

Analysis of Teacher Professionalism and Competence in Educational Management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara

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Received: 18 May 2026

Revised: 03 June 2026

Accepted: 25 June 2026

Published: 27 June 2026

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DOI: 10.56207/genbionix.v4i2.968

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Abstract: Teacher professionalism and competence are crucial elements in ensuring the effectiveness of educational management and improving the quality of education. Teachers are expected to possess professional attitudes and competencies that support effective teaching and learning processes. This study aimed to analyze teacher professionalism and competence within the perspective of educational management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara. A qualitative descriptive method was employed to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, with the school principal serving as the primary informant. The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that teacher professionalism is reflected in responsibility, discipline, commitment to teaching duties, active participation in school programs, and efforts to improve instructional quality. Teachers generally demonstrate adequate pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, although differences in competency levels among individuals remain evident. Educational management plays an important role in supporting teacher development through supervision, training programs, professional development activities, performance evaluation, and the provision of a conducive working environment. Furthermore, the principal contributes significantly to fostering teacher professionalism and competence through guidance, monitoring, and continuous support. The study concludes that effective educational management contributes substantially to strengthening teacher professionalism and competence, thereby enhancing the overall quality of education at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara.

Keywords: teacher professionalism, teacher competence, educational management, school leadership, educational quality.

How to Cite:

Zai, P. Y., Harefa, M. N., Zebua, L., Laoli, W. Y., Gulo, A., Zai, F. J. A., Lase, N. K. (2026). Analysis of Teacher Professionalism and Competence in Educational Management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara. *GEN BIONIX: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Biologi*, 4(2), 154-160. <https://doi.org/10.56207/genbionix.v4i2.968>

Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in developing human resources and improving the quality of life in society. The success of educational processes is not solely determined by curriculum implementation, infrastructure, and educational policies, but also by the quality of teachers as the primary actors in teaching and learning activities. Teachers are responsible for facilitating learning, guiding students, developing their potential, and fostering character development to achieve educational goals effectively. Therefore, teacher professionalism and competence are widely recognized as critical factors influencing educational quality and student achievement.

Teacher professionalism refers to a teacher's commitment, responsibility, ethical behavior, discipline, and dedication to continuous professional improvement. Professional teachers are expected to perform their duties effectively while adapting to educational developments and changing societal demands. In addition, teachers must possess four essential competencies mandated by educational standards, namely pedagogical competence, professional competence, social competence, and personal competence. These competencies enable teachers to design, implement, and evaluate learning activities effectively while maintaining positive relationships with students, colleagues, parents, and the broader community.

In recent years, educational institutions have faced significant challenges due to rapid technological advancement, curriculum transformation, globalization, and evolving student needs. Teachers are increasingly required to integrate digital technology into instructional practices, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and continuously update their professional knowledge. Furthermore, administrative responsibilities and accountability requirements often increase teachers' workloads, potentially affecting their professional performance. Consequently, strengthening teacher professionalism and competence has become a major concern for educational stakeholders.

Educational management plays a strategic role in addressing these challenges. Educational management encompasses planning, organizing, implementing, supervising, and evaluating educational resources to achieve institutional goals effectively and efficiently. Effective educational management contributes to the creation of supportive learning environments, the development of teacher competencies, and the improvement of overall school performance. Within this framework, school principals serve as instructional leaders who are responsible for guiding, monitoring, motivating, and evaluating teachers. Through effective leadership and management practices, principals can facilitate professional development opportunities, promote collaborative learning cultures, and support continuous improvement among teachers.

Several previous studies have highlighted the relationship between teacher professionalism, competence, and educational quality. Research conducted by Mellinger and Hanson emphasized that teacher competence significantly influences instructional effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Similarly, studies by Kandiko Howson and Kingsbury demonstrated that professional development and continuous learning are essential for improving teacher performance and adapting to educational changes. Other studies have also reported that effective school leadership and educational management positively contribute to teachers' professional growth and instructional quality.

Despite these findings, many previous studies have primarily focused on teacher competence or school leadership separately. Limited attention has been given to examining teacher professionalism and competence simultaneously from the perspective of educational management, particularly in schools located in developing and regional contexts. Furthermore, empirical evidence regarding how educational management practices support teacher development in schools within the Nias region remains limited. This gap highlights the need for further investigation to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interaction between teacher professionalism, teacher competence, and educational management.

SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara, as one of the public junior high schools in Gunungsitoli City, has a responsibility to improve educational quality through the enhancement of teacher professionalism and competence. Understanding how teachers perform their professional roles and how educational management supports their development is essential for identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Such information can contribute to school development strategies and educational policy implementation aimed at improving teaching quality and student achievement.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze teacher professionalism and competence from the perspective of educational management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara. Specifically, the study seeks to examine the level of teacher professionalism, identify teachers' competencies in instructional practices, and explore the role of educational management in supporting teacher development and improving educational quality. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for school leaders, teachers, policymakers, and educational researchers in promoting sustainable professional development and effective educational management practices.

Methods

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to analyze teacher professionalism and competence from the perspective of educational management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because it enables researchers to obtain comprehensive and in-depth information regarding social phenomena, behaviors, perceptions, and experiences related to teacher professionalism, competence, and school management practices. The study focused on describing and interpreting the existing conditions without manipulating any variables.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara, located in Gunungsitoli City, North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The selection of this school was based on its relevance to the research objectives, particularly in examining how educational management supports the development of teacher professionalism and competence within a formal educational institution.

The primary research subject was the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara, Mr. Arman Ziliwu, S.Pd., who served as the key informant. The principal was selected because of his strategic role in planning, organizing, supervising, and evaluating educational activities within the school. As the leader of the institution, he possesses comprehensive information regarding teacher performance, professional development programs, competency improvement efforts, and educational management practices implemented at the school.

In qualitative research, the researcher serves as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. To support the research process, several auxiliary instruments were employed, including interview guidelines, observation sheets, field notes, and documentation tools such as a digital camera. The interview guidelines were designed to explore information related to teacher professionalism, pedagogical competence, professional competence, social competence, personal competence, and the role of educational management in supporting teacher development. Observation sheets

were used to record conditions and activities related to school management and teacher performance, while documentation was utilized to collect supporting evidence and institutional records.

Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted directly with the principal to obtain detailed information regarding teacher professionalism, teacher competence, and educational management practices within the school. The interview process allowed the researcher to explore participants' perspectives while maintaining flexibility to investigate emerging issues relevant to the study. Observations were carried out by directly examining school conditions, teacher activities, and educational management practices implemented within the institution. Documentation techniques were employed to collect supporting data, including school documents, photographs, teacher development records, and other relevant materials that strengthened the credibility of the findings.

To ensure the trustworthiness of the data, triangulation techniques were applied by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. This process helped increase the credibility and accuracy of the research findings by validating information from multiple sources and methods.

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction involved selecting, categorizing, simplifying, and focusing the collected data according to the research objectives. Subsequently, the data were organized and presented in descriptive narrative form to facilitate interpretation and understanding. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on recurring patterns, relationships, and themes identified during the analysis process. The conclusions were continuously verified throughout the study to ensure consistency and validity. Through these procedures, the study sought to provide a comprehensive understanding of teacher professionalism and competence within the framework of educational management at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara.

Results

Teacher Professionalism at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara

The interview results revealed that teacher professionalism at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara is generally considered satisfactory. According to the principal, teacher professionalism is reflected in the ability of teachers to carry out their duties and responsibilities optimally as educators. Professionalism is not only measured by educational qualifications and certification but also by teachers' daily performance in the school environment. Teachers demonstrate professionalism through good attendance, active participation in school activities, effective classroom management, and commitment to guiding students throughout the learning process.

The principal further stated that professionalism is evident in teachers' ability to deliver learning materials effectively so that students can understand the subject matter. Student achievement and the attainment of learning objectives are considered indicators of teacher professionalism within the school.

The principal further explained that teachers actively participate in various school programs beyond their classroom responsibilities. Teachers are involved in extracurricular activities, student mentoring programs, school committees, and academic events organized by the school. Their participation demonstrates a commitment to supporting the overall educational process and contributing to school development. Furthermore, teachers regularly attend school meetings and coordination activities to discuss learning progress, student achievement, and institutional programs. This participation indicates that teachers understand their roles not only as classroom instructors but also as members of a broader educational community.

In terms of instructional implementation, the principal noted that teachers generally demonstrate seriousness in carrying out learning activities. Teachers strive to create learning environments that encourage student participation and engagement. They attempt to adapt learning activities according to classroom conditions and student characteristics. During the learning process, teachers provide explanations, guidance, and feedback to support students in achieving learning objectives. These practices illustrate the commitment of teachers to fulfilling their professional responsibilities within the educational setting.

Efforts to Improve Teacher Professionalism

The findings showed that the school actively implements various programs to improve teacher professionalism. Teachers are encouraged to participate in training programs, workshops, seminars, and professional development activities organized through the Musyawarah Kerja Kepala Sekolah (MKKS). Teachers are also encouraged to utilize the Ruang GTK platform to enhance their knowledge and competencies independently.

The principal reported that these activities provide teachers with opportunities to gain new knowledge related to instructional strategies, classroom management, educational technology, and current educational policies. In addition, the principal seeks to motivate teachers by providing examples of professional conduct and responsibility.

Teacher Discipline and Responsibility

The results indicated that teachers generally demonstrate good discipline and responsibility in carrying out their professional duties. Teachers prepare instructional documents before conducting classroom learning activities, including teaching modules, learning materials, and assessment instruments. Learning activities are conducted according to the established schedule, and teachers perform assessments to evaluate students' learning outcomes. The principal explained that teachers are also involved in providing guidance to students in both academic and non-academic aspects. However, variations in discipline and responsibility among individual teachers were acknowledged, indicating differences in commitment and performance levels.

Teacher Competence in Learning Management

The findings revealed that teachers possess relatively good pedagogical competence in managing classroom instruction. Most teachers utilize instructional planning documents as guides for implementing learning activities. Teaching modules, learning materials, and assessment instruments are used to determine learning objectives, instructional methods, and evaluation procedures.

The principal noted that teachers generally conduct learning activities in accordance with their instructional plans. Nevertheless, differences in pedagogical competence among teachers were observed, particularly in the consistency between lesson planning and classroom implementation.

The principal reported that teachers employ various instructional methods during classroom activities, depending on the nature of the subject matter and the learning objectives. Teachers utilize discussion methods, question-and-answer sessions, group assignments, and individual learning activities to facilitate student understanding. Learning activities are generally organized systematically, beginning with introductory activities, followed by the presentation of learning materials, and ending with evaluation and reflection activities.

Teachers also make efforts to monitor student participation during classroom instruction. Students who experience learning difficulties are provided with additional explanations and guidance. According to the principal, teachers attempt to ensure that all students have opportunities to participate actively in learning activities. This practice contributes to maintaining student engagement throughout the learning process.

Subject Matter Mastery

The interview results showed that teachers' mastery of subject matter is closely related to their preparation before conducting instructional activities. Teachers who prepare learning materials thoroughly tend to explain concepts more effectively and respond appropriately to students' questions during classroom interactions. According to the principal, teachers who demonstrate strong subject matter mastery contribute positively to learning effectiveness. Adequate preparation enables teachers to deliver instructional content clearly and systematically.

Utilization of Technology in Learning

The findings indicated that most teachers are capable of utilizing technology to support instructional activities. The school provides facilities such as Smart TVs and projectors that assist teachers in presenting learning materials through digital media. The principal reported that these technological facilities are frequently used to make learning activities more interactive and engaging. Teachers generally demonstrate the ability to adapt to technological developments and integrate digital tools into classroom instruction.

The use of technology has become increasingly common in daily instructional activities. According to the principal, teachers frequently use presentation software, educational videos, digital images, and online learning resources to support classroom instruction. These digital resources enable teachers to present information in a more visual and interactive manner. Students are generally more interested and engaged when multimedia resources are incorporated into learning activities.

In addition to classroom instruction, technology is also utilized for administrative and communication purposes. Teachers use digital platforms to prepare learning materials, record student assessments, and communicate educational information. The increasing use of technology has contributed to greater efficiency in both instructional and administrative activities within the school.

Teachers' Social Competence

The results revealed that teachers maintain positive social relationships within the school environment. According to the principal, relationships among teachers, school leaders, students, and the surrounding community are generally harmonious. Effective communication and cooperation among school members contribute to a positive school climate. No significant conflicts among teachers or other school stakeholders were reported. Teachers actively participate in collaborative activities and maintain professional relationships with colleagues and students.

The Principal's Role in Educational Management

The findings showed that the principal plays an important role in supporting teacher professionalism and competence. The principal performs leadership, supervisory, motivational, and evaluative functions within the school. These responsibilities include providing guidance, monitoring teacher performance, evaluating instructional practices, and offering recommendations for improvement.

The principal also facilitates teacher participation in professional development activities and encourages continuous improvement in instructional quality. Through these efforts, the school seeks to support the development of teacher professionalism and competence.

The principal explained that supervision activities are conducted regularly throughout the academic year. These activities include classroom observations, monitoring of instructional preparation, and evaluation of teacher performance. Feedback is provided to teachers following supervision activities to help them identify strengths and areas requiring improvement. Through these supervisory efforts, the school seeks to maintain instructional quality and encourage continuous professional development.

In addition, the principal regularly facilitates discussions with teachers regarding challenges encountered during the learning process. These discussions provide opportunities for teachers to share experiences, identify solutions, and strengthen collaboration among colleagues. Such activities contribute to the creation of a supportive professional environment within the school.

Challenges and Expectations in Teacher Development

The interview results identified several challenges in improving teacher professionalism and competence. The principal reported that differences in awareness, motivation, and commitment among teachers remain a major challenge. While many teachers demonstrate strong dedication to their profession, some require additional support and encouragement to enhance their professional performance. The principal expressed expectations that all teachers would continue improving their competencies, strengthening their professional commitment, and maintaining responsibility in carrying out educational duties.

Professionalism of Science Teachers

The findings specifically showed that science teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara demonstrate good professionalism. According to the principal, science teachers possess adequate teaching experience, strong responsibility, effective classroom management skills, and satisfactory mastery of subject matter. Science teachers were reported to serve as positive examples for other teachers in terms of instructional implementation, professional conduct, and work discipline. Their performance contributes positively to the overall quality of teaching and learning activities within the school.

Table 1. Summary of Findings on Teacher Professionalism and Competence in Educational Management

Aspect	Key Findings
Professional Conduct	Consistent commitment to educational duties, active involvement in institutional activities, and dedication to student development.
Capacity Building	Participation in training programs, professional learning communities, and independent learning through digital platforms.
Work Performance	Preparation of instructional documents, implementation of learning activities, assessment practices, and student guidance.
Instructional Management	Organization of classroom activities, utilization of teaching resources, and implementation of learning strategies.
Subject Expertise	Adequate understanding of curriculum content and ability to explain concepts effectively.
Digital Literacy	Utilization of Smart TV, projectors, multimedia resources, and technology-based instructional tools.
Interpersonal Relations	Positive communication and collaboration among teachers, students, school leaders, and the community.
Leadership Support	Guidance, supervision, monitoring, performance evaluation, and professional encouragement provided by the principal.

Development Barriers	Variations in motivation, professional awareness, and commitment among teaching staff.
Science Teacher Performance	Strong instructional practices, responsibility, classroom organization, and mastery of scientific content.

Conclusion

This study found that teacher professionalism and competence at SMP Negeri 2 Gunungsitoli Utara are generally in good condition and supported by effective educational management. Teachers demonstrate responsibility in carrying out learning activities, possess adequate pedagogical, professional, social, and technological competencies, and maintain positive relationships within the school environment. The principal also plays an important role in supporting teacher development through supervision, guidance, evaluation, and professional development programs. Although differences in commitment and professional awareness among teachers remain a challenge, continuous support and development efforts contribute to improving teacher quality and educational outcomes at the school.

AI Declaration

The author declares that Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools were used in the preparation of this manuscript. Specifically, ChatGPT (OpenAI) was utilized to assist with language editing, grammar improvement, content organization, paraphrasing, and academic writing refinement.

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