

School Environment, Student Learning Motivation, and Academic Achievement among the State Junior High School Students

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<p>Corresponding Author Basilius Redan Werang</p> <p>Ganesha University of Education, Singaraja, Bali, Indonesia</p> <p>Article History</p> <p>Received: 15 / 04 / 2025</p> <p>Accepted: 05 / 05 / 2025</p> <p>Published: 08 / 05 / 2025</p>	<p>Abstract:</p> <p>Objective: This study examines how the learning environment and students' learning motivation impact academic achievement among the state junior high school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia, with a specific focus on Indonesian Language Subjects.</p> <p>Method: Utilizing a quantitative approach and employing a survey research design, data were collected from 335 students across various state junior high schools. Gathered data were subjected to a rigorous statistical analysis using simple and multiple linear regression analysis.</p> <p>Findings: The findings show that school environment and learning motivation impact significantly positively the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in Indonesian Language Subjects, both partially and simultaneously.</p> <p>Implication for Practice and Research: The findings underscore the pivotal role of a conducive learning environment and heightened student motivation in bolstering academic achievement. The findings of this study contribute valuable insights to educators and policymakers, highlighting the importance of creating supportive learning environments and implementing strategies to enhance student motivation, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes in the Indonesian educational context.</p> <p>Keywords: Academic achievement, Learning motivation, School environment.</p>
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Introduction

Students' academic achievement is essential within the teaching and learning process, often measured by scores or grades. These metrics indicate the extent to which students have achieved the expected outcomes or standards within a specific period (Sabanal et al., 2023). A passing grade indicates that a student has attained at least the minimum learning competencies, knowledge, and skills required at their developmental level (Astawan et al., 2023; Rafiola et al., 2020). Conversely, a failing grade suggests that a student has not met the established standard for a particular learning area. This emphasizes the importance of academic assessment in determining students' progress and ensuring that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge for their educational development.

Academic assessment not only provides feedback on students' performance but also guides teachers in identifying areas where additional support may be needed. Incorporating various assessment methods, such as formative assessments, quizzes, projects, and exams, provides a holistic view of students' learning and progress (Black & Wiliam, 2018). This multifaceted approach to assessment allows teachers to gain insights into students'

understanding, skills, and abilities across different learning domains. By utilizing data-driven decision-making processes, teachers can tailor their instruction to meet the diverse needs of their students, thus promoting deeper learning and academic success. Continuous and comprehensive assessment practices allow teachers to monitor students' progress over time, enabling them to adjust their teaching methods and strategies accordingly.

Academic achievement is influenced by a variety of factors in the multifaceted process of education (Azhar et al., 2014; Diseth et al., 2010; Fernex et al., 2015; Saele et al., 2017; Wintre et al., 2011). In this study, we focused on the following two factors. The first factor to consider is the school environment. School is often considered a second home for students, playing a vital role in their growth and development (Srivastava & Jaiswal, 2022; Werang et al., 2024a). It serves as more than just a place for academic learning; it is a community where students form lasting friendships, develop essential social and emotional skills, and discover their interests and passions (Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020). Within the supportive environment of a school, students not only acquire

knowledge but also learn important life skills such as teamwork, time management, and problem-solving.

The school environment encompasses a wide range of factors that directly or indirectly influence the educational experience within a specific institution. More than just the physical space and resources available for learning, the school environment encompasses the entire atmosphere that supports the teaching and learning process (Werang et al., 2024b). When students experience acceptance and appreciation within their school community, it cultivates a sense of belonging that is crucial for their emotional health and academic prosperity (Ekiugbo, 2023; Willms, 2003). From this viewpoint, teachers and staff provide guidance and support, helping students navigate challenges and reach their full potential. In this nurturing and inclusive environment, students feel a sense of belonging and are empowered to explore, learn, and grow, shaping them into well-rounded individuals ready to contribute to society.

The sense of belonging and being empowered not only fosters a positive attitude towards learning but also enhances their confidence to participate actively in a range of academic and extracurricular efforts, ultimately influencing their academic performance. Numerous existing studies (e.g. Akpan, 2020; Kisogot et al., 2022; Lone, 2021; Malik & Rizvi, 2018; Mukmina et al., 2021; Okoi et al., 2022; Rafiq et al., 2022; Sudirman, 2023) have highlighted the significant impact of the school environment on student's personal development and academic achievement. This body of literature emphasizes that schools serve a crucial role that goes beyond academic instruction. Within the dynamic school environment, where students continuously interact with teachers and peers, various aspects of their development are profoundly influenced. These influences extend well beyond mere knowledge acquisition to include attitudes, interests, emotions, character development, and motivation to learn. Therefore, understanding the importance of the school environment is essential for shaping and enhancing students' overall academic achievement and well-being.

The second factor to consider is the student's learning motivation. As students are central to the learning process, holding the reins of their educational journey, their motivation to learn becomes a pivotal element (Williams & Williams, 2011). Student's learning motivation is viewed as the engine that powers their actions, guiding them toward their desired educational outcomes (Slavin, 2006). Therefore, understanding the significance of learning motivation is essential as it heavily influences students' activity choices, the amount of effort they put into their tasks, and their persistence levels (Dörnyei, 2001). Motivation determines not only why students engage in particular activities but also the intensity and duration of their efforts, making it a crucial factor in educational settings.

Recent research highlights the crucial role of motivation in improving students' academic performance (Almaiki, 2019; Aslam et al., 2021; Bakar et al., 2022; Mehndroo & Vandana, 2020; Ozer & Badem, 2022; Robbi et al., 2020; Steinmayr et al., 2019; Yogie et al., 2021). These studies consistently show that motivation is more influential than raw intellectual ability in shaping students' academic success. Motivation acts as a driving force, guiding students toward their educational goals, influencing their choice of activities, the effort they put forth, and the duration of their persistence (Hattie, 2009; Plante et al., 2013; Robbins et al., 2004; Wigfield et al., 2016). Therefore, understanding the importance of students' learning motivation is essential for shaping and enhancing their overall academic achievement and well-being.

This study focused on describing the potential impact of the school environment and student learning motivation on the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia. Despite the aforementioned studies investigating how the learning environment and student learning motivation impact academic achievement, there is still a need for further research on this topic within the eastern part of the Indonesian educational context, particularly focusing on state junior high school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province. In addition to addressing the issues of low achievement among indigenous Papuan students (Leba et al., 2021; Wea et al., 2020; Werang, 2018; Werang et al., 2017; Werang et al., 2019; Werang & Leba, 2022; Werang et al., 2022; Werang et al., 2023a), this study advances beyond previous research by offering a fresh perspective. While previous studies have examined the impact of the school environment and learning motivation on student's academic achievement separately, this study explores both their partial and simultaneous impact. We argue that the educational environment and students' motivation to learn are the primary factors that consistently contribute to the academic underachievement of many indigenous Papuan students, particularly in the Merauke district, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia.

We probed the following three research questions to guide the study. Firstly, does the school environment significantly positively impact the academic achievement of secondary school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia? Secondly, does the student learning motivation significantly positively impact the academic achievement of the secondary school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia? Thirdly, do the school environment and the student learning motivation impact simultaneously the academic achievement of the secondary school students in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia? To answer these three research questions, we employed a quantitative research approach using a survey research design.

Research Method

Research Design

As aforementioned, in this study, we sought to answer the following three research questions: (1) Does the school environment impact significantly positively the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in Merauke District, Papua, Indonesia? (2) Does the student's learning motivation impact significantly positively the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in the Merauke District of Indonesia? And (3) Do the school environment and the student's learning motivation impact simultaneously the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in the Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia?

To explore the research questions mentioned above, we adopted a quantitative research approach, utilizing a survey research design. This study aims to offer empirical insights into the factors that influence students' academic achievement in the Indonesian language subject. The decision to employ a quantitative survey research approach was based on its numerous advantages, as highlighted in several recent studies (Jim et al., 2024; Sondakh et al., 2023; Werang et al., 2023b.c.; Werang et al., 2024c). These advantages include simplified data collection, efficient cost utilization, enhanced representation, strong statistical relevance, and reduced investigator subjectivity. By utilizing a survey

research design, we systematically gathered data from a diverse pool of participants, enabling a comprehensive analysis of the research variables.

Data Collection and Participants

The junior high schools in the Merauke region of Southern Papua Province, Indonesia, served as the study's sites. 335 pupils from these schools took part in the study in total. Two survey questionnaires and the academic transcripts of the students enrolled in the Indonesian Language Course were used to gather data. The educational atmosphere was the main topic of the first questionnaire. A questionnaire consisting of nine items from a prior study by Werang et al. was distributed in order to gather data about the school environment (2024a). A four-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 4 denoting "strongly agree," was used by participants to score their answers. To guarantee participant understanding, the questionnaire was delivered in Indonesian. Statements like "I feel safe and at ease at school," "The teaching and learning activities at this school are enjoyable," and "The school provides adequate learning facilities" were examples of things.

The student's motivation for studying was the main topic of the second questionnaire. An 11-item questionnaire from a prior study by Werang et al. (2024b) was distributed to gather information about the students' motivation for learning. A four-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting "strongly disagree" and 4 denoting "strongly agree," was used by participants to score their answers. To guarantee participant understanding, the questionnaire was delivered in Indonesian. The following sample items were included in the questionnaire's English version: "I regularly search the internet for topics I am unfamiliar with," "Education has become an essential requirement for me," "I create study schedules and try to follow them," "I avoid procrastinating on completing assignments given by teachers," "I feel motivated when facing challenging tasks," "I consistently strive to perform well in the classroom," and "I enjoy participating in competitions."

Additionally, a thorough examination of students' academic records allowed for the systematic collection of specific data regarding their academic achievement in the Indonesian language course. These transcripts, which provide a thorough account of each student's achievements and progress in learning Indonesian, were extremely helpful information sources. Researchers obtained profound insights about students' academic achievement in this subject area by carefully examining these academic data.

Data Analysis

The basic and multiple linear regression tests were used to do a comprehensive statistical analysis on all of the collected data. Version 21 of the SPSS software was used to help with this analysis. Using this analytical method, we sought to determine how the learning motivation of students and the school environment affect the academic performance of state junior high school students in Indonesian language courses.

To ensure the statistical significance of our findings, we used an Alpha (α) coefficient value of .05, providing a strong basis for drawing meaningful conclusions from the study. We probed three hypotheses to be examined as the following: (1) The school environment impacts significantly positively the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in Merauke District, Papua, Indonesia; (2) The student's learning motivation impacts significantly positively the academic achievement of the state junior high school students in the Merauke District, Southern

Papua Province, Indonesia; and (3) The academic performance of the state junior high school pupils in the Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia, is influenced by both the school environment and the students' ambition to learn.

Results

As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to examine the possible effects of individual and group learning motivation and the school environment on students' academic performance in the Indonesian language course at state junior high schools in the Merauke district, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia. With the use of SPSS software version 21, the data—which came from 335 students who participated in the survey—was rigorously statistically analyzed using both basic and multiple linear regression approaches. Tables 1, 2, and 3 display the findings of the statistical study, which looked at the partial and simultaneous effects of the learning motivation of the students and the school environment on their academic performance in the Indonesian language course.

Table 1. The impact of the school environment on the student academic achievement

N	R	R ²	t-count	t-table	Sig.
			0.05		
335	.836	.699	27.793	1.967113	.001

a Predictors: (Constant), School_Environment
b Dependent Variable: Academic_Achievement

The data outlined in Table 1 indicates that at the significance level of $\alpha = .05$, the value of t_{count} (27.793) exceeds the critical t_{table} value (1.967113). This research finding supports the hypothesis that "the school environment significantly positively impacts the student's academic achievement in the Indonesian language subject at the state junior high schools in the Merauke district, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia," while rejecting the hypothesis that the opposite is true. It shows that students' academic performance in Indonesian language courses in the state junior high schools in the Merauke area of Southern Papua Province, Indonesia, is greatly enhanced by the school environment. In other words, at the $\alpha = .05$ level, the influence of the school environment on students' academic performance in the Indonesian language course is statistically significant.

Additionally, Table 1's data shows a Sig. coefficient value of 0.001 and an R2 coefficient value of 0.699. This indicates that the degree of school environment conduciveness accounts for about 69.9% of the variation in children' academic achievement. This finding emphasizes how crucial it is to fund programs that improve school climate since it has a direct effect on children' overall academic performance. It illustrates how fostering and encouraging a positive school climate may start a positive feedback loop that keeps pupils succeeding academically.

Table 2. The impact of learning motivation on student academic achievement

N	R	R ²	t-count	t-table	Sig.
			0.05		
335	.925	.856	44.533	1.967113	.001

a Predictors: (Constant), Learning_Motivation
b Dependent Variable: Academic_Achievement

According to the information in Table 2, at the significance level of $\alpha = .05$, the value of t_{count} (44.533) exceeds the critical t_{table} value (1.967113). This finding confirms the research hypothesis that "student's learning motivation significantly positively impacts the student's academic achievement in Indonesian language subject at the state junior high schools in the Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia," while the opposite hypothesis is unconfirmed. It demonstrates that students' learning motivation significantly positively impacts the student's academic achievement in Indonesian language subjects at the state junior high school in the Merauke district, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia. In other words, the impact of students' learning motivation on students' academic achievement in the Indonesian language subject is statistically significant at the $\alpha = .05$ level.

Additionally, Table 2's data shows a Sig. coefficient value of 0.001 and an R^2 coefficient value of .856. It shows that students' degree of learning motivation accounts for about 85.6% of the variation in their academic performance. This finding emphasizes how crucial it is to fund programs that encourage pupils to learn because it has a direct effect on their overall academic performance. It illustrates how encouraging and inspiring teachers' dedication to their work can start a positive feedback loop that keeps kids' academic progress and achievement going.

Table 3. The simultaneous impact of the school environment and learning motivation on the student's academic achievement

N	R	R^2	F-count	F-table	Sig.
0.05					
335	.940	.884	1260.289	3.022845	.001

a Predictors: (Constant), School_Environment_and_Learning_Motivation
b Dependent Variable: Academic_Achievement

The data outlined in Table 3 reveals a clear and significant pattern. At a significance level of .05, the calculated F-value of 1260.289 significantly surpasses the critical F-value of 3.022845. This statistical finding strongly supports the research hypothesis, which suggests that both the school environment and student learning motivation have a combined impact on student academic achievement.

The results imply that a conducive school environment coupled with high levels of student motivation can significantly enhance academic achievement. Data in Table 3 further strengthens this assertion, showing an R^2 coefficient value of .884 with a Sig. coefficient value of .001. Essentially, this indicates that 88.4% of the variance in students' academic achievement can be accounted for by the combined levels of the school environment and student learning motivation. These findings underscore the crucial role of both factors in shaping students' academic success, emphasizing the need for educational initiatives that enhance both the school environment and student motivation to foster improved academic outcomes.

Discussion

Education is an ongoing journey involving encountering, reflecting on, and either retaining or reassessing experiences. It encompasses the cultivation of all the abilities within an individual, empowering them to navigate their surroundings and realize their potential (Dewey, 1926; Freiberg, 1998). This study sought to explain how students' academic performance in the Indonesian

language course in the state junior high schools in Merauke District, Southern Papua Province, Indonesia, is influenced by the learning environment and motivation to learn. The data analysis's findings demonstrated that students' academic performance in Indonesian language courses was positively and significantly impacted by the school environment. This demonstrates that the more conducive the school environment, the higher the students' academic achievement; conversely, the less conducive the school environment, the lower the students' academic achievement.

The school is frequently likened to a second home for students (Srivastava & Jaiswal, 2022), representing more than just an institution for academic learning; rather, it functions as a community where students forge enduring friendships, cultivate vital social and emotional skills, and explore their interests and passions (Tapia-Fonllem et al., 2020). As soon as students step into school, the school environment begins to shape their growth and development (Werang et al., 2024a) and acts as a crucible in which young minds are not only educated but also molded and developed (Akpan, 2020).

The school environment is a cornerstone in the learning and growth of students, significantly impacting their academic, social, emotional, and ethical development (Rusticus et al., 2023). Positive interactions with both teachers and peers play a pivotal role in nurturing a sense of belonging and intrinsic motivation among students. In such an environment, students feel encouraged to explore their interests and express themselves freely, which is vital for their holistic development. Considering that students spend a considerable amount of time at school, it is essential to create an environment that fosters effective learning. Providing a conducive and enriching atmosphere is imperative to support students in reaching their full potential.

A positive and supportive school environment, characterized by strong teacher-student relationships, an engaging classroom atmosphere, and adequate learning resources, fosters higher levels of learning motivation among students. A supportive school environment not only enhances students' overall welfare but also plays a crucial role in discouraging negative behaviors. Without positive interactions and a supportive atmosphere, students may find it difficult to explore their interests or express themselves, leading to a lack of motivation and enthusiasm for learning. By nurturing a positive and supportive atmosphere, schools can contribute significantly to students' academic success and personal development.

Research indicates that students with high levels of motivation tend to exhibit greater persistence, resilience, and overall academic achievement (Deci & Ryan, 1985). The results of the data analysis also revealed a positive and significant impact of learning motivation on students' academic achievement in Indonesian language subjects. This demonstrates that the higher the students' learning motivation, the higher their academic achievement; conversely, the lower the students' learning motivation, the lower their academic achievement.

Students' motivation to learn is like the wind in their sails, energizing their progress and growth and propelling them toward their academic goals. Put another way, the incentive that propels students to achieve greater academic results is their learning motivation (Hattie, 2009; Plante et al., 2013; Robbins et al., 2004; Wigfield et al., 2016). Enthusiastic educators serve as guiding lights in the dynamic classroom, illuminating students' paths to learning and exploration. They have an impact on students' learning experiences that goes beyond lesson planning. Because of

these teachers' contagious excitement, learning becomes a fascinating journey where curiosity flourishes (Abazaoğlu & Aztekin, 2016).

Students are inspired to actively participate and pursue greatness in the classroom when teachers are not only informed but also driven and excited. This emphasizes how important educators are to creating a vibrant learning environment. According to Werang et al. (2023b.c), enthusiastic and driven educators inspire and push their pupils to achieve in addition to teaching knowledge. Because of their infectious zeal, learning becomes an engaging and fulfilling experience. Students are more inclined to ask questions, participate fully, and take charge of their education in these kinds of settings. Because of this, students are actively engaged in the learning process rather than being merely passive consumers of knowledge, which propels their academic improvement.

Motivating students to learn is a challenging task for teachers, necessitating a diverse range of teaching styles and techniques to capture students' interest effectively. Vărășteanu and Iftime (2013) emphasize the significance of continuous focus on motivation and encouragement, highlighting them as essential factors for fostering active student learning. In line with this, a variety of teaching styles can be employed throughout the teaching and learning process. Abbas and Hussain (2018) categorize teaching styles into five types: expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator. Ali et al. (2010) offer further classification, differentiating teaching styles into four categories: classical, technological, personalized, and interactional teaching styles.

The diversity of teaching styles underscores the complexity of engaging students effectively. By understanding and employing various teaching styles, teachers can tailor their approach to meet the diverse needs of their students. This not only enhances the learning experience but also fosters a more inclusive and dynamic classroom environment. With a repertoire of teaching styles at their disposal, teachers are better equipped to address different learning preferences and ensure that students remain engaged and motivated throughout their learning journey.

Conclusion

This study clarifies the substantial influence that learning motivation and the school environment have on students' academic performance in Indonesian language courses. The results highlight how crucial a supportive learning environment and high levels of motivation for learning are to fostering students' academic achievement. Additionally, the study emphasizes how important teachers are in creating a dynamic learning environment with their expertise, drive, and excitement.

The findings of this study have several practical implications for teachers and school administrators. Firstly, creating a positive and supportive school environment is essential for enhancing students' academic achievement and overall welfare. Secondly, fostering high levels of learning motivation among students through various motivational strategies can significantly contribute to their academic success. Finally, the study underscores the importance of passionate and motivated teachers who can inspire and encourage students to excel academically. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to our understanding of the factors influencing students' academic achievement. By highlighting the significant impact of the school environment and learning motivation, the study may supposedly add to the existing body of knowledge by emphasizing the need to consider both

environmental and individual factors in educational research and practice. The study underscores the crucial role of teachers in creating a dynamic learning environment and fostering students' academic success.

Notwithstanding the insightful information this study offered, it is important to recognize its limits. First off, the study solely looked at how students' academic performance in Indonesian language classes was impacted by their school environment and ambition to learn. Second, self-report measures were used in the study, which could lead to response bias. Building on the results of this study, future investigations could examine the efficacy of particular treatments meant to improve the educational setting and encourage students' enthusiasm to learn. Furthermore, future research might examine how teaching methods and students' academic performance relate to one another while accounting for individual variances in learning preferences. Longitudinal studies could provide insights into the long-term impact of the school environment and learning motivation on student's academic achievement and overall development.

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