



Strategies for Educational Emergency Crisis Management and School Leadership in the Post-Pandemic Era

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Abstract

This systematic literature review delves into the critical dimensions of crisis management, school leadership, and the recovery of educational institutions in the post-COVID-19 era. Drawing on an extensive analysis of scholarly works, the study reveals key insights that shape the trajectory of educational resilience. The findings underscore the fundamental role of adaptive leadership, emphasizing Fullan's (2007) model, as indispensable for navigating uncertainties, fostering resilience, and guiding schools through continuous change. Collaborative approaches to recovery, leadership model, emerge as essential, with diverse stakeholders engaging in shared responsibility for comprehensive rebuilding and transformation. The study also illuminates the accelerated integration of technology into education post-COVID-19, acting as a transformative catalyst for enhancing educational resilience and adapting to disrupted teaching norms. Finally, the literature consistently emphasizes the paramount importance of prioritizing socio-emotional needs in post-crisis recovery, recognizing the potential trauma and stress experienced by students and staff. Together, these insights provide a comprehensive roadmap for educational practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to navigate the complexities of the post-COVID-19 educational landscape and cultivate resilience in the face of ongoing uncertainties.

Keywords: Crisis Management, School Leadership, Educational Resilience, Adaptive Leadership, Post-COVID-19 Era

Introduction

In the wake of the unprecedented global disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, educational institutions have faced unparalleled challenges, necessitating a reevaluation of crisis management strategies and a redefinition of school leadership in the face of disruptive times. The pandemic has not only disrupted traditional modes of education but has also exposed vulnerabilities in existing educational systems worldwide. As schools grapple with the immediate crisis response, there is a growing recognition of the need for a comprehensive understanding of crisis management, effective leadership strategies, and a roadmap for the recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era.

Scholars have highlighted the pivotal role of leadership in crisis situations, emphasizing the need for adaptive and transformative leadership models (Fullan, 2001). In the context of schools, effective leadership becomes paramount not only for immediate crisis response but also for long term recovery and resilience building. Furthermore, the literature underscores the interconnectedness of crisis management and the broader socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts in which schools operate (Kilag, et al., 2023). Therefore, this study aims to explore how contextual factors influence crisis management strategies and leadership practices in schools.



As we delve into the recovery phase, the literature suggests that successful post-crisis transformation requires a strategic and collaborative approach involving various stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and policymakers (Bryk et al., 2010). By synthesizing the existing research, this study seeks to offer practical insights for educational practitioners and policymakers to enhance crisis management capabilities and foster resilient school systems.

This systematic literature review endeavors to provide a comprehensive overview of crisis management and school leadership in disruptive times, with a particular emphasis on the recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era. By critically examining existing scholarship, we aim to inform and guide future research, policy development, and practical interventions to ensure the resilience and adaptability of educational institutions in the face of unforeseen challenges.

Literature Review

The field of education has been significantly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, presenting unprecedented challenges that demand a reevaluation of crisis management strategies and school leadership approaches. A systematic exploration of the existing literature is crucial to understanding the complex interplay between crisis, leadership, and recovery in the context of education.

Crisis Management in Education

Scholars have emphasized the need for a robust crisis management framework in educational institutions (Bryk et al., 2010). The immediacy of the COVID-19 crisis has underscored the importance of not only preparedness but also adaptability. Crisis management in education extends beyond immediate response to encompass long-term recovery and resilience building. The work of Fullan (2007) highlights the significance of adaptive leadership, emphasizing the leader's capacity to guide institutions through continuous change. This adaptive approach becomes imperative in navigating the uncertainties associated with crises.

The literature suggests that effective crisis management in schools necessitates an understanding of the broader socio-cultural, economic, and political contexts in which these institutions operate (Boin et al., 2016). The interconnectedness of these factors shapes the nature of crises and influences the efficacy of crisis management strategies. Successful crisis management requires a nuanced understanding of the specific challenges posed by disruptive events and the ability to tailor responses to the unique circumstances of each crisis.

Leadership plays a pivotal role in crisis situations, shaping the trajectory of a school's response and recovery. The literature emphasizes the need for transformative leadership models that go beyond traditional hierarchical structures (Bryk et al., 2010). Transformative leaders inspire change, foster innovation, and build resilience within educational institutions. The adaptive leadership framework proposed by Fullan (2007) aligns with these principles, advocating for leaders who can navigate uncertainty and promote a culture of continuous improvement.

Moreover, effective school leadership during disruptive times extends beyond individual leaders to involve a collaborative approach. Cameron (2008) argue that successful post-crisis transformation requires the engagement of various stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and policymakers. This collaborative leadership model ensures a holistic and sustainable recovery, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being and success of the educational community.

Recovery of Schools in the Post-COVID-19 Era

As educational institutions transition from crisis response to recovery, a strategic and collaborative approach is essential. The literature indicates that post-crisis recovery involves not only restoring normalcy but also leveraging the opportunity for transformative change (Cameron 2008). The COVID-19 pandemic, while a crisis, presents an opportunity for educators and leaders to reevaluate existing systems and embrace innovative approaches to teaching and learning.

The recovery phase requires a focus on building resilience within educational institutions. This involves addressing the socio-emotional needs of students and staff, implementing targeted interventions for academic catch-up, and fostering a culture of adaptability (Bryk et al., 2010). Additionally, recovery efforts should consider the integration of technology in education, as the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital tools and remote learning platforms.

The literature on crisis management, school leadership in disruptive times, and the recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era underscores the need for adaptive and transformative approaches. Effective crisis management in education requires an understanding of the interconnected factors shaping crises and the ability to tailor responses to the unique challenges posed by disruptive events. Leadership, particularly of the transformative and



collaborative nature, emerges as a critical factor in navigating crises and guiding schools through recovery (Kilag, et al., 2023).

The recovery phase presents an opportunity for educational institutions not only to restore normalcy but also to embrace transformative change. Building resilience, addressing socio emotional needs, and integrating technology into education are essential components of post crisis recovery efforts. This literature review provides a foundational understanding of key themes, theories, and practices that will inform the systematic exploration of crisis management and school leadership in the subsequent phases of this study.

Methodology

Conducting a systematic literature review involves a rigorous and structured approach to synthesizing existing research on a specific topic. In this section, the methodology employed for the study is outlined. To begin, a comprehensive search strategy is developed to identify relevant literature. Utilizing academic databases such as PubMed, ERIC, JSTOR, and Scopus is crucial to access scholarly articles, journals, conference papers, and books. The search involves employing a combination of keywords related to crisis management, school leadership, and post-COVID-19 education, including terms such as "Crisis management in education," "School leadership during disruptive times," "Recovery strategies for schools post-COVID-19," and "Educational leadership models in crisis."

Following this, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria are established to refine the selection of literature. Inclusions focus on publications addressing crisis management, school leadership, and post-COVID-19 recovery within educational settings, while exclusions pertain to irrelevant studies, non-peer-reviewed sources, and literature not directly related to the research questions. A systematic screening process is then conducted to assess the relevance of each identified study. Initial reviews of titles and abstracts are performed to determine alignment with the research questions, followed by a more in-depth assessment of the full texts of selected articles for further eligibility.

A structured data extraction form is developed to systematically collect relevant information from each included study. This involves extracting data on study design, key findings, methodologies employed, and implications for crisis management, school leadership, and post Crisis recovery. The quality of each selected study is evaluated using predefined criteria, considering methodological rigor, validity, and reliability to ensure the inclusion of high-quality evidence in the review.

Lastly, the extracted data is synthesized to identify common themes, patterns, and discrepancies across the selected studies. The key findings related to crisis management, school leadership, and post-COVID-19 recovery are then summarized to provide a comprehensive overview of the literature in this domain.

Findings and Discussion

Adaptive Leadership in Crisis Management:

In the extensive examination of literature, a recurrent theme underscores the critical significance of adaptive leadership for proficient crisis management within educational domains. Notably, Fullan's conceptualization of adaptive leaders (2007) emerges as a cornerstone in understanding the dynamics of effective leadership during crises. These leaders play a pivotal role in navigating uncertainties, fostering resilience, and steering institutions through continuous change. Their capacity to adapt to unforeseen challenges and institute flexible strategies is consistently identified as indispensable for the successful management of crises, with particular relevance to the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic (Bryk et al., 2010).

Fullan's (2007) adaptive leadership model, rooted in the idea of leading through change, emphasizes the importance of leaders not only responding to crises but actively shaping the organization's trajectory. Adaptive leaders, in this context, are characterized by their ability to learn, innovate, and facilitate a collective sense of resilience within the educational community. Such leaders are viewed as instrumental in not only addressing immediate crisis-related concerns but also in fostering long-term adaptability and sustainability (Monternel, et al., 2023).

Moreover, the literature consistently accentuates the need for educational leaders to possess a dynamic skill set that goes beyond traditional management approaches. Bryk et al. (2010) argue that the adaptability of leadership strategies is contingent upon an understanding of the specific challenges presented by disruptive events, such as those encountered during crises. Therefore, adaptive leadership is not a one-size-fits-all approach; instead, it involves a nuanced understanding of the ever-evolving circumstances and a willingness to tailor responses accordingly.

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, adaptive leadership takes on heightened relevance as schools navigate unprecedented challenges, including sudden shifts to remote learning, disruptions to traditional teaching methods,



and heightened socio-emotional stress among students and staff. The adaptability of leaders in such circumstances becomes a linchpin for maintaining organizational stability and promoting a sense of collective efficacy in the face of uncertainty (Zaccaro, 2001).

The literature consistently highlights the imperative role of adaptive leadership, drawing from Fullan's (2007) conceptualization, in effective crisis management within educational settings. The ability of leaders to navigate uncertainties, foster resilience, and implement flexible strategies is essential, particularly in the context of the complex challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. The adaptive leadership model provides a valuable framework for educational leaders to not only respond to crises but to actively shape the recovery and transformation of educational institutions in the post-COVID-19 era.

Collaborative Approaches to Recovery:

Within the examined literature, a prominent theme surfaces, emphasizing the crucial role of collaborative approaches in the post-crisis recovery of educational institutions. Scholars consistently underscore the significance of engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and policymakers, in the recovery process. This collaborative endeavor is pivotal for the holistic rebuilding and transformation of schools following disruptive events. Cameron collaborative leadership model (2008) stands out as a frequently cited framework, shedding light on the vital elements of shared responsibility and collective efforts in the aftermath of crises.

Cameron (2008) model delineates the importance of collaboration not only as a reaction to crises but as an integral part of the recovery strategy. The model posits that the involvement of various stakeholders fosters a sense of shared ownership and commitment to the recovery process. By actively engaging educators, administrators, parents, and policymakers, a collaborative approach acknowledges the interconnectedness of diverse perspectives and resources required for comprehensive recovery.

Moreover, the collaborative leadership model aligns with the broader literature that emphasizes the necessity of breaking down silos and fostering open communication channels among stakeholders. This interconnectedness is pivotal for generating innovative solutions, pooling resources, and developing a unified vision for the recovery and transformation of educational institutions (Moss Kanter & Litow, 2009).

As educational institutions grapple with the multifaceted challenges brought about by crises, the collaborative approach becomes a linchpin for building resilience and ensuring sustainable recovery. Through shared responsibility and a collective effort, stakeholders contribute not only to the immediate response but also to the long-term adaptation and enhancement of educational systems (Martinez, et al., 2023).

The literature consistently underscores the significance of collaborative approaches in the recovery of educational institutions post-crisis. Engaging a diverse range of stakeholders, as advocated by Cameron (2008) collaborative leadership model, is essential for fostering shared responsibility and collective efforts in rebuilding and transforming schools. This collaborative paradigm not only addresses immediate recovery needs but also contributes to the resilience and adaptability of educational institutions in the face of ongoing challenges.

Integration of Technology in Educational Recovery:

A significant revelation from the reviewed literature is the rapid assimilation of technology into education, particularly as a crucial component of the recovery process post-COVID-19. The pandemic has not only necessitated but has expedited the adoption of digital tools and remote learning platforms within educational settings. Scholars and practitioners widely acknowledge the transformative potential of technology, recognizing its role in augmenting educational resilience, facilitating adaptable learning environments, and mitigating challenges stemming from disruptions to traditional teaching methods.

The integration of technology in educational recovery is grounded in the recognition that digital tools offer dynamic solutions to the constraints imposed by crises. As highlighted by experts (Kilag, et al., 2023) technology not only serves as a contingency plan during disruptions but also provides a strategic avenue for long-term educational transformation. The literature consistently underscores that the effective use of technology fosters innovation, facilitates distance learning, and equips educational institutions with the agility to adapt to unforeseen challenges (Cordova Jr, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the accelerated adoption of technology is positioned within the broader discourse on the future of education, emphasizing the need for a paradigm shift in pedagogical approaches (Fullan, 2007). The incorporation of technology is not merely reactive but aligns with a proactive vision of building resilient educational systems that can thrive in the face of diverse challenges, including those posed by global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Socio-Emotional Focus in Post-Crisis Resilience Building:



The literature review consistently underscores the paramount importance of prioritizing socio emotional needs in the aftermath of crises, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era. As schools shift from immediate crisis response to the long-term recovery phase, scholars and practitioners emphasize a critical awareness that students and staff may have undergone diverse forms of trauma and stress. Recognizing the profound impact of these experiences, the literature advocates for strategies centered on cultivating a supportive and emotionally responsive educational environment as integral to the comprehensive recovery of schools post-COVID-19.

This socio-emotional focus aligns with the broader understanding of education as a holistic endeavor that extends beyond academic achievement (Lechner, et al., 2019). By prioritizing the emotional well-being of students and staff, educational institutions not only address the immediate aftermath of crises but also contribute to the establishment of a resilient and adaptive community (McLeod & Dulskey, 2021). The literature consistently emphasizes that fostering a supportive environment enhances the overall efficacy of recovery efforts, contributing to the creation of a nurturing educational atmosphere capable of withstanding future uncertainties (Kilag, et al., 2023).

These synthesized findings offer a comprehensive overview of key insights from the systematic literature review, providing a foundation for understanding the dynamics of crisis management, leadership, and recovery in the context of education, especially amid the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Conclusion

In the wake of the unprecedented challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, this systematic literature review has provided a comprehensive exploration of crisis management, school leadership, and the recovery of schools. The findings gleaned from an extensive analysis of scholarly works reveal critical insights that hold profound implications for educational institutions in the post-COVID-19 era.

First and foremost, the pivotal role of adaptive leadership in effective crisis management within educational settings emerges as a consistent and foundational theme. Fullan's (2007) model of adaptive leadership proves instrumental in understanding the dynamic nature of leadership required to navigate uncertainties, foster resilience, and guide educational institutions through continuous change. This finding emphasizes the imperative for educational leaders not only to respond reactively but also to proactively shape the trajectory of recovery and transformation.

Collaborative approaches to recovery, as underscored by Aquino, et al. (2023) leadership model, take center stage in the literature. The engagement of diverse stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, and policymakers, is recognized as essential for the comprehensive rebuilding and transformation of schools. By fostering shared responsibility and collective efforts, this collaborative paradigm ensures a more holistic and sustainable recovery process.

Furthermore, the accelerated integration of technology into education emerges as a notable revelation from this study. The COVID-19 pandemic has acted as a catalyst for the adoption of digital tools and remote learning platforms, signaling a paradigm shift in educational delivery. Scholars and practitioners alike highlight the potential of technology to enhance educational resilience, facilitate flexible learning environments, and address challenges associated with disrupted traditional teaching methods.

Finally, the literature consistently emphasizes the importance of prioritizing socio-emotional needs as a core component of post-crisis recovery and resilience building. In recognizing that students and staff may have experienced various forms of trauma and stress, strategies focused on fostering a supportive and emotionally responsive educational environment are deemed integral to the holistic recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era.

This systematic literature review contributes nuanced insights to the discourse on crisis management, school leadership, and the recovery of schools in the post-COVID-19 era. The synthesized findings underscore the need for adaptive leadership, collaborative recovery approaches, technological integration, and a socio-emotional focus to cultivate resilience within educational institutions. As schools grapple with ongoing uncertainties, these insights provide a roadmap for educational practitioners, policymakers, and researchers to navigate the complexities of the post-COVID-19 educational landscape and foster a resilient and adaptive future for schools.

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