



## A Case Study of Loyola College Senior High School: Changes in The Learning Culture of An Excellent School

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### Abstract

This article describes the significant changes in the learning culture of Loyola College Senior High School Semarang. The research identified changes in organizational structure, work system and culture, pedagogical approach, and research culture in the educational institution. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews using snowball sampling with a key informant, namely the principal, observation, and document study. Analysis was carried out using the Miles and Huberman reduction, representation, and inference model. Meanwhile, triangulation of data sources was used to ensure validity. The results showed that the changes made included the adaptation of the organizational chart for more efficient management of human resources, the implementation of a more collaborative working system and a culture that supports innovation, a more open and inclusive approach to learning, and an increased research culture among teachers and students. The change process involved thoroughly evaluating the existing organizational structure, introducing new, more responsive working systems, empowering staff to implement innovative learning approaches, and adding infrastructure to support a strong research culture. Overall, these changes have positively impacted teachers and students, improving the quality of learning and strengthening the capacity of educational institutions to meet future challenges. The results of this study underline the importance of maintaining a culture of continuous education in educational institutions to respond to the needs of the times and prepare students for a dynamic future.

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### Introduction

Cultural change in the school environment is an important aspect of improving the overall quality of education. One of the government initiatives to support this change is the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This new paradigm in the Indonesian education system aims to give schools more flexibility in adapting the curriculum to local needs and

global developments. With this policy, schools are expected to develop an inclusive, creative, and innovative culture that can prepare students for future challenges.

The government's support for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is not limited to curricular and school culture aspects. This emphasis can be found in the Minister of Education, Culture, Research and Technology Regulation (Permendikbudristek No. 7, 2022). The government has issued various policies and programs to promote cultural change in line with the vision and mission of the Merdeka Curriculum. For example, training and professional development for educators to adopt a more contextualized and learner-centered approach to learning. The government is also providing adequate infrastructure and resources to support the implementation of this curriculum at various school levels.

In addition to systemic support from the government, school organizations, as implementers and providers of school services, need to continually adapt and improve service performance by using their skills and flexibility to manage change while remaining productive. In line with Baldwin & Ford and Bates and Khasawehn, a supportive learning culture is essential for organizational innovation. Therefore, schools that want to maximize potential and creativity should analyze their culture. This will help to determine what culture is needed to facilitate learning and problem-solving (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Bates & Khasawehn, 2005; Verduijn & Heijboer, 2016).

These include social, cultural, economic, and symbolic capital, such as how to make the school community aware of the importance of creating a school climate. This capital can be used to design interventions to reduce barriers and increase catalysts for creativity and innovation. Several authors agree that a sustainable learning culture can create a competitive advantage (Baars-van Moorsel, 2003; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Watkins & Marsick, 1996; Yolles, 2009).

Concerning the above context, it can be said that changes in the school system must not only be supported by efforts to make changes to the school structure itself but also related to the values developed by the school. Thus, changes in school perspectives ranging from principals, teachers, administrators, students, parents, and the community are seen as a driving force for creating system changes, patterns of action, and processes to achieve goals. The change itself can be supported by changes in cultural patterns, which embody the values and belief systems of people in an organization. It is also a control system that produces norms of behavior (Diba & Retnowati, 2018).

The school culture itself is a determinant of how the energy and structure of the school can be transformed into something useful; it is the school's value system that influences the way school members work and behave; it is built on deeply held beliefs about how the school should be organized or run; it is a system in which there is a common purpose in the school community that distinguishes one school from another; and it is a system in which there is a shared feeling, "Which" refers to a group of significant traits that define a school. (Lamatenggo & Panigoro, 2017; Masaong & Tilome, 2011).

Excellent schools are not only determined by physical factors such as magnificent buildings, complete facilities, or the level of education of their staff but also by less visible factors, namely the school culture. School culture is a system of basic assumptions, values, beliefs, and habits that all members of the school own. These values and beliefs are believed and proven to be used in dealing with problems of adaptation to new circumstances and internal integration. This system of assumptions and values can be taught to members and new generations. Hence, they have the right idea of understanding, thinking, feeling, and acting in the face of existing situations and environments. There are several influencing factors, including (a) teachers' enthusiasm for teaching, (b) mastery of teaching materials, (c) school discipline, (d) learning process, (e) accuracy of timetable, (f) teachers' attitude towards

students, and (g) principals' leadership (Masaong & Tilome, 2011). The development of school culture requires attention to a) school management modernization, b) teacher modernization, c) learning modernization, and d) school climate change planning (Mulyasa, 2011, 2015).

Loyola College Senior High School, Semarang City, Central Java, Indonesia, is a school of excellence as evidenced by the following indicators: (1) in the last five years, the average number of applicants has increased; (2) this school applies a regular enrolment fee, but because the upper middle economic group is willing to pay more, Flat Over 1, Flat Over 2, to Flat Over 3 is applied with an increasing amount of payment for each available Flat Over. This shows that the school's enthusiasts are from the middle and upper economic groups; (3) the school's excellent programs have made achievements in both academic and non-academic fields such as art, culture, and sports; (4) the acceptance rate of graduates over the past five years is 36.6% accepted by state universities, 61% accepted by major private universities in the country and 1.6% accepted by overseas universities.

## **Method**

This research methodology aims to provide an in-depth understanding of the changing learning culture at Loyola College Senior High School. A qualitative approach was chosen as it can provide rich and deep insights into this complex phenomenon. A case study design focused on a specific unit of analysis, Loyola College, allowing the researcher to explore the changes in learning culture in detail. The data sources were collected using interview techniques involving 13 individuals, including the principal, vice principal, head of the executive unit, technical executives, laboratory assistants, and teachers. Additionally, observation techniques and documentation studies were used to analyze school data. (Creswell, 2015; Sugiyono, 2015; Ulfatin, 2015).

Data collection was conducted through interviews with the school principal and the executive vice principal of curriculum management, student affairs, data and information, and educational completeness. It also involved school staff and teachers getting their views on these changes, conducting direct observations in the classroom to see the implementation of learning practices and the school environment, and documenting studies to understand the policies and programs implemented (Ulfatin, 2015).

Data analysis involves sorting, organizing, and analyzing data from different sources to identify patterns, trends, and key findings through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. To ensure the validity of the data, a source triangulation technique was used, whereby findings from different data sources are compared and corroborated to ensure the accuracy and validity of the research findings. With this approach, it is expected that this research can provide a comprehensive understanding of the changes in learning culture at Loyola College Senior High School, Semarang City (Miles & Huberman, 2014; Sugiyono, 2015; Ulfatin, 2015).

## **Result and Discussion**

Firstly, there have been changes in the organizational structure or organigram of the institution. The research showed that the organigram has been adapted to meet new needs in education, such as more efficient management of human resources. This change divided eight national educational standards into two areas of work: the Principal and the Executive Secretary of the Foundation. The Principal focuses on the development of the educational process, while the Executive Secretary of the Foundation is responsible for managing human resources and financial infrastructure. In practice, the two will work in synergy with each other for the effectiveness and efficiency of the work. The organigram is shown in Figure 1.

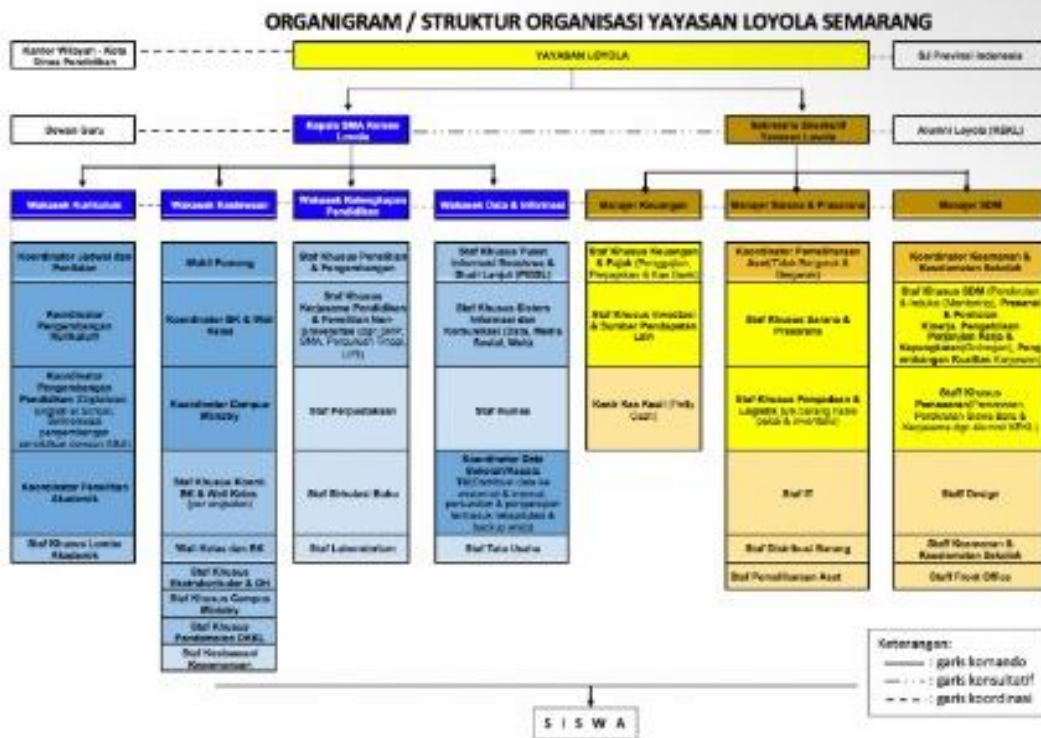


Figure 1. Organigram of Loyola Foundation

There have also been changes in the working system and culture of the educational institution. The research findings show that Loyola College Senior High School has begun to adopt a more collaborative working system responsive to new education developments. In addition, a working culture that supports innovation and experimentation is being instilled to create an environment that stimulates intellectual and professional growth. The headteacher has achieved this change through an informal approach by (a) instilling confidence in the abilities and competencies of teachers and staff, (b) aligning themselves with an individual vision that corresponds to the institution's vision before asking the school community to change, (c) using influential people as leaders of change, (d) gaining support from influential people before declaring change, and (e) encouraging influential people to informally influence others to accept the changes that have been initiated.

The third change observed was in the pedagogical approach. The research shows that more open, inclusive, and student-centered approaches to learning are beginning to dominate. This includes using active learning methods, integrating technology into the learning process, and emphasizing 21st-century skills such as creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. In this case, the school has independently developed a pedagogy of social change, resulting from the reconstruction of several existing pedagogies. The basic framework of the construction is the Reflective Pedagogy Paradigm (PPR), which is then developed according to the context of the time. The Reflective Pedagogy Paradigm (PPR), the Pedagogy of Kindness, the Pedagogy of Intimacy, and the Critical Digital Pedagogy are combined to reconstruct pedagogy. PPR becomes the basic framework for building pedagogy, while the principles of its application use the rules in the Pedagogy of Kindness,

Critical Digital Pedagogy, and Pedagogy of Intimacy. The pedagogical changes are illustrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2. Pedagogy of Social Change by Loyola College Senior High School**

The fourth change, the shift towards a research climate, is also the focus of this study. Educational institutions are beginning to promote a more substantial research culture among staff and students. This includes increased support for research and curriculum development, increased collaboration between institutions and industry, and promotion of critical thinking and data analysis values in institutions toward research-based schools.

Overall, the results of this study highlight the ongoing transformation of the learning climate, which includes changes in the organizational structure, working systems and culture, pedagogical approaches, and a more substantial research culture. This confirms the importance of continuous adaptation in educational institutions to respond to the changing demands of the times and better prepare students for a dynamic future.

### **Change process**

**Organigram Change:** A thorough assessment of the existing organizational structure is the first step in the change process. The leadership team works with subject matter experts to identify weaknesses in the organizational chart that may impede progress and innovation. Once identified, steps are taken to redesign the organizational chart to make it more responsive to change and more efficient in managing resources. This may involve removing unnecessary layers of hierarchy, creating new, more focused work units, or integrating separate departments to improve collaboration and coordination.

**Change in work system and culture:** This change process involves introducing new working systems that are more flexible, collaborative, and responsive. The management team led the effort to create a working culture that supports innovation, experimentation, and continuous learning. This has been achieved by implementing employee training and coaching programs, fostering open communication and dialogue across departments, and encouraging active participation in organizational decision-making. In addition, the incentive system was revised to encourage desired behaviors and recognize innovative contributions from employees.

Pedagogical change: The pedagogical change process involves a revolution in the approach to learning in the classroom. Using the paradigm of reflective pedagogy (PPR) as an underlying framework, teachers are encouraged to adopt learning methods that are more interactive, student-centered, and relevant to real-world needs. This process involves training teachers in innovative teaching techniques, developing curricula emphasizing 21st-century skills, and integrating technology into every aspect of learning. Educational institutions also provide additional support to teachers in exploring and implementing new ways of learning.

Change towards a research climate: This change process fosters a strong research culture in educational institutions. It starts with building infrastructure that supports research, such as well-equipped laboratories with competent and innovative staff, rich libraries, and access to relevant research resources. It also provides training and support for teachers and students to develop research skills in collaboration with external institutions, such as the Center for Young Scientists, to encourage interdisciplinary collaboration and integrate research into the curriculum.

### Learning Culture Change Impact

The impact of the learning culture change on students and teachers is significant. It is further shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** The impact of a learning culture.

No.	Aspect	Impact Description	
		Teacher	Student
1	Organigram Changes	Teachers are more focused on their primary responsibility of teaching. They are keen to develop their potential through participation in training and self-development and to serve the needs of students to the best of their ability.	
2	System and Work Culture Changes.	Changes in school systems and working cultures have affected how teachers and pupils interact in the learning environment. These include a more open and collaborative working culture, where teachers are encouraged to share ideas, work together on projects, and communicate effectively. This creates a more inclusive and growth-enhancing learning environment.	
3	Changes in Pedagogy	Teachers become more skilled at changing their teaching approach to implement different learning methods.	Students experience changes in the way they learn and participate in class. They are increasingly engaged in active and project-based learning, which improves their understanding of subject matter and critical skills.
4	Changes in Research Climate	Teachers are increasingly encouraged to use evidence in	Students are increasingly encouraged to develop their

No.	Aspect	Impact Description	
		Teacher	Student
		their teaching. They are increasingly eager to access research resources and to take up opportunities to participate in research activities.	research skills and to use evidence in their academic arguments or projects. They also have greater access to the development of scientific writing skills and are eager to engage in research projects.

This research examines significant changes in the learning climate, focusing on aspects of the organizational chart, work systems and culture, pedagogy, and the research climate in educational establishments. As described by Burdick, intelligence highlights the importance of creative thinking and analytical reasoning in the context of learning change. The success of this change depends on mental agility, which includes the ability to anticipate and adapt to change. In a Catholic school such as Loyola College High School, leadership must be inspired by a spirituality of service based on the example of Jesus. As expressed by Branson, the Church expects school leaders to be servant leaders, integrating Gospel values into their leadership. This includes equipping students with knowledge and skills and encouraging them to become agents of change, using their knowledge and skills to serve especially those in need, such as the poor and marginalized (Branson et al., 2019; Burdick et al., 2008; Friel, 2018; Maturan et al., 2024)

Bush emphasized the crucial role that leadership and management play in improving schools. The focus on competent managerial leadership, commitment, and capacity of organizational members plays a crucial role in facilitating the work of others to achieve organizational goals. Changes in learning culture, as outlined by Schein, should include proactive assumptions, a commitment to learning, and a positive approach to human nature. A strong learning culture requires leaders who consistently integrate these assumptions into the organization's mission, goals, structure, and procedures. The research conducted by (Bush, 2008; Hanafi et al., 2023; Schein, 2004; Sholeh, 2021) highlighted the urgency of implementing effective change leadership and work culture in school settings. The findings reinforce the understanding that transforming the learning climate requires concrete steps in leading change and creating a supportive work culture

Schein identifies several important traits of a learning culture, including a commitment to truth through inquiry, a focus on the future, full and open communication, and a commitment to diversity. Leaders who create a learning culture in a growing organization must gradually and consistently externalize their assumptions to create a culture responsive to changes in the external environment (Schein, 2004). Therefore, the role of change leadership that focuses on a grand transformative vision needs to be applied. Previous research confirms that principals' effective change leadership significantly impacts the quality of school learning (Nurabadi et al., 2019; Wills, 2016; Sholeh et al., 2021). Principals' success as learning leaders can be measured by several key factors, including their capacity as resource providers, instructional resources, communicators, and meaningful presence (Nurabadi et al., 2019; Taylor et al., 2011).

Furthermore, educational organizations such as schools face complex people, structural, and technological changes (Robbins & Coulter, 2015). Leaders need to manage these changes, enhance team reflection on performance, and focus efforts on continuous

improvement and organizational development (Gunawan et al., 2020; Sholeh, 2021). Based on the findings of Taylor et al. (2011); Oktaviana et al., (2022), professional principals who use change leadership can significantly impact teachers' instructional performance. This is based on Wills' (2016) research, which found that leadership for change directly affects school and teaching performance. Katkat, (2014); Taylor et al., (2011); Wills, (2016) also asserts that leadership capacity determines staff performance, influencing learning culture.

Morrill (2010) highlights a leader as a facilitator who requires personal attributes and expertise, familiarity with the school context and culture, and authority and power. In the context of change and conflict, leadership has aspects that are difficult to generalize but significantly impact groups and individuals in achieving common goals. (Leavitt, (2016); Morrill, (2010) suggests that principals have several strategies to choose from when implementing organizational change, including changes in organizational structure, technology, tasks, and people. The actions taken by principals as leaders include inspiring staff, setting strategic steps, implementing change, and evaluating and planning for follow-up. This aligns with several previous studies (Bafadal et al., 2019; Kusumaningrum et al., 2017). Vision and innovative approaches are important in leadership related to organizational change, as a leader's vision is key to motivating teams and employees in the face of change. Leaders with visionary and innovative traits can be catalysts to make organizations more effective in managing and implementing change (Abbas & Asghar, 2010).

Therefore, changing the learning climate involves integrating an understanding of intelligence, mental agility, leadership, and learning culture. Leaders must integrate these aspects to design and implement effective and sustainable change within educational institutions. By synthesizing ideas from various references, this research provides a solid theoretical basis for understanding and explaining significant changes in the learning climate in educational institutions. It provides a comprehensive view of the factors that influence such changes.

## **Conclusion**

The above discussion, therefore, concludes that significant change in the learning climate will require a solid integration of intelligence, mental agility, leadership, and learning culture. Intelligence plays a key role in enabling sound evaluation before implementing change concepts and plans, while mental agility is required to deal with and adapt to changing conditions.

Leadership plays a critical role in driving change in a learning culture, focusing on the commitment and capacity of organizational members to bring about productive and sustainable change. A learning culture should have a proactive attitude and commitment to learning and change, and leaders should have a clear vision and innovative approach. In the context of dynamic educational change, changing the learning climate involves a strong integration of all these aspects. Educational leaders must Combine an understanding of intelligence, mental agility, leadership, and learning culture to design and implement effective and sustainable change in educational institutions. Through this holistic approach, educational institutions can only renew themselves and better prepare students for future challenges.

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