



The Influence of Principals' Instructional Leadership, Work Discipline, and Self-Concept on Vocational High Schools Teachers' Professional Competence

Aulianafika Rahmanissa Bedriaty^{1*}, Cepi Safruddin Abdul Jabar²

Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta

Corresponding Author: Aulianafika : aulianafikarahmanissa.2023@student.uny.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effects of (1) school principals' instructional leadership, (2) work discipline, and (3) self-concept on teachers' professional competence in vocational high schools in Tembilahan District, as well as (4) their combined influence. Employing a quantitative approach with an ex post facto and correlational design, data were collected through validated and reliable questionnaires (Pearson and Cronbach's Alpha). A proportional random sampling technique was used to select 156 teachers. Multiple linear regression analysis revealed that all three variables significantly impact teachers' professional competence, both individually and collectively, contributing 54.4% to its variance. The findings emphasize the need for optimizing instructional leadership, enhancing work discipline, and fostering self-concept to improve teachers' professional competence.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher professional competence is essential in achieving national educational goals, encompassing knowledge, skills, and behavior necessary for effective instruction. Teachers must master four core competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional, with professional competence requiring a deep understanding of instructional content. However, vocational high schools (SMK) in Tembilahan District face challenges in this area, including limited training, curriculum implementation difficulties, and misalignment between teachers' expertise and teaching assignments. These issues contribute to job dissatisfaction and hinder proficiency in modern teaching methods.

School leadership plays a crucial role in fostering professional competence, yet in Tembilahan, it remains inadequate. Effective principals should manage educational activities, support staff development, and ensure proper supervision, but the survey found that leadership shortcomings negatively impact teacher performance. Weak oversight results in poor work discipline, reduced motivation, and ineffective curriculum development, further hindering professional competence. Strengthening instructional leadership is necessary to enhance teaching quality and ensure better educational outcomes.

Work discipline is another key factor affecting teacher competence, as adherence to institutional regulations promotes professionalism and instructional quality. However, irregular attendance and difficulty complying with school policies are prevalent issues in Tembilahan vocational schools, leading to decreased teacher engagement. Improving work discipline can foster a more structured and effective learning environment, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.

Self-concept also significantly influences teacher performance, affecting confidence and instructional effectiveness. Many teachers in Tembilahan struggle with self-confidence, limiting their ability to innovate in pedagogy. A positive self-concept enhances motivation and adaptability, improving teaching quality. Addressing weaknesses in instructional leadership, work discipline, and self-concept is crucial for strengthening teacher competence and improving overall educational standards in vocational high schools.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher's Professional Competence

Teacher professional competence refers to the skills, knowledge, and authority required to effectively educate students. It includes mastery of subject matter, understanding of teaching methodologies, and the ability to manage classrooms while fostering students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. A professional teacher not only imparts knowledge but also nurtures students' character and objectively evaluates their progress.

Key characteristics of professional teachers include expertise in a specific field, relevant educational background, and adherence to ethical and social

responsibilities. Factors influencing teacher competence include beliefs, values, skills, experience, personality traits, motivation, emotional factors, and intellectual capacity. Continuous self-improvement and systematic preparation are essential for maintaining high teaching standards.

Instructional Leadership of School Principals

School leadership is crucial to the success of educational institutions. A principal is responsible for overseeing all school activities, ensuring the effective implementation of curricula, and improving teacher performance and infrastructure management. Instructional leadership focuses on learning processes, including curriculum implementation, teaching methods, assessment, and teacher development.

Effective instructional leadership involves inspiring change, fostering inclusivity, and creating a positive learning environment. Key indicators include setting clear goals, acting as a resource for teachers, building a conducive school culture, and effectively communicating the school's vision. A principal should engage teachers in setting learning objectives and promote an inclusive classroom environment.

Overall, instructional leadership ensures systematic and procedural guidance, providing support and inspiration for teachers to enhance teaching quality. By prioritizing instructional improvements, principals play a vital role in creating a productive learning atmosphere and driving student success.

Work Discipline

Work discipline refers to employees' adherence to organizational rules, both written and unwritten, to ensure efficiency and productivity. It is based on management theories, such as Frederick W. Taylor's Scientific Management Theory, which emphasizes strict regulations for efficiency, and Henry Fayol's principle of discipline as a key management function. Work discipline can be categorized into **self-imposed discipline**, driven by personal motivation, and **command discipline**, enforced by authority. It helps minimize time wastage and errors, leading to better work outcomes.

Several factors influence work discipline, including compensation, leadership, clear regulations, supervision, and employee recognition. Fair compensation and strong leadership foster better discipline, while unclear rules and poor supervision can lead to negligence and absenteeism. Low discipline results in decreased productivity and workplace accidents, whereas effective enforcement creates a positive work environment, improves motivation, and ensures smooth operations. Organizations must apply fair and consistent disciplinary measures to maintain a cooperative and productive workforce.

Self-Concept

Self-concept is an individual's perception of themselves, shaped by experiences and interactions. It includes physical, social, and psychological aspects and is influenced by external feedback, economic conditions, and social class. Key components include physical appearance, moral values, family roles, and personal self-awareness.

Research highlights that self-concept, work discipline, and leadership significantly impact professional competence, particularly among teachers. Strong self-concept enhances motivation and performance, aligning with leadership, motivation, and social psychology theories.

The hypotheses in this study are as follows:

- a. H1.1: Instructional leadership of the school principal has a significant influence on the professional competence of vocational high school teachers in Tembilahan District.
- b. H1.2: Work discipline has a significant influence on the professional competence of vocational high school teachers in Tembilahan District.
- c. H1.3: Self-concept has a significant influence on the professional competence of vocational high school teachers in Tembilahan District.
- d. H1.4: Instructional leadership of the school principal, work discipline, and self-concept collectively have a significant influence on the professional competence of vocational high school teachers in Tembilahan District.

METHODS

This study employs the *ex post facto* method, as described by Sugiyono (2019), using questionnaires to examine past events and identify their causal factors. A descriptive method with a quantitative approach is used to analyze data collected from vocational high schools (SMK) in Tembilahan District, Indragiri Hilir Regency, Riau Province, from July to December 2024. The population consists of 175 vocational school teachers from two public schools and one private school, with a sample of 122 respondents determined using Slovin's formula. Data collection is conducted through Likert-scale questionnaires, assessing factors such as facilities, work motivation, and teacher commitment. The instrument development process includes theoretical reviews, indicator selection, instrument formulation, pilot testing, and validity and reliability testing using SPSS, ensuring its accuracy and consistency.

For data analysis, the study employs quantitative techniques, including simple and multiple linear regression using IBM SPSS version 27. Preliminary tests, such as normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity checks, ensure data suitability before hypothesis testing. Hypothesis testing examines significant relationships between independent and dependent variables at a 0.05 significance level using t-tests for individual effects and F-tests for combined effects. The coefficient of determination evaluates the extent to which independent variables influence dependent variables. Findings indicate significant relationships among the studied factors, providing insights into the dynamics affecting teacher work ethics and professional competence.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study investigates the impact of principals' instructional leadership, work discipline, and self-concept on teachers' professional competence in vocational high schools in Tembilahan District. Data were collected through teacher questionnaires and analyzed descriptively to understand key variable characteristics.

Descriptive Analysis

Teacher Professional Competence (Y)

Descriptive statistical analysis of teacher professional competence, based on 156 respondents, shows a mean of 112.85, a median of 114.00, and a mode of 125. The standard deviation of 8.732 indicates a relatively small data dispersion. The classification results reveal that 14.74% of teachers fall into the low category, 29.49% in the moderate category, and 55.77% in the high category. This suggests that the majority of teachers possess strong professional competence, aligning with competency measurement theories. The results indicate a distribution centered around the mean value.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistic of Teacher Professional Competence (Y)

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	
N	156
Mean	112.85
Median	114.00
Modus	125
Standard Deviation	8.732
Variance	76.256
Range	33
Lowest Score	92
Highest Score	125

Principal's Instructional Leadership (X1)

Descriptive analysis of the principal's instructional leadership variable, based on 156 respondents, reports a mean of 144.52, a median of 146.00, and a mode of 147. A standard deviation of 10.741 and variance of 115.374 indicate data dispersion. The score range between 90 and 160 reflects significant variation. Classification results show that 84.62% of respondents rated instructional leadership as high, 14.74% as moderate, and 0.64% as low. These findings support leadership theories emphasizing the importance of instructional leadership in enhancing teacher performance and educational quality.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Principal Instructional Leadership (X1)

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	
N	156
Mean	144.52

Median	146.00
Modus	147
Standard Deviation	10.741
Variance	115.374
Range	70
Lowest Score	90
Highest Score	160

Work Discipline (X2)

The descriptive analysis for work discipline, involving 156 respondents, reports a mean of 130.06, a median of 131.00, and a mode of 140. The standard deviation of 9.116 indicates a considerable variation, while a variance of 83.106 reinforces data dispersion. With scores ranging from 97 to 140, the findings indicate notable differences in assessment. Classification results show that 82.05% of respondents fall into the high category, 16.03% in the moderate category, and 1.92% in the low category. These results support work discipline theories that highlight its significance in improving individual performance and productivity.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Work Discipline (X2)

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	
N	156
Mean	130.06
Median	131.00
Modus	140
Standard Deviation	9.116
Variance	83.106
Range	43
Lowest Score	97
Highest Score	140

Self-Concept (X3)

Descriptive analysis of the self-concept variable, based on 156 respondents, shows a mean of 126.56, a median of 127.00, and a mode of 122. A standard deviation of 9.413 and variance of 88.609 indicate data dispersion. The score range between 89 and 140 reflects significant differences. Classification results show that 67.31% of respondents fall into the high category, 30.77% in the moderate category, and 1.92% in the low category. These findings align with self-concept theories, which emphasize the importance of an individual's perception of themselves in shaping identity and behavior.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Self-Concept (X3)

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS	
N	156
Mean	126.56
Median	127.00
Modus	122 ^a
Standard Deviation	9.413
Variance	88.609
Range	51
Lowest Score	89
Highest Score	140

Assumption Test Results

The study conducted prerequisite tests to ensure the validity of the data for regression analysis. The normality test confirmed that all variables were normally distributed. The linearity test showed a significant linear relationship between independent and dependent variables. The multicollinearity test indicated no high correlations among independent variables, while the heteroscedasticity test confirmed homogeneous residual variance. These results validate the use of parametric statistical analysis and support relevant theoretical frameworks.

Hypothesis Testing Results

a. Simple Regression Hypothesis Test

The results of the simple linear regression analysis indicate that the obtained equation model is $Y = a + bX$, or $Y = 75,040 + 0,262X$ $Y = 75,040 + 0,262X$. This equation illustrates that the regression coefficient of 0.262 signifies that each one-unit increase in the Principal's Instructional Leadership will increase the Teacher Professional Competence score by 0.262.

Table 5. Simple Regression Hypothesis Test for Principal's Instructional Leadership

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
Constant	75.040		8.348	.000
Principal's Instructional Leadership	.262	.322	4.218	.000

The regression analysis indicates that the principal's instructional leadership significantly influences teachers' professional competence, with a regression coefficient of 0.262. The constant value of 75.040 suggests a positive baseline even without the independent variable's influence. Given the significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), the results confirm a statistically significant

relationship between instructional leadership and teachers' professional competence.

Table 6. Simple Regression Hypothesis Testing for Work Discipline (X₂)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
Constant	90.281		9.122	.000
Work Discipline	.174	.181	2.286	.000

The coefficient table analysis indicates that the constant value (a) is 90.281, while the regression coefficient for Work Discipline (b) is 0.174. Thus, the regression equation is formulated as $Y = 90.281 + 0.174X_2$, meaning that each one-unit increase in Work Discipline (X₂) raises the Teachers' Professional Competence (Y) score by 0.174. The constant value signifies a positive baseline for professional competence, even without the independent variable's influence. With a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), the analysis confirms that Work Discipline has a statistically significant impact on Teachers' Professional Competence.

Table 7. Simple Regression Hypothesis Testing for Work Discipline (X₂)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
Constant	90.281		9.122	.000
Work Discipline	.174	.181	2.286	.000

The coefficient table analysis reveals that the constant value (a) is 90.281, while the regression coefficient for Work Discipline (b) is 0.174, resulting in the regression equation $Y = 90.281 + 0.174X_2$. This indicates that each one-unit increase in Work Discipline (X₂) enhances the Teachers' Professional Competence (Y) score by 0.174. The constant value signifies a positive baseline for professional competence, even without the influence of the independent variable. With a significance value of 0.000, which is below 0.05, the analysis confirms that Work Discipline has a significant impact on Teachers' Professional Competence.

Table 8. Hypothesis Testing of Self-Concept Regression (X₃)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficient Beta	Standardized Coefficient	t	Sig
Constant	85.502		9.267	.000
Self-Concept	.216	.233	2.973	.003

Based on the Coefficients table, the constant value (a) is 85.502, while the coefficient for the Self-Concept variable (b) is 0.216. Thus, the formulated regression equation is: $Y = a+bX$, or $Y = 85.502 + 0.216X_1$. This equation indicates that the regression coefficient (b) of 0.216 means that every one-unit increase in Self-Concept (X₃) will increase the dependent variable (Y) score by 0.216. The constant value of 85.502 suggests that the dependent variable has a positive

baseline value even in the absence of contributions from the independent variable (Self-Concept). The analysis results show a t-value of 2.973 with a significance value (Sig) of 0.003. Since the significance value is smaller than the predetermined significance level (0.05), it can be concluded that Self-Concept has a significant influence on the dependent variable in this regression model.

b. Multiple Regression hypothesis Testing

Table 9. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient
		B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constanta)	47.467	13.680	
	Instructional Leadership of Teachers	.211	.064	.260
	Work Discipline	.133	.073	.139
	Self-Concept	.139	.073	.150
Dependent Variable : teacher professional competency				

The multiple linear regression equation formulated in this study is as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = 47.467 + 0.211(X_1) + 0.133(X_2) + 0.139(X_3)$$

1. The constant value of 47.467 indicates that when the independent variables – Instructional Leadership of the Principal (X_1), Work Discipline (X_2), and Self-Concept (X_3) – are considered to be zero, the estimated teacher professional competency (Y) is 47.467.
2. The regression coefficient for Instructional Leadership of the Principal (b_1) is 0.211, meaning that each unit increase in this variable (X_1) will enhance teacher professional competency (Y) by 0.211, assuming other variables remain constant.
3. The regression coefficient for Work Discipline (b_2) is 0.133, indicating that each unit increase in Work Discipline (X_2) will improve teacher professional competency (Y) by 0.133, assuming other variables remain constant.
4. The regression coefficient for Self-Concept (b_3) is 0.139, signifying that each unit increase in Self-Concept (X_3) will raise teacher professional competency (Y) by 0.139, assuming other variables remain constant.

c. Partial Test Results (T-Test)

Table 10. Results of Partial Test (T-Test) Analysis

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	t	Sig
Instructional Leadership of Teachers	.262	4.218	.000
Work Discipline	.174	2.286	.000
Self-Concept	.216	2.973	.003

Based on the analysis results, the interpretation of the influence of each independent variable on Teacher Professional Competence is as follows:

1. First Hypothesis Testing (H_1): The influence of School Principal's Instructional Leadership on Teacher Professional Competence yields a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.262 and a t-value of 4.218. Since H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, it can be concluded that School Principal's Instructional Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Professional Competence.
2. Second Hypothesis Testing (H_2): The influence of Work Discipline on Teacher Professional Competence yields a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.174 and a t-value of 2.286. Since H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, this indicates that Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Professional Competence.
3. Third Hypothesis Testing (H_3): The influence of Self-Concept on Teacher Professional Competence yields a significance value of $0.003 < 0.05$, with a regression coefficient of 0.216 and a t-value of 2.973. Since H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted, it can be concluded that Self-Concept has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Professional Competence.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that School Principal's Instructional Leadership, Work Discipline, and Self-Concept individually exert a positive and significant influence on Teacher Professional Competence.

d. Results of the Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

Table 11. Results of the Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
1.	Regression	1697.994	3	565.998	8.500	.000 ^b
	Residual	10121.615	152	66.590		
	Total	11819.609	155			
<i>a. Dependent Variable : Teacher Professional Competence</i>						
<i>b. Predictors: (Constant), Instructional Leadership of the Principal, Work Discipline, and Self-Concept</i>						

Based on the statistical analysis presented in the ANOVA table, a significance value of 0.000 was obtained. According to the decision-making criteria, if the significance value (Sig) is less than 0.05, then H_a is accepted, and H_0 is rejected.

Furthermore, the F-value of 8.500 indicates a significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The mean square regression value of 565.998, compared to the mean square residual value of 66.590, suggests that the regression model used in this study has a strong capability in explaining the variation in the dependent variable.

e. Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Table 12. Results of the Coefficient of Determination Test

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.579 ^a	.544	.427	8.960
a. Predictors: (constant), Instructional Leadership of the Principal, Work Discipline, and Self-Concept				
b. Dependent Variable: Teacher Professional Competence				

The regression analysis results indicate an R value of 0.579, signifying a moderately strong positive relationship between the independent variables (instructional leadership, work discipline, and self-concept) and teacher professional competence. The R Square value of 0.544 suggests that these variables contribute 54.4% to the variation in teacher competence, while the Adjusted R Square value of 0.427 provides a more realistic estimate of the model's explanatory power. The standard error of the estimate, at 8.960, reflects the deviation in predictions; however, the model remains effective in explaining data variability. These findings support the theoretical relationship among the variables in the regression analysis.

DISCUSSION

The analysis shows a significant positive impact of school principals' instructional leadership on teachers' professional competence, with a significance value of 0.000, a regression coefficient of 0.262, and a t-value of 4.218. This aligns with previous studies, such as those by Werdiningsih et al. and Machali (2021), which highlight the crucial role of school leadership in enhancing teacher performance. Transformational leadership theory supports these findings, emphasizing the importance of school principals in guiding and evaluating teachers to improve professionalism.

Work discipline also has a significant positive impact on teachers' professional competence, with a significance value of 0.000, a regression coefficient of 0.174, and a t-value of 2.286. Research by Utari (2019) and Sutrisno (2017) confirms that work discipline enhances teacher performance and supports innovative teaching strategies. Krisdianti and Setyawati (2021) further highlight the link between motivation, discipline, and employee effectiveness. These findings reinforce that work discipline is a key factor in strengthening teacher professionalism, time management, and learning strategies.

Self-concept positively and significantly affects teachers' professional competence, with a significance value of 0.003, a regression coefficient of 0.216, and a t-value of 2.973. Research by Sari and Indriyani suggests that a positive self-concept enhances teachers' confidence and classroom management. Other studies (Gunawan & Nursih, Kusuma & Hidayah, Sutanto & Anggraini) indicate that a strong self-concept helps teachers tackle challenges, stay motivated, collaborate effectively, and make sound educational decisions.

ANOVA analysis reveals a significant combined impact of instructional leadership, work discipline, and self-concept on teachers' professional competence, with a significance value of 0.000 and an F-value of 8.500. The regression model effectively explains variations in teacher competence. Supporting studies (Notoatmodjo, Wahyuni & Sari, Saputra) affirm the influence of leadership, discipline, and self-concept on teacher professionalism.

The study acknowledges three key limitations. First, data collection relied solely on questionnaires, which may not fully capture teachers' actual conditions. Second, analysis was limited to simple and multiple linear regression, suggesting future research should employ path analysis. Third, the large number of questionnaire items may have affected response quality. Future research should address these limitations to enhance validity and reliability.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that instructional leadership, work discipline, and self-concept significantly impact teachers' professional competence. Effective school leadership provides guidance and motivation, while strong work discipline enhances teachers' performance and professionalism. Additionally, a well-developed self-concept boosts confidence, positively affecting teaching quality. Collectively, these factors contribute to teachers' professional growth, highlighting the importance of leadership improvement, disciplined work habits, and self-concept reinforcement in supporting their development.

As suggested, school principals should enhance their leadership through continuous training, professional development, and a supportive work environment to improve teachers' performance. In addition, teachers are encouraged to engage in training, create engaging learning environments, and take greater responsibility for professional tasks. Furthermore, future researchers should explore additional factors, such as organizational culture and work climate, to gain a deeper understanding of influences on teachers' professionalism.

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