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Professionalism of Junior High School Teachers' Performance in the Learning Process: Pedagogical Competency Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Background: Teacher professionalism, particularly in pedagogical competence, plays a critical role in the quality of the learning process and student outcomes. Understanding how teachers apply and develop their pedagogical skills is essential for enhancing educational effectiveness. **Objective:** This study aims to assess the professionalism of teacher performance in the learning process at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung, with a specific focus on pedagogical competence. **Method:** A qualitative-descriptive approach was employed. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation involving teachers and the principal. The data analysis process included data reduction, presentation, verification, and conclusion drawing. **Result:** The study identified three key aspects of pedagogical competence among teachers: (1) efforts to improve students' abilities, (2) effective performance during the learning process, and (3) strategic approaches to developing pedagogical skills. **Conclusion:** Teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung exhibit professional pedagogical competence through various strategies aimed at improving student learning and instructional quality. **Contribution:** This study offers both theoretical and practical contributions by providing insights into the development of teacher professionalism, serving as a reference for future educational practices and policy improvements related to pedagogical competence.

1. INTRODUCTION

The teacher is the most decisive component in the education system, the role of the teacher must receive central, first and foremost attention. This one figure will always be a strategic highlight when talking about education issues (Zein, 2016). The teacher also determines the success of students, especially concerning the teaching and learning process, the teacher is the component that most influences the achievement of learning activities. Various efforts have been made by schools to improve the quality and ability of teachers so it is hoped that later this will also have an impact on the quality of education. Teacher competence is developed in a varied scope and includes various environments both social, institutional, educational groups and individuals (Alawiyah, 2013). The existence of the teacher as the main element of the educational staff is a very strategic factor and the overall driving force of

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education, where educa-tional resources include: facilities, budget, human resources, organization, and environment. Teacher performance as a component of education towards improving the quality of education greatly influences graduation skills, responsibilities social responsibility, and noble character (Yestiani & Zahwa, 2020). The measure of teacher capacity is the performance it has. The fact is that not all schools have good performance in the field of good learning and managerial management. Not a few school principals and teachers work less than optimally and seem half-hearted in carrying out the mandate which is their obligation and responsibility (Sammons et al., 2002).

Performance teacher performance is the result of work or work performance carried out by a teacher based on the ability to manage teaching and learning activities which include lesson planning, learning implementation, learning evaluation, and fostering interpersonal relationships with their students (Kilpatrick et al., 2022). Teacher performance is the result or level of success achieved by a teacher in his field of work according to certain criteria and is evaluated by the leaders of educational institutions, especially the school principal (Magdalena, 2020). Teachers who have high performance will be passionate and try to improve their competence, concerning planning, implementing, and evaluating learning, so that optimal work results are obtained (Dewi, 2019).

There are at least seven factors that affect teacher performance, namely (1) personality and dedication. Teachers who have good personalities can generate a willingness to actively advance their profession and increase their dedication to doing educational work; (2) professional development. The development of teacher professionalism emphasizes mastery of knowledge or management skills and their implementation strategies; (3) the teacher's teaching ability. The teacher's teaching ability to follow the standard demands of the work carried out has a positive effect on the results to be achieved such as changes in student academic results, student attitudes, student skills, and changes in teacher work patterns will increase; (4) relationship and communication. Teacher performance will increase along with the conditions of healthy relationships and communication between school components because a smooth and good pattern of relationships and communication will encourage a person to carry out tasks well bet-ween components in the school is a necessity in supporting increased performance; (5) relations with the community. The occurrence of a harmonious relationship between schools and the community opens opportunities for mutual coordination and supervision in the teaching and learning process in schools and joint involvement in advancing students in schools; (6) sixth, discipline. The discipline of a teacher is a very important requirement to have to support and improve performance and on the other hand, it will set an example for students that discipline is very important; (7) welfare. To maximize teacher performance, the government has taken a strategic step, namely providing proper welfare for teachers according to the teacher's work volume. In addition to providing intensive support as a guarantee for the fulfillment of the needs of teachers and their families (Suherman & Saondi, 2010).

Teacher performance can be seen from the level of competence it has. One of these competencies is pedagogic competence (Lubis, 2020). Pedagogical competence is the teacher's ability to manage student learning, which includes understanding student characteristics, planning and implementing learning, evaluating and assessing learning outcomes developing various potential students (Akbar, 2021). Pedagogic competence requires teachers to master learning theory and learning principles because students have different characters, traits, and interests (Somantri, 2021).

Pedagogic competence is the ability to manage students, there are seven indicators of pedagogic competence including (1) understanding of educational insights and foundations; (2) understanding of students; (3) curriculum development; (4) learning design; (5) implementation of educational and dialogic learning; (6) evaluation of learning outcomes; (7) developing students to actualize their various potentials. The seven indicators must be mastered by teachers to have their identity as educators, mastery of each of these indicators certainly has different benefits for each student (Saudah, 2017). According to Madhavaram & Lavarie, pedagogic competence is an individual's ability to a coordinated and synergistic combination of tangible resources (such as teaching materials such as books, articles, software technology, and hardware) and intangible resources (such as knowledge, skills, experience to achieve learning efficiency, and or activities in pedagogy (Suciu, 2011).

Teacher pedagogic competence, which is one of the four teacher professional competencies, can be learned or prepared by someone, namely through the process of teacher education (Mumpuniarti et al., 2020). This preparation can help inclusive education teachers more easily handle and provide education to children with special needs. Teachers can also create creativity during the learning process with innovations that are easily understood and accepted by students. According to Rahman (2014), put forward pedagogic competence is the ability to manage learning, which includes planning, implementing, and evaluating student learning outcomes. This competency must be owned by every teacher to achieve success in learning and teaching activities.

The existence of teachers as the main element of the educational staff is a very strategic factor and the overall driving force of education, where educational resources include: facilities, budget, human resources, organization, and environment. Teacher performance as an educational component for improving the quality of education greatly influences competence, compassion, and conscience (Mariana, 2015). To create effective teaching-learning conditions, five variables determine the success of student learning, namely actively involving students, attracting students' interest and attention, and arousing student motivation. Motive is the effort that encourages someone to do something (Sardiman, 2011), motive is the power within a person that encourages him to do something, or the condition of a person or organism that causes his readiness to start a series of behaviors or actions (Usman, 2010).

To produce high-quality learning in schools, schools should have 10 categories, namely: (1) a rich and stimulating physical environment, (2) a conducive classroom climate for learning, (3) clear and high expectations of students, (4) learning coherent and focused, (5) thought-stimulating scientific discourse, (6) authentic learning, (7) regular diag-nostic assessments of learning, (8) studying and writing and working as regular activities, (9) mathematical thinking, (10) use technology effectively (Siregar, 2015). While the learning process itself is a set of actions designed to support student learning, taking into account extreme events that contribute to a series of internal events that take place experienced by students (Harmoni, 2012). While Gagne defines learning as the careful regulation of events with the intention that learning occurs and makes it effective. In another sense defines learning "as setting and creating extreme conditions in such a way as to support the student learning process and not hinder it (Rusman, 2012). In learning that is intended to produce learning, external situations must be designed in such a way as to activate, support, and maintain the internal processes contained in each learning event.

Deepening of information data researchers do at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung, from the results of observations and interviews with school teachers there, it was found that efforts to improve and develop teacher performance at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung, the strategies that have been carried out include (1) improve the quality of learning in accordance with the needs and demands of students; (2) promote the use of educational tools and media in the learning process; (3) produce quality teacher resources through an effective and efficient learning process; (4) managing the utilization of the learning process, so that the learning process is efficient and effective; (5) fostering students who appreciate superior values in the learning process; (6) motivating students, appreciating, and pursuing high quality through the learning process; (7) improve the learning process in accordance with the needs of globalization; (8) giving attention to gifted students; (9) changing students to be oriented to work, not to diplomas; (10) cultivating a critical and open attitude as a condition for the growth of a more democratic mindset of students; (11) cultivating values that love quality to students; (12) cultivating the attitude of hard work, productivity, and discipline. The twelve steps of the strategy are carried out continuously and continuously until they reach the predetermined targets.

Based on the preliminary studies that have been described, this studi aims to determine the professionalism of teacher performance in the learning process at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung in terms of pedagogic ability. The focus of the discussion in this research examines (1) the pedagogic competence of teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung; (2) the teacher's performance in the learning process; (3) the teacher's efforts to improve pedagogic competence. The contribution of results of this study is used as enrichment material and contributes scientific information related to teacher performance in the learning process in terms of pedagogical competence.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study uses a qualitative research type, this research approach emphasizes its analysis of deductive and inductive inference processes as well as the analysis of the dynamics of the relationships between observed phenomena using scientific logic. The research method uses a descriptive study, namely a study that focuses on problems based on facts which are carried out employing observation, interviews, and study documents. This method was chosen as one of the writing methods to obtain an overview of teacher performance in the learning process in terms of pedagogic competence.

Descriptive research takes problems or focuses attention on actual problems as they were at the time the research was carried out. Given its nature, descriptive research in education functions more to solve practical educational problems. The researcher uses a descriptive-qualitative method intending to see the events that are the center of his attention and then illustrates them as they are. This method was chosen as one of the researchers' efforts to obtain an overview in the field regarding teacher performance in the learning process in terms of pedagogical competence.

2.2 Research Subjects

This research was carried out at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung in 2021. The location was chosen based on research considerations and research had not previously been conducted on the role of teacher performance in improving student achievement at Kepung 1 Public Middle School. Furthermore, based on the experience of field practice that researchers have done at the school the school is used as a research location.

The subjects in this study were teachers of SMP Negeri 1 Kepung. In addition, the class teacher is also seen as a person who knows about the data to be collected. Furthermore, the principal, teachers, and several students were also used as sources of information to obtain as much data and information as possible.

2.3 Data Sources

Sources of data in this study are people as sources and documents as supporting data. In the research, the sources selected by the research were teachers, school principals, and students. The selection of informants in this study used a snowball sampling technique. Supporting data in this study are documents related to the research subject. In this study, the researcher collected descriptive data obtained from data collection through observation and interviews with informants. The determination of informants in this study was not based on the notion that informants must represent the population, but that informants must be able to provide the necessary information following the focus of the research. To understand the condition and description of the school situation, the researcher conducted a document study.

2.4 Data Collection

Researchers developed guidelines for observation, interviews, and documentation to be used as instruments for data collection. Observation guidelines and interviews were validated first to know whether the questions and statements in each instrument could represent the indicators of the variables studied. The initial step was to collect data on the first background several times, and the results were analyzed so that provisional findings were compiled. Furthermore, several times data collection was carried out again on the second background. The results were analyzed and compared with the interim findings from the previous (first) data collection results so that temporary but broader findings were compiled. Then several times data collection was carried out again on the third background. The results were analyzed and compared with the interim findings from the previous data collection so that they were used to expand the interim findings resulting from data collection in the first and second settings. Thus obtaining the final findings that are more extensive. In the end conclude (Suharningsih, 2010).

2.4 Data Validity

In this study, checking the validity of the data used a credibility test utilizing triangulation. This step was taken to be able to increase the degree of trust in the research data obtained. The triangulation used in this research is the triangulation technique. This step was carried out to test the credibility of the data and was carried out by checking the data from the same source using different techniques. In this study, the triangulation technique was carried out by checking data from the same source using different techniques, namely observation, interviews, field notes, and documentation.

2.5 Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out inductively but starting from empirical facts, researchers went directly to the field, studied, analyzed, interpreted, and drew conclusions in the field. Analysis of data before the field is still temporary and will develop according to conditions in the field, while in this study the analysis will be taken together with the data collection process. The data analysis process includes (1) data presentation; (2) data reduction; (3) data verification; (4) conclusion.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the research results obtained in the field, namely finding facts from the formulation of the problem and interpretation on the existing theoretical basis. The data that has been obtained comes from the source, namely the place of research and the results of the analysis of the author's interviews from several informants needed by the researcher and following the formulation of the problem raised. The following data discusses the portrait of teacher performance in the learning process at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung in terms of pedagogic competency analysis.

3.1.1 Teacher Pedagogic Competence at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung.

a) Teacher's Ability to Master Student Characteristics

One of the most important aspects of teacher competence is the ability to master student characteristics from the physical, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects. This ability is the main capital as a prerequisite in achieving learning activities. From the results of observations and interviews, it can be seen that all the teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung can understand the morals and emotions of students, this can be seen from the teacher's actions, namely advising students on how to behave, and how to speak during class. The teacher also gave a warning to students who were not serious about learning. From an intellectual point of view, the teacher guides students who have difficulty accepting the material by first giving questions or questions to students to determine the level of student's ability to absorb the subject matter.

From these facts, it can be concluded that the teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung have a good ability to master the characteristics of students from the physical, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects. Even though these teachers in terms of competency assessment have not been very satisfactory, as a condition for teacher pedagogic competency abilities this shows a positive value that can be used as a basis for further improvement.

An understanding of student development is needed to design conducive learning that will be carried out (Nurhamidah, 2018). A conducive learning design will be able to increase student learning motivation to be able to improve the desired learning processes and outcomes (Sinar, 2022). The emotional characteristics of students are one of the signs of the emergence of identity development. Adolescents tend to think about what is going on in their minds and examine themselves. They also begin to realize that there is a difference between what they think and feel and how they behave. They begin to consider the possibilities (Winarno, 2013). Teenagers are easily made dissatisfied with themselves. They criticize their traits, compare themselves to others, and try to change their behavior (Janawi, 2019). Students at junior high school age generally have developed a status of achieving identity.

b) Teacher's Ability to Mastering Learning Theory and Learning Principles

In learning activities, mastery of learning theory and learning principles is important because this is a way to facilitate learning outcomes. From the results of research from interviews with teachers about mastery of learning theory and learning principles, all teachers have this ability. This can be seen from the teacher's ability to attract students' attention during learning, making students more proactive and always paying attention to students in learning activities.

Another method used by teachers in learning activities was also clarified by the principal and teachers that the teacher gave quizzes to students to train their thinking and enthusiasm for learning. The teachers also try to answer every question from students. The teacher also conveyed to students to always obey the applicable regulations. Even so, the teacher does not mean that it goes smoothly, there are still students who make noise so the class is not conducive even though the teachers always emphasize not to fight when learning activities are in progress.

Based on these facts, it can be concluded that in general teachers have skills in learning theory and learning principles. Teachers carry out various ways, methods, and creativity to facilitate learning activities. The teachers have fulfilled the competency assessment indicators for mastery of learning theory and learning principles.

The pedagogic theory that transmits knowledge is dealing with various changes that occur so quickly in this modern era that the knowledge one acquires experiences a decline in function amid advances in technological innovation, population mobility, and changes in economic and political systems (Anwar, 2018). Therefore education is no longer properly formulated as an effort to transmit knowledge but is formulated as a lifelong discovery process of what is needed to be known (Suhandani & Julia, 2014). In a new paradigm view that in learning, for both children and adults, the most important thing is how to learn certain skills to be able to direct oneself to discover something new, and how to direct oneself to always ask questions and seek answers (Mujiono, 2020). This change in concept then influences pedagogic learning theory (Kalu, 2016).

c) Teacher Ability in Developing Subject Curriculum

Based on the results of research on teachers regarding the ability to develop curricula related to the subjects taught, the teachers have carried out curriculum development. In learning activities, the teacher is no longer a central position who is the center of attention in learning activities but the teacher makes learning activities student-centered. Students are required to be more active in learning activities. Teachers can develop Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) according to the subject matter of each teacher and the existing curriculum.

From this, it can be said that teachers have good abilities in curriculum development related to the subjects taught. Indeed, there are still teachers who have limited abilities in curriculum development but evaluation and

improvement are always carried out by these teachers. One evident thing is the change in learning patterns from being teacher-centered to being more student-centered.

Given the important role of the education curriculum, in its preparation, it must refer to a solid and strong foundation (Ikhsan & Hadi, 2018). The foundation of curriculum development is not only needed for curriculum makers (macro) or written curriculum which is often referred to as the ideal curriculum (Fajri, 2019). Besides that, it must also be understood and used as a basis for consideration by curriculum implementers (micro), namely education supervisors and teachers, and other parties related to education management tasks, as material to be used as an instrument in conducting guidance on curriculum implementation in every area. Type and level of education (Bahri, 2017). With this important position, the preparation and development of the curriculum cannot be done haphazardly but must be based on various considerations, or a foundation so that it can be used as a basis for organizing the educational process, to facilitate the achievement of educational and learning objectives more efficiently and effectively. (Huda, 2017).

d) Teacher's Ability in Organizing Educational Learning

From the results of research, teachers in every learning activity always use the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) guidelines so that what is the goal of the learning activity can be easily achieved. The competence of teachers in conducting educational learning can be seen from the use of good learning media following the level of ability and understanding of students. The use of learning media following the learning curriculum delivered can make it easier for students to participate in learning activities. Besides that, the existence of innovations from the teacher can increase enthusiasm for learning and also a good level of absorption of the material being taught.

Based on this, it shows that teachers can organize educational learning, namely by carrying out learning creativity that is not boring and always guided by the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) and the syllabus that has been made. Besides that, the use of learning media is following the level of student abilities.

Pedagogic competence is one of the abilities related to learning management which consists of understanding students' planning and implementation of learning evaluating learning outcomes and developing students' potential according to their potential (Joni, 2016). One of the demands of pedagogic competence that must be carried out by the teacher is to organize educational learning (Kusmiyatun, 2018). One of the indicators in organizing educational learning is carrying out educational learning in schools by paying attention to the required safety standards and using learning media and learning resources that are relevant to the characteristics of students and the subjects being taught to achieve the learning objectives as a whole (Himayaturohmah, 2019). Therefore, teachers in learning activities are expected to carry out educational learning and use learning media and learning resources optimally.

e) Teacher's Ability to Utilize Information and Communication Technology

The results of research conducted on school principals and teachers, show that in learning activities that always keep up with the times, the use of information and communication technology cannot be avoided. The use of appropriate technology will facilitate every activity. It is also in learning activities, teachers are required to always follow the development of technology along with its utilization. As one of the indicators of utilizing information and communication technology in learning activities, teachers use each learning tool to increase enthusiasm for learning and facilitate the delivery of teaching materials.

Forms of learning activities in the use of technology carried out by teachers include delivering teaching materials through the Watshaap application, submitting assignments via email, assignments in the form of videos, and so on. From the results of this study, it can be concluded that teachers can use information and communication technology in learning activities. The use of information media and technology as learning media is a positive value possessed by the teacher as a main support for learning activities.

Changes in learning patterns are urgently needed to carry out updates in a conventional learning system which is considered obsolete and irrelevant to the dynamics of the times that are developing more rapidly and intensively, triggered by developments in science and technology (Budiana et al., 2015). Information and communication technology in learning acts as a link in the implementation of knowledge transfer without eliminating the initial model of learning that takes place face-to-face in the classroom (Husain, 2014). Utilization of information and communication technology in learning is carried out to increase effectiveness in implementing the learning process which in the end is expected to improve student learning outcomes and the individual quality of students in terms of using technology more precisely and usefully.

f) Teacher's Ability to Communicate Effectively with Students

From the results of the research, every teacher's learning is always interactive with students. The teacher always asks how far the understanding of the material is being taught. The teacher also builds communication after learning through learning media when students want to ask about the subject matter being taught. The ability to communicate effectively, empathetically, and politely to students will have a positive impact, students feel valued by the teacher. Another thing that is done by teachers when there are students who commit school violations, the teacher does not immediately scold students but builds good communication and takes an emotional approach to students.

From the facts above it can be concluded that almost all teachers can communicate effectively, emphatically, and politely to students. Even though there are teachers who are sometimes unable to control their emotions towards students, this is due to the actions of students who go too far in making mistakes and have been warned repeatedly by the teacher concerned. Severe warnings in the form of both mild and severe punishments are an attempt by teachers to awaken students who make mistakes that are considered out of bounds after passing through warning stages that are not heeded by students. Overall, even if the students make mistakes, they are still within the context of reasonableness, such as fighting over and making noise by provoking other friends.

The process of communication in learning is divided into verbal communication and nonverbal communication. Verbal communication is communication using language, both written and spoken language. Nonverbal communication is communication that uses signs, gestures, pictures, symbols, facial expressions, and the like (Majid, 2014). According to Wibowo & Hamrin (2012), states that the important elements in the communication process include: (1) the sender of the message or the communicator and the material (content) of the message; (2) message language; (3) media; (4) interpret/interpret the message; (5) recipient of the message (communicant); (6) feedback, response from the recipient of the message); and (7) obstructing disturbances.

g) Teacher's Ability to Conduct Assessment and Evaluation of Learning Outcomes

Based on the results of the research, it shows that the assessment and evaluation of learning is an important aspect to see students' absorption of the material presented by the teachers. The results of a bad assessment are of course the impact of learning that is not optimal so that students cannot understand the teaching material presented. Vice versa, the results of a good assessment are a form of success in learning activities. Evaluation is also important as material for making improvements in learning. Teachers must be open to evaluations carried out to further improve the overall quality of learning.

Based on research, teachers always carry out assessments in learning activities in the form of questions and answers, quizzes, midterm tests, and final semester tests. In addition, teachers also conduct practical tests as a complement to the theory being taught. Assessment activities carried out by teachers carried out objectively are indeed the results of learning achievements carried out by students. This step is also a form of responsibility of teachers towards school institutions which are then used as a reference in evaluating learning outcomes. The teachers also conveyed to always improve learning to students so that the results achieved were always maximal.

The activity of carrying out the assessment means measuring the mastery of the subject matter using the questions that have been prepared (Jahidi, 2017). The assessment can be carried out according to a predetermined schedule or using class hours. The last activity after carrying out the assessment is to carry out pre-scoring activities by examining student test results (Astuti, 2016). The score that has been obtained is then compared with certain criteria; for example the minimum learning mastery criteria (KKM).

h) Teacher's Ability in Guiding Students

The form of the teacher's responsibility in learning activities is not only to provide teaching materials but also to provide guidance to students in each learning activity. Teachers who are professional and have quality will always understand the level of ability of students so they know students who need extra guidance. This is because each student has a different level of ability to absorb and understand the teaching material delivered by the teacher. The teacher's closeness to student personnel will make it easier to achieve learning activities. The teacher must be able to see the mental development of student learning because this step will be effective in distributing the knowledge taught by the teacher.

Based on the results of interviews, the teacher supervises students who have below-average abilities. The goal of the teacher is to at least increase the absorption of knowledge from the material being taught. Besides that, the teachers also always remind them not to get bored and to be more active in learning, with that the ability to absorb lessons will be more trained. The inability of the teacher to guide students will become a separate problem in

learning activities. Teachers who are indifferent to students will hinder the learning achievements set by the school. Indeed, there are still teachers who do not want to know about the progress and level of students' ability to absorb learning. Some teachers have an old paradigm and think that the teacher's job at school is only limited to delivering teaching material. The attitude of the teacher who is indifferent to students also results in the attitude of students who find it difficult to understand and obey what the teachers want. This is what makes learning activities ineffective and far from the expectations of learning achievement.

In the learning process, the teacher plays a very important role to generate or increase the attention of students. So that students will carry out learning activities better, both in the process and in learning outcomes (Musa, 2016). Therefore, teachers always try to ensure that students always pay great attention to learning activities (Lubis, 2019). The stimuli given by the teacher should be able to attract students' attention by using teaching methods, using media, and tools, using good teaching styles, creating a pleasant learning environment, and so on (Putri et al., 2018).

i) Teacher's Ability to Pour Pedagogic Potential into Learning Implementation Plans (RPP).

Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is a guide in every lesson. The existence of a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) can make it easier for teachers to carry out learning activities and the extent to which learning outcomes have been achieved. Based on the research results from the process of observation, interviews, and documentation, the teachers had made a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) before conducting teaching and learning activities. This means that the teachers put all knowledge and knowledge according to their respective fields in the lesson plan. Making a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is an obligation for teachers before the implementation of learning.

Based on the facts above, it can be concluded that teachers can convey pedagogical abilities, especially mastery of teaching materials in the Learning Development Plan. The importance of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is also emphasized by the school as a guide in learning activities. There are indeed teachers who still have minimum standards in terms of the quality of making Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) but they always make improvements every time according to the needs of students and the development of knowledge.

Teachers who succeed in pouring their respective knowledge and scholarship into the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), will find it easier to carry out teaching and learning activities because what will be done along with the targets are well planned in the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) (Gunawan & Asrifan, 2020). On the other hand, there are still teachers whose lesson plans (RPP) do not meet the eligibility standards in terms of the quality of the teacher's knowledge (Sa'bani, 2017). Learning activities will easily reach the targets to be achieved by schools if the teachers realize the importance of lesson plans (Mayudana & Sukendra, 2020). Without a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) that is arbitrary without regard to scientific requirements and the development of knowledge, the quality of learning is not good.

3.1.2 Teacher Performance in the Learning Process

a) Teacher Performance in Preparing Learning Implementation Plans (RPP)

Based on the results of observations, interviews, and documentation of all teachers in their respective fields of study, the implementation of learning activities is always guided by the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). The preparation of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is carried out long before the implementation of active learning begins. Making a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is always emphasized by the school because it will make it easier for teachers to carry out learning activities and actions in achieving the goals that will be expected by the school. The preparation of a good Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) certainly has a positive impact on the quality of learning carried out by the teacher, even though there are shortcomings from the teacher personally but what is the aim and target of the school, in general, have been fulfilled. The teachers also put their abilities and knowledge to the maximum extent possible in the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP). The teachers are also aware of the importance of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) in learning activities because it is the first step for the teacher to find out what material fits the needs of students according to their development.

Based on the results of the study, it was shown that teachers were able to incorporate pedagogic competency abilities into planning (preparing lesson plans). Each subject teacher always makes a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) according to their respective fields. The importance of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) is also understood by teachers as a guideline and achievement target set by the school. Schools also strive for teachers to always be committed to learning activities from the beginning of learning, namely in the form of making a Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) to learning evaluation. Even though there are still limitations and deficiencies in making Learning Implementation Plans (RPP), teachers always make improvements according to student needs.

A teacher must be able to create a challenging classroom atmosphere to facilitate the development of students' critical thinking processes. According to Moon (2008), introducing challenges to formal education is the key to

critical thinking. Classes should be used as a place to explore ideas, rather than just to transfer knowledge (Suwardi & Farnisa, 2018). This means that a teacher should play more of a role as a maintainer and promoter of a classroom atmosphere that can develop students' critical thinking skills (Silins & Mulford, 2002). The creation of a challenging classroom atmosphere is of course closely related to the teaching method chosen by the teacher. Discussion methods, problem-based learning, project methods, and other innovative learning models have the potential to develop and train students' critical thinking in the learning process (Sanjani, 2020).

b) Teacher Performance in the Implementation of Learning

Based on the results of the interviews, shows that the teacher's performance in implementing learning can run well, this is proven by the existence of learning activities, teachers carry out classroom management and also carry out learning carried out online using WhatsApp as a learning medium. In implementing learning in terms of the readiness of teaching materials, teachers are always ready to prepare teaching materials to be delivered to students, teaching materials are compiled and prepared based on the knowledge and knowledge of teachers for each subject. Apart from the readiness of teaching materials, the use of learning methods is an important thing that teachers use in learning activities.

The teachers always carry out classroom management in learning activities, as seen from the warnings given to students who are not serious about participating in learning activities. The learning media used in learning activities uses Watshaap, the use of this media is for several basic reasons, that is, all teachers and students are used to using this application, meaning that from an operational point of view, everyone can do it well. The second application is considered the simplest but can convey material in the form of text, audio, and video so even though this application is simple it can cover all forms of material delivered by teachers to students.

The position of the teacher in the learning process activities is also very strategic in explaining a lesson. Because the teacher will determine the depth and breadth of the subject matter (Sodik, 2019). The teacher also sorts and selects the lesson material that will be presented to students. Each student has different abilities, therefore the results will be different (Mastra, 2019). However, from the direction of a teacher and the seriousness of students in learning, students will find points of similarity in abilities (Andriani et al., 2021). Teachers who have good performance will affect their students, so teachers must always see their shortcomings to improve these deficiencies.

c) Teacher Performance in Learning Evaluation

Evaluation is always carried out by teachers after assessing the results of learning activities. Hal This is following the results of research which show that teachers always carry out learning evaluations intending to find out the level of understanding of students in receiving and absorbing teaching material delivered by teachers. Evaluation is also intended as material for improvement in subsequent learning activities. The school always emphasizes that every teacher participates in carrying out joint evaluations to find out the achievements set by the school. During learning activities, if the implementation can be done well then usually the results of the evaluation are also good. This is based on the results of the student's scores in learning activities. Effective and conducive learning activities will be easily accepted and absorbed by students, which in turn students will understand the material being taught.

The evaluation of learning activities is carried out as a form of school responsibility towards fulfilling the rights of students and parents of students in obtaining teaching and knowledge from teachers. Learning evaluation is carried out every three months after the assessment of the results of the midterm exam or after the assessment of the results of the final semester exam. Evaluation meetings are carried out by the whole school together with the ranks of the teachers to ensure that each subject teacher has material to be used as a joint evaluation. Implementation of any activity without evaluation will not know the weaknesses and strengths of the activities that have been carried out, so in learning activities, the implementation of learning evaluation is important to do to improve further learning.

Performance evaluation is the process of conducting formally documented appraisals of appraised performance to assess invaluable performance by periodically comparing performance standards to assist human resource management decision-making. Nawawi (2006) argues that performance evaluation is also interpreted as an activity to measure/assess the implementation of work to determine the success or failure of a job in carrying out their duties and responsibilities in their respective work fields. Performance evaluation is a process of assessing a person's work in carrying out his work according to his assigned responsibilities by comparing performance standards according to predetermined criteria (Oktriany et al., 2018). The results of the evaluation can be used as input to carry out better activities in the future.

3.1.3 Teacher's Efforts in Improving Pedagogic Competence

From the results of research conducted by researchers that the efforts made to improve teacher pedagogic competence are in various ways such as providing motivation, guidance, training in preparing Learning Implementation Plans (RPP) and administration as well as providing rewards in the form of allowances or gifts to teachers in carrying out duties and obligations. These efforts are made so that teachers are motivated in developing themselves to improve the competency standards possessed by teachers. Guidance and training are concrete ways to increase the capacity and quality of teachers, both in the form of scientific development training and technical training. With various efforts and methods, existing teachers will have qualified pedagogic competencies according to their respective scientific fields. Qualified teachers will have an impact on learning outcomes for students who are also qualified.

Another effort made by the school to improve teacher pedagogic competence is to provide rewards to teachers for carrying out their obligations and advancing the school. This effort is indeed commonly carried out by many schools, but not a few of the teachers do not heed it for various reasons, including being lazy to compete, being happy to be in a comfort zone, and so on. The purpose and objective of giving gifts or allowances is not solely to get these prizes or allowances but teachers will be motivated who will later get used to a good work culture and a high commitment to advancing the school. In general, the efforts made by schools to improve pedagogic competence are quite good.

In improving teacher pedagogic competence, the role of a leader is also needed to be able to generate teacher mo-tivation and encouragement to achieve common goals (Musadad, 2010). Understand students' mindsets and develop their learning (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014). External support will help improve teacher pedagogic competence, such as support from the government or the education office by conducting training, financial assistance, mentoring, and evaluation.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implication

The implications of this study highlight the importance of developing teachers' pedagogical competence to enhance the quality of teaching and student outcomes. The findings contribute to educational policies, particularly in improving teacher training and professional development programs. By understanding key aspects of pedagogical competence, such as efforts to improve student abilities, effective performance during the learning process, and strategic approaches to developing pedagogical skills, this study can serve as a foundation for designing more effective policies to enhance teacher professionalism in the future.

4.1 Research Contribution

This study makes significant theoretical and practical contributions to the field of education. Theoretically, it enhances the understanding of teacher professionalism, specifically in the context of pedagogical competence, by identifying key aspects that contribute to effective teaching and student development. Practically, it provides actionable insights into how teachers can improve their pedagogical skills and strategies to enhance the learning process. The findings offer valuable reference points for policymakers, school administrators, and educators to refine training programs and implement policies aimed at fostering teacher professionalism

5. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Limitations

The limitations of this study are found in several aspects. First, the research was conducted only at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung, so the findings may not be fully generalizable to other schools with different contexts. Second, the data collected through observations, interviews, and documentation may be influenced by the subjectivity of both the researcher and the respondents. Additionally, the study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach, which focuses on in-depth understanding but does not examine causal relationships between the variables studied. Lastly, time and resource constraints limited the scope of the research, which was conducted over a single academic year and did not account for external factors that may influence teachers' pedagogical competence

5.2 Recommendation for Future Research

For future research, it is recommended to expand the study to include a larger and more diverse sample of schools to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the

long-term effects of teacher pedagogical competence development on student outcomes. Additionally, future research could explore the impact of external factors, such as school culture, community involvement, and policy changes, on teachers' pedagogical practices.

6. CONCLUSION

In order to improve teachers' pedagogical competence, one of the strategic steps that can be taken by the school is to provide rewards to teachers in carrying out their obligations and advancing the school. This is in line with SMP Negeri 1 Kepung, where the pedagogical competence of teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung can be seen from the performance of teachers in learning activities. Pedagogical competence in learning activities such as mastering student characteristics, designing and compiling lesson plans, implementing learning and the principles of student personality development, assessing learning outcomes and evaluating the results of learning activities. Teacher competence is intended as an effort to improve the quality of learning and explore students' abilities to develop themselves.

The findings reveal that the performance of teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Kepung in preparing lesson plans (RPP), implementing learning activities and evaluating learning has gone well. Teachers understand what their main duties and functions are as a form of responsibility in improving the quality of learning and actualizing the competencies of teachers. Efforts made by schools in improving teachers' pedagogical competence by providing motivation, guidance, training in the preparation of lesson plans (RPP) and other administration and providing rewards in the form of allowances or gifts to teachers in carrying out their duties and obligations.

Suggestions and recommendations. Based on the research findings, suggestions and recommendations that researchers can offer are (1) school leaders are expected to provide facilities for teachers, namely by conducting training, coaching and awards to teachers so that later they can sustainably improve their performance in the learning process at school; (2) for further researchers can focus their research on the factors that shape and influence teacher performance in the learning process at school.

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Author Contribution Statement

. Each researcher works according to their full duties and responsibilities. Researchers guarantee the authenticity of the data that researchers have reported through this article. All data presented in this article is in accordance with the actual situation without any additions and manipulations from researchers

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declared that they have no competing interests with respect to the research, authorship, or publication that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this article.

Ethical Approval Statement

The author declares that this study was conducted in accordance with research ethics principles and has received ethical approval from the author's institution, including respect for participants' autonomy, confidentiality of data, and ensuring their safety and well-being, as outlined in the applicable research ethics guidelines.

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