



The Influence of Teacher Competence on Teacher Performance Through Work Motivation in Elementary School Environments

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Abstract

This study analyzes the influence of teacher competence on work motivation and teacher performance in elementary schools (SD) in Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency, with motivation as an intervening variable. The population of this study consisted of 390 teachers, with a sample of 150 teachers selected using stratified random sampling. Data analysis was performed using path analysis with the help of SmartPLS 4. The results of the study indicate that teacher competence has a positive and significant effect on work motivation, which also has a significant impact on teacher performance. Motivation plays a dominant role as an intervening variable that strengthens the relationship between competence and performance.

Keywords: Competence, Motivation, Performance.

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I. BACKGROUND

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of a nation. The quality of education is greatly influenced by various factors, one of which is teacher competence. Teachers play an important role in the learning process as they are responsible for transferring knowledge and skills to students. Therefore, teacher competence significantly impacts their teaching performance, which in turn affects the quality of education provided.

On the other hand, the work environment also plays a crucial role in supporting a teacher's performance. A conducive and supportive work environment can enhance a teacher's enthusiasm and motivation in carrying out their duties. One factor that is closely related to teacher performance is work motivation. Work motivation is the drive or enthusiasm that teachers possess to work better and achieve optimal results in the learning process.

The elementary school environment in Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency, has specific characteristics that influence teacher performance. In a challenging environment, both in terms of facilities and human resources, teacher motivation becomes an important factor in maintaining the quality of learning. Teachers with high competence but lacking strong work motivation may not be able to perform at their best. Conversely, teachers with high motivation but low competence will find it difficult to achieve optimal learning outcomes.

Considering the importance of the relationship between teacher competence, work motivation, and teacher performance, this study aims to examine the impact of teacher competence on their performance through work motivation, specifically in the elementary school environment in Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency. This research is expected to provide deeper insights into how teacher competence and work motivation interact in influencing teacher performance in elementary schools.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Competence

Teacher competence is a crucial factor in determining the quality of education. According to Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, teacher competence is divided into four categories: pedagogical competence, personality competence, professional competence, and social competence. Pedagogical competence encompasses a teacher's ability to plan, implement, and deliver learning. Personal competence relates to attitudes, character, and behavior that reflect a good personality. Professional competence refers to a teacher's ability to master open material in depth, and social competence relates to a teacher's ability to interact with colleagues, students, and the community.

Teachers with strong competence will be able to manage classes effectively, develop appropriate curricula, and provide quality learning. Based on research by Lestari (2019), strong teacher competence can improve teacher motivation and performance in the teaching and learning process. Competent teachers will be more confident in delivering material, which impacts optimal student learning outcomes.

Teacher Performance

Teacher performance is the result of the work performed by teachers in carrying out their professional duties. According to Gibson (2014), work performance refers to the achievement of expected tasks within an organization or profession. In the educational context, teacher performance includes planning and implementing learning, classroom management, assessing learning outcomes, and contributing to school development. Research by Sarwono (2018) shows that teacher performance is influenced by various factors, such as teacher competence, work environment, and motivation. High teacher performance will improve the quality of education and student success in achieving learning objectives. Therefore, improving teacher performance is crucial, both through competency enhancement and providing appropriate motivational support.

Teacher Work Motivation

Work motivation is the drive that comes from within a teacher to perform their work diligently and with a strong commitment to achieving the desired results. Robbins (2001) explains that work motivation is divided into two types: intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation comes from within the individual, such as the drive to do a good job or a sense of personal satisfaction, while extrinsic motivation stems from external factors such as salary, recognition, and other benefits.

According to Maslow (1943), motivation is one of the basic human needs that teachers strive to fulfill. In the context of teachers, work motivation is crucial for improving their teaching performance and planning effective lessons. Teachers with high work motivation tend to be more enthusiastic about innovating in their teaching, which ultimately leads to improved performance in school.

Research by Suryani (2020) shows that high work motivation can improve teacher performance, particularly in carrying out teaching tasks in the classroom. Well-motivated teachers will be more enthusiastic about designing enjoyable and effective learning, which will positively impact student learning outcomes.

III. RESEARCH METHODS

The population in this study was all 390 elementary school teachers from Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency, South Sulawesi Province. Sampling used probability sampling with a stratified random sampling method, resulting in a sample size of 150. This study consisted of teacher competency variables with indicators of educational, personality, and professional. Teacher work motivation variables with indicators of intrinsic, extrinsic, and emotional/feeling factors. The dependent variable was teacher performance with indicators of learning management, classroom management, and self-development. The analytical method used in this study was path analysis using SmartPls.4.

IV. RESEARCH RESULT

Results

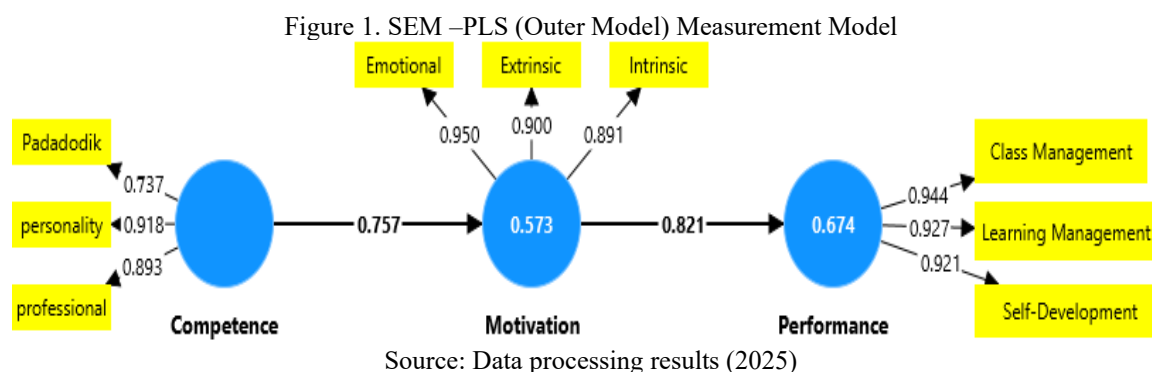


Table 1. Discriminant Reliability Test Results

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE	R Square
Competence	0.794	0.715	0.647	
Motivation	0.902	0.938	0.836	0.573
Performance	0.922	0.951	0.866	0.674

Source: Data processing results (2025)

Based on table 1 above, it can be seen that the discriminant reliability (AVE) value for the Competence variable is 0.647, the motivation variable is 0.836, and the Performance variable is 0.866. Based on the calculation of discriminant reliability (AVE), all items are declared reliable in measuring their latent variables. Then, the composite reliability value on the Competence variable is 0.715, the motivation variable is 0.938, and the Performance variable is 0.951. Thus, based on the calculation of composite reliability, all items are declared reliable in measuring their latent variables. Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha value on the Competence variable is 0.794, the motivation variable is 0.902, and the performance variable is 0.922. These results show a value greater than 0.6. Thus, based on the calculation of Cronbach's Alpha, all subvariables are declared reliable in measuring their latent variables. The R-square value of the motivation variable is 0.573 or 57.3%. This indicates that competence can influence motivation by 57.3%, and the R-square value for the Performance variable is 0.674 or 67.4%. This indicates that motivation and competence can influence teacher performance by 67.4%.

Table 2. Coefficient of Direct and Indirect Influence Test Results

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Competence -> Motivation	0.757	0.755	0.053	14.218	0.000	Sig
Motivation -> Performance	0,821	0.819	0.042	19.348	0.000	Sig
Competence -> Motivation-> Performace	0.891	0.820	0.072	18.646	0.000	Sig

Source: Data processing results (2025)

Table 2 shows that the direct influence of the competence variable on motivation is positive and significant, and the influence of competence on performance through motivation is also positive and significant, even more dominant. This means that motivation, as an intervening variable, has a significant impact on improving teacher performance.

V. Discussion

The positive and significant influence of competence on motivation indicates that the higher a teacher's competence, the greater their motivation to perform optimally. Competence, in this context, encompasses knowledge, teaching skills, interpersonal abilities, and a professional attitude. When teachers feel they possess sufficient expertise to effectively manage their classrooms and teach the material, they tend to feel more confident and are motivated to work harder. The confidence built on solid competence is a driving factor in teachers' intrinsic motivation to deliver their best in teaching.

Research conducted by Lestari (2019) shows a similar thing, where teacher competence plays a major role in motivating them to continue developing themselves and improving the quality of teaching. High competence is also associated with increased job satisfaction, which in turn strengthens motivation to achieve educational goals. Klassen, R. M., & Tze, V. M. C. (2014) in their study entitled Teacher Beliefs and Teacher Motivation: A Test of the Mediating Role of Teacher Self-Efficacy (Journal of Educational Psychology) found that teacher competence (as measured by the teacher's level of self-confidence in their teaching abilities) is closely related to intrinsic motivation and teaching performance. Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (2005) and Locke, E. A., & Latham, G. P. (2004) have the same view that the competence possessed by individuals (in this case, teachers) is an important factor in creating effective motivation. This research links teacher competency to the achievement of higher-order goals, both for teachers themselves and for their classroom performance, emphasizing the crucial role of motivation in encouraging teachers to continuously develop and deliver better teaching. These four studies support the finding that teacher competency not only plays a role in directly improving their performance but also strengthens work motivation, which encourages teachers to develop themselves and give Motivation, acting as an intervening variable, has a significant impact on improving the performance of elementary school teachers in Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency, demonstrating that motivation is not merely an additional driver but also a crucial element in optimizing teacher competencies. High work motivation acts as a bridge, strengthening the

influence of competency on teacher performance. When an elementary school teacher possesses high competency but is not supported by adequate work motivation, even if they possess strong knowledge and skills, these abilities can be hampered in their daily teaching. Without sufficient motivation, teachers may feel unmotivated to develop or implement their expertise to achieve optimal results.

Conversely, elementary school teachers with high work motivation, despite experiencing limitations in certain competencies, will strive harder to overcome these deficiencies and optimize classroom learning. Motivation can spur elementary school teachers to be more creative in finding solutions to challenges, innovate in their teaching approaches, and commit to providing the best learning experience for students. Motivation acts as a reinforcement, encouraging teachers to continuously strive to improve the quality of their teaching, even when their resources or competencies are not yet perfect. their best in teaching.

Research by Gagne & Deci (2005) revealed that intrinsic motivation, which arises from within elementary school teachers to achieve personal satisfaction in providing meaningful education, has a greater impact on improving teaching quality than extrinsic motivation, such as rewards or salary. This intrinsic motivation provides a more sustainable drive for elementary school teachers to continue learning, innovating, and responding to students' needs in a more positive manner. Kim, T. Y., & Lee, J. S. (2019) in a study entitled "Teacher Motivation and its Impact on the Teaching Performance: A Global Perspective (Teaching and Teacher Education)" found that teacher motivation acts as a key link between competence and performance. Schunk, D. H., Pintrich, P. R., & Meece, J. L. (2008) in the book "Motivation and Learning: Theory, Research, and Applications" revealed that motivation plays a crucial role in improving teacher and student performance. This study states that teacher motivation acts as a mediator connecting teacher competence and teaching outcomes. In addition, the Self-Determination theory developed by Deci & Ryan (2000) also emphasizes that motivation derived from the basic human need to feel competent, autonomous, and connected to others can influence how effectively elementary school teachers implement their competencies. Elementary school teachers who feel supported by a supportive work environment and feel in control of their learning process will be more likely to demonstrate better performance, even though they face challenges in terms of limited knowledge or skills.

Therefore, motivation not only serves as a driving force in carrying out existing tasks but also as a catalyst that strengthens the relationship between elementary school teachers' competencies and learning outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial for educational institutions in Bantaeng District, Bantaeng Regency, to create a climate that can enhance elementary school teachers' work motivation, whether through professional support, appropriate rewards, or the development of a supportive work environment. This will strengthen the positive influence of elementary school teachers' competencies and enable them to achieve optimal performance.

Motivation is not only a driving force in improving teacher performance but also an element that strengthens the relationship between teacher competencies and learning outcomes. Teacher motivation, whether derived from internal or external factors, plays a significant role in encouraging teachers to optimize their competencies and positively impact their performance in the classroom.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study shows that teacher competency has a positive and significant influence on their work motivation, which in turn significantly impacts teacher performance. However, the role of motivation as an intervening variable is crucial and even more dominant in strengthening the relationship between competency and performance. Teachers with high competency, supported by high work motivation, tend to demonstrate better teaching performance and achieve educational goals. Conversely, even if teachers possess high competency, without sufficient motivation, their ability to implement that competency in daily learning will be hampered. Therefore, to improve teacher performance, it is crucial to create an environment that can enhance their motivation, whether through professional support, rewards, or ongoing career development.

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