

Enhancing Students' Learning Interest Through Teachers' Professional Competence

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Abstract

This research aims to determine the role of teachers' professional competencies in stimulating students' interest in learning. This research used a descriptive qualitative method. The study population was teachers and students in grades 4, 5, and 6 of SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar. A proportional random sampling technique was used to determine 15% of the total population as the sample consisted of 3 teachers and 24 students. Data collection techniques were observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The data analysis technique used descriptive qualitative. The results showed that the teachers' professional competence in SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar is good, and they carry out the learning process well. This situation affects students' interest in learning. The results also indicated that the teachers' professional competence in elementary school is excellent, and students at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar have a very high learning interest. Several factors support the teachers' professional competencies include students' condition, school facilities, and infrastructure.

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INTRODUCTION

Education has an impact on the progress of a nation, meaning that the greater the number of people who pursue higher education, the greater the contribution of thought to the nation. The perpetrators of the role of education are none other than teachers and lecturers, where Indonesia has a teacher higher education that produces graduates to become teaching staff, transferring the knowledge gained to students. Thus, teachers in carrying out their duties must have professional competencies and attitudes to be taught to students (Illahi, 2020; Jahidi, 2017; Nur & Fatonah, 2022).

Law of the Republic of Indonesia No.14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers states that the position of teachers as professionals serves to improve the dignity of teachers and

their role as learning agents and improve the quality of national education. Professionals are jobs or activities carried out by a person and become a source of life income that requires expertise or skills that meet certain qualities or norms and require professional education.

Teachers are educators who are professionals in their fields, proven by academic abilities in the form of certificates or teaching certificates (Boyd et al., 2007; Nurtanto, 2016). Qualifications are static, meaning that recognition of a person's academic ability as evidenced by the provision of a diploma or certificate does not change as far as the appropriate academic degree is concerned. It is proven that by proving a diploma or teaching certificate, it is considered to have mastered the competencies as a teacher. To become a professional teacher, teachers must have the authority of teacher quality and professionalism as their work ethic and make it the basis for behavioral orientation in their professional duties so that, a professional teacher is in accordance with the profession obtained and teaches the competencies possessed (Illahi, 2020; Nurtanto, 2016).

The number of universities that produce professional graduates of a teacher, not all of them have the ability to be professional but only a diploma. professional teacher have different attitudes from unprofessional people even though they are in the same job or say they are in the same workspace (Fahdini et al., 2014). This will distinguish professional teachers with only a diploma or professional teachers with skills and proficiency as teachers. Professional teacher competence always strives to improve the quality of teachers in increasing student interest in learning.

Previous studies have examined how teaching methods influence student engagement (Christanty & Cendana, 2021; Fira et al., 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2024). However, limited research has focused specifically on the professional competencies of elementary school teachers in rural areas like SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar. This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing how teacher professionalism directly impacts students' learning interest in an elementary school setting.

While many studies have explored teacher competencies, research focusing on their direct influence on student interest at the elementary level in Indonesia remains scarce. This study specifically examines how teacher professional competence at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar enhances students' enthusiasm for learning, filling a gap in research on rural elementary education (Wahyuni & Haryanti, 2024). Through these observations, it can be said that teachers at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar are said to be successful in developing student education because so far the teacher has been able to actively involve students, both physically, mentally and socially in the learning process. The professional competence of teachers at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar has an important role in the successful implementation of education. Thus it can be said that the professional competence of teachers in the learning process is able to change the behavior of students towards the better.

METHOD

This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach, aiming to describe the value of variables independently without making comparisons or establishing relationships with other variables. The data collected consists of qualitative data obtained through observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. The data analysis is conducted descriptively to illustrate the role of teachers' professional competence in enhancing students' learning interest at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar.

This study is divided into four main stages. The first stage is planning, which includes analyzing the standards of facilities and infrastructure, preparing the research design, and determining the research location. The second stage is implementation, where data collection is conducted through interviews, observations, and distributing questionnaires to teachers and students. The third stage involves data analysis, which is carried out after conducting observations, interviews, and administering questionnaires to teachers of grades 4, 5, and 6, as well as students from the same grades. The final stage is evaluation, where the analyzed data is reviewed to identify the role of teachers' professional competence in increasing students' learning interest and the supporting and inhibiting factors.

This study was conducted at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar, selected as the research location to obtain relevant data. The research population consists of all students and teachers at the school, totaling 161 students and three teachers from grades 4, 5, and 6. The research sample was determined using proportional random sampling, as the population consists of elements that are not homogeneous and proportionally stratified. Based on this technique, 15% of the total population was selected, resulting in 27 samples, consisting of three teachers from grades 4, 5, and 6, and 24 students from the same grades (eight students per class).

This study utilizes two main types of data: primary and secondary data. Primary data is directly obtained from observations, interviews, and questionnaires administered to teachers and students, while secondary data comes from school documents, such as the school profile, vision and mission, and the number of teachers and students.

Data collection techniques in this study include observation, interviews, documentation, and questionnaires. Observations were conducted to directly examine school conditions, teachers' and students' preparedness in learning activities, as well as supporting facilities and infrastructure. Interviews were carried out with the principal, teachers, and students using interview guidelines designed based on indicators of teachers' professional competence. Documentation was used to collect existing school data, such as student numbers and school profiles. The questionnaire served as the primary instrument for measuring indicators of teachers' professional competence and students' learning interest, using a four-option scale: Always, Often, Sometimes, and Never.

The collected data was analyzed using a descriptive qualitative approach, with each response scored based on the following scale Always = 4, Often = 3, Sometimes = 2, and Never = 1. The results were classified into four categories: very low (0-25%), medium (26-50%), high (51-75%), and very high (76-100%). The data analysis process involved calculating questionnaire scores, categorizing the data, and interpreting the findings based on field observations to ensure the scientific validity of the research results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research on the role of teachers' professional competence in arousing students' interest in learning at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar, it is assessed that teachers are able to master learning techniques and learning materials broadly and deeply and teachers are able to guide students to understand the content of the material they teach so that in learning activities they can arouse students' interest in the learning process.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of professional competence of teachers in class 4 based on indicators. The following is a table 1 of the role of professional competence of class 4 teachers based on indicators.

Table 1. The role of professional competence of class 4 teachers based on indicators

No	Indicator	Item	Score	Classification
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15	93,75	Very High
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	23	95,83	Very High
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	15	93,75	Very High
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	14	87,5	Very High
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	19	95	Very High

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of professional competence of teachers in class 4 as a whole. The following is a table 2 of the role of professional competence of class 4 teachers as a whole.

Table 2. The overall role of class 4 teachers' professional competence

No	Indicator	Item
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	23
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	15
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	14
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	19
Total		86
Score		$\text{Score} = \frac{86}{23 \times 4} \times 100$ $= 93,47$
Classification		Very high

Based on the results of managing the questionnaire data given to teachers regarding the professional competence of class 4 teachers at SD Inpres Kasimbar, the results show that the professional competence is classified as very high. This is due to the ability of class 4 teachers at SD Inpres Kasimbar in developing their professional competence during the learning process. This result is reflected in the questionnaire given by the researcher, which has been prepared in accordance with the assessment indicators. From the calculation of questionnaire data, a value of 93.47 was obtained, which is included in the very high category.

In addition, the results of an interview with the fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Tasbiha, S.Pd., showed that a professional teacher must have good professional competence to carry out his duties as an educator and student guide. According to her, some steps that can be taken to arouse students' interest in learning include: conducting literacy activities for 15 minutes to increase interest in reading, utilizing learning media, and giving awards to students who successfully answer questions well.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of teacher professional competence in class 5 based on indicators. The following is a table 3 of the role of professional competence of class 5 teachers based on indicators.

Table 5. The role of professional competence of class 5 teachers based on indicators

No	Indicator	Item	Score	Classification
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15	93,75	Very high
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	24	100	Very high
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	14	87,5	Very high
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	14	87,5	Very high
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	13	65	High

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of teacher professional competence in class V as a whole. The following is a table of the role of the professional competence of the fifth grade teacher as a whole.

Tabel 5. The role of professional competence of class V teachers as a whole

No	Indicator	Item
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	24
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	14
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	14
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	13
Total		80
Score		$\text{Score} = \frac{80}{23 \times 4} \times 100$ $= 86,97$
Classification		Very high

Based on the results of data management on teacher questionnaires regarding the professional competence of fifth grade teachers at SD Inpres Kasimbar can be stated as very high. This is because teachers in class 5 of SD Inpres Kasimbar develop their professional competence in the learning process, it can be seen in the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers in accordance with the assessment indicators. From the results of the calculation of the questionnaire data given, a value of 86.97 was obtained and can be classified as very high. Based on the results

of interviews conducted by researchers to a fifth grade teacher named Mrs. Saripta S. Beli A. Ma. pd who stated that with professional competence, a teacher can develop his knowledge to educate students. The steps that must be taken in arousing students' interest in learning are making the atmosphere in the classroom excited, making interesting props and giving praise or prizes to students who are active in receiving the material being taught.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of teachers' professional competence in class 6 based on indicators. The following is a table 5 of the role of professional competence of class 6 teachers based on indicators.

Table 5. The role of professional competence of class VI teachers based on indicators

No	Indicator	Item	Score	Classification
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15	93,75	Very high
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	23	95,83	Very high
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	15	93,75	Very high
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	16	100	Very high
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	19	95	Very high

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to teachers about the role of the professional competence of teachers in class 6 as a whole. The following is a table 6 of the role of the professional competence of class 6 teachers as a whole.

Table 6. The role of professional competence of class VI teachers as a whole

No	Indicator	Item
1.	Mastering the subject matter taught	15
2.	Mastering the competency standards and basic competencies of the subjects taught	23
3.	Developing learning materials creatively	15
4.	Develop professionalism in a sustainable manner by taking reflective action	16
5.	Utilizing information and communication technology to develop themselves	19
Total		88
Score		Skor = $\frac{88}{23 \times 4} \times 100$ = 95,65
Classification		Sangat Tinggi

Based on the results of questionnaire data management regarding the professional competence of class VI teachers at SD Inpres Kasimbar, it is known that the level of professional competence of these teachers is classified as very high. This can be seen from the results of the questionnaire given by the researcher to the teacher, which has been compiled based on relevant assessment indicators. From the results of calculating the questionnaire data, a value of 95.65 was obtained, which is included in the very high category.

The results of an interview with a class 6 teacher, Mr. Ambo Tuwo, S.Pd.Gr., also corroborate these findings. He stated that professional competence is very important for a teacher, especially because teachers must have the ability to master the material to be taught or delivered

to students. Some steps that can be taken to arouse students' interest in learning, according to him, include creating a pleasant classroom atmosphere and using interesting learning media.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about student interest in learning in class 4 based on indicators. The following is a table 7 of interest in learning class 4 students based on indicators.

Table 7. Learning interest of class 4 students based on indicators

No	Indicator	Average	Score	Classification
1.	Feeling of pleasure	15,5	96,88	Very high
2.	Feeling of interest	18	75	High
3.	Attentive	15	93,75	Very high
4.	Positive attitude	6,63	82,8	Very high
5.	Needs fulfilled	7,25	90,63	Very high
6.	Tenacious in facing difficulties	9,75	60,94	High
7.	Independent in learning	5,57	71,88	High

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about students' interest in learning in class 4 as a whole. The following is a table 8 of learning interest of class 4 students as a whole.

Table 8. Overall learning interest of class 4 students

No	Student's name	Student interest score	Classification
1.	RA	84,38	Very high
2.	A	80,21	Very high
3.	V	76,04	Very high
4.	MS	84,38	Very high
5.	A	81,25	Very high
6.	A	80,21	Very high
7.	S	81,25	Very high
8.	MG	81,25	Very high

Based on the results of questionnaire data management regarding the learning interest of class 4 students, consisting of 8 students at SD Inpres Kasimbar, it is known that students' learning interest is in a very high category. This can be seen from the results of the questionnaire given by the researcher to students, which has been compiled based on relevant assessment indicators. The results of an interview with one of the fourth grade students, Miftahul Syahda, revealed that in the learning process, teachers often relate the subject matter to everyday life and use learning media. This step was taken by the teacher to increase students' interest in learning.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about student interest in learning in class 5 based on indicators. The following is a table 9 of class V students' interest in learning based on indicators.

Table 9. Learning interest of class 4 students based on indicators

No	Indicator	Average	Score	Classification
1.	Feeling of pleasure	15,13	94,56	Very high
2.	Feeling of interest	20,25	84,38	Very high
3.	Attentive	15,63	97,69	Very high
4.	Positive attitude	6,75	84,38	Very high
5.	Needs fulfilled	7,75	96,88	Very high
6.	Tenacious in facing difficulties	11,38	71,13	High
7.	Independent in learning	6,63	82,88	Very high

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about students' overall interest in learning in class 5. The following is a table 10 of overall learning interest of class V students.

Table 10. Overall learning interest of class V students

No	Student's name	Student interest score	Classification
1.	PU	89,58	Very high
2.	R	87,5	Very high
3.	MU	86,46	Very high
4.	IR	88,54	Very high
5.	FAIN	83,33	Very high
6.	SA	86,46	Very high
7.	WM	90,63	Very high
8.	MF	83,33	Very high

Based on the results of managing questionnaire data regarding the learning interest of class 5 students consisting of 8 students at SD Inpres Kasimbar, it is known that students' learning interest is in the very high category. This is because class 5 students of SD Inpres Kasimbar have a high interest in learning in the learning process, as seen in the questionnaire given by the researcher, which is compiled based on relevant assessment indicators. The results of an interview with one of the fifth grade students, Putri Utami, stated that in the learning process, the teacher relates the subject matter to everyday life and uses learning media. This effort was made by the teacher to increase students' interest in learning.

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about student interest in learning in class 6 based on indicators. The following is a table 11 of class 6 students' interest in learning based on indicators.

Table 11. Learning interest of class 6 students based on indicators

No	Indicator	Average	Score	Classification
1.	Feeling of pleasure	15,13	94,56	Very high
2.	Feeling of interest	20,25	84,38	Very high
3.	Attentive	15,63	97,69	Very high
4.	Positive attitude	6,75	84,38	Very high
5.	Needs fulfilled	7,75	96,88	Very high
6.	Tenacious in facing difficulties	11,38	71,13	High
7.	Independent in learning	6,63	82,88	Very high

Based on the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students about students' interest in learning in class 6 as a whole. The following is a table 12 of learning interest of class 6 students as a whole.

Table 12. Overall learning interest of class VI students.

No	Student's name	Student score	interest	Classification
1.	KP	82,29		Very high
2.	M	80,21		Very high
3.	I	80,21		Very high
4.	RO	76,04		Very high
5.	RO	81,25		Very high
6.	AD	85,41		Very high
7.	EA	76,04		Very high
8.	A	83,33		Very high

Based on the results of managing questionnaire data regarding the learning interest of class 6 students at SD Inpres Kasimbar, it is known that students' learning interest is in a very high category. This can be seen from the results of the questionnaire given by researchers to students, which are arranged in accordance with relevant assessment indicators. The results of an interview with one of the 6 grade students, Monalisa, stated that in the learning process in class, the teacher relates the subject matter to everyday life and uses learning media. This effort was made by the teacher to increase students' interest in learning.

Based on the research conducted, the results show that the role of teachers' professional competence can stimulate students' learning interest at SD Inpres Kasimbar. This is because teachers' professional competence significantly influences students' learning interest (Kunter et al., 2013; Marlina et al., 2022; Mulang, 2021; Mustakim & Linda, 2022). Teachers demonstrate mastery of subject matter, competency standards, and basic competencies, develop materials creatively, engage in reflective practices, and utilize information and communication technology in the learning process. These efforts stimulate students' learning interest, as evidenced by their enthusiasm in paying attention to lessons and actively participating in practice tasks provided during the learning process (Wu et al., 2022). The role of teachers' professional competence in stimulating students' learning interest at SD Inpres Kasimbar falls into the "very high" category

for both teacher competence and student learning interest in Grades 4, 5, and 6. This is reflected in the data collected through questionnaires distributed to both teachers and students.

Based on the questionnaire data regarding teachers' professional competence and students' learning interest in Class 4 at SD Inpres Kasimbar, the results are categorized as "very high." This is because teachers in Class 4 actively develop their professional competence to stimulate students' interest in the learning process (Wahyudi, 2023). This is evident from the questionnaire responses where teachers interpret relevant materials in accordance with the subjects they teach, resulting in students' heightened attention to the material delivered. Teachers also demonstrate mastery of competency standards, basic competencies, and learning objectives, which encourages students to focus on the teacher's explanations (Alan & Güven, 2022).

Regarding indicators of students' feelings of interest, perseverance in facing difficulties, and independence in learning, the results remain high. However, teachers need to creatively organize materials by utilizing technology appropriate to students' developmental stages. For example, using projectors to display images or videos as learning media and engaging in reflective practices during the learning process can further enhance students' learning interest in Class 4 at SD Inpres Kasimbar.

Based on the questionnaire data regarding teachers' professional competence and students' learning interest in Class V at SD Inpres Kasimbar, the results are also categorized as "very high." This is because teachers in Class V actively develop their professional competence to stimulate students' learning interest. The questionnaire responses indicate that teachers interpret relevant materials effectively, ensuring that students consistently pay attention during lessons. Teachers' understanding of competency standards, basic competencies, and learning objectives further supports this process (Fira et al., 2024).

Regarding the use of technology, while teachers' responses remain "high," they need to continue improving their technological skills to enhance students' learning interest further. For indicators of perseverance in facing challenges during learning, students in Class V scored high. Therefore, teachers must engage in reflective practices to ensure that students remain resilient and do not easily give up during the learning process.

Based on the questionnaire data regarding teachers' professional competence and students' learning interest in Class VI at SD Inpres Kasimbar, the results are categorized as "very high." Teachers in Class VI develop their professional competence by interpreting relevant materials according to the subjects they teach, which effectively captures students' attention. Teachers demonstrate mastery of competency standards, basic competencies, and learning objectives, engage in reflective practices, and utilize available technology, making the learning process more engaging for students. However, for indicators of perseverance in facing challenges, students in Class VI scored high. Teachers, therefore, need to engage in reflective practices to ensure that students remain motivated and do not easily give up during learning (Wahyudi, 2023).

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that the role of teachers' professional competence significantly stimulates students' learning interest. This is supported by the questionnaire data provided to both teachers and students, which highlights the importance of teachers mastering subject matter, competency standards, basic competencies, learning objectives, and developing creative materials. Teachers must also engage in reflective practices and utilize information and communication technology. Consequently, the role of teachers' professional

competence effectively stimulates students' learning interest by fostering feelings of enjoyment, attention, and curiosity, as well as fulfilling their need for acquiring new knowledge. This enables students to remain resilient, independent, and motivated in their learning process (Kunter et al., 2013; Marlina et al., 2022; Mustakim & Linda, 2022; Wu et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study titled "The Role of Teacher Professional Competence in Stimulating Student Learning Interest at SD Inpres 3 Kasimbar," it can be concluded that the role of teacher professional competence plays a significant part in stimulating students' learning interest. This conclusion aligns with the questionnaires given to both teachers and students. It emphasizes that teachers must master the subject matter to be taught, possess a deep understanding of competency standards, basic competencies, and learning objectives, creatively develop learning materials, engage in reflective practices, and make use of information technology. The role of teacher professional competence helps ignite students' learning interest by fostering feelings of enjoyment, curiosity, attentiveness, and meeting their need for acquiring new knowledge. As a result, students become more resilient and independent in their learning process. The professional competence of teachers in the learning process is also supported by several factors, including the students' characteristics and the availability of school facilities and infrastructure.

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