

Social Competency Development of Teachers at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District

Elsha Destria Metta¹, Rifma², Ermita³, Enceria Damanik⁴

¹²³⁴ Department of Educational Administration, Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

The development of teachers' social competence is an important effort in improving teacher professionalism and supporting the quality of educational services. Teachers' social competence enables teachers to communicate effectively, establish positive relationships with school stakeholders, and adapt to the school environment. However, previous studies indicate that the development of teachers' social competence has not been implemented optimally in many schools. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the development of teachers' social competence at public junior high schools in Padang Timur District. This study employed a quantitative descriptive research design. The population consisted of 248 teachers, and a sample of 159 teachers was selected using proportional stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire that met the validity and reliability requirements. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics by calculating the mean score. The findings revealed that the development of teachers' social competence was categorized as good, with an overall mean score of 4.21. The development of teachers' effective communication skills obtained a mean score of 4.20, the development of teachers' effective social interaction skills obtained a mean score of 4.23, and the development of teachers' adaptability to the surrounding environment obtained a mean score of 4.22. These findings indicate that the development of teachers' social competence implemented by school principals has supported teachers in strengthening their social competence. Therefore, the development of teachers' social competence should be maintained and continuously improved to enhance teacher professionalism and the quality of education.

Corresponding Author:

Elsha Destria Metta

Email: elshadestriametta@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the key determinants of the quality of human resources and national progress. The success of education is influenced by various components, one of which is the teacher as the main implementer of the learning process. Teachers are required to carry out their professional duties optimally through the mastery of pedagogical, personality, professional, and social competencies, as mandated by Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. These four competencies complement one another in supporting the success of the learning process. Among them, social competence plays a crucial role because it relates to teachers' ability to build communication, cooperation, and harmonious relationships with students, fellow teachers, education staff, parents, and the community.

According to Mulyasa (2020), social competence is the ability of teachers, as members of the community, to communicate and interact effectively with students, fellow educators, education staff, parents, and the community. Similarly, Satori (2007) explains that social competence is the ability of

teachers to build positive interpersonal relationships, collaborate, adapt to the work environment, and establish effective communication with all school members. Social competence is one indicator of teacher professionalism because it supports the creation of a conducive learning environment, harmonious working relationships, and collaboration in improving the quality of education. In this study, the development of teachers' social competence is examined through three indicators: the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to socialize effectively, and the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment. These three indicators are important aspects that need to be developed through guidance from school principals so that teachers are able to carry out their professional duties optimally.

The development of teachers' social competence is a guided process directed toward positive change, progress, improvement, growth, evaluation, and various possibilities for advancement (Ermita & Anisah, 2013). Wahjosumidjo (2011) stated that the principal functions as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator, one of whose duties is to guide and develop teacher professionalism. Similarly, Glickman (dalam Jaharja et al., 2022) explains that teacher development through academic supervision aims to help teachers improve their competence and provide more effective learning services. The development of teachers' social competence is crucial because teachers' abilities to communicate, interact, and adapt not only influence relationships among school members but also contribute to the creation of an effective learning process and a conducive school climate.

Several previous studies have shown that developing teachers' social competence still requires attention. Susilo et al. (2022) found that principal supervision was not specifically directed at developing teachers' social competence, resulting in general guidance. Apriansyah & Jasrial (2023) revealed that teachers' ability to build relationships with the school community and communicate in a friendly manner still needs improvement. Furthermore, Simanjuntak & Naibaho (2023) stated that teachers' social competence is often neglected in the learning process, as evidenced by suboptimal communication and interaction between teachers and students. These findings indicate that developing teachers' social competence still needs to be continuously improved.

Based on previous research, studies that specifically describe the development of teachers' social competence in terms of effective communication skills, effective social skills, and the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment remain limited. Furthermore, no research has specifically examined the development of teachers' social competence at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District. Therefore, this study aims to describe the development of teachers' social competence at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District based on these three aspects. The results of this study are expected to provide input for school principals in designing more effective development programs and to contribute to the field of educational administration and management.

2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS

This study uses a quantitative approach with a descriptive method. According to Sugiyono (2020), quantitative research is a method used to examine a particular population or sample through data collection using research instruments and statistical data analysis. Meanwhile, descriptive research aims to describe a phenomenon systematically, factually, and accurately according to actual conditions (Arikunto, 2019). This study aims to describe the development of teachers' social competence at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District, which includes the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to socialize effectively, and the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment.

The population of this study consisted of 248 teachers from five State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District, namely State Junior High School 5 Padang, State Junior High School 8 Padang, State Junior High School 9 Padang, State Junior High School 30 Padang, and State Junior High School 31 Padang. A sample of 159 teachers was determined using the Proportional Stratified Random Sampling technique, so that every member of the population had a proportional opportunity to be selected as a research sample.

The research instrument was a Likert-scale questionnaire with five response options: Always (SL), Often (SR), Sometimes (KD), Rarely (JR), and Never (TP). Prior to use, the instrument was tested for validity and reliability. The reliability test yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.968, indicating very high reliability.

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to the respondents who served as the research sample. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, namely by calculating the mean score, to describe the development of teachers' social competence for each research indicator.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The results of this study describe the development of teachers' social competence at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District based on three dimensions: the ability to communicate effectively, the ability to socialize effectively, and the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment. A summary of the research findings is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of Average Scores for the Development of Teachers' Social Competence at State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District

No	Indicator	Average	Category
1	The ability to communicate effectively	4.20	Good
2	The ability to socialize effectively	4.23	Good
3	The ability to adapt to the surrounding environment	4.22	Good
	Overall Average	4.21	Good

As shown in Table 1, the overall mean score for the development of teachers' social competence was 4.21, which was categorized as good. Among the three indicators, the ability to socialize effectively obtained the highest mean score (4.23), followed by the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment (4.22), while the ability to communicate effectively obtained the lowest mean score (4.20). Nevertheless, all three indicators were classified as good.

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that the development of teachers' social competence in State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District was categorized as good, with an overall mean score of 4.21. This finding demonstrates that school principals have implemented professional development activities that support teachers in improving their social competence. The development process includes guidance, motivation, supervision, coordination, and evaluation, which help teachers strengthen their interpersonal relationships and perform their professional responsibilities effectively.

The positive results may reflect the important role of principals as instructional leaders who facilitate teachers' professional growth through continuous development programs. Rather than focusing solely on pedagogical competence, principals also contribute to strengthening teachers' social competence, which is essential for building effective communication, collaboration, and positive relationships within the school community. According to Rifma (2016), teacher development is a continuous process designed to improve teachers' competencies through systematic guidance, mentoring, and evaluation. Likewise, Mulyasa (2013) emphasized that principals have a strategic responsibility to develop teachers' competencies continuously as part of improving educational quality. Therefore, the findings suggest that the development programs implemented by school principals have contributed positively to teachers' social competence.

Compared with previous studies, the present findings provide additional evidence regarding the development of teachers' social competence. Susilo et al. (2022) reported that academic supervision contributes to improving teachers' competence and performance; however, their study did not specifically examine teachers' social competence. Similarly, Apriansyah and Jasrial (2023) found that teachers still experienced difficulties in establishing effective relationships with members of the school community. In contrast, the present study found that the overall development of teachers' social competence had reached a good level. These findings indicate that continuous professional development implemented by school principals can contribute to improving teachers' interpersonal competence.

One important contribution of this study is that it specifically examines the development of teachers' social competence through three dimensions: effective communication, effective social interaction, and adaptability to the surrounding environment. Previous studies have generally discussed teacher competence or academic supervision in broader terms, whereas this study provides empirical evidence regarding the implementation of teachers' social competence development in State Junior High Schools. Therefore, this study enriches the literature on educational administration by demonstrating how principals support teachers' social competence through systematic professional development activities.

The indicator of the ability to communicate effectively obtained the lowest mean score (4.20), although it remained within the good category. This finding suggests that communication development has generally been implemented successfully but still provides opportunities for further improvement. Effective communication is fundamental to teachers' professional responsibilities because it facilitates collaboration

with students, colleagues, school staff, parents, and the wider community. As educational environments increasingly rely on digital communication, teachers are expected to communicate professionally through both face-to-face and technology-based interactions.

This finding is consistent with the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia No. 16 of 2007, which identifies effective communication as one of the essential indicators of teachers' social competence. It also supports the findings of Susanto et al. (2020), who argued that continuous guidance and supervision from school principals contribute significantly to improving teachers' communication skills. Although the indicator achieved a good category, strengthening professional communication practices and communication ethics remains important to ensure that teachers can respond effectively to changing educational demands.

The indicator of the ability to socialize effectively achieved the highest mean score (4.23). This result indicates that principals have successfully encouraged teachers to establish positive interpersonal relationships within the school community. Good social interaction reflects teachers' ability to collaborate with colleagues, communicate respectfully with students, cooperate with parents, and participate actively in school activities. Such conditions contribute to creating a positive organizational climate that supports both teacher performance and student learning.

These findings are in line with Wahjosumidjo (2011), who emphasized that principals are responsible for fostering harmonious relationships among all members of the school community. Similarly, Sagala (2009) argued that teachers' social competence is demonstrated through their ability to establish constructive relationships that support the achievement of educational goals. Compared with previous studies, the present findings reinforce the importance of collaborative school leadership in promoting teachers' social competence and strengthening the school's organizational culture.

The indicator of the ability to adapt to the surrounding environment obtained a mean score of 4.22, indicating that teachers demonstrated good adaptability to changes within the educational environment. Adaptability enables teachers to respond positively to changes in school culture, educational policies, technological developments, and students' learning needs. In the context of rapid educational change, adaptability has become an increasingly important component of teachers' professional competence.

This finding supports Glickman's perspective, as cited in Jaharja et al. (2022), which emphasizes that teacher development should continuously assist teachers in responding to organizational and educational changes. Likewise, Mulyasa (2013) explained that principals should prepare teachers to adapt to educational developments through sustainable professional development programs. Consequently, strengthening teachers' adaptability not only enhances their professional competence but also contributes to improving the quality of educational services provided by schools.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the development of teachers' social competence has been implemented effectively across all three dimensions. Nevertheless, the comparatively lower mean score for effective communication suggests that this aspect deserves greater attention in future development programs. School principals should continue to strengthen professional communication, particularly in relation to digital communication, constructive feedback, and communication ethics, while maintaining teachers' strengths in social interaction and adaptability. These efforts will support continuous professional development and contribute to improving the quality of education in State Junior High Schools.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the development of teachers' social competence in State Junior High Schools in Padang Timur District was categorized as good, with an overall mean score of 4.21. All three dimensions of teachers' social competence effective communication, effective social interaction, and adaptability to the surrounding environment were also classified as good, indicating that school principals have successfully implemented professional development activities that support teachers' social competence.

The findings contribute to the field of educational administration by providing empirical evidence that systematic professional development conducted by school principals can effectively support the development of teachers' social competence. This study also expands previous research by specifically examining teachers' social competence through three dimensions: communication, social interaction, and adaptability.

Based on these findings, school principals are encouraged to strengthen continuous professional development programs, particularly those related to professional communication, communication ethics, and the effective use of digital communication. Teachers should actively participate in professional

development activities to continuously improve their social competence. Future research is recommended to investigate factors influencing the effectiveness of teachers' social competence development using different research approaches or broader research settings.

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