FEAR OF GOD AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT: A CORRELATIONAL STUDY AMONG TENTH GRADE STUDENTS AT GKPI PADANG BULAN PRIVATE SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL IN MEDAN, 2023

Novita Romauli Saragih [1], Elisabeth Sitepu [2], Selamat Karo-Karo [3], Riama Sitohang [4], Padriadi Wiharjokusumo [5]

Fakultas Keguruan & Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Darma Agung, Medan, Indonesia [1,2,3,4]

Prodi Usaha Perjalanan Wisata Akademi Pariwisata dan Perhotelan Darma Agung, Medan, Indonesia [5]

Corresponding Author:

novitaromauli12@gmail.com [1], elisabethsitepu20@gmail.com [2], selamtkaro@gmail.com [3], riamasitohang43@gmail.com [4], knb.ministry76@gmail.com [5]

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji korelasi antara sikap "rasa takut akan Tuhan" dan prestasi akademik di kalangan siswa kelas sepuluh di SMA Swasta GKPI Padang Bulan, Medan, Indonesia, pada tahun ajaran 2023. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain korelasional deskriptif, dengan melibatkan seluruh populasi siswa kelas sepuluh yang berjumlah 30 orang sebagai sampel. Dokumentasi dan kuesioner menggunakan 30 item pilihan ganda (a, b, c, d) sebagai instrumen penelitian. Uji reliabilitas dilakukan untuk memastikan keabsahan kuesioner. Analisis data menunjukkan distribusi normal untuk kedua data rasa takut akan Tuhan (X^2_hitung < X^2_tabel = 22,33 < 43,77) dan data prestasi akademik siswa (X^2_hitung < X^2_tabel = 18,85 < 43,77). Uji statistik menunjukkan adanya hubungan linear antara kedua variabel tersebut. Analisis lebih lanjut menggunakan uji korelasi sederhana menunjukkan korelasi positif yang signifikan, dengan nilai r sebesar 0,453 yang melebihi nilai kritis sebesar 0,361. Uji-t mengkonfirmasi signifikansi ini dengan nilai t sebesar 3,41 yang melebihi nilai kritis sebesar 1,69 pada tingkat signifikansi 95%. Temuan ini menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang signifikan antara rasa takut akan Tuhan dan prestasi akademik di kalangan siswa kelas sepuluh dalam penelitian ini.

Kata Kunci: Sikap takut akan Tuhan, Hasil belajar, Korelasi

Abstract

This research investigates the correlation between "fear of God" and academic achievement among tenth-graders at GKPI Padang Bulan Private Senior High School, Medan, Indonesia, in the academic year 2023. The study employed a descriptive correlational design, involving the entire population of thirty tenth-grade students as the sample. Documentation and a self-reported questionnaire with thirty, four-option (a, b, c, d) items were utilized as research instruments. A reliability test confirmed the questionnaire's effectiveness. The analysis revealed a normal distribution for both fear of God data (X^2_calc < X^2_tab = 22.33 < 43.77) and students' academic achievement data (X^2_calc < X^2_tab = 18.85 < 43.77). Statistical tests indicated a linear relationship between the two variables. Further analysis using simple correlation testing showed a significant positive correlation, with an r-value of 0.453 exceeding the critical value of 0.361. A t-test confirmed this significance with a t-value of 3.41 exceeding the critical value of 1.69 at a 95% significance level. These findings suggest a statistically significant positive correlation between fear of God and academic achievement among tenth-graders in this study.

Keywords: Fear of God, Academic achievement, Correlation

INTRODUCTION

Education serves a vital role in shaping students' character and fostering their success (Seider, Soutter, and Clark 2016). While academic achievement is a primary focus, religious education often complements this by instilling positive values and a strong moral compass. This study, conducted by a team of four lecturers and one student, delves into the potential relationship between "fear of God" and academic

achievement among tenth-grade students at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School in Medan, Indonesia (2023).

The concept of "fear of God" transcends mere apprehension; it signifies a deep respect, reverence, and desire to live righteously according to one's faith. We hypothesize that a strong sense of "fear of God" might positively influence academic performance by encouraging students to exhibit discipline, dedication, and a strong work ethic. Conversely, a weaker connection with these values could potentially hinder academic success.

By investigating this potential correlation, we aim to contribute valuable insights to the field of Christian education. If a positive relationship is established, educators can potentially leverage this understanding to develop strategies that integrate moral development with academic pursuits, ultimately fostering well-rounded individuals who excel not only in academics but also in their spiritual lives.

A. Definition of the Fear of God

The **Fear of God** is understood within Christian theology as a foundational element that influences an individual's response to divine matters. This concept is encapsulated in the biblical proverb, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs 1:7). This reverence is not mere trepidation but a profound respect for God's holiness and an acknowledgment of His sovereignty.

Scholars interpret the Fear of God as a catalyst for true worship and wisdom. According to Lee and Kim (2021), it represents "The desire to be in fellowship with Jesus Christ and steadfastness in life," suggesting that this fear is intertwined with a relational and committed approach to one's faith journey. Similarly, Boehlke (2013) outlines the characteristics of those who embody this fear, highlighting attributes such as prayerfulness and a life marked by worship.

1. **Prayerful Living:** Prayer is an integral practice for Christians, reflecting their faith in God. Calvin (2000) articulates this by stating, "Prayer is the connection between man and God. Whatever we can expect from Him according to His promise, we must ask for it in prayer according to His command." The New Testament reinforces this notion, with Jesus affirming the efficacy of prayer in Matthew 21:22 and the apostle James underscoring the power of a righteous person's prayer in James 5:16b.

2. **Attending Worship:** Yandianto (2010) defines worship as the fulfillment of God's commandments, encompassing all aspects of a believer's life. The PAK PGI Working Group (2011) further categorizes worship into three domains: ethical living, stewardship of creation, and the pursuit of knowledge. Regular participation in Sunday worship services is seen as a manifestation of one's commitment to God's Word and a means to deepen one's understanding of the divine.

3. **Reading the Word of God:** Engagement with the Bible is crucial for believers to know God. The PAK-PGI Working Group (2011) emphasizes the importance of Scripture as the medium through which God reveals Himself. Verses like Psalm 119:105 illustrate the Bible's role in guiding one's path, suggesting that a diligent study of Scripture is reflective of a faithful life.

4. **Yielding to Win:** This theological attitude involves responding to adversity with grace, as informed by biblical teachings. It encompasses forgiving those who wrong us and maintaining dignity in the face of opposition, aligning with the principles of Christian conduct.

B. Definition of **Christian Religious Education (CRE)**

Christian Religious Education (CRE) is an educational discipline that emphasizes the development of character and moral values, drawing inspiration from the teachings and

example of Jesus Christ, who is revered as the ultimate teacher of His followers. As noted by Wiharjokusumo et al. (2023), the core objective of CRE is to steer learners of all ages towards a deeper understanding and embodiment of God's intentions and desires as revealed through Christ. This educational journey is not merely about acquiring knowledge; it's about transforming individuals into effective servants and disciples, with Christ as the focal point of their growth and service.

The essence of education, as described by various scholars, is to navigate individuals through the complexities of life, enabling them to realize their full potential in the context of their environment. CRE embodies this philosophy through a purposeful, structured, and ongoing process that imparts knowledge, cultivates attitudes, instills values, hones skills, and heightens sensitivities. It's an all-encompassing approach that views every experience as an opportunity for intentional learning.

According to the theological insights of Calvin, CRE involves nurturing the minds of believers and their offspring with the Word of God, under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit. This nurturing takes place within the church community through diverse learning experiences. CRE serves as a gateway for both the young and the elderly to engage actively with their faith, fostering a communal life centered around the worship and adoration of God. It's a faith-driven educational path that unites individuals in their devotion to God and encourages them to honor His name consistently across all spheres of life.

In summary, Christian Religious Education is a holistic form of instruction that seeks to shape the spiritual, moral, and intellectual lives of individuals, guiding them to live in harmony with God's will and to participate fully in the life of the Christian community.

C. Definition of Learning

Saragih, NR et al (2023) define learning as the lifelong process of transforming information and experience into knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes. This comprehensive definition captures the acquisition of knowledge, development of skills, and lasting behavioral changes that occur through experience and interaction with the environment.

1. **Demonstration Method**: The demonstration method is a teaching approach where students observe a process, situation, or object being presented. This presentation can be done verbally, visually (through simulations), or in real-time. As Saragih et al (2023) point out, demonstration essentially means showing or performing something. This method is effective for clarifying concepts and illustrating how to complete tasks. The demonstration method is versatile and can be applied across various subjects. By observing demonstrations, students can learn accurate information and find answers to their questions. This method aims to capture students' attention and help them retain information in their long-term memory, leading to a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

2. **Learning Outcomes**: Learning outcomes are the ultimate goals of teaching and learning, representing the combined efforts of teachers and students (Crespo et al. 2010). They encompass a wide range of behavioral changes in students, including those in the cognitive (thinking), affective (emotional), and psychomotor (physical skills) domains. These outcomes are crucial for measuring the effectiveness of the teaching process. By evaluating learning outcomes, teachers can adapt their methods to better meet the needs of their students. Successful learning outcomes lead to changes in students' minds, such as a deeper understanding of a subject or improved social skills. There are various tools for measuring learning outcomes, but they go beyond test scores. While quizzes, exams, and tests can provide some indication of student achievement, they represent a student's overall academic success only in part. Learning outcomes encompass a student's intellectual

(cognitive), emotional (affective), and practical (psychomotor) development. By considering all three aspects, educators gain a more complete picture of a student's progress and can provide tailored support to ensure all students reach their full potential. For instance, Wiharjokusumo (2021) highlights measuring knowledge acquisition (a cognitive aspect) through test scores, but this should be complemented by assessing a student's attitudes, beliefs, and practical abilities.

METHOD IMPLEMENTATION

This study employed a correlational design to explore the relationship between fear of God and academic achievement among thirty tenth-grade students at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School in Medan, Indonesia, during the academic year 2023. Data collection involved the administration of a self-reported questionnaire designed to measure fear of God attitude among the participants. The questionnaire consisted of thirty items reflecting various aspects of fear of God attitude, categorized into ranges such as Very High, High, Adequate, Low, and Very Low, rather than specific Likert scale responses. Additionally, academic achievement data were obtained from existing school records.

Assumption testing included normality and linearity tests to ensure the appropriateness of the statistical analyses conducted. Normality tests were performed using the chi-square (χ^2) formula, while linearity tests utilized regression analysis. Descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, were calculated to examine the distribution of fear of God attitude scores among the participants. These statistical analyses aimed to provide insights into the relationship between fear of God attitude and academic achievement among the tenth-grade students at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School in 2023.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
A. Descriptive Data Analysis

Fear of God Attitude Scores: Based on the research data obtained from 30 respondents, the highest score recorded was 56, and the lowest was 28, with a mean (M) of 40.66 and a standard deviation (SD) of 19.06. The frequency distribution of fear of God attitude scores for Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution Of Fear Of God Attitude Scores (X)

No	Range	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Category
1	≥ 52	9	30%	Very High
2	46-51	3	10%	High
3	40-45	7	23.33%	Adequate
4	34-39	4	13.33%	Low
5	28-33	7	23.33%	Very Low
	Total	30	100%	

From the table above, it can be observed that 30% of the students exhibited a very high fear of God attitude, while 10% showed a high attitude, 23.33% had an adequate attitude, 13.33% had a low attitude, and 23.33% had a very low attitude. Thus, it can be concluded that fear of God attitude among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 is categorized as very high for 30% of the students.

Academic Achievement Scores: The research data obtained from 30 respondents yielded a highest score of 90 and a lowest score of 55, with a mean (M) of 78 and a standard deviation (SD) of 7.62. The frequency distribution of academic achievement scores for Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution Of Academic Achievement Scores (Y)

No	Range	Observation Frequency	Relative Frequency	Category
1	≥ 90	1	3.33%	Excellent
2	83-89	6	20%	Very Good
3	76-82	12	40%	Good
4	69-75	7	23.33%	Adequate
5	62-68	1	3.33%	Low
6	55-61	1	3.33%	Very Low
	Total	30	100%	

The table indicates that 40% of the students achieved a good academic performance, while 20% achieved a very good performance, 23.33% attained an adequate performance, 3.33% scored low, and another 3.33% scored very low. Thus, it can be concluded that the academic achievement of Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 is categorized as good for 40% of the students.

B. Assumption Test Analysis

1. Normality Test

The normality test for the fear of God attitude variable was conducted using the chi-square (χ^2) formula. Normality assumptions are met if the calculated χ^2 value is less than the χ^2 critical value at a significance level (α) of 5%, with degrees of freedom (df) equal to 5. The results of the normality test for the research data can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary Of Normality Test For Data Distribution

Research Variable	df	χ^2_calculated	χ^2_critical (α=0.05)	Curve
Fear of God Attitude (X)	30	22.33	43.77	Normal
Student Academic Achievement (Y)	30	18.85	43.77	Normal

Based on the table above, it can be observed that the calculated χ^2 value is less than the critical χ^2 value at a significance level of 5%. Thus, it can be concluded that the data distribution for both research variables follows a normal distribution.

2. Linearity Test

This study involves one independent variable and one dependent variable. The linearity of the relationship between these variables was tested using the regression formula for a linear equation $Y = a + bx$. The results of the simple regression equation $Y = 22.77 + 1.22x$ indicate linearity at a significance level of 5%.

C. Trend Analysis of Research Data

Fear of God Attitude Trend: Based on the research data, with a highest score of 56 and a lowest score of 28, a mean (M) of 42, and a standard deviation (SD) of 4.6, the trend analysis of fear of God attitude among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Fear Of God Attitude Trend Analysis

Class	Interval	Frequency (Fo)	Relative Frequency (%)	Category
1	<48.9	4	13.33%	Very High
2	44.3-48.9	9	30%	High
3	39.7-44.3	3	10%	Adequate
4	35.1-39.7	4	13.33%	Low
5	<35.1	8	26.66%	Very Low
Total		30		

Based on the table above, it can be observed that 30% of the students exhibited a high fear of God attitude, while 10% showed a very high attitude, 13.33% had an adequate attitude, 13.33% had a low attitude, and 26.66% had a very low attitude. Thus, it can be concluded that the fear of God attitude among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 tended towards being high (30%).

Student Academic Achievement Trend: The trend analysis of student academic achievement among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023, based on the research data with a highest score of 90 and a lowest score of 55, a mean (M) of 72.2, and a standard deviation (SD) of 5.83, is presented in Table 4.5.

Table 5. Student Academic Achievement Trend Analysis

No	Range	Absolute Frequency	Relative Frequency (%)	Category
1	>80.94	2	6.66%	Excellent
2	75.11 - 80.94	22	73.33%	Good
3	69.28 - 75.11	4	13.33%	Adequate
4	63.45 - 69.28	1	3.33%	Low
5	<63.45	1	3.33%	Very Low
	Total	30	100%	

From the table above, it can be observed that 73.33% of the students achieved a good level of academic performance, while 6.66% attained an excellent performance, 13.33% achieved an adequate performance, 3.33% scored low, and another 3.33% scored very low. Therefore, it can be concluded that the academic achievement of Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023 tended towards being good (73.33%).

D. Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypothesis regarding the relationship between fear of God attitude and student academic achievement among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023, a correlation analysis using the product moment formula was conducted:

$$r_{xy} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{\{N.\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2 N(\sum y^2 - (\sum y\ cx)^2\}}}$$

Based on the calculated result, $r_{calculated}$ = 0.453, which was compared to the critical value $r_{critical}$ at a significance level of 5%. With a sample size of 30 respondents, $r_{critical}$ = 0.361 $r_{critical}$ = 0.361. Since $r_{calculated}$ > $r_{critical}$ (0.453>0.361) $r_{calculated}$ > $r_{critical}$ (0.453>0.361), it indicates a significant relationship between fear of God attitude and student academic achievement. Furthermore, a statistical (t-test) analysis was conducted using the formula:

$$t = \frac{n\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

From the calculation, $t_{calculated}$ = 3.41 $t_{calculated}$ = 3.41. This value was then compared to the $t_{critical}$ value at a significance level of 95% ($\propto$=0.05) with degrees of freedom ($df=n-2$) where df=30−2=28. The $t_{critical}$ value obtained was 1.691.69. Since $t_{calculated}$ > $t_{critical}$ (3.41>1.69), it indicates a significant relationship, showing that fear of God attitude contributes to the improvement of student academic achievement among Grade X students at GKPI Padang Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings of the research indicate a significant relationship between fear of God attitude and student academic achievement among Grade X students at GKPI Padang

Bulan Medan Private High School in 2023. With a calculated t value of 3.41, and referring to the critical t value at a significance level of 5% with N=30, the $t_{critical}$ value is 1.69 since $t_{calculated} > t_{critical}$ (3.41>1.69).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

A. Conclusion

The study explored the correlation between "fear of God" and academic achievement among tenth-grade students at GKPI Padang Bulan Private High School in Medan, Indonesia, during the academic year 2023. Through a descriptive correlational design, involving the entire population of thirty tenth-grade students, it was found that fear of God attitude and academic achievement exhibited a statistically significant positive correlation. The findings suggest that students with a stronger fear of God tended to perform better academically.

B. Suggestion

Based on the findings, several suggestions can be made to further explore and leverage the relationship between fear of God and academic achievement:

1. Longitudinal Study: Conduct a longitudinal study to track the development of fear of God attitude and academic achievement over time to understand the long-term effects.
2. Intervention Programs: Implement intervention programs that incorporate religious education to strengthen fear of God attitude and assess its impact on academic performance.
3. Comparative Studies: Compare the relationship between fear of God and academic achievement across different religious and cultural contexts to identify commonalities and differences.
4. Teacher Training: Provide training for teachers on integrating moral and religious values into the curriculum to enhance students' fear of God attitude and academic success.
5. Parental Involvement: Encourage parental involvement in fostering fear of God attitude at home and investigate its influence on academic achievement.
6. Qualitative Research: Conduct qualitative research to explore students' perceptions and experiences related to fear of God and its impact on their academic motivation and behavior.

By implementing these suggestions, educators and policymakers can better understand and harness the potential of fear of God in promoting academic success and holistic development among students.

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