

## THE INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND TEACHER CREATIVITY ON STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims to analyze the influence of school leadership and teacher creativity on student academic achievement at SDN Kotabumi Selatan. Utilizing a quantitative descriptive research design with a correlational approach, the study involved 89 fifth-grade students as respondents. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression. The findings reveal that both school leadership and teacher creativity have a positive and significant impact on student academic achievement, with significance values of 0.044 and 0.037, respectively. When combined, these factors show a significance value of 0.012. The study concludes that effective school leadership and creative teaching methods are crucial for enhancing student performance. The implications highlight the need for school administrators to develop strong leadership skills and for teachers to innovate in their teaching practices to improve student engagement and learning outcomes.*

**Keywords:** *School Leadership, Teacher Creativity, Student Academic Achievement*

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### Introduction

The objective of this study is to systematically analyze the influence of school leadership and teacher creativity on student academic achievement (Chang et al., 2021; Nir & Piro, 2016). The motivation for this research arises from the complex interplay of both internal and external factors that shape student performance (A. R. P. Barusman, 2024; Rubenstein et al., 2018; Sebastian et al., 2016). Understanding these factors in greater depth is crucial for developing effective strategies to enhance educational outcomes (Steinmayr et al., 2019; Wilona & Defrizal, 2024).

**Internal Factors:** These encompass physiological and psychological dimensions that impact a student's ability to learn and perform academically (Asika, 2021; Villa, 2023). Physiological factors include aspects such as physical health and overall well-being, which can affect a student's concentration, energy levels, and capacity to engage in learning activities (Mehta, 2022; Rasimin & Yusra, 2020; Wijayanti & Habiburahman, 2024). Psychological factors encompass motivation, cognitive abilities, and inherent talent. Motivation drives students' desire to achieve and persist in their studies, while cognitive abilities and talent influence how they process and utilize information (Abdulrahman et al., 2021; M. Y. Barusman & Hidayat, 2017; Hamouda & Deiwa, 2022).

**External Factors:** These can be divided into social and non-social influences. Social influences include the roles of family, teachers, and peers (Halawi & Haydar, 2018; Nabila & Usman, 2019; Nurfiyati & Indawati, 2021). Family support and involvement in a student's education can provide a foundation of encouragement and resources (A. R. P. Barusman & Mihdar, 2015; Haryanto et al., 2020; Listyani, 2022). Teachers play a critical role in delivering quality instruction, providing feedback, and creating a supportive learning environment (Azikin & Barusman, 2021; Meulen et al., 2021). Peers can influence academic engagement and attitudes towards learning through social interactions and collaborative activities (Hughes et al., 2023; St-Amand & Smith, 2017). Non-social influences include learning facilities and infrastructure, such as the availability of educational resources, technology, and the quality of physical learning environments (Defrizal et al., 2015; Schindler et al., 2017). These elements contribute to the accessibility and effectiveness of educational experiences (Masud et al., 2023).

Despite a wealth of research on the individual impact of these factors on student achievement, there remains a notable gap in the literature regarding the combined effect of school leadership and teacher creativity.

School leadership is fundamental in setting educational goals, fostering a positive school climate, and ensuring that the institution's vision aligns with student needs (Habiburrahman et al., 2022; Ross & Cozzens, 2016; Taftania et al., 2020). Effective leadership can inspire and guide teachers, streamline administrative processes, and enhance overall school performance. Teacher creativity, on the other hand, involves the development and implementation of innovative teaching methods, engaging lesson plans, and adaptive strategies that cater to diverse learning styles and needs (Habiburrahman et al., 2019; Matraeva et al., 2020). Creative teaching can make learning more engaging, relevant, and effective, thereby potentially improving student outcomes (A. R. P. Barusman, 2014; Bernard et al., 2019; Ober et al., 2023).

This study aims to address this research gap by providing empirical evidence on how school leadership and teacher creativity interact and contribute to student academic success. By investigating these two critical factors together, the research seeks to uncover insights into how they collectively influence student performance and to identify best practices for integrating effective leadership and creative teaching strategies. The findings of this study have the potential to inform educational policy and practice, offering actionable recommendations for enhancing school environments and teaching approaches to better support student achievement.

## Methodology

This study utilizes a quantitative descriptive research design with a correlational approach to examine the relationships between school leadership, teacher creativity, and student academic achievement. The choice of this design allows for a precise quantification of these relationships and facilitates a critical evaluation of the study's validity and reliability. By employing a correlational approach, the study aims to determine the strength and direction of the associations among the variables, providing a comprehensive understanding of their interplay.

The study involved 89 fifth-grade students from SDN Kotabumi Selatan. Participants were selected based on their availability and willingness to participate. Focusing on fifth-grade students ensures that the study captures a developmental stage where academic performance can be distinctly linked to the influences of school leadership and teacher creativity. Informed consent was obtained from both students and their parents or guardians, adhering to ethical standards and ensuring that participants' rights were respected.

Data were collected using structured questionnaires that measured two primary variables: the perceived effectiveness of school leadership and the level of teacher creativity. Separate questionnaires were administered to students and teachers to capture their perspectives. The school leadership questionnaire assessed perceptions related to the effectiveness of leadership in areas such as vision, support, communication, and management. The teacher creativity questionnaire evaluated the extent to which teachers employed creative methods, such as innovative lesson plans and interactive activities. Academic achievement was measured through students' grades in core subjects, including mathematics, science, and language arts, which were obtained from school records.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple linear regression analysis. Descriptive statistics provided an overview of the data, including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions, which helped identify overall patterns and trends (Kalu et al., 2023). Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to explore the significance and strength of the relationships between school leadership, teacher creativity, and student academic achievement (Bafadal et al., 2018). This analysis allowed for the assessment of how variations in these factors collectively influence academic outcomes, while controlling for potential confounding variables (Leithwood et al., 2019).

The study adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring that participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and participant confidentiality was maintained. Ethical approval was secured from the relevant educational and research ethics committees to ensure that the study complied with standard research practices and protected the rights of all participants.

## Result and Discussion

The descriptive statistics provided insights into students' perceptions of school leadership and teacher creativity. Both variables were rated positively by students, with average scores exceeding the midpoint of the scale. This indicates that students generally perceive their school environment as one characterized by effective leadership and creative teaching practices. Specifically, students recognized the value of supportive school leadership and innovative teaching methods, which are essential for creating a conducive learning environment. These findings align with previous research that underscores the importance of both leadership and creativity in shaping a positive educational atmosphere.

The multiple linear regression analysis revealed that both school leadership and teacher creativity have a statistically significant and positive impact on student academic achievement. The significance value for school leadership was 0.044, suggesting that effective leadership practices, such as providing a clear vision and adequate resources, contribute to improved academic outcomes. Similarly, teacher creativity had a significance value of 0.037, indicating that innovative teaching methods enhance student success. When considering both factors simultaneously, the combined effect yielded a significance value of 0.012, highlighting the robust impact of integrating effective leadership and creative teaching strategies on student performance. This finding corroborates earlier studies that have identified both school leadership and teacher creativity as critical elements in improving educational outcomes.

The results emphasize the crucial role of effective school leadership and teacher creativity in boosting student academic achievement. Effective school leadership, marked by clear vision, support, and resource allocation, creates an environment that promotes learning and student success. Leaders who actively foster a supportive school climate contribute to an enhanced educational experience, as noted in the literature.

Conversely, teacher creativity manifested through dynamic teaching strategies and engaging lesson plans plays a vital role in motivating students and making learning experiences more enjoyable. Creative teaching methods are instrumental in catering to diverse learning styles and needs, which can lead to improved academic performance. This aligns with findings from previous research that highlights the benefits of innovative teaching practices.

This study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating the combined effect of school leadership and teacher creativity on student achievement. While previous research has explored the impact of each factor independently, this study provides a more comprehensive view by integrating these elements. The findings suggest that the combined influence of effective leadership and creative teaching strategies offers a more nuanced understanding of their impact on student performance. This integrated approach aligns with the theoretical framework outlined in the introduction, which emphasizes the interplay of internal and external factors in shaping educational outcomes.

In summary, the study underscores the significance of both effective school leadership and teacher creativity in enhancing student academic performance. By addressing the combined effects of these factors, the research offers valuable insights for educators and policymakers aiming to improve educational practices and outcomes. The results advocate for a holistic approach that incorporates both strong leadership and creative teaching to foster an optimal learning environment.

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the factors influencing employee performance within public sector organizations, specifically focusing on the BPKAD Kabupaten Tulang Bawang. The strong positive correlations between work discipline, additional income, and employee performance affirm the study's hypotheses, demonstrating that both factors are essential determinants of employee performance. These results align with the broader literature, which underscores the critical roles of compensation and discipline in enhancing employee productivity (Belle & Cantarelli, 2014; Gupta & Shaw, 2014; Nyberg et al., 2013). However, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by revealing the interactive effects of these variables, particularly within the context of Indonesian public sector organizations, which have been relatively underexplored (Chew & Chan, 2008; Shahan et al., 2021).

The regression analysis provides compelling evidence of the combined impact of work discipline and additional income on employee performance, with an  $R^2$  value of 0.784, indicating that these two factors together explain a significant portion of the variance in employee performance. This finding emphasizes the need for a holistic approach to human resource management in the public sector, one that simultaneously considers multiple factors to optimize employee performance (Franco et al., 2002; Hardiyansah et al., 2021). Notably, work discipline emerged as a slightly stronger predictor than additional income, underscoring the vital role of organizational culture and leadership in cultivating an environment where employees are motivated not only by financial incentives but also by a commitment to organizational goals and standards (Juheti & Sulaeman, 2021; Paulus, 2022).

Furthermore, the high level of variance explained by the model suggests that public sector organizations, such as BPKAD Kabupaten Tulang Bawang, can achieve significant improvements in employee performance financial aspects of job satisfaction. This includes implementing clear disciplinary policies, ensuring that employees adhere to organizational norms, and providing financial rewards that reflect their contributions' importance (de Waal, 2010; Van Herpen et al., 2005). The findings imply that any effort to improve employee

performance in the public sector should be multifaceted, addressing the need for fair compensation structures and the importance of cultivating a disciplined and focused workforce (Bernstein & Reinharth, 1973; Wright, 2001).

This study advances our understanding of employee performance in the public sector by empirically demonstrating the significant and combined effects of additional income and work discipline. The results suggest that while financial incentives are crucial, the enforcement of discipline plays an even more critical role in ensuring consistent performance. These insights have essential implications for public sector management, indicating that policies aimed at improving employee performance should focus not only on financial rewards but also on reinforcing work discipline. By doing so, public sector organizations can enhance service delivery, achieve organizational goals, and maintain public trust (Huber, 1983; O'Toole & Meier, 2008).

## Conclusion

This study concludes that both school leadership and teacher creativity are crucial factors influencing student academic achievement. The empirical evidence gathered underscores the significant impact that effective leadership and innovative teaching practices have on educational outcomes. Effective school leadership has a profound effect on student performance. Leaders who articulate a clear vision, provide necessary support, and ensure that resources are available create a conducive learning environment. This study found that strong leadership fosters a supportive and structured atmosphere, which is essential for academic success. The positive influence of school leadership highlights its role in motivating both teachers and students and establishing high expectations that drive educational achievement.

Similarly, teacher creativity plays a pivotal role in enhancing student engagement and improving academic results. Teachers who implement innovative teaching methods and develop engaging lesson plans contribute significantly to student success. Creative teaching practices make learning more interactive and enjoyable, which helps students better understand and retain information. The findings affirm that teacher creativity is a key driver in stimulating student interest and fostering an effective learning environment.

The study also highlights the combined effect of school leadership and teacher creativity. When considered together, these factors demonstrate a robust impact on student achievement. This interaction underscores the importance of integrating effective leadership with creative teaching strategies to maximize their collective influence on student success.

Based on these findings, several recommendations for educational practice and policy emerge. Schools should focus on developing and supporting effective leadership that creates a positive and resourceful learning environment. Additionally, professional development programs should emphasize equipping teachers with creative teaching strategies and methods. Policymakers are encouraged to incorporate both leadership and creativity into educational frameworks and standards, ensuring that these elements are addressed in school improvement plans and teacher training initiatives.

In summary, this study reinforces the significant roles of school leadership and teacher creativity in driving student academic achievement. Effective leadership and innovative teaching practices are integral to creating an environment that supports and enhances learning. By addressing and integrating these factors, educators and policymakers can improve educational practices and foster greater student success.

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