



# The Concept of Teachers as Agents of Change in Education

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## Abstract

A change agent is a person or expert who has the ability to influence clients to make changes as expected. This study aims to describe and understand in depth the strategic function of teachers as agents of change, as well as to evaluate how this role is applied in practice and has a positive impact on learning and school culture. This study uses the Systematic Literature Review method or systematic literature study steps, The initial step is to collect scientific research materials or literature related to educational administration and the fundamentals of organizational development, specifically focusing on the concepts and roles of change agents, also known as Agents of Change, sourced from websites, books, articles, journals, and other sources. After these scientific research materials are collected, the researcher studies and understands them. The research findings indicate that change is a natural occurrence that arises in the course of human life and human civilization. The implication is that innovative learning methods must be in line with the learning objectives set by teachers, capable of achieving what has been planned, have the ability to implement a variety of learning and teaching strategies tailored to the learning interests and needs of students, and be able to improve the quality of the learning process and learning outcomes aimed at improving the overall quality of education.

## Article Information:

Received October, 28 2024

Revised November 20, 2024

Accepted December 10, 2024

**Keywords:** *Renewal gent, education, teacher*

## INTRODUCTION

Education is the most important factor in guiding a nation toward a better future. Without education, a nation will not be able to stand on its own and achieve its desired goals. Quality education requires change agents who can guide education toward the components needed by students to advance the country. The change agents referred to here are teachers (Jannah & Sulianti, 2021) The implementation of educational innovation, including curriculum innovation, cannot be separated from the innovators and implementers of such innovation in educational reform.

**How to cite:** Nasrul, N. Ringgit, A. Akmal, F. Mardiana, P.D. (2024). The Concept of Teachers as Agents of Change in Education *Al-Kayyis: Journal of Islamic Education*, 2(2), 87-96.

3031-3872

**E-ISSN:** STAI Balaiselasa YPPTI Pesisir Selatan

**Published by:**

There are many examples of innovations implemented by the government over the past few decades, such as Active Student Learning Methods, mentor teachers, preparatory schools for development, and small schools. The Module Teaching System, Distance Learning System, Open Junior High Schools, and others. However, the implementation of these innovations has not shown significant success, and in many cases, the innovation process has disappeared without clear evaluation (Aini et al., 2019; Novita et al., 2022; Pasaleron et al., 2023; Zulmuqim, 2017).

Every innovation is a social change, but not every social change is necessarily an innovation. Innovation has a narrower scope than social change. Innovation is a change that is progressive and is expected to be useful, while social change encompasses both positive and negative changes. The innovation process itself is closely linked to renewal efforts, renewal agents, and society. The diversity of society will impact the gap between renewal efforts and society. This gap can hinder the innovation diffusion process itself.

The role of change agents is like a bridge between innovative entrepreneurs and schools, and like lubricant for an engine, ensuring that innovation runs smoothly. Innovation can be hindered or even fail without innovation agents. Innovation agents empower others to participate in and benefit from innovation. Innovation agents stand between innovative entrepreneurs and schools. Their role in innovation is crucial. Therefore, further discussion about innovation agents themselves is necessary.

Innovation in education is essential because it relates to issues of relevance, quality, efficiency, effectiveness, and structural problems (Fatmawati, 2019). Additionally, the innovation process has characteristics related to needs, clarity, complexity, quality, and practicality that align with local community characteristics. Thus, the role of innovation agents is needed to support the success of the educational innovation process. Havelock (1995) describes change agents as “the principal actors in any organizational effort; change agents play many roles, including leaders, facilitators, negotiators, and advisors.” Furthermore, Smither states that, both internally and externally, a change agent must possess four characteristics: i) interpersonal communication skills, ii) theory-based problem-solving capability, iii) educational skills, and iv) self-awareness (Triandini et al., 2019).

In general, anyone involved in conceiving, designing, organizing, and conveying messages in innovation diffusion activities can be referred to as an agent of change. This means that innovation diffusion activities are not carried out by a single individual but by a team. Essentially, the role of innovation agents is to educate and raise clients' awareness of the importance of change. In addition to having a pioneering spirit, innovation agents must possess certain skills as a foundation for carrying out their tasks.

## **METHODS**

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review method or systematic literature study steps (Engkizar et al., 2018; Guspita, 2025; Ikhlas et al., 2025; Khairunisa et al., 2025; Faddhia, 2025). That is, the researchers first collect materials scientific research materials or literature related to educational administration and the fundamentals of organizational development, specifically regarding the concept and role of change agents, commonly referred to as Agents of Change, sourced from the web, books, articles, journals, and other sources. After collecting these scientific research materials, the researchers then studied and understood them. The researcher then attempts to draw conclusions from the scientific research, transforming it into new knowledge, which is the result of the analysis conducted (Akmal et al., 2024; Engkizar et al., 2021; Istiqamah et al., 2024; Mahira et al., 2024; Mustafa et al., 2025; Wati et al., 2025).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The role of teachers in promoting educational development within society is known as the Agent of Change, characterized by a group of individuals who drive and disseminate the process of change. These individuals, referred to as change agents, play a crucial role in fostering positive transformation, particularly in the field of education. They not only serve as disseminators of ideas and innovations but also as inspirers capable of motivating others to participate in the desired changes. Therefore, a change agent must possess strong characteristics such as leadership, commitment, and integrity, which can be cultivated (Htay et al., 2025; Jaafar et al., 2025; Okenova et al., 2025; Rahman et al., 2025).

Individuals or groups responsible for promoting behavioral change or creating transformation within an environment are referred to as change agents. In general, change agents can be defined as individuals or teams who work together to influence society or other parties, both internally and externally, with the aim of creating desired change. Their role is not limited to providing direction, but also includes mentoring and empowerment so that the change process can run effectively and sustainably.

To make it more interesting, the author attempts to elaborate starting from the terminology aspect, followed by expert opinions and related theories. The author also discusses the results of this study with the results of recent educational researchers who discuss this issue in a similar context and issue (Engkizar, Guspita, et al., 2025; Nasril et al., 2023; Oktavia et al., 2024; Ummah et al., 2025).

### Basic Concepts Regarding Agents of Change

Efforts to develop a society are always marked by the presence of a number of people who pioneer, drive, and disseminate the process of change (Damsuki, 2019). These are the people referred to as agents of change. This change aligns with the mission they aim to achieve, which is to create something appealing and highly meaningful for a group of people. The parties seeking change are referred to as agents of change, i.e., individuals or groups of people entrusted as leaders of one or more community institutions.

Havelock (1995) argues that change agents are people who help bring about social change or planned innovation. Ibrahim (1988: 100) argues that change agents are people whose job is to influence clinics to accept innovations in line with the goals of the innovators (Hakim & Darajat, 2023). This aligns with Rogers' (1983: 313) assertion that: a wide variety of occupations fit our definition of change agent: teachers, consultants, public health workers, agricultural extension agents, development workers, salespeople, and many others. All of these change agents serve as a communication link between a resource system of some kind (commonly referred to as a change agency) and a client system. (Havelock, 1995) This definition encompasses various occupations such as teachers, consultants, health educators, family planning educators, agricultural extension workers, and so on, referred to as innovation agents (Engkizar, Muslim, et al., 2025; Iskandar et al., 2025; Putri et al., 2025; Rambe et al., 2025; Sulaiman, 2021).

An agent of change is someone who is professionally tasked with influencing individuals or clients in terms of delivering innovations tailored by innovative entrepreneurs. According to Rogers, agents of change are professionals who influence the innovation decisions of community members in the direction desired by the change institution. Thus, everyone who works to pioneer, plan, and implement social change is considered an agent of change (Engkizar et al., 2023).

On the other hand, Soekanto explains that agents of change lead society in transforming social systems (Saepudin et al., 2023). In carrying out their role, agents of change are directly involved in the pressures to bring about change. They may even prepare changes in other social institutions. Methods of influencing society

through a systematic and pre-planned system are called social engineering or social planning.

He was one of Allah's messengers who had a gentle character in preaching to his father. Among the gentle characteristics of Prophet Ibrahim are depicted in several verses of communication between Prophet Ibrahim and his father regarding faith.

There are three things that agents of change need to pay attention to in order to strengthen their relationship with clients, namely: i) In the eyes of clients, agents of change must be capable and officially tasked with helping clients improve their lives or solve the problems they face, ii) Efforts must be made to facilitate the exchange of information about the expected outcomes of the change process (innovation) between the agent of change and the client, iii) Appropriate sanctions must be imposed on the change targets to be achieved (Engkizar et al., 2024).

There are seven steps in the activities of change agents in delivering innovation to the client system, namely: first, arousing the need for change. Usually, someone who acts as an agent of change at the beginning of their assignment is asked to help their clients realize the need for change. Agents of change must start by exploring the problems faced by their clients, helping them identify important and urgent priorities, and convincing them that they can solve these problems. For an educator acting as a change agent, they must have the ability to identify the problems faced by their students. Based on these problems, an educator can then help solve the existing issues, enabling students to develop the ability to achieve more positive changes.

Second, In another case, an agricultural extension worker who also acts as an agent of change must be able to identify the needs of the target audience, identify the problems faced by the target audience, analyze these problems according to priority, and then act as a facilitator in solving the problems faced so that the objectives of the extension process can be achieved. Third, strengthen information exchange relationships (Adawiyah, 2018; Engkizar et al., 2022). Trust is the key to the renewal process; the relationship between renewal agents and clients must be bound by mutual trust. Clients must have confidence that renewal agents have the ability to assist in a more positive change process. Conversely, change agents must also believe that clients have the willingness and ability to change for the better. Once clients have the confidence to change, change agents must immediately build a closer relationship with their clients.

Innovative agents can improve their relationship with clients by fostering client trust in their abilities, mutual trust, and empathy for clients' problems and needs. In the case of educators as change agents and students as clients, educators and students must trust each other so that the issues they face can be resolved through the exchange of complete information. In social life, if an individual trusts someone, whatever that person says is likely to be accepted as true without further analysis.

Fourth, diagnose the problems faced (Engkizar, Jaafar, et al., 2025). The ability of renewal agents to diagnose situations is a key factor that must be possessed. Before carrying out their primary tasks, change agents must be able to become part of an existing social system so that the problems faced by clients can be fully explored in their actual conditions, with nothing hidden. The validity of the problems that can be explored and diagnosed will determine whether the solutions offered are appropriate, and if this is done accurately in accordance with the client's needs, the change process will occur. The change agent is responsible for analyzing the situation faced by their client. The change agent must also have alternative problem-solving options to determine solutions tailored to the client's needs. Ultimately, the change agent can diagnose and review the client's situation with empathy. The renewal agent views the problem through the client's perspective, meaning that the diagnostic conclusions must be based on an analysis of the client's situation and psychology, not

on the agent's personal views. Therefore, an educator must be able to diagnose the problems faced by students based on the situation and psychology they are experiencing, not on the educator's personal assumptions.

Fifth, motivating clients to change. In the innovation adoption process, clients have several levels of acceptance of a given innovation. Therefore, innovation agents must not only be able to identify the problems faced by clients, but also be able to identify the level of adoption of each client. After innovation agents explore various possible ways for clients to achieve their goals, they are tasked with finding ways to motivate and attract attention so that clients are willing to change or open themselves up to accepting innovation. However, the methods used must remain client-oriented, meaning they should focus on the client's needs rather than overly emphasizing the innovation. An innovation will be accepted if it is genuinely needed by the client. Similarly, for an educator, if the innovation being presented to students is genuinely needed, the willingness to accept the innovation or information provided will not be difficult.

Sixth, translating intention into action. After developing the intention to change, the change agent must be able to influence the client's behavior in implementing the innovation provided based on the client's needs, not out of coercion. The tangible outcome of the innovation adoption process is that the client is willing and able to apply the innovation communicated by the change agent. To achieve this, the change agent does not have to act alone to influence the client but can leverage others who have already gained the client's trust, such as community leaders. Interpersonal communication is more effective when conducted among close friends and is particularly beneficial during the persuasion and decision-making stages of innovation adoption. Therefore, the most appropriate action for innovation agents is to use indirect influence, such as leveraging community leaders to activate other group activities.

Seventh, maintaining the stability of innovation acceptance in a sustainable manner (Prestiana et al., 2023). Innovation agents must maintain the stability of innovation acceptance by strengthening clients who have implemented innovations. Behavioral changes that align with the innovation must be maintained to prevent a regression to pre-innovation conditions. In a community setting, once an innovation introduced by an innovation agent has been implemented, the agent has a responsibility to maintain stability to ensure the innovation remains in use sustainably. Many factors can cause an implemented innovation to become unsustainable, such as it no longer being profitable, the emergence of another innovation that is more effective in influencing clients, etc. Therefore, the role of innovation agents in maintaining the stability of the innovation adoption process must continue.

Ending dependency. The ultimate goal of a change agent is to foster awareness of the need for change and the ability to change oneself as a member of a social system that is constantly challenged by the progress of the times. Change agents must strive to shift their clients from relying on the abilities of the change agent to being free and trusting in their own abilities. The success of a change agent in fulfilling their role is measured by the client's ability to sustainably apply the innovations provided, and the client's conscious development of these innovations, even becoming more open to the innovations needed. This situation would be even better if the client could disseminate the innovations obtained to others, thereby enabling the client to also act as a change agent.

Change agents play a crucial role in encouraging individuals or groups to recognize the need for change and adopt innovations. The first step involves helping clients identify issues and providing solutions tailored to their specific needs. Trust between change agents and clients is a key factor in the successful dissemination of

innovations, as strong relationships facilitate communication and acceptance of change. Additionally, innovation agents must be able to accurately diagnose problems and understand clients' psychological conditions to ensure that the solutions offered are truly effective. During the change process, innovation agents also need to motivate clients to change voluntarily rather than out of coercion. The success of innovation is not only measured by its acceptance but also by its sustainability, so innovation agents must ensure that the changes implemented remain stable and do not revert to their previous state. Ultimately, the primary goal of innovation agents is to help clients become self-reliant, capable of developing innovations sustainably, and even serve as innovation agents for others.

### **Strategies for Enhancing the Role of Teachers as Agents of Change**

The success of educational reform ultimately depends on what teachers think and do. This aligns with the following statement, which asserts that improvements in schools will not occur without changes in the quality of learning experiences on the part of those who run the schools (Cahya, 2023; Hernita et al., 2025; Yasin et al., 2024). Several strategic steps can be taken to enhance the role of teachers as agents of change.

Building positive teacher mentality (Rohmah et al., 2023). This can be done through periodic training activities such as “achievement motivation” and similar programs, for example, coaching and training in Emotional Spiritual Quotient. Although every teacher theoretically knows some psychological theories, learning, but still requires refresher courses on orientation and prospective life insights from psychology experts or motivators in dealing with various work issues as educators. In this context, the training focuses on building consistency as an educator throughout their professional career to develop the following: i) The principle of continuous learning (learning principle) ii) The principle of the need for achievement (need achievement principle) iii) The principle of leadership (leadership principle) d) The principle of forward-looking life orientation (vision principle) e) The principle of being a beacon in group life (well-organized principle).

Promoting accelerated understanding of learning innovations and the utilization of Computer Science Technology. In response to the condition of teachers who still do not understand various learning innovations and the importance of utilizing advances in learning technology, the strategy that can be implemented is for each educational unit to have a ‘learning innovation expert team’. Some activities that the learning innovation expert team can undertake to improve teacher quality include: i) Conducting collegial discussions on the development of mastery of scientific concepts and the latest technological advancements ii) Developing teaching materials or modules and conducting training on the use of multimedia based on science and technology iii) Conducting classroom action research iv) Involving teachers in the school self-evaluation process v) Providing input on the application of learning methods that uphold the pillars of learning, namely: learning to know, learning to do, learning together, and learning to be.

Monitoring and guidance of teacher performance The City or Regency Education Office, through school supervisors, continues to monitor and provide guidance on teacher performance in implementing the four basic competencies of professional teachers. Several requirements that supervisors must possess in the teacher guidance process to be able to become agents of change in learning at school include the following qualities of a supervisor as a professional teacher performance coach: i) Understanding various learning psychology theories theoretically and practically ii) Having an integral, democratic, visionary perspective and possessing IESQ advantages iii) Possessing multi-faceted abilities, including expertise in specific academic disciplines, managerial skills, communication or motivational abilities, and

humanistic qualities iv) Mastering educational research conceptually and practically, including various strategies or approaches to learning.

## CONCLUSION

The exemplary character of Prophet Ibrahim, which includes being a good role model who always obeyed Allah and was never touched by polytheism due to the pure nature given by Allah, can be seen when he preached to his father and gave advice to his children and grandchildren to always hold fast to the religion of Allah. The gentle nature of Prophet Ibrahim can be seen when he conveyed Allah's command to Isma'il with tender and gentle words, as well as in his preaching to his father. Therefore, the gentle character of Prophet Ibrahim can serve as a guide by always using gentle words such as "ya bunayya" (O my son) and "ya abati" (O my father), and by establishing balanced and loving communication within the family, as seen in the unity of Ibrahim, Hajar, and Ismail in facing life's difficulties with patience. The noble character of Siti Hajar can be seen in her patience in accepting what Allah commanded Prophet Ibrahim, including leaving him in a desolate place in the middle of a barren desert, faithfully accompanying her husband and never showing any harshness in raising her child, Siti Hajar cared for Ismail with such sincerity, nurturing him with love and affection when Ibrahim left him between the hills of Shafa and Marwah. The obedient and respectful character of Prophet Ismail (peace be upon him) toward his parents is evident when he was about to be sacrificed. He obeyed and submitted to what his father, Ibrahim (peace be upon him), had said, using gentle words, "O my father," without ever rebelling or disobeying, as Ismail's character had been nurtured from childhood by Prophet Ibrahim and Siti Hajar, and he was also obedient to the Creator, Allah, in his life.

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Al-Kayyis: Journal of Islamic Education

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