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The Influence of Principal's Professional Competence, Work Motivation, and Job Satisfaction on Teachers' Professional Attitude in Public Elementary Schools in Kejajar District, Wonosobo Regency

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Abstract

Based on a preliminary assessment conducted in 2024 by the local education supervisory authority under the Wonosobo Regency Education Office, teacher professionalism in public elementary schools in Kejajar District was categorized as low. This classification was based on a standardized monitoring instrument covering pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies aligned with the national framework. The assessment of 132 teachers produced an average score of 68.4 out of 100, below the institutional threshold of 75, indicating systemic challenges in maintaining professional standards. This study investigates the influence of principal professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction on teachers' professional attitudes. A quantitative correlational design was applied, involving 125 teachers selected through proportional random sampling. Data were collected using validated Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using multiple regression with SPSS version 24. The findings show that principal competence ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$), work motivation ($\beta = 0.285$, $p < 0.001$), and job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.267$, $p < 0.001$) each have a positive and significant effect on teachers' professional attitudes. Collectively, these variables explain 58.6% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.586$). These results highlight the integrated role of leadership and motivational factors in shaping teacher professionalism and provide empirical support for strengthening instructional leadership and teacher motivation, particularly in resource-constrained educational contexts.

KEYWORDS

job satisfaction, principal's professional competence, teachers' professional attitude, work motivation.

Introduction

Education constitutes a fundamental pillar of national development, in which teachers play a pivotal role in shaping high-quality human resources. At the level of basic education, the professional attitude of teachers is a decisive factor influencing the effectiveness of learning processes and educational outcomes. Teacher professional attitude reflects the extent to which educators demonstrate commitment, dedication, ethical responsibility, and accountability in carrying out their professional duties (Sagala & K, 2023). A positive professional attitude encourages teachers to continuously enhance their competencies, deliver quality educational services, and maintain professionalism in diverse instructional contexts. However, such attitudes do not emerge spontaneously; rather, they are shaped by a complex interaction of individual, organizational, and environmental factors within the school system.

One critical external factor influencing teacher professional attitude is the professional competence of school principals. Principals who possess strong

professional competence are capable of acting not only as instructional leaders but also as effective managers and motivators for teachers. According to (Adha et al., 2019), principal professional competence significantly affects teachers' professionalism through the creation of a supportive school culture, effective supervision, and constructive guidance. Professional leadership enables principals to foster a conducive working environment that strengthens teachers' work ethics and professional identity. Conversely, limited principal competence may weaken guidance, reduce instructional quality, and hinder the development of positive professional attitudes among teachers.

In addition to leadership competence, teacher work motivation represents a crucial determinant of professional attitude. Teachers with high work motivation tend to demonstrate greater enthusiasm, resilience under pressure, and sustained commitment to their profession. Herzberg's motivation theory, as discussed by (Afriyani & Sabandi, 2020), emphasizes the role of intrinsic factors such as achievement, recognition, and personal growth in enhancing employee engagement and professional behavior. In the educational context, motivated teachers are more inclined to innovate, improve instructional practices, and exhibit positive attitudes toward their professional responsibilities. Conversely, low motivation may result in diminished performance, reduced engagement, and negative professional attitudes.

Another influential factor shaping teacher professional attitude is job satisfaction, which reflects the degree to which teachers feel valued, comfortable, and fulfilled within their work environment. (Fitria et al., 2019) argues that job satisfaction is closely associated with positive emotional responses toward job tasks, working conditions, collegial relationships, and recognition received. Teachers who experience high job satisfaction are more likely to develop strong professional identities and demonstrate loyalty to their institutions. In contrast, dissatisfaction may lead to decreased motivation, absenteeism, and weakened professional commitment (Mustafida, 2021). Therefore, job satisfaction functions as a critical psychological mechanism linking organizational conditions with teacher professionalism.

Despite the acknowledged importance of these factors, empirical conditions in elementary schools within Keajar District, Wonosobo Regency, indicate persistent challenges. Preliminary monitoring and evaluation data from school supervisors reveal that teacher professionalism has not yet reached optimal levels. The measurement of principal professional competence, teacher professional attitudes, job satisfaction, and discipline was conducted using a survey instrument based on educational performance indicators with a 1–5 Likert scale, where percentages were calculated by comparing the mean score to the maximum possible score. The 2024 survey data indicate that principal professional competence reached 55% (low category), while teacher professional attitudes and job satisfaction each reached 65% (moderate category), and teacher discipline reached 78% (high category). These findings suggest that high discipline alone is insufficient to achieve optimal professionalism without adequate leadership competence and job satisfaction. This discrepancy highlights the complexity of teacher professionalism, which cannot be explained by a single variable but requires a multidimensional analysis.

Further observational findings reinforce these concerns. Academic supervision in public elementary schools in Keajar District was identified as limited in frequency and developmental impact based on 2024 data from observations, document analysis, and interviews with teachers and principals across five schools. Supervision occurred on average once per semester below the

recommended standard and 72% of practices were administrative in nature, indicating suboptimal use for professional development. Supervision activities are frequently irregular, lack systematic follow-up, and fail to address teachers' instructional needs. As a result, teachers' professional teaching competencies such as lesson planning, classroom management, instructional media utilization, and student assessment remain underdeveloped. These conditions are exacerbated by limited recognition, inadequate facilities, heavy workloads, and insufficient opportunities for professional growth, all of which contribute to moderate levels of job satisfaction among teachers.

Given these empirical realities, the problem addressed in this study is both significant and complex. Teacher professional attitude in elementary schools is influenced by interrelated leadership, motivational, and organizational factors that require systematic investigation. Existing studies have predominantly examined these variables in isolation. For instance, research by Leithwood emphasizes the role of principal leadership in shaping school effectiveness, while Deci and Ryan focus on work motivation as a determinant of individual performance; similarly, studies on job satisfaction highlight its impact on teacher commitment and retention. However, limited empirical work integrates principal professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction within a single analytical framework, particularly in localized primary education contexts, thereby leaving a gap in understanding their combined effects on teacher professional attitudes. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the simultaneous and partial effects of principal professional competence, teacher work motivation, and job satisfaction on teacher professional attitude in public elementary schools in Keajar District, Wonosobo Regency.

Accordingly, the objectives of this research are: (1) to analyze the effect of principal professional competence on teacher professional attitude; (2) to examine the influence of teacher work motivation on teacher professional attitude; (3) to assess the impact of job satisfaction on teacher professional attitude; and (4) to investigate the combined effect of principal professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction on teacher professional attitude. By addressing these objectives, this study is expected to contribute empirically and theoretically to the literature on educational leadership and teacher professionalism, while providing practical implications for improving school management and teacher development in elementary education settings.

Methods

Research Type and Design

This study employed a quantitative research approach using a correlational, cross-sectional survey design to examine the associative and predictive relationships among variables at a single point in time. Accordingly, the findings are interpreted as indicating statistical associations rather than causal effects, and no causal inferences are drawn from the analysis. The quantitative approach was selected because the research variables were measured numerically and analyzed using statistical techniques to test predetermined hypotheses. The study aimed to examine both partial and simultaneous effects of principal professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction on teachers' professional attitudes. A correlational design was considered appropriate to identify the strength and direction of relationships among variables without manipulating the research setting.

Research Location and Time

The research was conducted in Gugur Bima Lukar, located in

Kejajar District, Wonosobo Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. This area comprises public elementary schools with relatively homogeneous organizational characteristics. Data collection was carried out over a four-month period, from September to December 2025, including instrument testing, data collection, and data verification stages.

Population and Sample

The population of this study consisted of 181 public elementary school teachers working in Gugus Bima Lukar, Kejajar District. A sample was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, resulting in a minimum requirement of 125 teachers. The use of the Slovin formula is considered appropriate in this study due to the finite and well-defined population size, as well as the absence of prior variance estimates needed for more complex sampling calculations. In addition, the adequacy of the sample size is supported by general guidelines for multiple regression analysis, which recommend a minimum ratio of 10–15 observations per predictor variable; with three independent variables, the sample size exceeds this threshold, thereby ensuring sufficient statistical power for detecting meaningful associations. Sampling was conducted באמצעות proportional random sampling, ensuring that each school was represented according to its proportion of teachers in the population. This technique was applied because the population was assumed to be relatively homogeneous, and each member had an equal opportunity to be selected as a respondent.

Research Variables

The study involved four main variables:

1. Independent Variables
 - a. Principal Professional Competence (X_1)
 - b. Work Motivation (X_2)
 - c. Job Satisfaction (X_3)
2. Dependent Variable
 - a. Teacher Professional Attitude (Y)

Instrumentation

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed based on established theoretical frameworks and previous empirical studies. Each variable was operationalized into measurable dimensions and indicators, resulting in 30 items per variable. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Prior to the main data collection, the instrument underwent validity and reliability testing. Construct validation was conducted in a multi-step procedure to ensure the adequacy of the measurement model. Initially, item-level analysis was performed using Pearson Product-Moment correlations (item-total correlation) to assess item validity, with decision criteria based on the critical r -value corresponding to $df = n - 2$ ($n = 125$; $df = 123$; r -critical ≈ 0.176 at $\alpha = 0.05$). All items exceeded this threshold, indicating acceptable item discrimination; however, this step was treated as preliminary evidence rather than definitive construct validity.

To examine dimensionality and the alignment of items with their respective constructs, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was employed using principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The results showed that all items loaded onto their intended factors with loading values above 0.50, supporting the underlying construct structure. Convergent validity was indicated by substantial factor loadings, while the absence of significant cross-loadings provided initial evidence of discriminant validity. Furthermore, internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, with all constructs exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability. Overall, these combined procedures provide more robust support for the measurement

quality beyond simple item correlation analysis. Reliability testing showed Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.906 to 0.922, exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.70, thereby confirming the reliability of the instrument.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted through direct distribution of questionnaires to selected respondents after obtaining institutional permission. Participants were provided with clear instructions regarding the purpose of the study and how to complete the questionnaire. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were given sufficient time to complete the instrument. Completed questionnaires were checked for completeness before being processed for analysis.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was performed using SPSS version 24. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize respondents' characteristics and variable distributions. Inferential analysis employed multiple linear regression to examine the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Before hypothesis testing, classical assumption tests were conducted, including:

- Normality test using probability plots,
- Multicollinearity test using tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF),
- Linearity test, and
- Heteroskedasticity test using the Glejser method.

Hypothesis testing included:

- t -tests to examine partial effects of each independent variable,
- F -test to examine simultaneous effects, and
- Coefficient of determination (R^2) to assess the explanatory power of the regression model.

The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly observed throughout the research process. All participants were informed about the objectives of the study and provided their consent prior to participation. Respondents' identities were kept anonymous, and all data were treated confidentially and used solely for academic purposes.

Result and Discussion

Data Description

The descriptive analysis reveals the general distribution and central tendencies of the study variables, highlighting key patterns in principal professional competence, work motivation, job satisfaction, and teachers' professional attitudes. Overall, the data indicate moderate variability across respondents, with tendencies suggesting that higher levels of leadership competence and motivation are associated with more favorable professional attitudes among teachers. These patterns provide an empirical basis for subsequent inferential analysis. This step is conducted to describe and illustrate the condition of the respondents with respect to the principal's professional competence, teachers' work motivation, and teachers' job satisfaction, with the results presented as follows.

Principal Professional Competence of Public Elementary Schools in Kejajar District

The principal's professional competence variable (X_1) has a minimum score of 52, indicating that the lowest assessment provided by respondents regarding the principal's professional competence was 52. The maximum score is 141 which

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Principal Professional Competence	Work Motivation	Teacher Job Satisfaction	Teacher Professional Attitude
N (Valid)	125	125	125	125
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	103.01	104.70	106.34	108.16
Median	103.00	105.00	107.00	107.00
Mode	96	106	90	100
Std. Deviation	19.513	21.126	19.649	17.900
Minimum	52	61	64	68
Maximum	141	145	143	147

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Principal Professional Competence

No.	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	52-69	Very Poor	9	7.2%
2	70-87	Poor	13	10.4%
3	88-105	Fair	50	40.0%
4	106-123	Good	35	28.0%
5	124-141	Very Good	18	14.4%
Total			125	100%

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Teacher Work Motivation

No.	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	61-77	Very Poor	13	10.4%
2	78-94	Poor	28	22.4%
3	95-111	Fair	41	32.8%
4	112-128	Good	24	19.2%
5	129-145	Very Good	19	15.2%
Total			125	100%

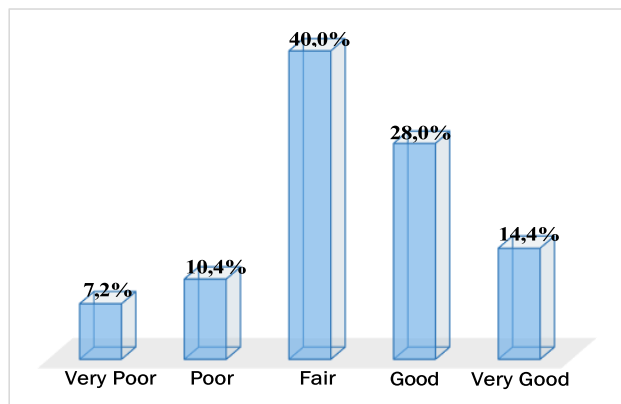


Figure 1. Distribution Chart of Principal Professional Competence Data at Public Elementary Schools in Kejajar District

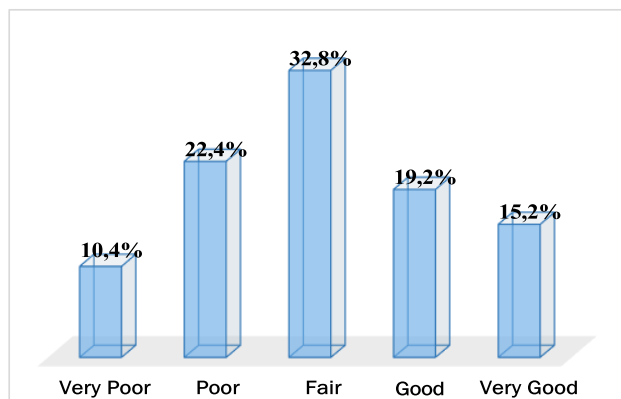


Figure 2. Distribution Chart of Teacher Work Motivation Data at Public Elementary Schools in Kejajar District

represents, the highest assessment given by respondents. The mean score of principal professional competence is 103.01, indicating that, on average, respondents rated the principal's professional competence at 103.01. Meanwhile, the standard deviation of 19.512 indicates the degree of data dispersion for the principal professional competence variable among the 125 respondents.

Based on data collected from 125 public elementary school teachers in Kejajar District, the principal professional competence variable obtained a maximum score of 141, a minimum score of 52, a mean of 103.01, and a standard deviation of 19.512. The distribution of principal professional competence data was classified into five categories, namely very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor. From these five categories, the interval value was determined as follows:

$$i = \frac{\text{maximum score} - \text{minimum score}}{\text{number of categories}}$$

$$i = \frac{141 - 52}{5}$$

$$i = \frac{89}{5}$$

$$i = 17.8 \approx 18 \text{ (rounded)}$$

To facilitate understanding of public elementary school teachers' perceptions in Kejajar District regarding the principal's professional competence, the distribution is illustrated in a diagram as shown in Figure 2.

Based on the data presented in Table 2 or Figure 1 above, the perceptions of 125 public elementary school teachers in Kejajar District regarding principals' professional competence indicate that 7.2% fall into the very poor category, 10.4% into the poor category, 40.0% into the fair category, 28.0% into the good category, and 14.4% into the very good category. Given that the mean score of principals' professional competence is 103.01, which falls within the interval of 88-105 corresponding to the fair criterion, it can be concluded that the implementation of principals' professional competence at public elementary schools in Kejajar District is generally at a fair level.

Teacher Work Motivation at Public Elementary Schools in Kejajar District

Teacher Work Motivation (X2) has a minimum score of 61, indicating that the lowest assessment of work motivation among all respondents was 61. The maximum score is 145, which reflects the highest assessment of work motivation provided by the respondents. The mean score of work motivation is 104.70, meaning that, on average, respondents rated teacher work motivation at 104.70. The standard deviation is 21.126, indicating that the dispersion of data for the work motivation variable among the 125 respondents is 21.126.

Based on the data collected from 125 public elementary school teachers in Kejajar District, the overall work motivation scores show a maximum score of 145, a minimum score of 61, a mean of 104.70, and a standard deviation of 21.126. To facilitate a clearer understanding of public elementary school teachers' perceptions in Kejajar District regarding work

Table 4. Frequency Distribution of Teacher Job Satisfaction

No.	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	64-79	Very Poor	13	10.4%
2	80-95	Poor	23	18.4%
3	96-111	Fair	43	34.4%
4	112-127	Good	26	20.8%
5	128-143	Very Good	20	16.0%
Total			125	100%

Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Teacher Professional Attitudes

No.	Interval	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	68-83	Very Poor	11	8.8%
2	84-99	Poor	21	16.8%
3	100-115	Fair	56	44.8%
4	116-131	Good	24	19.2%
5	132-147	Very Good	13	10.4%
Total			125	100%

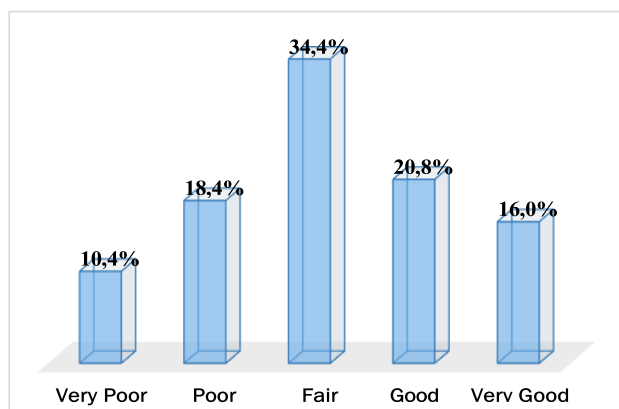


Figure 3. Distribution Chart of Teacher Job Satisfaction Data at Public Elementary Schools in Keajar District

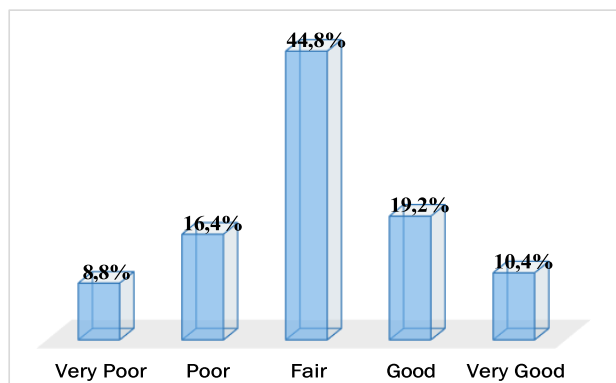


Figure 4. Distribution Chart of Teacher Professional Attitudes Data at Public Elementary Schools in Keajar District

motivation, the distribution is illustrated in the form of a diagram as presented below.

Based on the data presented in Table 3 or Figure 2 above, the perceptions of 125 public elementary school teachers in Keajar District regarding work motivation indicate that 10.4% fall into the very poor category, 22.4% into the poor category, 32.8% into the fair category, 19.2% into the good category, and 15.2% into the very good category. Given that the mean score of work motivation is 104.70, which falls within the interval of 95-111 corresponding to the fair criterion, it can be concluded that public elementary school teachers in Keajar District generally demonstrate a fair level of work motivation.

Teacher Job Satisfaction at Public Elementary Schools in Keajar District

Teacher job satisfaction (X3) has a minimum score of 64, indicating that the lowest assessment of teacher job satisfaction among all respondents was 64. The maximum score is 143, reflecting the highest assessment provided by the respondents. The mean score of teacher job satisfaction is 106.34, which indicates that, on average, respondents rated their job satisfaction at 106.34. The standard deviation is 19.649, suggesting that the dispersion of data for the teacher job satisfaction variable among the 125 respondents is 19.649.

Based on data collected from 125 public elementary school teachers in Keajar District, the overall job satisfaction scores show a maximum score of 143, a minimum score of 64, a mean of 106.34, and a standard deviation of 19.649. The distribution of teacher job satisfaction data was classified into five categories: very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor.

To facilitate a clearer understanding of public elementary school teachers' perceptions in Keajar District regarding job satisfaction, The distribution is illustrated in a diagram as shown in Figure 3.

Based on the data presented in Table 4 or Figure 4 above, the perceptions of 125 public elementary school teachers in Keajar District regarding job satisfaction indicate that 10.4% fall into the very poor category, 18.4% into the poor category, 34.4% into the fair category, 20.8% into the good category, and 16.0% into the very good category. Given that the mean score of teacher job satisfaction is 106.34, which falls within the interval of 96-111 corresponding to the fair criterion, it can be concluded that public elementary school teachers in Keajar District generally exhibit a fair level of job satisfaction.

Teacher Professional Attitudes at Public Elementary Schools in Keajar District

Teacher professional attitudes (Y) have a minimum score of 68, indicating that the lowest assessment of teacher professional attitudes among all respondents was 68. The maximum score is 147, reflecting the highest assessment provided by the respondents. The mean score of teacher professional attitudes is 108.16, which indicates that, on average, respondents rated their professional attitudes at 108.16. The standard deviation is 17.900, suggesting that the dispersion of data for the teacher professional attitude variable among the 125 respondents is 17.900.

Based on data collected from 125 public elementary school teachers in Keajar District, the overall professional attitude scores show a maximum score of 147, a minimum score of 68, a mean of 108.16, and a standard deviation of 17.900.

To facilitate a clearer understanding of public elementary school teachers' perceptions in Keajar District regarding teacher professional attitudes, the distribution is illustrated in the diagram below.

Based on the data presented in Table 5 or Figure 4 above, the perceptions of 125 public elementary school teachers in Keajar District regarding teacher professional attitudes indicate that 8.8% fall into the very poor category, 16.8% into the poor category, 44.8% into the fair category, 19.2% into the good category, and 10.4% into the very good category. Given that the mean score of teacher professional attitudes is 108.16, which falls within the interval of 100-115 corresponding to the fair criterion, it can be concluded that public elementary school teachers in Keajar District generally demonstrate a fair level of professional attitudes.

The Partial Effect of Principals' Professional Competence on Teachers' Professional Attitudes at Public Elementary Schools in Keajar District

The results of the study indicate that the calculated t-value for principals' professional competence is 14.417, while the t-table value is 1.65734 (14.417 > 1.65734), with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. Therefore, H₀ is rejected and H_a is

accepted, indicating that principals' professional competence has a significant effect on teachers' professional attitudes at public elementary schools in Keajar District. This study demonstrates that principals' *professional competence* has a significant effect on teachers' *professional attitudes* in public elementary schools in Keajar District, as evidenced by a calculated *t*-value that is substantially higher than the *t*-table value and a very low significance level, leading to the rejection of H_0 (primary data). These findings are consistent with international empirical evidence indicating that *instructional leadership* and principals' professional competence positively enhance teachers' professional competence through effective guidance and supervision practices, thereby strengthening *teacher motivation* and professional attitudes in carrying out daily instructional tasks (Norman, 2025). In addition, other studies have found that principals' *leadership and supervision* serve as important predictors of improvements in teachers' professional competence, showing a positive and significant relationship between leadership practices and teacher professionalism in the elementary school context (Samsilayurni et al., 2025). Contemporary literature further emphasizes that leadership which prioritizes *innovation* and *accountability* can foster the development of teachers' professional attitudes through systematic learning communities and *coaching* practices (Tjandra, 2023). Overall, recent international research confirms that improving principals' professional competence contributes significantly to shaping teachers' professional attitudes, thereby reinforcing the relevance of this study's findings in efforts to enhance the quality of learning in elementary schools.

These findings demonstrate that principals' professional competence, when examined partially, does influence teachers' professional attitudes. This implies that although principals' professional competence is not the sole factor affecting teachers' professional attitudes, focused and well-directed professional competence particularly when targeting specific aspects of supervision and guidance can positively contribute to the improvement of teachers' performance and professional development. Effective principals' professional competence should be implemented continuously, involve teachers actively, and be oriented toward enhancing teachers' professional attitudes as a whole. Although the influence may be partial, when carried out properly and systematically, principals' professional competence can serve as an effective instrument for strengthening teachers' professional attitudes and ultimately improving the quality of learning.

The findings of this study are consistent with those reported by (Mardhiah, 2023) The study found that principals' professional competence was able to encourage improvements in teacher professionalism. The professional techniques employed by principals included classroom visits, classroom observations, and group techniques. However, the techniques used were not sufficiently varied, and the implementation of supervision had not yet been optimal. Follow-up actions to academic supervision were conducted through guidance, direction, assistance to teachers, participation in seminars and training, inviting competent resource persons, and providing opportunities for teachers to pursue higher education.

Similarly, the results of this study are supported by (Mustafida, 2021) based on data presentation and analysis, the study found that principals' professional competence had a substantial and beneficial impact on teachers' professional attitudes, with a very strong relationship strength of 0.992. This indicates that the more effective the principal's professional competence, the higher the level of teacher professionalism.

In line with this, (Ramadina, 2023) examined the effect of

academic supervision on teachers' professional competence in the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka at public junior high schools in Krian District. The findings revealed that: (1) the level of academic supervision implementation by principals reached a very high category (85.6%); (2) teachers' professional competence was classified as high (79.7%); and (3) there was a positive correlation between principals' academic supervision and teachers' professional competence in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$ and an effect size of 35.7%. These results indicate that principals' academic supervision significantly influences teachers' professional competence in curriculum implementation.

According to (Nurjanati, 2023), principals' professional competence refers to a guidance process conducted by superiors toward teachers and other school personnel directly involved in student learning, aimed at improving teaching and learning situations so that students can learn more effectively and achieve better academic outcomes. The results of supervision must be followed up to produce tangible impacts on improving teacher professionalism, which are expected to be perceived by both the community and relevant stakeholders. Such follow-up actions may include reinforcement and rewards for teachers who meet established standards, educative warnings for those who do not, and opportunities for teachers to participate in further training and professional development programs.

In general, principals, in their role as supervisors, play a crucial role in improving educational quality through various efforts and activities. One of their primary responsibilities is to motivate and stimulate teachers and school staff to perform their duties optimally. Principals are also responsible for providing and improving instructional facilities and media to support effective teaching and learning processes. In classroom practice, principals must ensure that teaching methods align with the demands of the prevailing curriculum. Fostering harmonious collaboration among teachers and school staff is equally important in creating a conducive working environment. Moreover, principals are expected to enhance the quality and knowledge of teachers and staff by organizing group discussions, providing access to school libraries, and facilitating participation in training programs, seminars, and professional workshops according to their respective fields (Suryana, 2021).

The implementation of principals' professional competence is fundamentally a supervisory duty that involves monitoring teachers and school staff, conducting evaluations, determining necessary policies, and providing solutions to problems encountered by school personnel. In their capacity as supervisors, principals are tasked with guiding teachers in selecting learning materials that enhance students' potential, choosing appropriate instructional methods, organizing teachers' council meetings, conducting inter-class visits, and evaluating the instructional approaches and methods applied by teachers (Harapan, 2019).

The Partial Effect of Work Motivation on Teachers' Professional Attitudes in Public Elementary Schools of Keajar District

The results of the study presented in the table above indicate that the calculated *t*-value for work motivation is 17.978, while the *t*-table value is 1.65734 ($17.978 > 1.65734$), with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, meaning that work motivation has a significant effect on the professional attitudes of teachers in public elementary schools of Keajar District. The empirical results of this study confirm that *work motivation* has a statistically significant positive effect on teachers' *professional attitudes* in public elementary schools in Keajar District, aligning with a broad body of international research demonstrating that teacher motivation plays a crucial role in

shaping professional behaviors and attitudes in educational settings. Work motivation positively influences teacher professionalism by increasing engagement in instructional responsibilities, fostering reflective practice, and encouraging participation in continuous professional development, which collectively strengthen professional attitudes and classroom performance (Marnita et al., 2025; Novita et al., 2022; Rosanti & Irawan, 2025; Shaleh et al., 2020). Furthermore, motivational factors such as intrinsic interest, organizational support, and professional recognition are significantly associated with higher levels of teacher commitment, job involvement, and professional identity formation, thereby reinforcing teachers' willingness to adopt *professional standards* and collaborative educational practices (Arbianingrum, 2025; Novita et al., 2022; Putria et al., 2024; Shaleh et al., 2020). Recent studies also indicate that work motivation interacts synergistically with contextual factors such as *school climate* and leadership support, enhancing teachers' ability to internalize professional values and sustain positive attitudes toward continuous improvement.

These findings indicate that work motivation has a positive and statistically significant association with teachers' professional attitudes ($\beta = 0.285$, $p < 0.001$). However, its relative contribution is lower compared to principal professional competence ($\beta = 0.312$) and slightly higher than job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.267$), as evidenced by the comparative standardized coefficients. This suggests that while work motivation is an important predictor, principal professional competence represents the strongest contributing factor among the variables examined. Partially, work motivation can be regarded as an important factor in shaping teachers' professional attitudes, which include the ability to manage learning activities, understand students, and create a conducive learning environment. Although work motivation is an essential component of teachers' professional attitudes, its influence may not always be more dominant than other factors such as professional competence (mastery of subject matter), work experience, or job satisfaction. Teachers can enhance their work motivation through various means, including formal education and training, continuous professional development, the use of educational technology, self-reflection, and the implementation of best practices.

This study is consistent with the findings of Nurjanati (2023). The results showed that: (1) work motivation has a direct positive effect on teacher professionalism of 0.170 or 17%; (2) professional competence has a direct positive effect on teacher professionalism of 0.124 or 12.4%; (3) social competence has a direct positive effect on teacher professionalism of 0.204 or 20.4%; (4) personality competence has a direct positive effect on teacher professionalism of 0.221 or 22.1%; (5) teacher certification has a direct positive effect on teacher professionalism of 0.537 or 53.7%; (6) pedagogical competence has an indirect effect on teacher professionalism through teacher certification of 0.343 or 34.3%; (7) professional competence has an indirect effect on teacher professionalism through teacher certification of 0.230 or 23%; (8) social competence does not have an indirect effect on teacher professionalism through teacher certification; and (9) personality competence does not have an indirect effect on teacher professionalism through teacher certification.

According to (Rachmawati et al., 2021), work motivation is very important for teachers because it enables them to understand students, design effective learning, implement instruction properly, evaluate learning outcomes, and optimally develop students' potential. Teachers who are pedagogically competent are able to create a conducive learning environment, make learning more meaningful, and help students achieve their full potential. Teachers who possess pedagogical competence will ultimately be able to

work professionally. Work motivation supports teachers in developing students' potential holistically, encompassing both academic and non-academic aspects such as social skills, emotional development, and creativity.

Furthermore, (Rohmat, 2019) states that work motivation is not merely related to teaching ability, but also constitutes an essential foundation for teachers in carrying out their roles and responsibilities professionally and effectively. Teachers with strong pedagogical competence are able to equip students with relevant skills and knowledge to face future challenges and to develop their competencies effectively.

The Partial Effect of Job Satisfaction on Teachers' Professional Attitudes in Public Elementary Schools of Kejajar District

The results of this study indicate that the calculated t-value for job satisfaction is 18.861, while the t-table value is 1.65734 ($18.861 > 1.65734$), with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, meaning that job satisfaction has a significant effect on the professional attitudes of teachers in public elementary schools of Kejajar District. The results of this study indicate that *job satisfaction* has a significant and positive partial effect on teachers' *professional attitudes* in public elementary schools, which is consistent with international research demonstrating that higher levels of job satisfaction are closely associated with stronger professional commitment and more positive professional attitudes among educators (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Empirical studies further emphasize that organizational factors such as *transformational leadership* and *school culture* not only enhance teacher job satisfaction but also indirectly strengthen professional attitudes by creating supportive work environments that foster teacher engagement and dedication (Hidayat et al., 2024; Huda & Alderite, 2024). Additional evidence indicates that job satisfaction contributes to teachers' professional behavior by increasing work motivation, reducing burnout, and encouraging sustained involvement in instructional innovation and continuous professional development, which are essential components of *professional attitude* (Toropova et al., 2020). Therefore, although job satisfaction interacts with other factors such as working conditions and leadership support in shaping teacher professionalism, the cumulative findings confirm that improving job satisfaction is a key strategy for strengthening teachers' professional attitudes and enhancing overall educational quality (Boštjančič & Petrovčič, 2019; Kim & Burić, 2020).

These findings show that job satisfaction has a positive and significant partial effect on teachers' professional attitudes. This implies that the higher a teacher's level of job satisfaction, the higher their level of professionalism. Job satisfaction plays an important role in encouraging teachers to improve the quality of instruction, engage in self-development, and strengthen their commitment to the profession. Teachers who experience high job satisfaction tend to be more active in participating in training programs, developing innovative teaching methods, and paying greater attention to students' development, which directly enhances their professionalism. Although job satisfaction is an important factor, teachers' professional attitudes are also influenced by other factors such as qualifications, work experience, and support from the work environment.

The findings of this study are in line with those of (Pradnyawati & Rustika, 2019) the results of that study indicate that job satisfaction among rural teachers remains low and has not yet had a significant effect on their professionalism. In addition, teachers face obstacles in developing their professionalism. The study recommends that local governments provide stimuli and encouragement for teachers in rural areas to continuously enhance their professional competence.

(Sutrisno, 2017) states that job satisfaction is a factor that drives teachers to engage in certain activities in carrying out their duties. (Winardi, 2019) explains that satisfaction arises from needs (need), aspirations (aspiration), and desires (desire). Job satisfaction is a process that influences basic needs or drives that generate enthusiasm, direct behavior, and sustain work-related actions. (Badeni, 2019) asserts that job satisfaction is a process that produces intensity, direction or goals, and individual persistence in achieving objectives. In general, everyone requires job satisfaction to work enthusiastically. For teachers who hold professional certification, job satisfaction is an internal factor that fosters work motivation. (Hamalik, 2020) emphasizes that it is essential for teachers to have job satisfaction, as it can generate enthusiasm or motivation for individuals or groups to perform their work in order to achieve goals (Aqib, 2019).

Furthermore, (Wahyudi, 2019) argues that job satisfaction serves as an internal driving factor that motivates individuals to carry out their work. (Uno, 2018) defines job satisfaction as a process used to mobilize teachers so that their behavior can be directed toward concrete efforts to achieve predetermined goals. In line with this view, Suryana (2021: 9) states that job satisfaction acts as a driving force for teachers to perform their work in accordance with planned objectives. Teachers with high levels of job satisfaction consistently carry out their tasks as planned and complete their work on time in accordance with previously established goals.

The Simultaneous Effect of Principals' Professional Competence, Work Motivation, and Job Satisfaction on Teachers' Professional Attitudes in Public Elementary Schools of Keajar District

The results of the study indicate that the calculated F-value for principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction is 167.066, while the F-table value is 2.68 (167.066 > 2.68), with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, indicating that principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction simultaneously have a significant effect on the professional attitudes of teachers in public elementary schools of Keajar District.

These findings imply that principals' professional competence, teachers' work motivation, and job satisfaction simultaneously exert a positive and significant influence on teachers' professional attitudes. In other words, improvements in the quality of principals' professional competence, teachers' motivation in teaching, and teachers' internal drive to work will enhance overall teacher performance. Effective principals' professional competence supports teachers in improving the quality of instruction through feedback, instructional planning development, and performance evaluation. Strong professional competence of school principals also increases teachers' awareness of the importance of students' development. Likewise, work motivation is closely related to teachers' ability to manage the learning process, including planning, implementation, and evaluation of instruction. Teachers with high work motivation are more effective in creating a conducive learning environment.

The results of this study are consistent with (Pramono et al., 2024), who states that teachers' professional attitudes are crucial in education because professional teachers are able to create high-quality learning and foster students' character development. Teachers' professional attitudes encompass competencies in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning, as well as building positive relationships with students. (Kristiawan & Rahmat, 2018) also argues that professional teachers possess the ability to design effective

learning, apply various teaching methods, and create a conducive learning atmosphere. Teachers' professional attitudes are a key factor in producing high-quality education and preparing intelligent, well-characterized future generations who are ready to face future challenges.

Furthermore, the findings of this study suggest that when a school is able to enhance principals' professional competence, teachers' work motivation, and job satisfaction across all school components, the synergy among these three variables will reinforce one another and encourage sustained improvement in teachers' professional attitudes. Therefore, based on these findings, schools should develop principals' professional competence while simultaneously strengthening teachers' work motivation and fostering a highly motivating work environment.

Fachrudin (2018) explains that teachers' professional attitudes in carrying out their main duties and functions are influenced by various components, including principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction. A professional teacher is able to continuously develop themselves in performing their roles and responsibilities and is not merely confined to established rules and bureaucratic procedures.

Conclusion

This study examined the effects of principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction on teachers' professional attitudes in public elementary schools of Keajar District. The findings indicate that principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction are each positively and significantly associated with teachers' professional attitudes. In addition, the results confirm that these three variables simultaneously exert a strong and significant influence on teachers' professional attitudes, indicating that improvements in school leadership quality, teachers' internal motivation, and their level of job satisfaction collectively contribute to strengthening professional attitudes among teachers.

Specifically, the significant partial effects highlight that effective principals' professional competence plays a crucial role in guiding, supervising, and supporting teachers' professional development. Likewise, work motivation emerges as an essential driver that encourages teachers to perform their duties enthusiastically, improve instructional practices, and maintain commitment to their profession. Job satisfaction also proves to be a key factor, as satisfied teachers tend to demonstrate higher professionalism, stronger commitment, and greater willingness to engage in continuous self-development. The simultaneous analysis further reveals that the synergy among principals' professional competence, work motivation, and job satisfaction provides a more comprehensive explanation of teachers' professional attitudes than any single factor alone.

These findings underscore important managerial and practical implications for educational stakeholders. Strengthening principals' professional competence through structured training, fostering teachers' work motivation via continuous professional development programs, and creating a supportive and satisfying work environment are strategic efforts that can sustainably enhance teachers' professional attitudes. In the context of Keajar District, educational authorities and school leaders are encouraged to integrate these factors into coherent policies and school management practices to improve overall teacher professionalism and, ultimately, the quality of education.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the research was limited to public elementary schools in a single district, which may restrict the generalizability of the

findings. Second, the study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to response bias. Future research should expand the scope to include different educational levels and regions, incorporate longitudinal designs to capture changes over time, and explore additional variables such as organizational culture or leadership styles. Such efforts may

further enrich the understanding of factors influencing teachers' professional attitudes and provide stronger evidence to inform educational policy and practice.

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