

English Teacher's Motivation to Achieve Professional Teacher

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Abstract. Teacher professionalism is a value, purpose, and quality of expertise related to the work of a teacher. Professional teachers possess the talent, interest, motivation, competence, and responsibility to perform their job effectively. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of teachers' motivation on their professionalism. The research method employed is qualitative research, utilizing a case study approach. The instruments used were observation, interview, and a documentation study. The informants in this study were three English teachers at SMKN 1 Cirebon. The research results showed that becoming a professional English teacher requires several efforts. First, teachers must possess talent, interest, and motivation. Second, teachers must also have an educational background that aligns with their field. Third, teachers must have the competencies required by their field of work. Lastly, teachers must take responsibility for carrying out their duties as teachers.

Keywords: English Teacher; Motivation; Professionalism.

1. INTRODUCTION

Motivation is an essential aspect of the learning process because it is necessary to have a motivation to learn. If you are motivated, you will be more interested in learning. The more appropriate the motivation, the higher the interest in learning (Pratiwi, 2017). Saldiman (2018) states that motivation in learning activities is the driving force for students, which creates learning activities, ensures continuity of learning, and provides direction to learning activities so that learning subjects can achieve their desired goals.

Motivation can be seen as the realization of a power within a person that activates and guides behavior. It is an expression of the holistic interaction between motives, needs, and observable circumstances, and can contribute to the achievement of the goals expected of the individual. This interaction occurs in a dynamic process (Prihartanta, 2015). One of the motivations for learning English is to work abroad. Knowledge of English is becoming increasingly important for success in the increasingly competitive global workforce. Overseas, it can be challenging to hire foreigners who do not speak English fluently, as this can lead to language barriers and misunderstandings. A prerequisite for advancing at the national and international levels is proficiency in the English language. In this world, virtually everyone

speaks English, whether they are native speakers or just learning the language (Ratminingsih, 2017).

Research conducted by Santosa (2017) with the title *Motivation in Learning English: Case Studies in Students Department of English Education IAIN Surakarta*. Based on research findings, students enrolled in the English Language Education Department at IAIN Surakarta have shown a high level of motivation. The instrumental element thus shows quite positive results. So, it can be concluded that students already have a good mood and interest in learning English. This research highlights similarities in what underlies someone's decision to choose an English major and its relation to their academic and career goals.

Experts suggest that there are several definitions of a teacher, as noted by Jaidi et al. (2021). Teachers serve as excellent role models for students both inside and outside the classroom. Because teachers are already modeling behaviors that students can imitate. According to Bedanta (2020), teachers are the basis of the educational process in the classroom. All teachers are empowered individuals whose job it is to teach and develop students (Hamid, 2017).

Instructors strive to improve students' knowledge while serving as their educators and character builders (Jamaluddin, 2014). To achieve the defined goals, the teacher becomes the driving force behind all learning components (Sutarsih, 2009). According to Korth et al. (2009), a teacher educator is simply someone who instructs or teaches others. The term "teacher" refers to any person employed in a school and responsible for the education of students.

From the statements according to experts it can be concluded, The term "teacher" or "teachers" embrace all those persons in schools who are responsible for the education of pupils or students; teacher educator is simply one who teaches or educates others, and teachers are models for students both in learning and outside learning, the teacher is also the milestone in the classroom teaching for the process of education and teachers are all people who have authority and has the responsibility to guide and foster students, and the teacher is an educator and shaper of the personality of students. The teacher serves as the driving force to achieve predetermined goals.

Teachers are the most important resource for improving the quality of education and must be professional. Professional teachers are a crucial element in the quality education process. To become a professional teacher, you must be able to find your own identity and self-actualize by the skills and standards of a professional teacher. The origin of the word professionalism is the word "professional," which means work based on specialized training. The profession requires specific skills from actors (Hasibuan, 2018). Professionalism itself can refer to the predispositions, qualities, and behaviors that characterize a profession or a professional person (Umar, 2017).

Teachers' professional competence is one of the key factors supporting the achievement of educational quality. This is because teacher professional competence highlights the teacher's ability to manage classroom activities. This is a complex process that involves not only how information is transmitted from teachers to students, but also how teachers can know what students need during the learning process.

A professional teacher is required with several minimum requirements, including: having adequate professional education qualifications, having scientific competence by the field he is engaged in, having the ability to communicate well with his students, having a creative and productive spirit, having a work ethic and high commitment to his profession, and constantly developing continuously through professional organizations, the internet, books, seminars, and the like (Syarafudin & Ikawati, 2020).

As educators, we need to develop professionalism by acquiring the competencies relevant to our work. These competencies are used as drivers of a teacher's performance as an

educator. There must be truly professional teachers. He has solid basic teaching skills, understands the content, and is dedicated to his teaching duties. Therefore, teachers must be competent (Bagou & Sukung, 2020).

A teacher's ability to perform their duties as a member of the teaching staff, including mastery of pedagogy, knowledge, methodology, management, and other areas, is referred to as teacher professional competence (Dudung, 2018). According to Jamin (2018), understanding the scope of pedagogical competencies, knowledge of different types of learning resources, and organization of learning materials are factors that facilitate the implementation of professional competencies. A good teacher is skilled in learning and understanding scientific terminology. The difference between the two is reflected in performance during learning transformation (Sidiq, 2018). Suppose the teacher lacks specialized skills. In this case, the lack of professional competence among teachers will impact the learning process, resulting in a decline in learning quality, which in turn will lead to a decline in educational quality (Nabila, 2022).

To improve the quality of learning, a teacher must possess professional competence, which includes specialized skills acquired through educational expertise. However, at present, many teachers have inadequate educational backgrounds, necessitating their inclusion in special education or training to enhance their professionalism. The teaching profession should not be carried out by just anyone outside the field of education.

According to Aspi and Syahrani (2022), when performing their duties as teachers, teachers shall understand and abide by the principles of professionalism. (1) Having talents, interests, professions, and idealism. (2) Strive to improve the quality of education, faith, purity, and noble character. (3) Have the academic and academic qualifications appropriate to the area of responsibility, (4) Have the necessary skills in the area of responsibility, (5) Are responsible for the performance of professional work, (6) Have a degree, have a certain level of income through work performance, (7) Have the opportunity to have the ability to continuously grow through lifelong learning, (8) Have legal protection in the performance of their professional duties. (9) Guaranteed Professionalism with a professional body authorized to regulate matters related to teachers.

Recognizing the crucial role and strategic position of teachers in enhancing the quality of human resources, it is essential for teachers to continually develop their professional abilities in fulfilling their duties and obligations. This means that in order for the quality of students to improve, the quality of teachers also needs to be improved.

Based on observations made at SMK N 1 Cirebon, there are still many teachers who lack mastery of the material they teach, and some teachers lack discipline in their teaching. It is also supported by Pant's (2018) research, which showed that 40 English language teachers stated that teaching is not their first choice of career. Therefore, researchers observed the motivation of English teachers to become professional teachers. The previous study used students as informants, while this study used English teachers as informants. The research questions can be formulated as follows: 1) How is the motivation of English teachers to achieve teacher professionalism?

2. METHOD

The researcher chose to conduct this qualitative research because there are problems that need to be explored and researched. This is necessary because it allows for the study of groups or individuals by identifying variables that cannot be easily measured or equated. This research uses a case study. According to Yin (2014), case studies are used in many research situations to provide knowledge about individuals, groups, and other entities. The researcher uses this strategy because this study examines how teachers' motivation affects their pursuit of

teacher professionalism. The participants in this research were three English teachers at SMK N 1 Cirebon, Indonesia. The three English teachers teach classes X, XI, and XII, respectively. The observation technique used in this research involves directly observing the teaching process in the field at the Vocational High School. The interview technique was used to collect data regarding the opinions of English teachers on the professionalism of their colleagues. Then, the documentation used in this research is photographs. The above was done by the researcher herself as the main instrument—data analysis. Researchers used descriptive methods, including data reduction, data presentation/display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

3. RESULT

The researcher conducted interviews on May 29 with Teacher One and on May 30 with Teachers 2 and 3. The writer started asking about how English teachers' motivation to achieve professional teacher status at SMK N 1 Cirebon.

3.1 *Talent to become an English teacher*

In this discussion, Teachers 1, 2, and 3 believed that he was directed by his parents to become a teacher. Teaching is indeed a very noble profession. Without the presence of teachers, of course, we would not be where we are today. The following is a teacher's statement on the motivation to become a teacher:

- T1: "Actually, I do not want to be a teacher, I do not want to. However, also, not because I had to, but because I was directed by my parents."
- T2: "When I became a teacher, I could say it was not my dream; my parents had the determination to find a way for me to go to college and enter teacher training, so I had to explore what I was experiencing in front of me."
- T3: "So, before I did not want to be a teacher, I chose to major in English because I wanted to work in a foreign company, but to teach, I obeyed my parents, so being a teacher was not my goal."

Based on the results of the interview instrument, Teachers 1, 2, and 3 thought that she was directed by her parents to become a teacher. Teacher 1 argues that she did not want to be a teacher, but she ended up becoming one because she was directed by her parents. T2 argues that her parents provided the facilities for her to attend college and pursue teacher training, enabling her to become the teacher she is today. T3 argues that before becoming a teacher, she aspired to work in a foreign company, but because she obeyed her parents, she eventually became a teacher. Thus, the three teachers argue their reasons for becoming teachers. Her parents directed her to become a teacher (T1). Her parents were determined to find a way for her to attend college and enter teacher training (T2), so she could become a teacher to please her parents (T3).

3.2 *English teachers' interest in learning English*

In this discussion, the three teachers have different interests. Teacher 1 believes that she was unintentionally motivated to learn English, starting with reading books, watching movies, and listening to music, which led her to realize her interest in the Language. Teacher 2 thinks that she was motivated by the teacher during school. While Teacher 3 thinks he chose to study English because I want to work in a foreign company. The following is a teacher's statement that tells the motivation for interest in learning English:

- T1: “Initially, my motivation was because at first it was accidental. The motivation is still that sometimes I read the book, and on the other hand, I still watch movies, listen to English music, so that goes hand in hand.”
- T2: “I like the English teacher; the English teacher motivates me and makes me interested in English.”
- T3: “I choose to learn English because I want to work in a foreign company. I think the world is getting wider.”

Based on the results of the interview instrument, the three teachers have different interests. Teacher 1 believes that she was unintentionally motivated, starting from reading books in English, watching movies, and listening to music, and from there she realized she was motivated in English. Teacher 2 argues that his English teacher motivated her to be interested in English. Teacher motivation plays a vital role in increasing student interest; the higher the teacher's motivation, the greater the students' interest in the lesson. Teacher 3 studied English because she wanted to work abroad. In the world of work, good English skills can help broaden career opportunities, including the possibility of working overseas and establishing connections. Thus, of the three teachers, they may have different interests and motivations in learning English. Unconscious motivation comes from reading books (T1), being motivated by his English teacher (T2), and learning English because she wants to work in a foreign company (T3).

3.3 English teacher education background

In this discussion, the three English teachers have educational backgrounds that align with the field they teach, specifically a bachelor's degree in English education. The following are the teachers' statements regarding their educational background:

- T1: “I have a bachelor's degree in English education at STAIN Cirebon.”
- T2: “I have a bachelor's degree in English education.”
- T3: “Bachelor of English Education.”

Based on the results of the interview instrument, Teacher 1 argued that she pursued a bachelor's degree in education at STAIN Cirebon; Teacher 2 and Teacher 3 also pursued a bachelor's degree in English education. All three English teachers have the same background in the field they teach.

3.4 Competence in the field of duty

In the discussion about teacher competence, Teacher 1 argues that teacher competence is an ability that a teacher must possess. Teacher 2 believes that teacher competence includes pedagogic competence related to our abilities. The following is a teacher's statement that defines teacher competence:

- T2: “Teacher's competence includes pedagogical competence. It is related to our abilities.”
- T1: “The abilities that must be possessed by a teacher, especially in English teachers, are the ability to understand the material to be taught, prepare teaching materials, and convey the material well.”
- T3: “Teacher competency is the teacher's ability. There is pedagogy, social abilities, and thought processes, all of which we must have.”

Based on the results of the interview instrument, Teacher 2 argues that teacher competence includes pedagogical competence, which is related to the teacher's abilities. However, unfortunately, the meaning of "pedagogic competence" is not explained in detail. However, this uncertainty can be explained by Teacher 1, whose pedagogic competence requires the ability to understand the material, prepare effective teaching materials, and convey the material well. Teacher 3, in addition, the teacher's competency is the teacher's ability. There are pedagogical, social, and thought processes that teachers must possess. Thus, the three teachers may understand what teacher competence is. The abilities that a teacher (T1) must possess include teacher competence, which is related to teacher abilities (T2), encompassing pedagogic, social, and thought processes (T3).

3.5 Teachers' responsibility to do their job

In demonstrating teachers' responsibility to do their job, Teacher 1 explained that by always trying her best and continually learning, Teacher 2 strives to develop herself by attending seminars/webinars. Teacher 3 demonstrates the need to master what is taught, be disciplined, and be close to students. The following is a teacher's statement that tells their professional identity as an English teacher:

- T1: "I show my professional identity as an English teacher by always trying my best, always learning when I get the best trust or assignments."
- T2: "Trying to be able to develop myself by attending seminars/webinars."
- T3: "First, we have to master what we teach; second, we can be disciplined by going to class and then continuing to teach. The important thing now is that the teacher must be close to the students."

Based on the result of the interview instrument, to become a professional English teacher, Teacher 1 always tries its best, and learns when it earns trust. When given a task or responsibility to complete, we must fulfill it effectively. Teacher 2 argues that she tries to develop herself by attending seminars/webinars. Through webinar training, conferences, or workshops, teachers can improve their teaching skills. Teacher 3 argues that to master what will be taught, teachers can be disciplined and must be close to students. The importance of building good relations between teachers and students is that teaching and learning activities can take place smoothly.

3.6 Improving the quality of education

In this discussion, T1 thought that English teachers should become more international, because time is moving on, and one cannot just stay stuck here. T2 explained that each subject teacher needs skills in their respective fields, and T3 explained that specific skills are not only for teachers' English. The following is a teacher's statement that tells English teachers how to improve the quality of education:

- T1: "English teachers have to be more international, the times are moving on, we cannot just be stuck here, feel smart on our own, feel that we can [...]"
- T2: "Each teacher in that subject requires skills in their respective fields; they need skills both materially and theoretically, both skilled in technology, skilled in conditioning students and others."

T3: “Certain skills are not only for English teachers; these skills must keep up with the times, especially since the pandemic, we have to be able to operate online media. If we do not teach it all, we will be left behind and have trouble.”

Based on the results of the interview instrument, Teacher 1 argues that English teachers need to be more international; times are changing, and one cannot remain stagnant. Teacher 2 explains that each subject teacher requires skills in their respective fields. The teacher plays a crucial role in ensuring that students grasp the material presented. Teacher 3 describes specific skills not only for English teachers, but these skills must keep up with the times. Someone deserves to be called a professional if s/he knows precisely what to do. Thus, the three teachers have the answer regarding the skills that English teachers must possess. English teachers must become more international over time (T1). Each subject teacher needs specialized skills in their field (T2), and specific skills are not exclusive to English teachers (T3).

3.7 Discussion

To achieve teacher professionalism, teachers must first possess the talent and interest to excel in their role. By possessing talent and interest, teachers can become professional educators and efficiently fulfill their duties. According to research submitted by Hairun (2013), the demands of teachers to improve the quality of education are closely related to the talent, responsibility, and commitment of teachers in fulfilling their duties to become professional educators. However, the study did not mention that interest is also essential to becoming an experienced teacher.

Second, to fulfill this professional standard, teachers must have academic qualifications and an educational background according to their field of work. English teachers in this school typically share a similar educational background, specifically a bachelor's degree in English. The teaching profession requires specialized expertise, typically acquired through an education program, to become a teacher with competent professionalism. Suppose the teacher's educational background is not appropriate. In that case, the teacher lacks competent professionalism because one of the key factors that teachers must possess is specialized skills developed through an education program of expertise or specialization. For teachers without a teacher education background, they must improve their abilities to be competent. The theory proposed by Khani and Hajizadeh (2016) suggests that English teachers should teach according to their field; however, this study does not imply that English teachers must have the same background as the subject they teach.

Third, to achieve professional teachers, teachers must have the competencies required by their field of work. English teachers in this school already have the four teacher competencies, namely pedagogy, social, personal, and professional. Teachers must also learn continuously throughout their lives by opening themselves to new developments in their fields. The results of the above research conducted at SMK N 1 Cirebon show that the professional competence of English teachers has been carried out optimally. This demonstrates that the professional competence of English teachers at SMK N 1 Cirebon is sufficient. A teacher needs to possess a strong personality, master the subject matter, and be proficient in teaching methods as part of their competence. Without this, the teacher will fail in carrying out his duties. The research was conducted by Nurutami and Adman (2016). The results of this study indicated that the professional competence of instructors is a determining factor and has a significant impact on student learning. The research did not address the fact that teachers should also be lifelong learners, opening themselves up to hearing and seeing new developments in the field to have a significant impact on student learning.

Fourth, to achieve professional teachers, teachers must take responsibility for their job. Responsibility to oneself, family, school, environment, and country. Because a teacher is also a role model for students, someone who works as a teacher must demonstrate the best qualities and be worthy of being used as an example by students. Teacher responsibility is related to social competence, which is the ability of a teacher to communicate and get along with others, including education personnel, students, parents, and the community. Research conducted by Darmadi (2015) categorizes teacher responsibilities into five types: intellectual, professional, social, moral-spiritual, and personal responsibilities. Establishing communication certainly requires its tricks and methods. However, the point is that a teacher must have a way of communicating, speaking well, and be worthy of being a role model for others.

4. CONCLUSION

The use of interviews was conducted to confirm and obtain information about the English teacher's motivation to achieve professional teacher status; the following conclusions can be drawn from the research findings:

To become a professional English teacher, several efforts must be made. First, teachers must have talent, interest, and motivation. Second, teachers must also have an educational background that aligns with their field. Third, teachers must have the competencies required by their field of work. Lastly, teachers must take responsibility for carrying out their duties as teachers.

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