating commitment, providing direction, modeling positive attitudes toward innovation, and securing support from relevant stakeholders.

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In Mabuhay District, the implementation of educational programs and organizational initiatives requires school administrators to exercise management competencies that encourage cooperation and reduce resistance. The researcher recognized the importance of examining how these skills are practiced in the district, particularly in helping school personnel respond constructively to organizational changes. Understanding the existing practices of school administrators and the perceptions of teachers can provide useful information for strengthening leadership approaches and improving the implementation of school-based initiatives.

Thus, this study was conducted to determine the 21st-century management skills employed by school administrators in addressing resistance to change in Mabuhay District. Specifically, it examined resistance prevention planning, raising awareness about change, unifying the technical and people sides of change, comprehensive training and support, and leadership and sponsorship. It also compared the responses of school administrators and teachers to determine whether a significant difference existed between their assessments. Ultimately, the study sought to provide a basis for organizational modification through improved change-management practices, stronger personnel engagement, and sustained school improvement.

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MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The study employed the **descriptive survey method** to determine the management skills practiced by school administrators in addressing resistance to change in Mabuhay District. This design was appropriate because it described existing management practices and gathered the perceptions of two groups of respondents: school administrators and teachers.

Research Locale and Respondents

The study was conducted in Mabuhay District during the second semester of School Year 2025–2026 until the middle of 2026. The respondents consisted of 19 school administrators and 162 elementary teachers, or a total of 181 respondents. The teachers were selected from a population of 180 and had at least three years of teaching experience. The participating schools included the elementary schools within Mabuhay District.

Sampling Technique

Purposive sampling, particularly judgment sampling, was used to select the respondents. The selection considered the respondents' experience and involvement in school operations and organizational changes.

Research Instrument

A researcher-developed questionnaire-checklist served as the primary data-gathering instrument. It consisted of 25 statements divided equally among five management skill areas:

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1. Resistance prevention planning;
2. Raising awareness about change;
3. Unifying the technical and people sides of change;
4. Comprehensive training and support; and
5. Leadership and sponsorship.

The preliminary questionnaire underwent a dry run involving school administrators and teachers from Talusan District. Suggestions from the evaluators were incorporated before the final instrument was submitted for approval and administered to the target respondents.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Permission to conduct the study was secured from the Schools Division Superintendent. After approval, the researcher administered the questionnaire to the school administrator respondents. The teacher questionnaires were distributed following faculty meetings. Respondents were given instructions on how to complete the instrument and were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially.

Statistical Treatment

The gathered data were tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using the following statistical tools:

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- **Weighted mean** – used to determine the average responses of the participants for each management skill indicator.
- **Ranking** – used to identify the relative standing of the five management skill areas based on their average weighted means.
- **Four-point continuum** – used to interpret the responses according to the following scale:

Scale	Mean Range	Verbal Interpretation
4	3.26–4.00	Always Practiced
3	2.51–3.25	Often Practiced
2	1.76–2.50	Sometimes Practiced
1	1.00–1.75	Never Practiced

- **t-test** – used to determine whether a significant difference existed between the responses of school administrators and teachers at the 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The results revealed that the identified 21st-century management skills were generally practiced by school administrators in Mabuhay District. The five indicators all obtained mean scores within the range interpreted as "Always Practiced," suggesting that administrators

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consistently applied different strategies to manage organizational changes and address possible resistance among school personnel.

1. Management Skills Practiced to Address Resistance to Change

Table 1. Summary of the five management skill areas

Management Skill Area	Average Mean	Rank	Interpretation
Resistance Prevention Planning	3.61	1	Always Practiced
Raising Awareness About Change	3.60	2	Always Practiced
Comprehensive Training and Support	3.59	3	Always Practiced
Unifying the Technical and People Sides of Change	3.57	4	Always Practiced
Leadership and Sponsorship	3.56	5	Always Practiced
Overall Average	**3.57**		**Always Practiced**

Source: Researcher's survey results as reported in the thesis.

The findings showed that resistance prevention planning ranked first, with an average mean of 3.61. This indicates that school administrators consistently anticipated possible challenges and developed action plans to minimize resistance during organizational changes.

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Identifying potential sources of opposition and preparing contingency measures are important practices because they allow school leaders to address concerns before these become major obstacles.

Raising awareness about change ranked second, with an average mean of 3.60. This result emphasizes the importance of communicating the purpose, benefits, and expected outcomes of organizational initiatives. Clear communication and orientation activities help personnel understand the reasons for change and their responsibilities during implementation. When teachers are properly informed, they are more likely to participate and cooperate with school improvement efforts.

Comprehensive training and support ranked third, with an average mean of 3.59. This finding suggests that administrators recognize the need to provide continuous guidance, technical assistance, and learning opportunities to personnel. Training and support enable teachers to develop the competencies needed to adjust to new procedures and expectations. These practices may also lessen apprehension caused by unfamiliar tasks or responsibilities.

Unifying the technical and people sides of change ranked fourth, with an average mean of 3.57. Although it received the lowest score among the first four indicators, it was still interpreted as "Always Practiced." The result highlights the importance of balancing technical improvements with the needs and concerns of personnel. Encouraging knowledge-sharing, integrating employee feedback, and addressing concerns can strengthen participation and improve the implementation of organizational initiatives.

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Leadership and sponsorship ranked fifth, with an average mean of 3.56. Despite being the lowest-ranked indicator, it remained within the "Always Practiced" category. This finding suggests that school administrators demonstrate leadership through transparent practices, positive role modeling, and collaboration with stakeholders. Visible leadership support is important because personnel are more likely to embrace change when administrators demonstrate commitment and provide consistent direction.

Overall, the average mean of 3.57 indicates that the five management skill areas were consistently practiced. The results suggest that addressing resistance to change requires an integrated approach involving planning, communication, employee participation, capacity-building, and leadership support.

2. Difference Between the Responses of School Administrators and Teachers

The study compared the responses of school administrators and teachers to determine whether their assessments of the management practices differed significantly.

The thesis reported an average mean of 3.61 for school administrators and 3.52 for teachers, with an overall difference of approximately 0.10. Both groups generally assessed the management practices as "Always Practiced," indicating a favorable perception of the application of 21st-century management skills in Mabuhay District.

However, the t-test yielded a computed value of **3.846**, which exceeded the critical value of **2.306** at the 0.05 level of significance with 8 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the null

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hypothesis was rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference between the responses of school administrators and teachers.

The result suggests that although both groups recognized the consistent practice of change-management strategies, their assessments were not entirely identical. One possible explanation is that administrators may evaluate the implementation of management practices from a leadership and planning perspective, while teachers may assess them based on their direct experiences during the implementation of organizational initiatives. This finding emphasizes the need for regular consultation, feedback mechanisms, and collaborative decision-making to strengthen the alignment of administrators' and teachers' perceptions.

3. Implications for Organizational Modification

The findings demonstrate that effective change management should not be limited to issuing directives or introducing new programs. Rather, it should involve preparing personnel, explaining the purpose of changes, listening to concerns, providing appropriate support, and demonstrating consistent leadership.

The high ratings across the five indicators suggest that the district has established management practices that can support organizational improvement. Nevertheless, the significant difference between the two respondent groups indicates an opportunity to strengthen communication and participation. By creating an environment where teachers can openly express concerns and contribute to decisions, school administrators can promote greater acceptance and ownership of organizational initiatives.

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These results support the view that organizational modification becomes more sustainable when technical improvements are accompanied by appropriate human-centered management practices.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The five identified 21st-century management skill areas were generally rated as always practiced by school administrators in Mabuhay District, as reflected in the overall average mean of 3.57.

2. Resistance prevention planning was the most consistently practiced management skill, followed by raising awareness about change, comprehensive training and support, unifying the technical and people sides of change, and leadership and sponsorship.

3. School administrators and teachers both provided favorable assessments of the management practices. However, their responses differed significantly, as shown by the computed t-value of 3.846, which was greater than the critical value of 2.306.

4. Effective organizational modification requires a combination of proactive planning, transparent communication, employee participation, continuous training, and visible leadership support.

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5. Strengthening the alignment between administrators and teachers is essential to improving cooperation, reducing resistance, and sustaining organizational changes in schools.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. **Strengthen resistance prevention planning.** School administrators should develop clear action plans before implementing organizational changes. These plans should identify possible sources of resistance, anticipate implementation challenges, and provide appropriate contingency measures.

2. **Improve communication about organizational changes.** Administrators should conduct regular orientations, consultations, and information-sharing activities to ensure that teachers understand the purpose, benefits, and expected outcomes of new policies and programs.

3. **Promote employee participation and collaboration.** Teachers should be encouraged to share their knowledge, provide feedback, and participate in decisions that affect school operations. Their contributions should be considered in planning and implementing organizational initiatives.

4. **Provide continuous training and technical assistance.** School leaders should organize relevant professional development activities and offer sustained guidance to help teachers acquire the competencies necessary to adapt to new systems, procedures, and responsibilities.

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5. **Demonstrate transparent and supportive leadership.** Administrators should serve as positive role models by communicating openly, showing commitment to improvement, and building trust among school personnel and stakeholders.

6. **Establish regular feedback and monitoring mechanisms.** Schools should periodically assess the experiences and concerns of teachers during the implementation of organizational changes. This will help identify gaps between administrative intentions and actual implementation.

7. **Adopt an integrated change-management approach.** The district should strengthen all five management skill areas as interconnected practices to promote a supportive organizational culture, improve personnel engagement, and sustain meaningful organizational modification.

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