

School fiscal management, challenges and performance

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ABSTRACT

This study, titled “School Fiscal Management, Challenges and Performance: Bases for Action Plan,” determined whether challenges in fiscal management mediate the relationship between teachers’ experiences in school fiscal management and school performance in Getafe I District, Bohol, during School Year 2025–2026. Anchored in Rawls' Theory of Justice, Hanushek's Education Production Function, Adams' Equity Theory, and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, it examined how fiscal practices influence school outcomes. A quantitative, non-experimental mediation design was used involving 103 public elementary school teachers. A validated questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.70$) measured fiscal management experiences and challenges. Results showed a high level of fiscal management experience ($M = 3.60$), moderate challenges ($M = 2.17$), and a “Very Satisfactory” level of school performance across all schools. Mediation analysis revealed no significant indirect effect ($p = 0.409$), but a significant direct relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance ($p = 0.012$). This indicates that effective fiscal management directly improves school performance regardless of challenges. The study recommends strengthening financial management capacity, improving fund release systems, and sustaining professional development programs.

Keywords: School fiscal management, school performance, challenges in education, teachers' experiences, resource allocation

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INTRODUCTION

School fiscal management serves as a critical foundation of operational efficiency within public education systems, as it directly influences the delivery of quality instruction, the availability of learning resources, and the overall effectiveness of school performance. In the Philippine context, the proper utilization of Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) is essential in sustaining school operations, improving instructional facilities, and supporting teacher development initiatives. However, despite the decentralization of financial governance, many public elementary schools, particularly in geographically isolated areas such

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as Getafe I District, Bohol, continue to encounter persistent challenges that hinder effective fiscal management and optimal resource utilization.

Although the Department of Education has implemented policies to strengthen School-Based Management (SBM) and empower schools in financial decision-making, disparities in fiscal capacity and administrative efficiency remain evident. These disparities often result in uneven access to instructional materials, inadequate facilities, and limited professional development opportunities for teachers. Consequently, school fiscal management becomes not only a technical process of budgeting and allocation but also a determinant of equity and educational quality. Within this framework, teachers' lived experiences in fiscal processes including planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation become crucial in understanding how financial management practices translate into actual school performance outcomes.

In addition, the effectiveness of fiscal management is often mediated by contextual challenges such as delayed fund releases, limited financial literacy among school personnel, bureaucratic constraints, and unequal resource distribution across schools. These challenges may either weaken or reshape the relationship between fiscal management practices and school performance. Thus, examining the mediating role of challenges provides a more comprehensive understanding of how financial systems function in real school settings, particularly in rural districts where resource limitations are more pronounced.

This study is anchored on the need to strengthen transparency, accountability, and efficiency in school financial governance. In doing so, it provides empirical evidence that may guide school administrators, policymakers, and teachers in identifying gaps and developing targeted interventions. Ultimately, the study contributes to the formulation of an action plan aimed at improving fiscal management systems and enhancing school performance in the Getafe I District.

The primary purpose of this research is to determine the relationship between teachers' experiences in school fiscal management and school performance, with challenges serving as a mediating variable. Specifically, it seeks to examine whether fiscal management experiences significantly influence school performance and whether such influence is affected by the challenges encountered in the process. This aligns with the broader goal of improving educational outcomes through efficient and equitable resource allocation.

From a legal standpoint, this study is grounded in the 1987 Philippine Constitution, particularly Article XIV, Section 1, which guarantees the State's responsibility to protect and promote the right of all citizens to quality education and ensure its accessibility (Republic of the Philippines, 1987). Furthermore, Sections 2 to 5 emphasize the provision of a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education while recognizing the welfare of teachers as a vital component of the educational system. These provisions establish the constitutional mandate for equitable funding and support for public schools.

Complementing these constitutional provisions is the Local Government Code of 1991 (Republic Act No. 7160), which decentralizes governance and authorizes local government units (LGUs) to support basic education through the Special Education Fund (SEF). However, disparities in local revenue generation often result in unequal educational support, particularly in rural municipalities such as Getafe. Similarly, Republic Act No. 9155 or the Governance of Basic Education Act of 2001 institutionalizes School-Based Management, emphasizing shared governance and school autonomy in resource management (Republic Act No. 9155, 2001). Despite this, limited fiscal capacity often constrains effective implementation.

Moreover, Republic Act No. 10533 or the Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 expanded the basic education system and required increased government investment in instructional resources, infrastructure, and teacher development (Republic Act No. 10533, 2013). Meanwhile, Republic Act No. 4670, or the Magna Carta for Public School Teachers,

ensures teachers' welfare, including adequate support and working conditions (Republic Act No. 4670, 1966). However, gaps in implementation continue to affect teachers in under-resourced schools.

DepEd policies further guide fiscal management practices. DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2016 provides guidelines on MOOE utilization, emphasizing transparency and equitable distribution, while DepEd Order No. 60, s. 2019 outlines the management of SBM grants to support school improvement initiatives. Despite these frameworks, issues such as delayed fund release and limited administrative capacity persist, particularly in rural schools.

This study is also aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which promotes inclusive and equitable quality education. Likewise, the Department of Education's Basic Education Development Plan (BEDP) 2030 underscores funding equity, resource adequacy, and improved governance as key priorities. These international and national commitments reinforce the importance of addressing fiscal disparities to improve educational outcomes.

Theoretically, this study is anchored on John Rawls' Theory of Justice, which emphasizes fairness and equitable distribution of resources, particularly favoring the least advantaged groups (Rawls, 1971). In education, this suggests that schools in disadvantaged areas should receive greater support to achieve equity. Hanushek's Education Production Function Theory (2003) further explains that educational outcomes are directly influenced by inputs such as funding, teacher quality, and instructional materials, highlighting the importance of adequate resource allocation. Additionally, Adams' Equity Theory (1963) provides a psychological perspective, explaining how perceived fairness in resource distribution affects teacher motivation and performance. Lastly, Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory (1979) situates school fiscal management within broader systemic influences, including national policies, local governance, and community conditions.

Empirical studies support these theoretical foundations by showing that resource allocation significantly affects school performance and teacher effectiveness. Research indicates that schools with adequate funding and efficient fiscal management systems tend to achieve better learning outcomes, while under-resourced schools struggle with instructional quality and teacher workload (Brillantes & Fernandez, 2013; Hanushek, 2003; Jackson et al., 2016). Moreover, challenges such as delayed funding, limited infrastructure, and unequal access to professional development further exacerbate disparities in educational performance.

Teacher workload and well-being are also closely linked to fiscal management. Studies reveal that insufficient resources increase teacher stress, reduce job satisfaction, and negatively affect instructional effectiveness (Jeon et al., 2018; Zinsser et al., 2016). Similarly, the digital divide and limited access to technology during remote learning periods have further highlighted inequities in school funding and resource distribution (Cahapay, 2020; UNESCO, 2020).

In summary, school fiscal management plays a vital role in shaping educational outcomes, yet its effectiveness is often influenced by systemic challenges and structural inequities. By examining the mediating role of challenges, this study provides a more nuanced understanding of how fiscal management translates into school performance. The findings are expected to serve as a basis for developing an action plan that strengthens financial governance, promotes equity, and enhances the overall performance of schools in Getafe I District, Bohol.

Statement of the problem

This study aimed to determine whether challenges significantly mediate the relationship between teachers' experiences in school fiscal management and school performance in Getafe I District, Bohol, for the School Year 2025–2026. Specifically, it sought to: (1) determine the level of teachers' experiences in school fiscal management; (2) assess the challenges encountered in school fiscal management; (3) identify the level of school performance; and (4) determine whether challenges significantly mediate this relationship.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental mediation design to examine the relationship between teachers' experiences in school fiscal management and school performance, and to determine whether challenges serve as a mediating variable. This approach allowed for objective measurement and statistical analysis without manipulation of variables (Creswell, 2014).

The study was conducted in Getafe I District, Bohol, which includes eleven (11) public elementary schools. A total of 103 teachers participated in the study, selected through complete enumeration based on inclusion criteria. Only regular and permanent teachers were included to ensure consistency of responses.

Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire, anchored on John Rawls' Theory of Justice (1971), Hanushek's Education Production Framework (2003), and DepEd policies, including DepEd Order No. 13, s. 2016 and the school-Based Management framework (2019), along with related empirical studies on school governance and resource allocation. which was validated through pilot testing and yielded a reliability coefficient of Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.70$.

The questionnaire comprised two parts. Part I assessed teachers' experiences in school fiscal management, specifically in terms of awareness of school funding equity policies, resource allocation practices, availability of instructional materials and facilities, and professional development opportunities. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree (Slightly Experienced, 1.00–1.75), 2 = Disagree (Moderately Experienced, 1.76–2.50), 3 = Agree (Experienced, 2.51–3.25), and 4 = Strongly Agree (Highly Experienced, 3.26–4.00). Weighted mean and standard deviation were computed to determine the level and variability of responses.

Part II evaluated challenges in resource allocation, including limited resources, funding delays, transparency issues, and inequitable distribution. A four-point Likert scale was similarly applied: 1 = Strongly Disagree (Slightly Challenged, 1.00–1.75), 2 = Disagree (Moderately Challenged, 1.76–2.50), 3 = Agree (Challenged, 2.51–3.25), and 4 = Strongly Agree (Highly Challenged, 3.26–4.00). Weighted mean and standard deviation were computed to determine the level and variability of responses.

Data analysis included weighted mean and standard deviation to determine levels of experience and challenges, percentage distribution for school performance, and linear regression analysis to test mediation effects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the data of the study and the interpretation of the results gathered from the questionnaires distributed through printed copies and via Facebook Messenger, and discusses the findings in direct relation to the stated objectives of the investigation. The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design with a mediation analysis component to

examine the level of teachers' experiences in school fiscal management, the level of challenges encountered in implementing school fiscal management, the level of school performance, and the mediating role of challenges in the relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance. The teacher-respondents totaled 103 public elementary school teachers who answered the survey instruments measuring fiscal management experiences and challenges, while the level of school performance was determined from 11 participating schools, with experiences in school fiscal management treated as the independent variable, challenges treated as the mediating variable, and school performance treated as the dependent variable. The data were processed using the mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, and mediation analysis through path estimation, with significance evaluated against the critical p-value of 0.05. All interpretations were anchored on standardized scales, where experiences in fiscal management used the scale of 3.26–4.00 as Highly Experienced, 2.51–3.25 as Experienced, 1.76–2.50 as Moderately Experienced, and 1.00–1.75 as Slightly Experienced; challenges used the scale of 3.26–4.00 as Highly Challenged, 2.51–3.25 as Challenged, 1.76–2.50 as Moderately Challenged, and 1.00–1.75 as Slightly Challenged; and school performance used the scale of 4.50–5.00 as Outstanding, 4.00–4.49 as Very Satisfactory, 3.00–3.99 as Satisfactory, 2.00–2.99 as Unsatisfactory, and 1.00–1.99 as Poor. The succeeding discussion is grounded entirely in the data gathered and is presented to address the research objectives systematically.

Descriptive analysis

Level of teachers' experiences in school fiscal management

The results presented in Table 1, based on the responses of 103 teachers, reveal that the level of experiences in school fiscal management across four domains, namely awareness of school funding equity policies, awareness of resource allocation policies and practices, availability of instructional materials and facilities, and professional development opportunities, yielded an overall composite mean of 3.60 with a standard deviation of 0.54, which is interpreted as "Highly Experienced." Among the four domains, Professional Development Opportunities obtained the highest composite mean of 3.73 with a standard deviation of 0.45, classified as Highly Experienced, showing strong agreement on access to training and capacity-building activities. This was followed by Awareness of Resource Allocation Policies and Practices with a composite mean of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 0.53, and Awareness of School Funding Equity Policies with a composite mean of 3.53 and a standard deviation of 0.60, both interpreted as Highly Experienced and indicating good policy awareness, though with some variability among respondents. The lowest composite mean was recorded in the Availability of Instructional Materials and Facilities at 3.50 with a standard deviation of 0.57, which still falls under Highly Experienced but reflects comparatively lower resource access among the four domains.

These findings indicate a generally strong engagement in fiscal-related tasks and policies across schools, with the consistently Highly Experienced ratings demonstrating that teachers are actively involved in and aware of the fiscal management practices of their institutions, while the slight differences in mean scores reveal that capacity-building inputs are more strongly felt than the availability of instructional materials and facilities. The high rating for Professional Development Opportunities at 3.73 supports the position advanced by Al-Hashimy et al. (2022), who emphasized that continuous professional development improves financial management competence among teachers and school personnel. Meanwhile, the

comparatively lower rating of 3.50 in Availability of Instructional Materials and Facilities, even though still within the Highly Experienced range, aligns with the observations of Hanushek (2003), who noted persistent disparities in school resources that may continue to constrain instructional delivery despite improvements in other fiscal domains. The overall composite mean of 3.60 with a moderate variability of 0.54 collectively reflects the principles supported by Baker et al. (2018) and Hanushek and Woessmann (2008), who emphasized that equitable funding systems and the efficient allocation of resources are critical determinants of consistent school performance, suggesting that the teachers in the study operate within an environment where fiscal management practices are not only known but also actively experienced across multiple domains.

Level of challenges encountered in implementing school fiscal management

The results presented in Table 2, drawn from the same group of 103 public elementary school teachers, reveal that the level of challenges encountered in implementing school fiscal management obtained a composite mean of 2.17 with a standard deviation of 0.94, which is interpreted as "Moderately Challenged." This composite indicates that, overall, teachers experience a moderate level of difficulty in fiscal management-related concerns, although the individual indicators reveal variations in specific areas of concern. The highest indicator was Delays in fund release affect instructional activities with a mean of 2.31 and a standard deviation of 0.90, descriptively valued as Disagree, followed by Teachers experience limited access to instructional materials with a mean of 2.29 and a standard deviation of 0.86, also Disagree, and Inadequate funding affects teacher motivation and performance with a mean of 2.24 and a standard deviation of 0.98, again Disagree. Subsequent indicators in descending order include Unequal funding between schools leads to disparities in learning with a mean of 2.19 and a standard deviation of 0.96 (Disagree), Lack of administrative support exacerbates resource challenges with a mean of 2.08 and a standard deviation of 0.93 (Disagree), Teachers have limited participation in funding decision-making with a mean of 2.07 and a standard deviation of 0.95 (Disagree), and the lowest indicator, Lack of transparency in fund distribution is a challenge, with a mean of 2.01 and a standard deviation of 1.00 (Disagree).

These results indicate that the most pressing concerns among the respondents involve operational fiscal matters, particularly the timing of fund releases and access to instructional materials, while governance-related concerns such as transparency in fund distribution and participation in funding decision-making registered weaker agreement but also showed higher variability, as reflected in the standard deviations of 1.00 and 0.95, respectively. The relatively higher means for the operational indicators at 2.31 and 2.29 are consistent with the findings of Jackson, Johnson, and Persico (2016), who demonstrated that increased and timely school funding significantly improves educational outcomes, while delays and inefficiencies in fund distribution negatively affect school performance, providing empirical grounding for why teachers continue to flag fund-release delays and material access as the most felt operational challenges. Similarly, Lafortune, Rothstein, and Schanzenbach (2018) emphasized that the equitable distribution of school funding reduces performance disparities among schools, which strengthens the interpretation that the indicators relating to unequal funding and disparities in learning, with a mean of 2.19, remain practical concerns even when the overall classification is only Moderately Challenged. Taken as a whole, these findings align with Rawls' Theory of Justice (1971), which emphasizes fairness and equity in institutional resource distribution, and they reinforce the view that even moderate-level challenges in fiscal management warrant attention because they reflect underlying issues of timeliness, access, and procedural fairness in how resources reach classrooms and teachers.

Level of school performance

The results presented in Table 3, drawn from the 11 participating schools, reveal that the level of school performance yielded a mean of 4.47 with a standard deviation of 0.11, which based on the rating scale falls within the Very Satisfactory category. The frequency distribution shows that 0 schools (0%) were rated as Outstanding in the range of 4.50–5.00, 11 schools (100%) were rated as Very Satisfactory in the range of 4.00–4.49, 0 schools (0%) were rated as Satisfactory in the range of 3.00–3.99, 0 schools (0%) were rated as Unsatisfactory in the range of 2.00–2.99, and 0 schools (0%) were rated as Poor in the range of 1.00–1.99. The performance summary likewise reports a composite mean of 4.43, also interpreted as Very Satisfactory, with the very low standard deviation of 0.11 indicating that performance is highly consistent across the participating schools.

This uniformly distributed performance indicates that schools are operating above the acceptable standard but have not yet reached the highest performance category of Outstanding, suggesting a system that is functionally effective but still has room for qualitative improvement, particularly in the areas of innovation, excellence, and best-practice implementation. The extremely low standard deviation of 0.11 strengthens this interpretation by showing that improvement efforts, if needed, should be systemic rather than targeted at specific schools, since performance levels are uniformly distributed and no school deviates significantly from the rest. This pattern of consistent achievement aligns with Hanushek and Woessmann (2008), who emphasized that the efficient allocation of educational resources contributes to consistent learning outcomes across institutions, and with Baker et al. (2018), who found that equitable school funding systems are strongly associated with uniform student achievement and reduced performance gaps across schools. Taken together, the findings indicate that school performance is consistently strong, stable, and uniformly distributed across institutions, with very minimal variability, reflecting the effective implementation of educational policies and possibly the presence of equity in school management systems, while the absence of any Outstanding ratings also implies that the schools have not yet maximized their performance potential. Future improvements should therefore focus on quality enhancement and innovation rather than the correction of disparities, given the already homogeneous performance distribution observed in the data.

Inferential analysis

Mediating role of challenges in fiscal management and school performance

Table 4 presents the mediation analysis examining the role of challenges in school fiscal management in explaining the relationship between teachers' experiences in school fiscal management as the independent variable and school performance as the dependent variable, with challenges serving as the mediating variable, based on $n = 103$. The path estimates show that the effect of Experience on Challenges produced an estimate of -0.5222 with a standard error of 0.3796 , a Z-value of -1.38 , and a p-value of 0.169 , which is not significant; the effect of Challenges on Performance produced an estimate of -0.0758 with a standard error of 0.0734 , a Z-value of -1.03 , and a p-value of 0.301 , which is likewise not significant; while the direct effect of Experience on Performance produced an estimate of 0.2519 with a standard error of 0.1000 , a Z-value of 2.52 , and a p-value of 0.012 , which is significant at the 0.05 critical level. The mediation estimates show that the Indirect Effect yielded an estimate of 0.0396 with a standard error of 0.0479 , a Z-value of 0.826 , and a p-value of 0.409 ; the Direct Effect yielded

an estimate of 0.2519 with a standard error of 0.1000, a Z-value of 2.519, and a p-value of 0.012; and the Total Effect yielded an estimate of 0.2915 with a standard error of 0.0968, a Z-value of 3.013, and a p-value of 0.003. The mediation analysis summary reports a p-value of 0.409 against a critical p-value of 0.05, with the interpretation rendered as Not Significant and the decision being Do not Reject H_0 .

The results reveal that challenges do not significantly mediate the relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance, as the indirect effect of 0.0396 with a p-value of 0.409 fails to meet the 0.05 threshold, confirming the absence of mediation in the model. At the same time, the direct effect of Experience on Performance with $\beta = 0.2519$, $SE = 0.1000$, and $p = 0.012$ is statistically significant, indicating that higher fiscal management experience improves school performance independently of the challenges variable, which supports the position advanced by Hanushek and Woessmann (2008) on the importance of efficient educational resource allocation in shaping consistent institutional outcomes. The non-significant effect of Experience on Challenges at $\beta = -0.5222$ and $p = 0.169$ implies that experience does not significantly reduce or amplify the challenges teachers face, while the non-significant effect of Challenges on Performance at $\beta = -0.0758$ and $p = 0.301$ implies that the moderate challenges identified in the descriptive analysis do not exert a strong direct influence on the consistently Very Satisfactory performance of the schools. The Total Effect of 0.2915 with a p-value of 0.003 nonetheless confirms that the combined influence of the pathways still leads to a significant overall relationship between experience and performance, though that influence is almost entirely carried by the direct rather than the indirect route. These findings are consistent with Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), who reported that inadequate resources and organizational constraints contribute significantly to reduced institutional efficiency and teacher effectiveness, and with Jackson et al. (2016), who demonstrated that school funding levels exert a causal effect on student achievement and institutional performance outcomes. Taken together, the inferential analysis confirms that fiscal management experience directly influences school performance, while challenges do not serve as a mediating factor in this relationship, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis of no significant mediation at the 0.05 alpha level.

Synthesis of findings

Taken together, the findings of this study provide a coherent and empirically grounded response to the objectives that guided the investigation into school fiscal management, the challenges encountered in its implementation, school performance, and the mediating role of challenges in the relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance. The descriptive analysis established that the 103 teacher-respondents reported a Highly Experienced level of engagement in school fiscal management with an overall composite mean of 3.60 and a standard deviation of 0.54, with Professional Development Opportunities receiving the highest rating at 3.73 ($SD = 0.45$) and Availability of Instructional Materials and Facilities receiving the lowest at 3.50 ($SD = 0.57$); a Moderately Challenged level of difficulty in implementing fiscal management with a composite mean of 2.17 and a standard deviation of 0.94, with the highest concern being delays in fund release at 2.31 ($SD = 0.90$) and the lowest being the perceived lack of transparency in fund distribution at 2.01 ($SD = 1.00$); and a Very Satisfactory level of school performance for all 11 participating schools, with 0% rated Outstanding, 100% rated Very Satisfactory, 0% rated Satisfactory, 0% rated Unsatisfactory, and 0% rated Poor, supported by a mean of 4.47 and a performance summary mean of 4.43 with a notably low standard deviation of 0.11. The inferential analysis through mediation, set against a critical p-value of 0.05, revealed a significant direct effect of Experience on Performance at $\beta = 0.2519$, $p = 0.012$, a significant Total Effect of 0.2915, $p = 0.003$, but a

non-significant Indirect Effect of 0.0396, $p = 0.409$, leading to the decision to not reject the null hypothesis and confirming that challenges do not significantly mediate the relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance.

Collectively, these results address the objectives of the study by demonstrating that teachers' fiscal management experiences are uniformly high, that the challenges they encounter remain moderate rather than severe, that school performance across the participating schools is consistently Very Satisfactory with minimal variability, and that the influence of fiscal management experience on school performance operates through a direct rather than a mediated pathway. The study contributes to the field by reinforcing and extending the positions advanced by Al-Hashimy et al. (2022), Hanushek (2003), Baker et al. (2018), Hanushek and Woessmann (2008), Jackson, Johnson, and Persico (2016), Lafortune, Rothstein, and Schanzenbach (2018), Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017), and the equity principles of Rawls (1971), all of whom underscore that competence, transparency, equitable allocation, and the timely flow of resources jointly determine the quality and stability of educational outcomes. These insights hold practical significance for school heads, division offices, policy makers, and other education stakeholders, as they affirm the value of sustaining professional development and policy awareness, improving the timeliness of fund releases, enhancing access to instructional materials, and directing future investments toward the qualitative dimensions of innovation and excellence that can elevate schools from a consistently Very Satisfactory standing toward an Outstanding level of performance. The discussion logically prepares the reader for the subsequent chapter of the manuscript, which will present the summary of findings, conclusions, and recommendations directed toward strengthening fiscal management practices and improving school performance in the contexts examined in this study.

CONCLUSION

Public elementary school teachers in Getafe I District demonstrated a high level of experience in school fiscal management, indicating strong knowledge and active engagement in financial processes. The challenges encountered were moderate and generally manageable, while school performance remained very satisfactory, reflecting effective leadership and appropriate resource utilization. Challenges did not significantly mediate the relationship between fiscal management experience and school performance, indicating that strong fiscal management directly contributes to improved school performance despite existing constraints. The study was limited to public elementary school teachers in Getafe I District and relied on self-reported data, which may introduce response bias. It also did not consider other influencing factors such as leadership style, organizational culture, community support, teacher motivation, and actual budget allocation. Future research may expand the scope to other locations and school levels, employ qualitative or mixed-method designs, and examine additional mediating or moderating variables for a more comprehensive analysis.

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