

# **Do Leadership Style and Work Culture Influence School Achievement?**

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*This study explores differences in school achievement levels regarding leadership and work culture in public elementary schools in Pekanbaru. This study took a population of public elementary schools comprising achieving and non-achieving schools with 58 samples of teachers and staff. This study compares the achievements of elementary schools consisting of the National Student Art Contest Festival, the National Student Sports Olympiad, and the National Science Olympiad. The variables measured are moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture in schools using a questionnaire instrument, quantitative approach design survey type (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), and school achievement is used on documentation with comparative descriptive analysis. The results of the study found that moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture differed significantly Sig.(2-tailed) 0.0017, 0.027, and 0.015 < 0.05 in of high-achieving schools and non-achieving. The analysis shows that the application of moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture in high-achieving schools is better than non-achieving schools. The implication is that schools need to apply moral leadership, change leadership and work culture properly.*

*Keywords: moral leadership, change leadership, work culture, school achievement*

## **INTRODUCTION**

International school achievement can be seen from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) where elementary school achievement is formulated as reading, mathematics, and science (Pulkkinen & Rautopuro, 2022). In Indonesia, nationally, school achievement can be grouped based on the level of the academic unit. Elementary school achievement through the Ministry of Education and Culture, research, technology, and higher education in its official account <https://pusatprestasinasional.kemdikbud.go.id/jenjang/sd> has formulated several agendas in measuring elementary school (SD) achievement, including competing in the National Student Art Contest Festival (FLS2N) covering art, language, and

literacy. Furthermore, the National Student Sports Olympiad (O2SN) covers sports and physical health, and the National Science Olympiad (OSN) covers science and technology.

School achievement is a domino effect of sound and professional school leaders. The principal's leadership will influence all variables in implementing education in schools. Learning is the main activity in school. The principal has a strategic role in improving the quality of school education, which is influenced by the principal's leadership behavior (Kusumaningrum et al., 2020; Julaiha, 2019)). Wahab et al (2020) said educational success requires the school principal's commitment and high performance for teachers and students to create a good work culture in schools. This activity is then measured by the achievements achieved, namely school achievement. Jambo & Hongde (2020) show that distributed leadership has a positive and indirect effect on school achievement, and the role of the school principal is indispensable. Supriyanto (2016) added that a leader must have a strategy in building organizational commitment to achievement.

Therefore, there needs to be an ongoing effort to empower and strengthen school principals' leadership, with persistence in achievement which is reflected in the willingness and determination of school principals to implement quality leadership that will facilitate school achievement (Gunawan et al., 2020; Nurabadi, 2021). Principal leadership is a variable that significantly influences school progress. Principals should be great by increasing school achievement because a great organization has great leaders (Bafadal et al., 2018b). A large body of evidence has demonstrated the impact of school leadership on improving education. Leadership influence is often indirect but contributes to building a rewarding work culture. An environment in which teachers and schools can develop high-quality student learning (Pont, 2020). Leadership determines the organization's success (Syam et al., 2022).

Leadership is the ability to influence, direct behavior, and have particular expertise in the field in that the group wants to achieve goals (Khoiri, 2017). Servant leadership promises to be a leadership approach that can help leadership practitioners achieve better results with moral values-based leadership (Hoch et al., 2018). Moral leadership is a form of exemplary leadership expected to be moralized or imitated by followers. Moral leadership posits effective school management, site-based management, quality management, and effective co-leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992). Fehr et al. (2015) said three things related to moral leadership; 1) followers view their leader as an ethical leader, 2) leader behaviors that followers are likely to moralize, and 3) identify motivations to maintain moral values. Forms of moral leadership such as ethical, authentic, and servant leadership have experienced a surge in interest in the millennial era (Lemoine et al., 2019). Wang & Hackett's (2020) future investigation of how moral virtue influences the motivational properties of followers' moral identities. Findings (McLaren et al., 2021; Kavussanu & Stanger, 2017) of understanding the relationship between leadership and moral behavior informed to date goal attainment theory.

Schools as educational organizations will also face changes. The change includes changes in people, structure, or technology (Robbins & Coulter, 2021). Organizations face changes in environmental elements, values, and resources. Change leadership can increase team reflection on their performance results and focus on efforts to correct mistakes and efforts to develop the organization (Gunawan, Bafadal et al., 2020). The behavior of the principal as a leader who is more focused on mobilizing education and education staff in making continuous changes to improve the quality of learning is change leadership. Pont (2020) added that the school improvement perspective recognizes the critical role of school leadership in educational change. Principals and teachers as educational actors face the challenge of adapting to the times (Monia et al., 2019). Timan & Imron (2022) said digitalization can assist school principals in improving teacher performance which in turn supports teacher efforts in achieving the expected performance, and can increase student competency.

Wills (2016) argues that change leadership directly influences performing teachers and schools. Katkat (2014) states that the change in leadership capacity will determine his subordinates' performance level. Moreover, he saw that the change in leadership capacity of school principals also determines teacher performance. To implement organizational changes, there are four types of strategies that can be selected, namely: (1) changes in the organizational structure; (2) technological changes; (3) changes in assignments; and (4) human changes. A series of actions by the principal as a change leader as (1) looking to the future

and designing changes to expect the future (visionary); (2) inspiring teachers to look to the future to make changes; (3) determining strategic steps for change; (4) implementation of changes; and (5) evaluating changes and planning follow-up (Bafadal et al., 2019; Kusumaningrum et al., 2020).

A school is an organizational unit that must show its existence as a learning organization by obtaining brilliant achievements. (Senge, 2017) talks about where learning organizations may be the only source of sustainable competitive advantage. Learning organizations must be able to solve various problems and identify the development of schools and human resources (Caldwell, 2012; Ellström, 2010). School competitiveness is also determined by its human resources for achievement. Julaiha (2019) argues that a school is an institution that has various educational components that must be managed. The principal, as a leader, has an active role and is always influential in all matters relating to the needs of staff, teachers, and students at school. The principal has a strategic role in improving the quality of school education, which is influenced by the principal's leadership behavior (Bafadal et al., 2018b). Auliyah (2018) said that the seriousness of achievement is shown by the willingness and ability of the school principal to apply quality leadership which will facilitate the organization's growth and development so that it can achieve school achievements.

Pont (2020) states that there is a lot of research on leadership in schools. However, the analysis and promotion of policies to support and strengthen the role of school leaders to support schools, but the application in improvement seems to have received less attention. Added by Rusdinal et al (2019) that increasing subordinates' work commitment through seriousness and high enthusiasm at work, being responsible and increasing work awareness, and always trying to be responsive to any changes that occur in the organization can be encouraged by leadership efforts.

## **METHOD**

This research is research with a quantitative comparative method. The schools that became the research sites were two groups of public elementary schools, namely state primary schools with high achievers and non-achievers in the city of Pekanbaru. This research uses a quantitative approach design with a survey type (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This study examines moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture on school achievement.

The measurement of the variables of moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture (free) is through a questionnaire. One variable of school achievement (bound) is by documentation at the Pekanbaru city education office. The analysis used is descriptive and regression (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Descriptive analysis by calculating the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, range, minimum score, and maximum score. The results of the descriptive analysis are then presented in tabular form. Before the data were analyzed by regression, the data were tested for assumptions, which included normality, homogeneity, and linearity. Regression analysis aims to find the regression equation predictor variables and criteria. Analysis of research data using the help of the IBM SPSS Statistics 24 program.

The data was then analyzed by means of a comparative test between 5 outstanding state elementary schools and 5 underachieving public elementary schools with the following data:

**TABLE 1**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND SAMPLE IN 10 UNITS OF STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SDN) PEKANBARU WITH ACHIEVEMENT (5 UNITS) AND UNDERACHIEVING (5 UNITS)**

No	Achievement	Teacher	Employee	Total	Sample	Underachieving	Teacher	Employee	Total	Sample
	r				20%		r			20%
1	SDN 153	20	7	27	6	SDN 113	18	5	23	5
2	SDN 138	28	6	34	7	SDN 41	31	5	36	8
3	SDN 171	27	5	32	7	SDN 22	15	4	19	4
4	SDN 145	21	3	24	5	SDN 125	13	3	16	4
5	SDN 15	24	4	28	6	SDN 136	24	6	30	6
	<b>Total</b>	120	25	145	<b>31</b>	<b>Total</b>	101	23	124	<b>27</b>

\* Data from Education & Culture Office of Pekanbaru City

## RESULTS

### Data Description

Based on the research design, the measurement results include three numerical variables: moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture. In the following, the results of measuring these variables are presented.

### Description of State Elementary School (SDN) Data in the City of Pekanbaru

Based on the results of the data description, the researcher will display the data in the data section for schools with achievements and non-achievers in each variable. The moral leadership variable for outstanding elementary schools in Pekanbaru is known: the average is 86.40 in the good category. Meanwhile, schools with no achievements with an average of 65.40 are in the sufficient category. The description of the frequency of moral leadership variables is presented in table 2.

**TABLE 2A**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE MORAL LEADERSHIP VARIABLE IN ACHIEVEMENT STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

Categories	Percentage	F	%
Fewer	0 – 54	0	0,00
Less	55 – 64	1	3,22
Enough	65 – 79	12	38,70
Good	80 – 89	10	32,26
Very good	90 – 100	8	25,80
<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE 2B**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF THE MORAL LEADERSHIP VARIABLE IN**  
**UNDERACHIEVING STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Fewer	0 – 54	2	7,40
Less	55 – 64	8	29,62
Enough	65 – 79	14	51,85
Good	80 – 89	3	11,11
Very good	90 – 100	0	0,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the results of the description of the data above, it is known that the application of moral leadership in schools with good achievements is better than schools with no achievements. Statistically the mean difference test stated Sig.(2-tailed)  $0.0017 < 0.05$ .

The results of the description of the change leadership variable data in achievement schools with an average of 88.90 is in the good category. Meanwhile, change leadership in schools that do not excel with an average of 64.00 is in the less category. The description of the frequency of change leadership variables is presented in Table 3.

**TABLE 3A**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP VARIABLES AT STATE**  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH ACHIEVEMENT**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Fewer	0 – 54	0	0,00
Less	55 – 64	0	0,00
Enough	65 – 79	11	35,48
Good	80 – 89	15	48,38
Very good	90 – 100	5	16,12
<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE 3B**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF CHANGE LEADERSHIP VARIABLES IN STATE**  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH UNDERACHIEVING**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>
Fewer	0 – 54	2	7,40
Less	55 – 64	11	40,74
Enough	65 – 79	12	44,44
Good	80 – 89	2	7,40
Very good	90 – 100	0	0,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the results of the description of the data above, it is known that the implementation of change leadership in schools with good achievements is better than schools with no achievements. Statistically, the mean difference test stated Sig.(2-tailed)  $0.027 < 0.05$ .

Based on the results of the description of the data on the work culture variable in high-achieving schools, it is known that the average of 88.84 is in a good category. Meanwhile, the work culture in schools that do not excel is known to have an average of 65.10 in the good category. The description of the frequency of work culture variables is presented in Table 4.

**TABLE 2A**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF WORK CULTURE VARIABLES IN STATE**  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH ACHIEVEMENT**

Categories	Percentage	F	%
Fewer	0 – 54	0	0,00
Less	55 – 64	1	3,22
Enough	65 – 79	11	35,48
Good	80 – 89	13	41,93
Very good	90 – 100	6	19,35
<b>Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>100</b>

**TABLE 4B**  
**FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF WORK CULTURE VARIABLES IN STATE**  
**ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH UNDERACHIEVING**

Categories	Percentage	F	%
Fewer	0 – 54	3	11,11
Less	55 – 64	10	37,03
Enough	65 – 79	13	48,14
Good	80 – 89	1	3,70
Very good	90 – 100	0	0,00
<b>Total</b>		<b>27</b>	<b>100</b>

Based on the results of the description of the data above, it is known that applying work culture to schools with good achievements is better than schools with no achievements. Statistically, the mean difference test stated Sig.(2-tailed)  $0.015 < 0.05$ .

**TABLE 3**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF THE FREQUENCY OF STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (SDN) WITH**  
**ACHIEVEMENT AND UNDERACHIEVING (2017-2022/LAST 5 YEARS)**

No	Achievement	Teacher	Employee	Total	Achievements in the Last 5 Years
1	SDN 153	20	7	27	16
2	SDN 138	28	6	34	9
3	SDN 171	27	5	32	5
4	SDN 145	21	3	24	4
5	SDN 15	24	4	28	4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>38</b>

No	Underachieving	Teacher	Employee	Total	Achievements in the Last 5 Years
1	SDN 113	18	5	23	0
2	SDN 41	31	5	36	0
3	SDN 22	15	4	19	0
4	SDN 125	13	3	16	0
5	SDN 136	24	6	30	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>0</b>

### Test Data Assumption

Before the data were analyzed by regression, the data were tested for assumptions of normality, homogeneity, and linearity. Normality test to ensure that the research data is normally distributed. Normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test. The results of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test show the significance of the variables: moral leadership = 0.630; change leadership = 0.598; work culture = 0.469; and school performance. Based on the significance test of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, all research variables were  $> 0.050$ ; so it can be concluded that the data is included in the normal distribution.

The homogeneity test is used to ensure research data from samples that have a small variance. Homogeneity test using the Test of Homogeneity of Variances. The test results of the Test of Homogeneity of Variances show the significance of the variables: moral leadership = 0.62; change leadership = 0.611; work culture = 0.060. Based on the significance test of the Test of Homogeneity of Variances coefficients, all research variables were  $> 0.05$ ; so it can be concluded that the data comes from a sample with a slight variance.

Based on the assumption test on research data, which includes normality and homogeneity tests, it can be concluded that the research data meets the data assumptions to be analyzed with parametric statistics (regression analysis). Furthermore, the following presents the results of data analysis using regression analysis.

### Moral Leadership

Moral leadership is also associated with influencing school achievement. Moral leadership has a significant direct effect on changes in school academic capacity and an indirect effect on the growth rate of school achievement. This study supports a leadership perspective in learning that aims to build school academic capacity to improve school achievement (Hallinger & Heck, 2010). Gu et al (2015) said that moral leadership could help achievement by increasing followers' creativity.

Ethical approaches to leadership and describes avenues for promising future research to build complementary rather than redundant knowledge about how moral approaches to leadership inform broader domains of leadership (Lemoine et al., 2019). When demonstrated by school leaders, ethical standards inspire trust among students, parents, and society. This builds support for the school and an environment conducive to achievement (Hughes & Jones, 2011). School achievement is the result of an effort that has been carried out and created both individually and in groups on behalf of the school/school delegates originating from school residents, both at the city, provincial, national, and even international levels.

Moral leadership indicators according to (Fehr et al., 2015; Gu et al., 2013; Graham et al., 2011; Wang & Hackett, 2020; Khan et al., 2020; Clifford et al., 2015) with indicators Mindfulness, Justice, Loyalty, and Modesty able to lead the school to excel.

### Change Leadership

Change leadership is considered capable of influencing school achievement. Put forward by Holten et al. (2019), investigates the importance of change leadership (informing, communicating, involving, and supporting) and change management (reasons and competencies for change) for the process of organizational change and its results throughout the organization, in this case, school achievement. Hechanova et al (2018) stated that change leadership is context-dependent. In the context of school achievement, it is suspected that change leadership has an influence. Change leadership in basic education

settings and contribute to understanding effective change leadership and change management in schools (Guerrero et al., 2018). Change leadership is an attempt to create a revolution in organizational change.

Change leadership is a type of leadership that focuses on large-scale changes within an organization. Change leaders are more concerned about grand transformative visions and how staff becomes empowered enough to contribute to creating that vision. The change leadership can catapult an organization from uncertainty to certainty – through the confusion and distraction to new heights of success. There is no more difficult job for leaders than leading change, but change must and will continue to occur, and it is time for the organization to improve (Bradham, 2017).

Change leadership indicators according to (Dumas & Beinecke, 2018; Caulfield & Senger, 2017; Hanson, 2015; Bafadal et al., 2018a; Kusumaningrum et al., 2020; Issah, 2018; Guerrero et al., 2018) with indicators Visionaries, Inspire, Solving problems, Change management able to lead the school to excel.

## **Work Culture**

Organizations take very different approaches to build a quality work culture. In some organizations, a quality work culture is critical to ensure employees provide better customer service (Ali et al., 2015). Organizational culture is briefly defined as the basic assumptions about the world and the values that guide life in organizations. This brief review of the study of organizational culture is about the role of leadership and culture in understanding organizational culture and performance (Schneider et al., 2013).

Khan et al (2020) found that leadership can solve employees' workplace problems and increase job satisfaction, job performance, employee welfare, and innovation. Followers' perceptions about the leader's actions are morally right, and the moralizing of the leader's actions will improve the work culture, ultimately having implications for organizational achievement (Epitropaki et al., 2013). Djafri (2020), work culture will be a long process due to the change of old values into new values, and it will take time to become a habit and continue to make continuous improvements and improvements; this, of course, needs to be driven by leadership.

Culture work, according to (Ali et al., 2015; Alesina & Giuliano 2016; Adha et al., 2019; Suwondo, 2012; Djafri, 2020) with indicators Diligent, Dedicated, Responsible, Thorough, and Cooperate can create and contribute to outstanding schools.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the data analysis, it can be concluded that: (1) schools with high achievement implement moral leadership, change leadership, and a work culture that are better than schools with no achievements. This means that the better the application of moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture, the better school achievement. (2) significant differences in moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture in high achieving schools and non-achieving schools statistically sequential Sig.(2-tailed) 0.0017, 0.027, and 0.015 < 0.05 in the achieving school and non-achieving schools groups. Therefore, it needs to be optimally supported various variables that can technically be implemented by school principals, such as moral leadership, change leadership, and work culture to improve school achievement so that they excel.

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