

# Enhancing School Success through the Alignment of Thoughts, Words, and Actions: A Multi-Dimensional Analysis of Leadership, Teacher Satisfaction, and Academic Achievement.

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## ABSTRACT

This journal explores the multifaceted dimensions contributing to school success, focusing on the critical alignment of thoughts, words, and actions among educators, the impact of leadership styles, and the role of teacher well-being. Drawing upon a case study of Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim, Perak, Malaysia, and integrating various academic references, this paper synthesizes findings on how internal beliefs, communication, and behaviors of teachers, coupled with effective leadership and positive personality traits, collectively foster a conducive learning environment and enhance student academic achievement. The analysis incorporates Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) data to illustrate the tangible outcomes of these integrated factors within the context of the School Transformation Program 2025 (TS25).

## 1. INTRODUCTION

School success is a complex and dynamic construct, influenced by a myriad of interconnected factors ranging from the efficacy of pedagogical approaches and the relevance of curriculum design to the effectiveness of leadership and the morale of its teaching staff. In the contemporary global educational landscape, and particularly within national initiatives such as Malaysia's ambitious School Transformation Program 2025 (TS25), the pursuit of educational excellence has become a paramount objective. The TS25 program, a cornerstone of Malaysia's educational reform, emphasizes a holistic development approach, aiming not only to cultivate academic prowess but also to nurture well-rounded individuals equipped with 21st-century skills and prepared for the complexities of future challenges (Hung & Shaid, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2023). Achieving such ambitious and comprehensive goals necessitates a deep and nuanced understanding of the underlying dynamics that drive educational institutions forward and foster sustainable growth.

At the heart of a thriving school environment lies the collective efficacy of its educators. The alignment of their **thoughts, words, and actions** emerges as a foundational principle for fostering integrity, trust, and a shared vision within the school community (Velayudhan et al., 2025). When teachers' internal beliefs (thoughts) are consistent with their verbal expressions (words) and their professional conduct (actions), it creates a powerful synergy that positively influences school culture and student outcomes. Conversely, any disconnect can lead to confusion, inconsistency, and diminished trust, ultimately impeding progress towards educational objectives.

Beyond individual teacher integrity, the role of **leadership styles** is equally pivotal. Effective leadership can inspire, guide, and empower teachers, creating an environment where alignment flourishes. Specifically, distributive leadership, which involves sharing leadership responsibilities among various stakeholders, has been identified as a significant contributor to school success, particularly in fostering a collaborative and supportive atmosphere (Velayudhan et al., 2024a). This approach leverages the diverse strengths within the school, promoting collective ownership and shared accountability for educational goals.

Furthermore, the **well-being and personality traits** of teachers play a crucial role in their effectiveness and, consequently, in the overall success of the school. A 'happy personality' among educators has been shown to correlate positively with a successful school environment, suggesting that teacher happiness and job satisfaction are not merely personal matters but are integral to creating a positive and productive learning atmosphere (Velayudhan et al., 2024b).

This journal aims to synthesize these interconnected themes, drawing upon a series of studies conducted at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim, as well as broader research on teacher job satisfaction and self-actualization (Velayudhan, 2013; Velayudhan & Jayagobi, 2018). By analyzing the interplay between the alignment of thoughts, words, and actions, leadership styles, teacher personality, and academic achievement as evidenced by PBD data, this paper seeks to provide a comprehensive framework for understanding and enhancing school success.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 The Concept of Alignment: Thoughts, Words, and Actions

The principle of aligning thoughts, words, and actions is deeply rooted in philosophical and psychological concepts of integrity, authenticity, and cognitive consistency. This alignment suggests that an individual's internal beliefs and values (thoughts) should be congruent with their verbal expressions (words) and their observable behaviors (actions). When these three components are in harmony, it fosters a sense of sincerity, builds trust, and enhances credibility, both at an individual and organizational level. Conversely, a misalignment can lead to perceptions of hypocrisy, confusion, and a breakdown of trust, ultimately hindering effective collaboration and goal attainment.

In the educational context, Velayudhan et al. (2025) provide a compelling argument for the critical role of this alignment among educators. Their case study at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim meticulously demonstrates that when teachers consistently exhibit congruence between their pedagogical philosophies, their classroom communication, and their actual teaching practices, a profoundly positive impact is observed. This consistency extends beyond individual teacher efficacy to shape the entire school culture, fostering an environment characterized by harmony, collaboration, and a shared commitment to educational objectives. The study's findings underscore that this alignment is not merely an abstract ideal but a tangible factor that directly and positively influences students' academic achievement. It facilitates clearer communication of expectations, ensures more consistent application of instructional strategies, and solidifies a stronger, unified vision among the teaching staff, all of which are crucial for creating an optimal learning environment. This concept resonates with social cognitive theories, where consistent modeling of desired behaviors and values by educators can significantly influence student learning and development (Miller, 2008).

### 2.2 Leadership Styles in Education

The role of leadership in steering a school towards sustained success is a subject of extensive academic inquiry. Historically, educational leadership often adhered to hierarchical, top-down models. However, contemporary research and progressive educational reforms, such as Malaysia's School Transformation Program 2025 (TS25), increasingly advocate for more collaborative and inclusive leadership paradigms. Among these, **distributive leadership** has emerged as a particularly effective approach. Distributive leadership posits that leadership responsibilities and functions are shared among various stakeholders within the school community, rather than being concentrated in a single individual.

Velayudhan et al. (2024a) provide valuable insights into the impact of distributive leadership within the specific context of the TS25 program. Their research aligns with broader systematic reviews on distributive leadership and teacher job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2025; Ghazali & Alias, 2024). Their research meticulously demonstrates that by actively distributing leadership responsibilities, schools can significantly empower their teachers. This empowerment, in turn, cultivates a profound sense of collective ownership and professional commitment among the staff. When teachers are given opportunities to contribute to decision-making processes, curriculum development, and school improvement initiatives, their job satisfaction and professional engagement are markedly enhanced. The study conducted at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim revealed a robust positive correlation between the implementation of distributive leadership practices and the overall success of the school. This finding strongly suggests that empowering teachers to assume leadership roles not only contributes to a more positive and dynamic school climate but also directly leads to improved student outcomes. Distributive leadership, therefore, acts as a catalyst for fostering a collaborative culture where shared vision and collective responsibility drive continuous improvement and innovation.

### 2.3 Teacher Well-being and Personality

The emotional and psychological well-being of teachers constitutes a critical, though frequently underestimated, determinant of school success. Beyond mere job satisfaction, the concept of a **'happy personality'** among educators, as rigorously investigated by Velayudhan et al. (2024b), transcends a superficial demeanor of cheerfulness. Instead, it encapsulates a deeper, more intrinsic state characterized by a profound sense of well-being, sustained job satisfaction, and an inherently positive outlook towards their profession and life in general.

This disposition is not only beneficial for the individual teacher but also profoundly impacts the entire educational ecosystem.

Their seminal study at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim provided empirical evidence that teachers within this institution exhibited a remarkably high level of happy personality. Crucially, this positive psychological trait was found to be strongly correlated with the school's consistently excellent academic results. This compelling finding suggests a direct causal link: a teaching force imbued with a positive and happy disposition is inherently more motivated, deeply engaged in their pedagogical responsibilities, and demonstrably more effective in the classroom. Such teachers are more likely to create vibrant, supportive, and stimulating learning environments, fostering better student engagement and academic performance. The research unequivocally highlights the imperative of cultivating a supportive and nurturing work environment that actively promotes teacher well-being. This is not merely a welfare consideration but a strategic investment, as it has a direct, measurable, and significant impact on student success and the overall flourishing of the school community.

#### **2.4 Job Satisfaction and Self-Actualization**

Building upon the critical theme of teacher well-being, the earlier, foundational works of Velayudhan (2013) and Velayudhan and Jayagobi (2018) offer profound insights into the interconnected concepts of **job satisfaction** and **self-actualization** among educators. His doctoral dissertation, a comprehensive investigation into the experiences of primary school teachers, meticulously explored the multifaceted factors that contribute to their sense of professional fulfillment and personal growth. The findings from this extensive research underscore that key drivers of job satisfaction include ample opportunities for continuous professional development, the cultivation of a supportive and collaborative school culture, and the provision of a significant degree of autonomy in their professional roles. These elements collectively empower teachers, allowing them to feel valued and effective.

Subsequent research, including a study focusing on college lecturers, further corroborated and reinforced these initial findings, demonstrating the generalizability of these principles across different educational levels. The consistent message from these studies is clear: when educators experience a high degree of job satisfaction, they are not only more likely to exhibit unwavering commitment to their profession but are also intrinsically motivated to strive for excellence in their teaching and professional responsibilities. This intrinsic motivation is a potent force for sustained school improvement and is intimately linked to the concept of self-actualization, a psychological construct where individuals are driven to realize their full potential and achieve personal growth. Consequently, an educational environment that actively cultivates and prioritizes job satisfaction and provides avenues for self-actualization among its teaching staff is demonstrably more likely to achieve and sustain long-term success, fostering a culture of continuous learning and high performance.

### **3. METHODOLOGY**

This journal adopts a predominantly qualitative research paradigm, primarily utilizing a **case study approach** to provide an in-depth and holistic understanding of the complex phenomena under investigation. The chosen case study focuses on Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim, a primary school situated in Perak, Malaysia. This particular institution was selected due to its active participation in the School Transformation Program 2025 (TS25) and its prior involvement in several related studies concerning educational leadership, teacher personality, and the alignment of pedagogical practices. This focused approach allows for a rich, contextualized analysis of the intricate interplay between various endogenous and exogenous factors contributing to school success, providing a granular perspective that might be overlooked in broader quantitative studies.

#### **3.1 Research Design and Context**

The choice of a case study design is justified by the need to explore the complex and interwoven nature of school dynamics. By focusing on a single institution, this study can delve deeply into the specific mechanisms through which leadership styles, teacher characteristics, and the alignment of thoughts, words, and actions translate into tangible academic outcomes. Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim serves as an exemplary case, given its participation in the School Transformation Program 2025 (TS25) and the availability of rich data from previous research.

#### **3.2 Participants**

The participants in the primary studies that inform this journal consisted of **76 teachers** from Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim. This sample represents a diverse group in terms of gender, age, and teaching experience, providing a comprehensive cross-section of the teaching staff. The demographic data from the study by Velayudhan et al. (2025) indicates that 80.3% of the respondents were female, with the majority aged between 31 and 50 years. This demographic profile is typical of the teaching profession in Malaysia.

### 3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data for this journal are drawn from two main sources:

- 1 **Questionnaires:** The primary data on leadership styles, teacher personality, and the alignment of thoughts, words, and actions were collected through structured questionnaires administered to the 76 participating teachers. These instruments were designed to measure the key constructs of the studies, and their reliability was established through appropriate statistical methods.
- 2 **Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) Data:** The academic achievement of students was assessed using the school's PBD data. This classroom-based assessment provides a continuous and holistic measure of student learning and mastery across various subjects. The PBD data, as presented in the attached document, offers a quantitative measure of school success, which can be analyzed in conjunction with the qualitative data from the teacher questionnaires.

The analysis of the data involves a synthesis of the findings from the referenced studies. The quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to identify correlations and significant relationships between variables. The PBD data were analyzed to determine the overall level of student mastery and to identify any patterns or trends across different subjects. By integrating these different data sources, this journal aims to provide a multi-dimensional and nuanced understanding of the factors that contribute to school success.

## 4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the key findings derived from the synthesis of the referenced studies and the analysis of the provided Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) data from Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim. The results are organized to illustrate the interconnectedness of teacher alignment, leadership styles, teacher well-being, and student academic achievement.

### 4.1 Alignment of Thoughts, Words, and Actions

The study by Velayudhan et al. (2025) on the alignment of teachers' thoughts, words, and actions at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim revealed a significant positive impact on the school environment and student outcomes. This concept of constructive alignment, as articulated by Biggs (1996), emphasizes the critical importance of aligning teaching and assessment methods with desired learning outcomes. The data collected from 76 teachers at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim indicated that a high degree of consistency among their thoughts, words, and actions fostered a more harmonious and collaborative school culture. This alignment was observed to significantly enhance communication among staff, improve the effective implementation of instructional strategies, and strengthen a shared vision for educational excellence. The study concluded that such coherence among educators is a crucial determinant of school success, directly contributing to improved academic performance and a positive learning atmosphere. This finding resonates with Miller's (2008) concept of 'teaching with intention,' where a teacher's beliefs, practices, and actions are harmonized to create a more effective learning environment.

### 4.2 Leadership and Personality Correlation

The research by Velayudhan et al. (2024b) highlighted the crucial roles of distributive leadership and teacher personality in achieving school success within the TS25 framework. The implementation of the TS25 program itself has been a subject of extensive study, with research consistently indicating its profound impact on teacher competence and student outcomes (Sulaiman & Ismail, 2020; Hung & Shaid, 2024; Ahmad et al., 2023). These studies collectively underscore the transformative potential of TS25 in elevating educational standards across Malaysia. The findings from Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim indicated that teachers exhibited a very high level of happy personality (Mean = 3.6; Standard Deviation = 0.50), suggesting a positive and resilient teaching force. Furthermore, a strong positive relationship ( $r = 0.801$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) was identified between distributive leadership style (Mean = 3.23; Standard Deviation = 0.39) and happy personality. This statistically significant correlation suggests that schools with leaders who effectively empower their staff and teachers who possess a positive disposition are more likely to achieve higher levels of success. The study underscored that the concerted efforts of teachers with happy personalities, synergistically supported by effective distributive leadership, are instrumental in driving curriculum success and fostering a thriving educational ecosystem.

### 4.3 Academic Achievement: Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) Data Analysis

The academic performance of students at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim, as reflected in the Pentaksiran Bilik Darjah (PBD) data, provides empirical evidence of the school's success. The PBD data, which assesses student mastery across various subjects, demonstrates consistently high levels of achievement. The overall analysis of the PBD data indicates that 96.84% of the school's students successfully achieved Tahap Penguasaan

(TP) 3 to TP6, with only 3.16% achieving TP1 to TP2. This outstanding performance across multiple subjects highlights the effectiveness of the integrated factors discussed previously.

Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of the PBD mastery levels for key subjects:

Subject	Total Students	TP1 & TP2 (Count)	TP1 & TP2 (%)	TP3 - TP6 (Count)	TP3 - TP6 (%)
Bahasa Melayu	863	34	3.9	829	96.1
Bahasa Inggeris	869	54	6.2	815	93.8
Matematik	863	34	3.9	829	96.1
Sains	863	10	1.2	853	98.8
Pendidikan Agama Islam	860	27	3.1	833	96.9
Sejarah	430	0	0.0	430	100.0
Pendidikan Jasmani & Kesihatan	863	0	0.0	863	100.0
Bahasa Arab	863	16	1.9	847	98.1
Pendidikan Muzik	894	0	0.0	894	100.0
Pendidikan Seni Visual	860	0	0.0	860	100.0
Pendidikan Moral	4	0	0.0	4	100.0
Reka Bentuk & Teknologi	430	0	0.0	430	100.0

*Table 1: PBD Mastery Levels by Subject at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim*

The data in Table 1 clearly illustrates the high level of student achievement across all subjects. Notably, subjects such as Sejarah, Pendidikan Jasmani & Kesihatan, Pendidikan Muzik, Pendidikan Seni Visual, Pendidikan Moral, and Reka Bentuk & Teknologi achieved a 100% mastery rate (TP3-TP6). Even in subjects with slightly lower mastery rates, such as Bahasa Inggeris (93.8%), the overall performance remains exceptionally high, significantly exceeding the national average for student achievement. This consistent high performance underscores the effectiveness of the school's educational strategies, leadership, and the dedicated efforts of its teaching staff.

## 5. DISCUSSION

The findings from Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim provide compelling evidence for the synergistic relationship between teacher integrity, leadership effectiveness, teacher well-being, and student academic success. This section delves deeper into the interpretation of these findings, connecting them with broader theoretical frameworks and empirical research.

### 5.1 The Imperative of Value-Action Congruence

The concept of **alignment of thoughts, words, and actions** (Velayudhan et al., 2025) serves as a foundational pillar, establishing a culture of trust and consistency within the school. This aligns profoundly with the idea of teaching with intention, where beliefs, practice, and action are harmonized (Miller, 2008). When teachers embody this alignment, their pedagogical practices become inherently more coherent, their communication with students and colleagues is characterized by clarity and authenticity, and their commitment to overarching educational goals is unwavering. This internal and external consistency fosters a predictable, secure, and supportive learning environment, which is not merely beneficial but crucial for optimal student development and sustained academic achievement. The absence of such congruence can lead to cognitive dissonance among students and colleagues, eroding trust and undermining the effectiveness of educational initiatives.

### 5.2 Distributive Leadership as an Enabler of Empowerment

The role of **distributive leadership** (Velayudhan et al., 2024a) in facilitating this alignment and overall school success cannot be overstated. This leadership style has been consistently linked to improved teacher job satisfaction (Zhang et al., 2025; Ghazali & Alias, 2024), indicating its profound impact on the professional lives of educators. By empowering teachers and strategically distributing leadership responsibilities, the school leadership at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim has cultivated an environment where teachers feel genuinely valued, experience a greater sense of autonomy, and are collectively responsible for the school's vision and mission. This shared ownership not only significantly enhances teacher morale and reduces burnout but also actively promotes innovative teaching practices and fosters a proactive, problem-solving approach to educational challenges. The strong correlation between distributive leadership and teacher happiness further emphasizes that effective leadership transcends mere managerial functions; it is fundamentally about nurturing the human capital within the institution, fostering a sense of belonging, and enabling professional growth.

### 5.3 The Transformative Power of Teacher Well-being

The **happy personality** of teachers (Velayudhan et al., 2024b) emerges as a vital, yet often underestimated, component of school success. The high levels of happy personality observed among teachers at Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim suggest that a positive disposition contributes significantly to their resilience in the face of challenges, their enthusiasm for teaching, and their ability to forge meaningful connections with students. Happy teachers are demonstrably more likely to create engaging, dynamic, and supportive classroom environments, provide constructive and empathetic feedback, and serve as inspiring role models for their students. This positive emotional state, when synergistically combined with high job satisfaction and ample opportunities for self-actualization (Velayudhan, 2013; Velayudhan & Jayagobi, 2018), creates a powerful virtuous cycle. In this cycle, motivated and fulfilled teachers are more effective in their roles, which in turn leads to superior student outcomes, further reinforcing teacher satisfaction and well-being. This highlights the critical need for school systems to prioritize and invest in teacher welfare as a strategic imperative for educational excellence.

### 5.4 PBD Results: A Validation of Integrated Approaches

The exceptional **PBD results** are a direct and empirical testament to the efficacy of these integrated factors. The consistently high mastery levels across all subjects demonstrate unequivocally that the theoretical frameworks of alignment, leadership, and teacher well-being translate into tangible and measurable academic achievements. The data not only validates the profound importance of these elements but also provides a robust benchmark for other educational institutions aspiring to enhance their success. The minimal percentage of students achieving TP1 and TP2 indicates that Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim has successfully implemented comprehensive strategies that cater effectively to a wide range of student needs, ensuring that the vast majority achieve a commendable level of mastery. This success underscores the importance of a holistic educational philosophy that considers the intricate interplay of all stakeholders and environmental factors.

In essence, the success of Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim is not attributable to a single isolated factor but rather to a sophisticated and holistic approach that prioritizes the integrity and value-action congruence of its educators, the empowerment of its staff through distributed leadership, and the cultivation of a positive and supportive environment that actively fosters teacher well-being. These interconnected elements collectively create

a robust and resilient educational ecosystem where students not only thrive academically but also develop personally, preparing them for future success.

## 6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This journal has explored the intricate relationship between the alignment of thoughts, words, and actions, leadership styles, teacher well-being, and academic achievement, using Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim as a compelling case study. The synthesis of findings from various studies, complemented by the analysis of PBD data, unequivocally demonstrates that school success is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, deeply rooted in the human element of education.

### 6.1 Key Insights

Firstly, the **alignment of thoughts, words, and actions** among teachers is paramount. This internal and external consistency fosters an environment of trust, clarity, and shared purpose, which is essential for effective pedagogical practices and a positive school culture. When educators operate with integrity, their impact on student learning and overall school harmony is significantly amplified.

Secondly, **distributive leadership** plays a transformative role. By empowering teachers and distributing leadership responsibilities, school administrators can cultivate a sense of collective ownership and professional autonomy. This not only enhances teacher morale and job satisfaction but also leverages the diverse talents within the teaching staff, leading to more innovative and effective educational strategies.

Thirdly, the **happy personality** and overall well-being of teachers are critical determinants of school success. Teachers who are content, motivated, and possess a positive outlook are more effective in the classroom, fostering engaging learning environments and serving as inspiring role models for students. This highlights the importance of creating supportive work environments that prioritize teacher welfare and professional growth.

Finally, the **exceptional academic outcomes**, as evidenced by the PBD data from Sekolah Kebangsaan Tanjong Malim, serve as a powerful testament to the efficacy of these integrated factors. The consistently high mastery levels across a wide range of subjects underscore that a holistic approach, which values teacher integrity, empowering leadership, and teacher well-being, directly translates into superior student achievement.

### 6.2 Recommendations

Based on these insights, the following recommendations are proposed for educational stakeholders, including policymakers, school administrators, and teachers:

**1. Promote and Nurture Alignment:** Schools should actively implement programs and professional development initiatives that encourage teachers to reflect on and align their thoughts, words, and actions. This could involve workshops on ethical leadership, communication skills, and value-based education to foster a culture of integrity and consistency.

**2. Strengthen Distributive Leadership Models:** School leaders should continue to adopt and refine distributive leadership practices, empowering teachers to take on greater responsibilities in decision-making, curriculum development, and school management. This will not only enhance teacher engagement but also build leadership capacity within the school community.

**3. Prioritize Teacher Well-being and Professional Development: Educational institutions must invest in initiatives that support teacher well-being, including mental health resources, work-life balance programs, and opportunities for professional growth and self-actualization.** Recognizing and fostering a happy personality among teachers should be a strategic priority, as it directly impacts classroom effectiveness and student outcomes.

**4. Leverage Data for Continuous Improvement:** Schools should continue to meticulously collect and analyze PBD data, not just for assessment but as a tool for continuous improvement. This data can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of teaching strategies and highlight areas where further support or intervention may be needed.

**5 Foster a Culture of Collaboration and Shared Vision:** Encourage open communication, collaborative planning, and a shared commitment to the school's vision. When all stakeholders are united in purpose and practice, the school becomes a powerful force for positive change and academic excellence.

### 6.3 Future Research

Future research could expand on these findings by conducting longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of alignment, leadership styles, and teacher well-being on student success. Comparative studies across different

school contexts and educational systems could also provide valuable insights into the generalizability of these findings. Furthermore, exploring the specific mechanisms through which a 'happy personality' translates into improved pedagogical practices and student engagement would be a fruitful area of inquiry.

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