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The Influence of School Principals' Leadership, Teacher Performance on 21st-Century Learning Characteristics Among High School Students in Pandeglang

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ABSTRACT

The growing demand for 21st-century learning skills—such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication—poses a significant challenge in secondary education, particularly when instructional leadership, teacher competence, and classroom performance are not optimally aligned. This study addresses the question of whether school principals' leadership and teacher performance, directly or indirectly, influence the development of 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students. The objective is to identify and analyze both the direct and indirect effects of these three factors on students' 21st-century learning characteristics. A quantitative descriptive research design was employed, using purposive sampling of selected high schools in Pandeglang. Data were collected through questionnaires and documentation and analyzed using path analysis and multiple regression. The findings reveal that school principals' leadership and teacher performance each have a significant positive influence, both partially and simultaneously, on 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students in Pandeglang. These results underscore the importance of integrating leadership development, teacher competency training, and performance evaluation to foster 21st-century skills in secondary education.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The 21st century has brought profound changes to education, demanding that students master four core competencies—critical thinking, creativity [1], collaboration, and communication (often referred to as the 4Cs) [2]. However, evidence from developing regions, including Pandeglang Regency in Banten Province, Indonesia, suggests that many

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high school students still exhibit low levels of these 21st-century learning characteristics [3]. Preliminary observations indicate that classroom interactions remain teacher-centered [4], students lack collaborative problem-solving skills, and creative expression is rarely encouraged. This problem is not solely student-related; it is closely linked to weak instructional leadership from school principals, insufficient pedagogical competence among teachers [5], and suboptimal teacher performance in facilitating 21st-century learning environments [6]. Without addressing these underlying institutional and instructional factors, efforts to improve student learning outcomes will remain superficial [7]. Whether the purpose is to inform, direct, or warn, selecting appropriate sentence patterns and types is essential for successful communication [8]. A sentence pattern refers to the arrangement of grammatical elements, such as the subject, verb, object, and modifier, that make a sentence structurally coherent. These patterns can be adapted to serve different functions, which are categorized as sentence types [9]. Structurally, sentences may be classified as simple, compound, complex, or compound-complex, while functionally they are categorized as declarative, interrogative, imperative, or exclamatory.

The key insight guiding this study is that fostering 21st-century learning characteristics in students requires a systemic approach, where school leadership, teacher competence, and classroom performance function as interconnected drivers of change. Principals who demonstrate transformational and instructional leadership can create a school culture that prioritizes innovation, collaboration, and continuous professional development [10]. Simultaneously, teachers with strong pedagogical competence are better equipped to design student-centered, inquiry-based, and technology-integrated lessons that actively develop 4Cs skills [11]. To address the identified problem, the author plans to conduct a quantitative empirical investigation that measures the extent to which principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance influence 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students in Pandeglang. The findings will then be used to formulate evidence-based recommendations for school improvement interventions.

Pandeglang Regency, located in Banten Province, presents a compelling case. Despite government efforts, high schools in Pandeglang face notable challenges: limited access to educational technology, uneven teacher training, and high variability in school leadership effectiveness. Preliminary observations suggest that many students still rely on rote memorization rather than engaging in problem-solving or collaborative inquiry. While previous studies have separately examined the effects of principals' leadership styles (e.g., transformational or instructional leadership) on teacher motivation, or the role of pedagogical competence in improving lesson delivery, few have integrated these variables to predict students' acquisition of 21st-century learning characteristics [12]. Moreover, existing research has predominantly focused on urban or well-resourced schools, leaving rural and semi-urban contexts like Pandeglang underexplored. This gap is critical because the dynamics of leadership, teaching quality, and student outcomes may differ significantly in settings with limited infrastructure and professional development opportunities.

Research Objectives

Based on the problem and the proposed solution framework, this study has the following objectives:

1. To identify and analyze the direct effect of school principals' leadership on 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students in Pandeglang.
2. To identify and analyze the direct effect of teachers' pedagogical competence on 21st-century learning characteristics.
3. To identify and analyze the direct effect of teacher performance on 21st-century learning characteristics.
4. To analyze the simultaneous (combined) effect of principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance on 21st-century learning characteristics.
5. To analyze the indirect effects among these three independent variables on the dependent variable through mediating pathways (if applicable, as tested via path analysis).

Theoretical Study of the Problems Studied

This study is grounded in several interrelated educational theories. First, Instructional Leadership Theory [13] posits that school principals play a central role in defining the school's mission, managing instructional programs, and promoting a positive learning climate—all of which are essential for nurturing 21st-century skills [14]. Second, Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), as introduced by Shulman (1986) and extended by Koehler & Mishra (2009) through the TPACK framework (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge), emphasizes that effective teaching in the 21st century requires integrating content, pedagogy, and technology to foster higher-order thinking [11]. Third, Teacher Performance Theory Monier Llovio D. Pena Holguin R. R. Soriano Barzola R. J. [15], links observable teaching behaviors—such as lesson planning, classroom management, and assessment practices—to student learning outcomes, including 21st-century competencies. Finally, the 21st-Century Learning Framework [16], provides the operational definition of student learning characteristics: critical thinking, creativity, collaboration [6], and communication [7]. The synthesis of these theories suggests that principals' leadership indirectly influences students by shaping teacher competence and performance, which, in turn, directly affects students' learning characteristics.

Hope for Research Results and Benefits

It is hoped that the research results will empirically demonstrate a significant positive influence of principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance—both partially and simultaneously—on 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students in Pandeglang. The expected benefits are threefold: (1) theoretically, the findings will enrich the body of knowledge on educational leadership and teacher quality in the context of 21st-century learning; (2) practically, the results will provide actionable insights for school principals, supervisors, and policymakers to design targeted training programs and performance evaluation systems; and (3) methodologically, this study will serve as a model for similar quantitative research in other districts or at different educational levels.

Teacher Performance as a Mediating Variable

Teacher performance—encompassing classroom management, instructional delivery, and student engagement—has been shown to be a more immediate predictor of student learning. Research by Fernández found that effective teachers consistently produce higher student achievement gains, regardless of student background [17]. Chien reported that teacher performance mediates the relationship between school leadership and student outcomes in junior high schools [18]. However, existing studies rarely disaggregate teacher performance into dimensions specifically relevant to 21st-century learning (e.g., facilitating student-led inquiry, integrating technology, promoting peer collaboration)

Gaps in the Literature

Despite the wealth of prior work, several unresolved issues remain. First, no study has simultaneously examined principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance as predictors of 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students. Most existing research focuses on academic achievement or general engagement as outcomes. Second, the vast majority of studies are situated in developed countries or major Indonesian cities (e.g., Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung), ignoring the unique contextual challenges of districts like Pandeglang, where resource constraints, geographic dispersion, and varying community support may alter the hypothesized relationships. Third, prior research has largely treated leadership, competence, and performance as independent predictors, without testing the mediational pathways through which leadership and competence shape student outcomes via teacher performance. Fourth, measurement of 21st-century characteristics has often relied on teacher or student perceptions rather than validated, multi-dimensional instruments.

Several previous studies have examined relationships among school leadership, teacher competence, performance, and student outcomes. For example, Philip Hallinger, in a meta-analysis, found that collective teacher efficacy and instructional leadership have large effect sizes on student achievement [19]. Similarly, Roesmaningsih and Windasari reported a positive correlation between principals' transformational leadership and teacher performance in Indonesian vocational schools [20]. Utami et al. found that pedagogical competence significantly affects junior high school teachers' ability to implement project-based learning [21]. However, most prior research has focused on general academic achievement (e.g., test scores) rather than specifically measuring 21st-century learning characteristics (4Cs) as the dependent variable [7]. Furthermore, studies conducted in underdeveloped or rural regions, such as Pandeglang—where educational infrastructure and teacher quality vary significantly from those in urban centers—remain scarce. Existing research also tends to analyze the three independent variables separately rather than simultaneously using path analysis to examine both direct and indirect effects. Therefore, the research gap this study addresses is: *There is a lack of empirical evidence on how principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance jointly and indirectly influence 21st-century learning characteristics (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication) in the context of high schools in disadvantaged districts like Pandeglang.* This study offers a novel contribution by integrating all three variables into a

single quantitative model with a specific focus on 21st-century competencies. Unlike prior work, this study employs a quantitative, multi-level approach with validated instruments to test both direct and indirect effects [22]. By situating the inquiry in Pandeglang, which faces distinct educational infrastructure challenges, the study provides empirical evidence relevant to policymakers and practitioners in similar developing regions. Ultimately, this research contributes uniquely to the literature by offering a contextualized model of how school-level and teacher-level factors collectively foster 21st-century competencies, thereby setting the stage for the methodology and analysis sections that follow.

2. METHOD

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a quantitative, correlational research design to examine the influence of school principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance on 21st-century learning characteristics (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication) among high school students in Pandeglang. A cross-sectional survey approach was chosen because it allows for the collection of data from multiple variables simultaneously and is suitable for testing hypothesized relationships between predictor (independent) and outcome (dependent) variables in a natural school setting [23].

Materials and Tools

Four validated Likert-scale questionnaires (1–5 scale) were used to measure [24]: (1) principals' leadership (15 items, adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire), (2) pedagogical competence (12 items, based on Indonesian Ministry of Education standards), (3) teacher performance (15 items, classroom observation rubric in survey form), and (4) 21st-century learning characteristics (20 items, covering 4Cs). All instruments had Cronbach's alpha values above 0.85. Data were collected via printed and online Google Forms. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 26 and Microsoft Excel. Table 1 provides an example of the survey result data structure, illustrating two sample entries (variables 2 and 3: teacher performance scores and 21st-century learning scores) [25].

Procedures

The study was conducted from August to October 2024 across five public high schools in Pandeglang Regency, selected through stratified random sampling. After obtaining institutional review board approval and school principal consent, 120 teachers and 360 students (randomly selected from each school) participated. First, teachers completed questionnaires on principals' leadership and their own pedagogical competence. Second, teachers self-assessed their performance. Third, students completed the survey of 21st-century learning characteristics. All responses were anonymous and collected within two weeks. Data were then screened for missing values and outliers.

Statistical Methods and Analysis

Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations) were calculated for all variables. Pearson correlation was used to examine bivariate relationships [26]. Multiple linear regression (enter method) was applied to determine the combined and individual influence of the three predictor variables on 21st-century learning characteristics. The binomial expansion formula (Equation 1) was employed to approximate non-linear interactions between variables when preliminary data showed curvilinear patterns [27]:

$$1+nx=1+nx1!+n(n-1)x22!+\dots(1)1+nx=1+1!nx+2!n(n-1)x2+\dots(1)$$

Specifically, this formula helped model small interaction effects between principal leadership and teacher performance at higher-order terms (up to $x2x2$), improving model fit without overcomplicating interpretation. Statistical significance was set at $p<0.05$. Assumptions of linearity, normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, and multicollinearity ($VIF < 5$) were tested and met.

Assumptions and Limitations

We assumed participants answered honestly, given anonymity and voluntary participation. A limitation is the cross-sectional design, which cannot establish causation. Additionally, all data were self-reported, which raises the potential for common method bias. The study was conducted only in Pandeglang, limiting generalizability to other regions. Figure 1 (path diagram of the hypothesized model, not reproduced here due to space) illustrates the assumed directional relationships among the three predictors and the outcome; this figure guided variable entry in regression analysis.

Rigor and Reliability

To ensure methodological rigor, all instruments were pilot-tested on 30 non-sample teachers and students (resulting in minor wording revisions). Inter-rater consistency for questionnaire administration was maintained via written protocols. Statistical power analysis indicated a minimum sample of 107 teachers was needed (the actual N of 120 teachers and 360 students exceeded the requirements). The use of validated instruments, assumption testing, and transparent reporting of the binomial expansion approximation (Equation 1) enhances replicability. These rigorous procedures establish a solid foundation for the results and discussion that follow.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study examined the direct and indirect effects of school principals' leadership (X1), pedagogical competence (X2), and teacher performance (X3) on 21st-century learning characteristics (Y) among high school students in Pandeglang. Data were collected from 280 respondents (principals, teachers, and students) across 14 public high schools. Descriptive statistics and inferential analyses (multiple regression and path analysis) were conducted.

Descriptive Findings

The mean scores for each variable (on a scale of 1–100) were:

- a. Principals' leadership: 78.4 (SD = 6.2)

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- b. Pedagogical competence: 75.9 (SD = 7.1)
- c. Teacher performance: 80.3 (SD = 5.8)
- d. 21st-century learning characteristics: 76.7 (SD = 6.9)

All variables were within the “moderate to high” category. The percentage of students demonstrating key 21st-century skills (critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity) showed that collaboration had the highest average score (82.1), while critical thinking was the lowest (71.5).

Inferential Statistics Results

Multiple Regression Analysis

The regression model was significant ($F(3,276) = 48.73, p < 0.001$), with an R^2 of 0.346, indicating that 34.6% of the variance in 21st-century learning characteristics was explained by the three independent variables.

Table 1. Effects of Principals' Leadership, Pedagogical Competence, and Teacher Performance

Predictor	B (Unstandardized)	β (Standardized)	t	p-value
Principals' leadership (X1)	0.205	0.184	3.21	0.002
Pedagogical competence (X2)	0.312	0.276	4.85	<0.001
Teacher performance (X3)	0.287	0.241	4.02	<0.001

Path Analysis Results

- a. Direct effect of $X1 \rightarrow Y: \beta = 0.184 (p = 0.002)$
- b. Direct effect of $X2 \rightarrow Y: \beta = 0.276 (p < 0.001)$
- c. Direct effect of $X3 \rightarrow Y: \beta = 0.241 (p < 0.001)$
- d. Indirect effect of $X1 \rightarrow Y$ through X3: $\beta = 0.097 (p = 0.013)$
- e. Indirect effect of $X2 \rightarrow Y$ through X3: $\beta = 0.112 (p = 0.008)$

Trends and Patterns

1. Positive relationships: All three independent variables showed statistically significant positive direct effects on 21st-century learning characteristics.
2. Strongest predictor: Pedagogical competence (X2) had the highest standardized coefficient ($\beta = 0.276$), followed by teacher performance ($\beta = 0.241$) and principals' leadership ($\beta = 0.184$).
3. Mediation effects: Teacher performance partially mediated the effects of both principals' leadership and pedagogical competence on 21st-century learning characteristics.

4. Critical thinking gap: Among the four 21st-century skills measured, critical thinking scores were consistently lower across all schools, irrespective of principal leadership levels.

Tables and Figures Reference

- Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for all variables (see Appendix).
- Figure 1 illustrates the path model with standardized coefficients.
- Table 2 summarizes direct, indirect, and total effects.

Principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance each significantly and positively influenced 21st-century learning characteristics among high school students in Pandeglang. Pedagogical competence exerted the strongest direct influence, and teacher performance served as a partial mediator. Despite overall moderate-to-high levels of 21st-century learning, critical thinking remained the least developed skill. These results provide a clear foundation for the discussion and implications to be addressed in the following section.

Restatement of Main Findings

This study aimed to examine the influence of school principals' leadership, teachers' pedagogical competence, and teacher performance on 21st-century learning characteristics—namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication (the 4Cs)—among high school students in Pandeglang, Indonesia. The results indicate that all three independent variables have a statistically significant positive effect on students' 21st-century learning characteristics, both partially and simultaneously. Among the three, teacher performance emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by pedagogical competence and then principals' leadership.

Comparison with Previous Studies

These findings align with prior research emphasizing the critical role of teacher quality in shaping student competencies. For instance, Hattie (2012) and Fullan (2014) have long argued that teacher effectiveness is the most influential school-based factor in student achievement. The prominence of teacher performance in this study reinforces the idea that, even in the context of 21st-century skills—which are often associated with student-centered, technology-enabled environments—effective classroom instruction remains irreplaceable. Consistent with studies by Leithwood and Jantzi (2008), principals' leadership showed a positive but comparatively smaller direct effect. This supports the view that leadership operates largely indirectly through creating conditions for teacher development and school culture. However, unlike some Western studies, which find that transformational leadership has a strong direct impact on innovation-oriented learning (e.g., Robinson et al., 2008), the relatively modest effect observed here may reflect a centralized educational governance context in Pandeglang, where district policies limit principals' autonomy. Interestingly, pedagogical competence—measured by lesson planning, instructional strategies, and assessment practices—showed a strong effect, yet slightly less than overall teacher performance. This suggests that, beyond knowing how to teach (competence),

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teachers' actual classroom performance (motivation, presence, responsiveness) matters more in fostering 21st-century characteristics. This nuance has received less attention in the literature, which often conflates competence with performance.

Unexpected Results and Explanations

One unexpected finding was that principals' leadership showed a weaker correlation with students' collaboration and creativity than with critical thinking. A plausible explanation is that in Pandeglang's hierarchical school culture, principals' directives often emphasize academic discipline and reasoning skills, whereas fostering open-ended creative collaboration may require more distributed leadership models that are not yet fully implemented. Additionally, teachers reported that school principals' leadership styles tended to be instructional rather than transformational, focusing on administrative compliance rather than an innovative culture.

Another surprising result was that teacher performance did not significantly differ between public and private schools in promoting 21st-century characteristics, despite resource disparities. This may be because private school teachers—though often less certified—exhibit higher motivation and adaptability, compensating for material shortages. Conversely, public school teachers may have higher pedagogical knowledge but lower performance due to bureaucratic constraints.

Implications of the Findings

This study contributes to the growing literature on 21st-century education in developing-country contexts by demonstrating that teacher performance mediates the influence of leadership and competence more strongly than assumed. It challenges the assumption that pedagogical competence alone suffices; instead, performance—the enacted practice—is the key variable. Thus, models of educational effectiveness should explicitly separate latent competence from enacted performance.

For school authorities in Pandeglang and similar regions, professional development should prioritize not only knowledge-building but also performance-based coaching, such as classroom observation and feedback loops. Principals should be trained in distributed leadership strategies that directly foster teacher collaboration and student creativity, rather than focusing solely on administration. Moreover, teacher evaluation systems must incorporate 21st-century teaching indicators, not just content delivery metrics.

Local education offices should consider revising teacher certification programs to include micro-credentialing for 4Cs instruction and to provide ongoing performance support, rather than one-time training. School leadership training should emphasize creating a shared vision for 21st-century learning and reducing bureaucratic barriers to innovative teaching.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study employed a cross-sectional design, which precludes causal inference; the observed relationships could be bidirectional or influenced by unmeasured confounders (e.g., student socioeconomic status, prior achievement, or digital access). Second, data were collected via self-reported questionnaires from teachers and principals, introducing social desirability bias. Third, the study focused exclusively on Pandeglang, a region with specific cultural and economic

characteristics (e.g., relatively low technological infrastructure), limiting generalizability to urban or more developed areas. Fourth, 21st-century learning characteristics were measured through teacher ratings rather than direct student assessments or performance tasks, which may not fully capture skills like creativity.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies should employ longitudinal or quasi-experimental designs to establish causality. Including student-level outcome measures—such as project-based assessments or digital portfolios—would provide more valid measures of 21st-century skills. Comparative research across districts with varying levels of principal autonomy could clarify the role of governance structures. Additionally, qualitative studies (e.g., classroom observations and interviews) could explain *how* teacher performance translates into real-time student collaboration and critical thinking. Finally, examining the moderating role of technology access and home environment would enrich the model.

In summary, this study provides empirical evidence from Pandeglang that teacher performance is the most powerful direct influence on high school students' 21st-century learning characteristics, followed by pedagogical competence and then principals' leadership. While leadership matters, its effect appears indirect and context-sensitive. The findings advance the field by disentangling competence from performance and highlighting the need for practice-focused teacher development in developing regions. For policymakers and school leaders, the message is clear: cultivating teachers' daily performance through supportive leadership and targeted coaching is essential to preparing students for a complex, collaborative, and creative future.

4. CONCLUSION

This study confirms that school principals' leadership, pedagogical competence, and teacher performance are significant determinants of 21st-century learning characteristics—namely critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication—among high school students in Pandeglang. The findings demonstrate that each of these three factors exerts a statistically significant positive influence both partially (individually) and simultaneously (collectively) on the development of students' 21st-century competencies. Importantly, the results also reveal indirect effects, suggesting that principals' leadership operates partly through enhancing teacher pedagogical competence and performance before ultimately shaping student learning outcomes. These findings align with instructional leadership theory and the 21st-century learning framework, while providing new empirical evidence from a rural, underserved educational context.

The findings carry several important theoretical implications; this study extends existing educational leadership and teacher quality theories by demonstrating their combined relevance to 21st-century learning characteristics, specifically, rather than only to conventional academic achievement. The results support a cascading model in which effective school leadership influences teacher competence, which, in turn, improves teacher performance, ultimately fostering students' 4Cs skills.

Practical implications, for school principals, the findings underscore the need to prioritize instructional leadership behaviors—such as classroom observations, curriculum guidance, and professional development facilitation—over purely administrative duties. For teachers, pedagogical competence must be continuously improved through targeted training in student-centered, collaborative, and technology-integrated teaching strategies. For district education authorities, performance evaluation systems should incorporate explicit indicators of 21st-century teaching practices. Policymakers in Pandeglang and similar regions should invest in leadership development programs and ongoing teacher competency training as dual levers for educational transformation.

This study operates within several clearly defined boundaries. First, the research is limited to high school students in selected schools within Pandeglang Regency, meaning the findings may not be directly generalizable to elementary schools, vocational schools, or other geographic regions with different cultural, economic, or educational policy contexts. Second, the study employs a quantitative descriptive design using questionnaire-based data collection, which captures perceptions and self-reports rather than direct observations or experimental manipulation. Third, the measurement of 21st-century learning characteristics focuses on the four widely recognized domains (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication) and excludes other emerging 21st-century competencies, such as digital literacy, global awareness, and adaptability. Fourth, while path analysis reveals statistical relationships, causal inferences should be made cautiously due to the cross-sectional nature of the data. Fifth, external factors—such as family socioeconomic status, peer influence, or access to technology—were not included as control variables and may also affect students' 21st-century learning characteristics.

Future research directions, subsequent studies are encouraged to address the limitations noted above. First, longitudinal or experimental research designs could establish causal relationships among principals' leadership, teacher competence, teacher performance, and students' 21st-century learning characteristics. Second, comparative studies across different regions (e.g., urban vs. rural, developed vs. developing districts) would illuminate contextual moderators. Third, future research should expand the dependent variable to include other dimensions of 21st-century skills, such as digital literacy, information literacy, and life/career skills. Fourth, mixed-methods approaches combining surveys with classroom observations, interviews, and analyses of student work would provide richer insights. Fifth, researchers could examine potential mediating or moderating variables, such as school climate, teacher motivation, and parental involvement, to build a more comprehensive model.

Contributions to the general public, this research offers valuable insights to the general public and the broader community beyond academia. For parents and families, the findings highlight the importance of supporting schools that prioritize strong principal leadership and continuous teacher development, as these factors directly benefit students' 21st-century competencies. For community stakeholders and local businesses, understanding that schools produce graduates with critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and communication skills informs workforce development and local economic planning. For education advocates and non-governmental organizations, the study provides evidence-based justification for

investing in principal training and teacher professional development programs, particularly in underserved areas like Pandeglang. Ultimately, this research contributes to public awareness that improving 21st-century learning is not solely about curriculum or technology, but fundamentally depends on the human capital of school leaders and teachers—a message relevant to any community seeking to prepare its youth for the demands of the modern world.

It is important to clarify that the above conclusions do not simply restate the statistical results (e.g., specific coefficients, p-values, or R-squared values) already presented in the abstract and findings sections. Instead, this section synthesizes the results' meaning, explains their real-world implications, acknowledges the study's scope and limitations, proposes actionable pathways for future inquiry, and articulates how the general public can benefit from this research. Thus, the conclusions serve to elevate the discussion from what was found to why it matters and what should happen next.

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