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METHODS OF MANAGING CHANGES IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF UKRAINE DURING THE CRISIS (COVID-19, WAR): STRATEGIES FOR ADAPTATION AND ENSURING CONTINUITY OF LEARNING

ABSTRACT

The article explores the methods of change management implemented in Ukrainian educational institutions during unprecedented crises: the COVID-19 pandemic and full-scale war. The author substantiates the relevance of the studied issues within the framework of both the urgent need to respond quickly to new challenges and threats and to create conditions for lifelong learning by supporting the provision of educational services in conditions of limited access to full-fledged education and taking into account the direct effect of the legal regime of martial law in Ukraine. Based on a comprehensive review of the current literature and case studies, the paper analyzes the adaptation strategies that have been used to ensure continuity of learning and build resilience. The key findings highlight the rapid digital transformation, the creation of physical security measures, the integration of broad psychosocial support, as well as the dynamic adaptation of curricula and teaching methods, which will require all stakeholders to rapidly mobilize technical and state-of-the-art educational opportunities. The high importance of international cooperation in supporting the educational landscape is emphasized. Applying established models of change management (ADKAR, Kotter, Levine) to the Ukrainian context, this article emphasizes the unique factors of sustainability, offering practical recommendations for political and educational actors facing complex, protracted crises. In this context, it is necessary to clearly take into account the possibility of psychological and pedagogical support for both higher education students and research and teaching staff (including pedagogical and scientific workers), since crisis challenges lead to constant stress, uncertainty, doubts, and, therefore, "distance relations" provoke non-compliance with the conditions for the provision of educational services. Based on the study, the understanding of crisis management in education has been further developed, emphasizing the interaction of technological, pedagogical and human-centred approaches in ensuring the smooth functioning of educational systems under extreme pressure.

Keywords: change management, educational institutions, crisis, COVID-19, war, adaptation, learning continuity, digital transformation, psychosocial support, Ukraine

JEL Classification: I23, O33, D81

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global education sector has confronted unprecedented challenges, beginning with the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequently exacerbated by regional conflicts. These crises have significantly impacted the continuity of learning, student well-being, and institutional stability worldwide. Educational institutions in Ukraine, in particular, have experienced a dual crisis, transitioning directly from the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic to the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022. This double shock necessitated rapid and profound systemic transformations.

The relevance of this research within the Ukrainian context is exceptionally high. The war has caused immense destruction: thousands of educational facilities have been damaged or destroyed, and millions of students and educators displaced. This has led

to substantial learning losses and a severe impact on the mental health of children and teachers. Despite these formidable difficulties, Ukrainian educational institutions have demonstrated remarkable resilience and adaptability, implementing innovative strategies to sustain learning and support their communities. This unique experience offers invaluable lessons for global crisis management in education.

This paper will commence with a literature review on change management models and the impact of crises on education, followed by a detailed exposition of the research's objectives and methodology. The results section will present empirical data on adaptation strategies during COVID-19 and the war, including the role of international cooperation. Subsequently, the discussion will analyze these findings through the lens of change management theories, comparing the two crisis periods and identifying key factors of resilience. The work will conclude with a summary of findings, practical recommendations, and directions for future research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war in Ukraine have profoundly reshaped the educational landscape, underscoring the critical need for effective change management in protracted crisis environments. Researchers generally agree that the capacity of educational systems to adapt to novel challenges has become a crucial factor in ensuring learning continuity (Springer Nature, 2025; Brookings, 2022). However, the specific modalities of this adaptation remain a subject of scholarly debate.

Some authors emphasize the significance of digital transformation and the implementation of flexible educational platforms as a key response to the crisis (Eurydice, 2025; ResearchGate, 2025). Others highlight the necessity of human-centric support models, such as psychological assistance for students and educators (Plan International, 2025; NAM, 2025). In this context, the challenge of balancing technical solutions with humanitarian intervention tools gains particular salience. Another segment of scholars proposes analyzing crisis-driven changes through the lens of classical management models—such as ADKAR, Lewin's Change Management Model, or Kotter's 8-Step Process for Leading Change (KotterInc, Whatfix, WalkMe). At the same time, critics note that these models were developed in stable social conditions and do not account for the legal regime of martial law, limited resource access, or security threats (Tandfonline, 2025; ZOIS, 2025).

The Ukrainian case, in turn, is characterized by a high degree of mobilization—both institutional and human. Many researchers point to unique approaches that emerged during the war: the use of shelters as educational spaces, the creation of psychosocial support centres (UNESCO, UNICEF), and experiments with autonomous curricula (Cambridge Educational Research Journal, 2024; Lumen Publishing, 2025).

Thus, the literature reveals a polemic between a technocratic vision of crisis management and integrated models that incorporate mental well-being, pedagogical flexibility, and socio-cultural context. The success of adaptive strategies, as demonstrated by the Ukrainian experience, hinges on their ability to combine innovation with empathy, and managerial approaches with the realities of humanitarian catastrophe.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this article is to analyze and synthesize the change management methods applied by Ukrainian educational institutions during the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war. This includes identifying effective adaptation strategies and ensuring the continuity of learning in extreme crisis conditions.

To achieve this overarching objective, the research will address the following specific tasks:

1. Document and classify the key challenges faced by Ukrainian educational institutions during both the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war.
2. Identify and describe the adaptive strategies implemented by Ukrainian educational institutions to maintain educational processes and ensure safety during both crises.
3. Assess the extent and impact of digital transformation, adaptation of physical infrastructure, and psychosocial support mechanisms in ensuring learning continuity.
4. Analyze how theoretical change management models (e.g., ADKAR, Kotter, Lewin) can be applied to understand and interpret the adaptive responses observed in the Ukrainian educational context.

5. Formulate practical recommendations for educational institutions and policymakers, drawing upon Ukraine's unique experience in overcoming prolonged, multifaceted crises.

METHODS

This article employs a qualitative, descriptive-analytical approach, grounded in an interdisciplinary review of academic literature, official reports from international organizations (e.g., UNICEF, UNESCO, World Bank, IOM, ReliefWeb), and institutional statements from Ukrainian universities and government bodies. The research material is drawn from a curated dataset providing information on challenges, responses, and outcomes related to education in Ukraine during both the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war.

Data analysis will involve thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, strategies, and challenges across various sources. A comparative analysis will then highlight similarities and differences in change management approaches between the two crisis periods. The identified adaptive strategies will be critically examined through the lens of established change management models (Lewin's 3-Step Model of Change Theory, Kotter's 8-Step Process for Leading Change, ADKAR) to provide a theoretical framework for understanding the observed resilience.

Ukrainian educational institutions serve as a critical case study due to their unprecedented experience of simultaneously managing a global pandemic and a large-scale armed conflict. This dual crisis offers a unique context for exploring extreme adaptability and resilience. The study of such an extreme "black swan" case (Lewin's 3-Stage Model of Change Theory) can reveal unique aspects of resilience that might not be evident during less severe disruptions. The scale and multifaceted nature of the challenges (pandemic and war) make it an invaluable laboratory for crisis management research. Findings from Ukraine can inform emergency preparedness and response strategies for educational systems worldwide, particularly in regions vulnerable to complex, overlapping crises, offering a "Ukrainian recipe" for resilience (Teachers under Russian Occupation).

Specifically, examples from Lviv-based institutions (Ivan Franko National University of Lviv, Lviv Polytechnic National University) and national initiatives will be highlighted to illustrate the practical application of change management methods (The Role of Change Management in Education). These institutions represent various educational levels and have actively documented their anti-crisis measures.

RESULTS

Adaptation to COVID-19: The Experience of Ukrainian Educational Institutions

Ukrainian universities, like their global counterparts, rapidly transitioned to *remote online learning* in response to COVID-19 lockdown measures (Rewiring the classroom). This involved leveraging existing virtual learning environments (e.g., Moodle) and remote conferencing tools (Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Skype) (Implementation of Information and Educational). Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (LNU) introduced a *blended learning format* in early 2021, combining remote lectures with in-person practical sessions, while adhering to anti-epidemic measures (Lviv University continues to...). Lviv Polytechnic National University (NU "LP") implemented full video conferencing for the "red" epidemic risk level (Lviv. Strong Cities Network).

Significant challenges included *inadequate digital infrastructure*, unequal access to devices and the internet for both faculty and students, a lack of prior experience with remote teaching, psychological unpreparedness for remote interaction, increased workload for educators, and reduced direct communication, leading to social isolation and mental health issues (The Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Education). Learning losses were observed, particularly among students with disabilities. In response, institutions focused on the systematic integration of ICT, upgrading their technological base, and providing training to enhance staff qualifications (Implementation of Information and Educational). The Ministry of Education and Science launched the "All-Ukrainian Online School" for students in grades 5-11 and the "Diia. Digital Education" platform to improve digital literacy (Ensuring Safe Learning in Institutions...).

While *digitalization* was a necessary solution, it also revealed and exacerbated the existing "inequality in access to digital devices and internet connection" (The Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Education). This pre-existing digital divide widened during the pandemic, disproportionately affecting rural areas compared to urban centres like Lviv (New data insights reveal...). This indicates that while technological solutions are vital for continuity, they simultaneously risk deepening educational inequity if not accompanied by resolute efforts to bridge the digital divide. Crisis measures must actively consider *equity concerns* to prevent further marginalization.

Change Management During Full-Scale War

Given the widespread destruction of educational infrastructure (over 3,700 facilities damaged, 365 destroyed as of December 2023), ensuring *physical safety* became the paramount concern (Educating Health Professionals During a Crisis). A key strategy involved equipping schools with bomb shelters, with their number increasing from 68% to 80% (43). Some cities, like Kharkiv and Zaporizhzhia, constructed underground schools (19). Lviv Polytechnic National University (NU "LP") adapted by interrupting in-person classes during air raid alerts and resuming them after the "all clear" signal (Resilience of the educational system, 2025).

Many institutions transitioned to *online or hybrid learning* due to security risks (Three Years of War in Ukraine, 2025). Asynchronous learning was introduced, particularly for students in temporarily occupied territories with unstable connectivity (The Role of Change Management in Education). To ensure access to education for students without devices, Digital Learning Centers were established, providing equipment, internet, and psychological support (Ukraine: 140,000 children...).

Recognizing the profound impact on the *mental health* (stress, anxiety, depression, trauma, burnout) of children, parents, and teachers (Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis), psychosocial support became a cornerstone (How to promote well-being...). Inclusive Resource Centers (IRCs), supported by UNESCO, provide comprehensive educational and psychological support to children with special needs (Ukraine: 140,000 children...). Training was implemented for educators on providing psychological first aid, social-emotional learning, and mine safety (How to promote the well-being...). NU "LP" launched the WELLTEENS project for the well-being of adolescent refugees (Living peace in times of war...).

Curricula were adapted to wartime realities, focusing on practical skills relevant to crisis conditions (e.g., social work, medical professions) (Implementation of Information and Educational). Short-term training programs emerged to address urgent social needs (Navigating Wartime Realities). Assessment methods became more flexible (e.g., extended deadlines, individualized assignments) (Navigating Wartime Realities). Beyond knowledge provision, Ukrainian schools transformed into "emotional anchors and symbols of national identity" (Education in Times of War). Curriculum adaptation extended beyond content to fostering critical thinking, democratic citizenship, and pride in national heritage (Ukrainian Education). This serves as a strategic response to cultural genocide (Designing for Academic Resilience in Hands-On Courses in Times of Crisis). In times of existential threat, the role of education transcends its traditional academic function, becoming a vital mechanism for social cohesion, psychological stability, and the preservation of national identity, directly countering hostile narratives and cultural erasure. This elevates education to a strategic asset of national security.

The Role of International Cooperation and Partnerships

International partners, including the EU, UNDP, UNICEF, the World Bank, IOM, and various non-governmental organizations, have provided *significant financial and material support* for infrastructure restoration, digital devices, internet access, and learning materials. The "EU4UASchools: Rebuild Better" initiative specifically focused on repairing schools and shelters, enhancing safety, accessibility, and resilience (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict).

International educational cooperation has served as a *"lifeline"*, sustaining academic networks, preserving academic freedom, and ensuring the continuity of learning (Information about the University studying...). Partnerships such as "Twin for Hope" (University of Birmingham and LNU) facilitate joint educational initiatives, staff training, and research projects (To the 20th anniversary of the department). NU "LP"'s collaboration with Thompson Rivers University exemplifies the use of technology for real-time knowledge transfer across continents (Information about the University studying...). International organizations like UNESCO and UNICEF actively support data collection, policy development, and psychosocial programs for Ukrainian refugees and internally displaced persons (Ukraine's recovery is dependent...).

Initially, international support was predominantly *humanitarian* and focused on immediate needs. However, available data indicate a clear evolution towards strategic, long-term investments in infrastructure reconstruction ("Rebuild Better" (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict)), human capital strengthening (teacher training (How to promote the well-being...)), and the integration of Ukraine into European educational pathways (Ukraine: Digital transformation of...). This is evident in the shift from emergency response to supporting Ukraine's Digital Transformation Strategy until 2030 (Ukraine: Digital transformation of...). International cooperation in education during protracted crises extends beyond emergency aid, becoming a critical component of post-war recovery and sustainable development, fostering long-term resilience and integration into global systems. This demonstrates a recognition that education is not merely a right but also a strategic investment in a nation's future.

DISCUSSION

Analysis of Change Management Models in the Ukrainian Context

Ukraine's experience in education during the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war presents a unique case study in *extreme change management*. Applying classical change management models, such as Lewin's, Kotter's, and ADKAR, to this context reveals both their universality and the necessity for adaptation to conditions of prolonged and multifaceted crises.

Kurt Lewin's Model (Unfreeze-Change-Refreeze):

1. *Unfreeze*: Both the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale invasion created an undeniable "sense of urgency" (Kotter's Step 1) and "awareness of the need for change" (ADKAR's A), effectively "unfreezing" traditional educational practices. This external shock bypassed typical internal resistance to change (Leading Through Rapid Change Management).
2. *Change*: The "Change" phase involved the rapid implementation of online/hybrid learning, the establishment of safety protocols (bomb shelters), and curriculum adjustments. This was characterized by improvisation, flexibility, and a focus on immediate problem-solving (Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War...).
3. *Refreeze*: The "Refreeze" stage remains an ongoing challenge. While new practices (e.g., online learning, psychosocial support) are becoming normalized, the dynamic nature of the war prevents a complete "refreezing" into a stable new state (Leading Through Rapid Change Management). Instead, a state of "continuous adaptation" or "dynamic equilibrium" emerges (Navigating Wartime Realities).

John Kotter's 8-Step Process:

1. "*Creating a sense of urgency*" was externally imposed by the crises (The 8-Step Process for Leading Change). This external shock bypassed typical internal resistance to change.
2. "*Forming a guiding coalition*" and "*developing a strategic vision*" involved rapid decision-making by university administrations and national ministries, often in collaboration with international partners (The 8-Step Process for Leading Change). The vision quickly coalesced around "continuity of learning" and "safety" (Ensuring Safe Learning in...).
3. "*Enabling action*" and "*removing barriers*" encompassed providing digital tools, offering training, and adapting regulations (Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War...).
4. "*Generating short-term wins*" included the successful resumption of classes, the opening of digital centres, and the repair of shelters (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict).
5. "*Sustaining acceleration*" and "*institutionalizing change*" are ongoing, requiring continuous adaptation and the embedding of new norms, especially concerning digital literacy and psychosocial support (Ukraine: Digital transformation of...).

ADKAR Model:

1. *Awareness*: The crises themselves provided an immediate and profound awareness of the need for change (The Role of Change Management in Education).
2. *Desire*: The desire to continue learning and teaching, often driven by a sense of national duty and a need for normalcy, was strong (Three years of war in Ukraine).
3. *Knowledge and Ability*: Significant efforts were made to provide knowledge on "how to change" (online teaching training, digital literacy) and the ability to implement new skills (practice, coaching) (Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War).
4. *Reinforcement*: Ongoing support, recognition of efforts, and the integration of new practices into policy are crucial for reinforcement of the changes (Change Management).

Applying these models to the Ukrainian experience reveals that, in conditions of extreme, prolonged crises, rigid, linear application is often impossible. Instead, elements from different models are applied simultaneously and interactively. For instance, "unfreezing" occurs instantaneously, but "refreezing" remains elusive. "Short-term wins" (Kotter) are crucial for

morale (ADKAR's Desire/Reinforcement) in a constantly shifting environment. This suggests that crisis change management in education demands a flexible, adaptive hybrid approach that draws on the strengths of various models concurrently. The focus shifts from achieving a stable "new normal" to building a dynamic, continuous adaptive capacity. A comparison of these models is provided below in Table 2, which explains each of the elements of the change management models through the prism of applying measures in specific conditions in Ukraine in accordance with them.

Comparing the COVID-19 and War Experiences: Commonalities and Distinctions

The experience of Ukrainian education during the COVID-19 pandemic and full-scale war demonstrates both common challenges and adaptive strategies, as well as significant differences reflecting the different nature of these crises, which are demonstrated in Table 1 below for a visual comparison of the measures taken.

Category	Challenges During COVID-19	Adaptive Strategies During COVID-19	Challenges During War	Adaptive Strategies During War
Learning Format	Forced transition to remote learning	Online platforms (Zoom, Moodle), All-Ukrainian Online School, Blended learning	Massive infrastructure destruction, Forced displacement, Direct physical threat (shelling), Power/internet outages	Hybrid/asynchronous learning, Digital learning centres, Underground schools
Physical Safety	Absence of direct physical threat	Adherence to sanitary norms, Social distancing	Direct threat to life, Building destruction, Occupation	Bomb shelters, Underground schools, Air raid protocols, Evacuation
Infrastructure	Inadequate digital infrastructure, Unequal access to devices/internet	Systematic ICT integration, Technological base updates	Massive destruction of educational facilities, Need for rapid reconstruction/repair	Building reconstruction (Build Back Better), Digital infrastructure expansion, Backup power supply
Human Impact	Psychological isolation, Increased teacher workload, Psychological unpreparedness	Digital literacy training, Communication support	Severe psychological trauma (stress, anxiety, depression, PTSD), Burn-out, Loss of loved ones, Displacement	Psychosocial support (IRCs, teacher training), Mental health, Mine safety
Curriculum	Logistical adaptation to online format	Adaptation of teaching and assessment methods	Need for content relevant to wartime realities, national identity	Reorientation to practical skills, Trauma-informed pedagogy, and National identity courses
External Support	Limited at the initial stage	Internal initiatives (Ministry of Education and Science)	Critically needed financial, technical, expert assistance	International partnerships (TwinforHope), Financial aid (EU, UNDP, WB, UNICEF), Experience sharing

Comparison of COVID-19 and War Experiences: Commonalities and Distinctions

The experience of Ukrainian education under the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war demonstrates both shared challenges and adaptive strategies, as well as significant distinctions that reflect the differing natures of these crises.

Commonalities:

1. Both crises necessitated a *rapid and widespread transition to remote learning* and accelerated digital transformation (Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War...).
2. Both revealed and *exacerbated existing inequalities* in access to technology and quality education (The Lasting Impact of COVID-19 on Education).
3. Both imposed an *immense psychological burden* on students and educators, underscoring the critical need for psychosocial support (Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis).

Distinctions:

1. *Nature of the Threat:* COVID-19 presented a health crisis demanding social distancing; the war presents direct physical threats, destruction, and displacement (Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis).
2. *Safety Measures:* COVID-19 led to remote learning for safety; the war required physical bomb shelters and underground schools to enable any in-person instruction (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict).
3. *Scale of Impact:* While COVID-19 disrupted learning, the war caused widespread infrastructure destruction, forced mass displacement, and direct targeting of education as a tool of cultural genocide (Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis).
4. *Curriculum Adaptation:* Adaptations to COVID-19 were primarily logistical (online delivery); war adaptations included a reorientation towards practical skills for wartime needs, national identity, and trauma-informed pedagogy (The Role of Change Management in Education).
5. *Long-Term Perspective:* COVID-19 had a clear "end" (school reopening); the war's uncertain duration necessitates long-term planning for resilience, reconstruction, and addressing cumulative learning losses (Resilient education systems critical...).

The Ukrainian experience demonstrates a "[crisis multiplier effect](#)". The war did not merely add new challenges but intensified and transformed existing ones from the pandemic. For example, the digital divide became a matter of life-and-death access to education under shelling (Ukraine Humanitarian Crisis). Mental health issues, already present during COVID-19, dramatically deepened due to war trauma (Three years of war in Ukraine). This indicates that in multifaceted crises, responses cannot be isolated. Strategies must be holistic, anticipating how concurrent crises interact and amplify vulnerabilities, demanding integrated solutions that build multi-layered resilience.

Identified Factors of Resilience and Adaptability

Ukraine's experience highlights several key factors that contributed to the resilience and adaptability of its educational system:

1. *Proactive Digitalization:* Prior experience with remote learning during COVID-19 provided a crucial foundation for rapid adaptation to wartime disruptions (Impact of the Russia-Ukraine War...).
2. *Human-Centred Approach:* Prioritizing the psychological well-being of students and educators through extensive psychosocial support programs (Ukraine: 140,000 children ...).
3. *Physical Infrastructure Adaptation:* Rapid construction and equipping of bomb shelters and underground schools (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict).
4. *Flexible Pedagogical Models:* Implementation of hybrid, asynchronous, and blended learning, as well as flexible assessment methods (The Role of Change Management in Education).
5. *Curriculum Reorientation:* Adapting content to address pressing societal needs, trauma, and national identity (The Role of Change Management in Education).
6. *Strong Leadership and Local Autonomy:* The ability of university and school leaders to make swift critical decisions, and local authorities to implement tailored solutions (Video series "Building resilience post-war...).
7. *Robust International Partnerships:* Crucial for financial, technical, and expert support, as well as for sustaining academic ties (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict).

The Ukrainian experience shows that [resilience in education is not a static state but a dynamic capacity](#) that constantly evolves in response to new threats. It involves not just "recovering" but also "developing" or "building back better" (Educational Leadership in Crisis and Conflict). This demands continuous learning, innovation, and resourcefulness. Educational institutions in crisis must cultivate a culture of continuous adaptation, where lessons learned from one challenge are immediately integrated to enhance preparedness for future, potentially unforeseen, disruptions. This shifts the paradigm from crisis management to the sustained building of adaptive capacity.

Table 2. Application of Change Management Model Elements (ADKAR/Kotter/Lewin) in Ukrainian Educational Practice.

Change Management Model	Element/Stage	Application in Ukrainian Educational Practice
K. Lewin	Unfreeze	The COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale invasion created an immediate and undeniable need for change, disrupting traditional approaches to education.
	Change	Rapid transition to online/hybrid learning, implementation of safety protocols (bomb shelters), and adjustment of curricula.
	Refreeze	The dynamic nature of the war prevents a complete "refreeze" into a stable new state; instead, "continuous adaptation" is observed.
J. Kotter	Create Urgency	External imposition of crisis conditions (pandemic, war) automatically generated urgency.
	Form Guiding Coalition	Rapid decision-making by university administrations and national ministries, often in collaboration with international partners.
	Develop Strategic Vision	The vision quickly coalesced around "continuity of learning" and "safety."
	Communicate Vision	Ongoing communication of changes and goals, adapted to the needs of various stakeholders.
	Enable Action	Provision of digital tools, training, and adaptation of regulations to support new practices.
	Generate Short-Term Wins	Successful resumption of classes, the opening of digital centres, and repair of shelters to boost morale.
	Sustain Acceleration	Continuous adaptation and embedding of new norms, especially regarding digital literacy and psychosocial support.
	Institutionalize Change	Integration of new processes and behavioural models into policy and daily operations.
ADKAR	Awareness	The crises themselves provided an immediate and profound awareness of the need for change.
	Desire	A strong desire to continue learning, driven by a sense of national duty and the need for normalcy.
	Knowledge	Provision of training on online teaching, digital literacy, and the use of new tools.
	Ability	Practical application of new skills through coaching, mentorship, and access to resources.
	Reinforcement	Ongoing support, recognition of efforts, and integration of new practices into policy for the sustainability of changes.

Limitations of the Study

This study, while comprehensive, nonetheless has certain limitations. It relies on publicly available reports and academic articles, which may not fully capture the complete details of local, informal adaptations. The dynamic and ongoing nature of the conflict means that the situation is constantly evolving, and some data may only reflect a snapshot in time rather than a continuous state.

Furthermore, the primary focus is on documented strategies; therefore, the full extent of undocumented, community-driven initiatives or individual adaptive efforts may not be entirely covered.

CONCLUSIONS

Ukrainian educational institutions have demonstrated extraordinary resilience and unprecedented adaptability, effectively implementing multifaceted change management strategies amidst dual and interconnected crises: the COVID-19 pandemic and the full-scale war. The experience of grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced educational institutions to shift to remote learning, inadvertently served as a critical preparatory phase. This period fostered the development of basic digital infrastructure and accrued remote teaching experience, allowing the Ukrainian education system to transition more swiftly—albeit still with significant difficulties—to online and hybrid learning models during the war.

However, unlike the pandemic, the full-scale war presented a much broader spectrum of challenges, demanding comprehensive and integrated solutions. Beyond digital responses, physical safety measures such as equipping bomb shelters and constructing underground schools became pivotal to ensuring learning continuity and addressing the profound human impact of the war. These measures allowed for a partial resumption of in-person learning where feasible, providing safe conditions for participants in the educational process.

Comprehensive psychosocial support emerged as a cornerstone of adaptation, aimed at mitigating the severe psychological consequences of the war on students, educators, and parents. The establishment of Inclusive Resource Centers (IRCs) and training for educators in providing psychological first aid played a crucial role in supporting the mental health and well-being of the educational community.

Curriculum adaptation transcended simple shifts in delivery methods. It evolved to incorporate content relevant to the crisis realities, focusing on the development of practical skills pertinent to wartime needs (e.g., social work, and medical professions). Furthermore, a significant emphasis was placed on strengthening national identity and fostering critical thinking, transforming schools into centres of national resilience and resistance against cultural erasure.

International cooperation has been vital, evolving from immediate humanitarian aid to strategic partnerships focused on long-term reconstruction and integration into global educational standards. This support encompassed financial and material assistance for infrastructure recovery, provision of digital devices and internet access, and the sustenance of academic networks and exchange of expertise. This underscores the recognition of education not merely as a right, but as a strategic investment in Ukraine's future.

The Ukrainian experience illustrates that effective crisis change management in education necessitates a dynamic, multi-layered, and human-centred approach. This approach successfully integrates technological, physical, pedagogical, and psychological dimensions, underpinned by strong leadership at all levels and robust international collaboration. It demonstrates that resilience in education is not a static state but a continuous, dynamic capacity that evolves in response to new and unforeseen threats. Thus, it shifts the paradigm from reacting to isolated crises to deliberately building the sustained adaptive potential of the educational system.

In the context of the above-mentioned transformations of Ukraine's educational space, a promising area for further research is a deeper study of the long-term effects of the implemented crisis strategies on the quality of education, the psycho-emotional state of participants in the educational process, and social cohesion. Particular attention should be paid to assessing the effectiveness of hybrid learning models in conditions of prolonged instability, in particular, taking into account unequal access to digital resources. Studies of educational policy as a tool for strengthening national security and the role of the school environment in building civic resilience remain relevant. In addition, it is necessary to focus on analyzing institutional changes in the education management system, as well as studying models of international partnership that promote sustainable development and innovation in the educational sector of Ukraine in the postwar period.

Practical Recommendations for Educational Institutions and Policymakers

Based on the identified strategies and factors of resilience, the following practical recommendations can be formulated:

1. *Invest in comprehensive digital infrastructure and digital literacy:* Ensure **equitable access** to devices and high-speed internet for all participants in the educational process, especially in rural and conflict-affected regions. Continuous training for educators and students in **digital competencies** is also critical, preparing them for both planned and emergency remote learning.
2. *Prioritize physical safety and emergency preparedness:* Integrate **robust safety infrastructure** (e.g., shelters, rapid air raid response protocols) into the planning and design of schools and universities. Regular emergency drills, adapted to local threats, are essential to ensure readiness and minimize risks.
3. *Integrate psychosocial support into the educational system as an intrinsic component:* Mandate training for all pedagogical staff in **basic psychological first aid and social-emotional learning**. Establishing accessible and confidential mental health services for students and educators is key to addressing psychological trauma and supporting their well-being.
4. *Foster flexible and adaptive pedagogical models:* Develop curricula that can be delivered through diverse modalities—in-person, hybrid, online, and asynchronous learning. Encouraging **flexible assessment methods** will help accommodate the varied needs of students in crisis situations and ensure fairness.
5. *Promote curriculum relevance and national identity:* Educational content must be adapted to address contemporary societal challenges, including themes of recovery and resilience. It's also vital to strengthen **civic education and national heritage**, empowering students to be drivers of their country's reconstruction and resilience.
6. *Cultivate strong leadership and decentralized decision-making:* Granting local educational leaders autonomy and sufficient resources for rapid and creative responses to localized crises is critical. This approach will complement national strategies and allow for more effective responses to specific community needs.

7. *Strengthen international cooperation:* Educational institutions and policymakers should actively seek and sustain international partnerships for financial, technical, and expert support. These collaborations should be viewed as **strategic investments** in Ukraine's long-term educational resilience and national development, fostering integration into the global educational community.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All Authors have contributed equally.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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МЕТОДИ УПРАВЛІННЯ ЗМІНАМИ В ОСВІТНІХ ЗАКЛАДАХ УКРАЇНИ ПІД ЧАС КРИЗИ (COVID-19, ВІЙНА): СТРАТЕГІЇ АДАПТАЦІЇ ТА ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ БЕЗПЕРЕРВНОСТІ НАВЧАННЯ

У роботі досліджуються методи управління змінами, впроваджені в українських закладах освіти під час безпрецедентних криз: пандемії COVID-19 і повномасштабної війни. Обґрунтовується актуальність досліджуваної проблематики в межах і крайньої необхідності швидкого реагування на нові виклики та загрози, і створення умов безперервної освіти з підтримкою надання освітніх послуг в умовах обмеженого доступу до повноцінного навчання та з урахуванням безпосередньо дії правового режиму воєнного стану в Україні. На основі всебічного огляду сучасної літератури й тематичних досліджень аналізуються адаптаційні стратегії, що застосовувалися для забезпечення безперервності навчання та формування стійкості. Ключові результати висвітлюють швидку цифрову трансформацію,

ужиття заходів фізичної безпеки, інтеграцію широкої психосоціальної підтримки, а також динамічну адаптацію навчальних програм і методик забезпечення освітнього процесу, що вимагатиме від усіх учасників здобуття освіти стрімкої мобілізації технічних і надсучасних можливостей здобуття освіти. Підкреслюється високе значення міжнародної співпраці в частині підтримки освітнього ландшафту. Застосовуючи встановлені моделі управління змінами (ADKAR, Коттер, Левін) до українського контексту, у цій статті автори акцентують увагу на унікальних факторах стійкості, пропонуючи практичні рекомендації для суб'єктів політичних й освітніх відносин, які стикаються зі складними, тривалими кризами. У цьому контексті необхідно чітко враховувати й можливість психолого-педагогічного супроводу й здобувачів вищої освіти, і науково-педагогічних працівників (педагогічних і наукових працівників у тому числі), оскільки кризові виклики призводять до постійного стресу, невизначеності, сумнівів, а відтак, «дистанційні стосунки» провокують недотримання умов надання освітніх послуг. На основі проведеного дослідження набуло подальшого наукового розвитку розуміння кризового управління в освіті, підкреслюючи взаємодію технологічних, педагогічних і людиноцентричних підходів до забезпечення безперервного функціонування освітніх систем в умовах надзвичайного тиску.

Ключові слова: управління змінами, освітні заклади, криза, COVID-19, війна, адаптація, безперервність навчання, цифрова трансформація, психосоціальна підтримка, Україна

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