



Contents lists available at Journal Global Econedu
Journal of Educational and Learning Studies
ISSN: 2655-2760 (Print) ISSN: 2655-2779 (Electronic)
Journal homepage: <http://jurnal.globaleconedu.org/index.php/jels>



Training quality and work motivation predict vocational high school teacher performance effectively

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Apr 19th, 2026
Revised May 19th, 2026
Accepted Jun 30th, 2026

Keyword:

Teacher performance,
Training quality,
Work motivation,
PLS-SEM

ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of Training Quality and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance among vocational high school teachers. A quantitative explanatory survey was conducted involving all 31 teachers at SMKN 7 Sijunjung using a census sampling technique. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.1.0.8. The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity. Training Quality had the strongest positive effect on Teacher Performance ($\beta = 0.646$, $p < 0.001$), followed by Work Motivation ($\beta = 0.416$, $p < 0.001$). Together, both variables explained 64.9% of the variance in Teacher Performance ($R^2 = 0.649$). Enhancing teacher performance requires integrating high-quality professional development with strategies that strengthen teachers' work motivation.



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Introduction

Teacher performance is widely recognized as one of the most important determinants of educational quality because it directly influences students' learning experiences, academic achievement, and the overall effectiveness of schools (Nugroho et al., 2023; Wahyudi et al., 2022). Within vocational education, maintaining high teacher performance has become increasingly challenging due to rapid technological advancement, industrial transformation, curriculum reform, and the growing demand for graduates equipped with industry-relevant competencies. Consequently, vocational teachers are required not only to possess strong pedagogical competence but also to continuously update their professional knowledge and practical skills to remain aligned with evolving workplace expectations. Previous studies have identified professional development, work motivation, leadership, organizational support, and school climate as important determinants of teacher performance (Habibi et al., 2025; Kholifah et al., 2024). However, empirical evidence explaining how competency development and motivational factors jointly contribute to teacher performance in vocational education remains limited, indicating the need for a more integrated analytical perspective.

Recent studies have consistently reported that high-quality professional development improves instructional competence, teaching effectiveness, and pedagogical innovation by providing relevant learning content, competent instructors, practical learning activities, and opportunities for professional reflection (Amini et al., 2022; Lede et al., 2024). Likewise, teachers with stronger work motivation tend to demonstrate greater commitment, instructional engagement, creativity, and persistence in performing their professional responsibilities (Rahmah et al., 2022; Siswanto et al., 2023). Although these findings generally support the

positive influence of Training Quality and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance, previous studies have predominantly examined these variables independently, offering limited understanding of their relative contributions within a single explanatory framework. This limitation leaves an important gap in explaining which factor provides the greater contribution to improving teacher performance in vocational schools.

Despite the expanding literature, several substantive and methodological gaps remain. Substantively, previous research has rarely integrated Training Quality and Work Motivation into a unified structural model, particularly within the context of vocational high schools that require teachers to simultaneously master pedagogical competence and continuously adapt to industrial and technological developments (Anshori et al., 2023; Istanti et al., 2020; Nugraha et al., 2026). Methodologically, many earlier studies relied on conventional regression techniques that primarily estimate direct relationships without comprehensively evaluating measurement quality or latent construct validity. Consequently, the relative contribution of Training Quality and Work Motivation to Teacher Performance has not been examined using a structural modeling approach capable of simultaneously assessing construct validity and causal relationships. Addressing these limitations is essential to produce stronger empirical evidence and support evidence-based policies for improving teacher performance in vocational education (Jihaduddin et al., 2020; Pratiwi & Warlizasusi, 2023; Suparno et al., 2019; Virgana & Lapasau, 2024).

To address these gaps, the present study investigates the effects of Training Quality and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance among teachers at SMKN 7 Sijunjung using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Beyond introducing a different analytical technique, this study offers a conceptual contribution by integrating competency development and motivational perspectives into a single structural framework, allowing the relative contribution of each predictor to be evaluated simultaneously. In addition, this research emphasizes the quality of professional training rather than merely participation in training activities, providing a more comprehensive explanation of how professional development contributes to improving teacher performance (Andriani et al., 2018; Suriagiri et al., 2022; Suwiyadi, 2017). The use of PLS-SEM also strengthens the analysis by ensuring adequate evaluation of both the measurement model and structural relationships, particularly for reflective constructs and relatively small samples.

This study contributes to the literature in several. First, it provides a more comprehensive explanation of Teacher Performance by integrating Training Quality and Work Motivation within a single structural model and identifying their relative influence on teacher performance. Second, it extends empirical evidence from the underexplored context of Indonesian vocational high schools, where teachers face distinctive challenges associated with technological and industrial change. Third, the findings enrich the theoretical understanding of how competency development and work motivation complement each other in improving teacher performance while offering practical guidance for school leaders and policymakers to design professional development programs that simultaneously enhance teacher competence and strengthen work motivation. This integrated perspective represents the principal contribution of the present study to both educational management research and vocational education practice (Hutabarat, 2015; Mintrop & Ordenes, 2017).

Method

This study employed a quantitative approach using an explanatory survey design to examine the effects of Training Quality and Work Motivation on Teacher Performance among vocational high school teachers. The research was conducted at SMKN 7 Sijunjung, West Sumatra, Indonesia, during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The study involved all 31 active teachers using a census (total sampling) technique because the target population was relatively small and fully accessible, allowing the entire population to be represented without sampling bias. The respondents consisted of teachers with different educational backgrounds, employment statuses, and professional training experiences. Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was pilot-tested with 30 teachers from another vocational high school with similar institutional characteristics to evaluate item quality while avoiding data contamination between the pilot and the main study.

The research instrument consisted of a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The measurement indicators were adapted from established studies on teacher performance, professional training, and work motivation and were modified to suit the context of Indonesian vocational education. Training Quality was initially measured using 28 indicators representing six dimensions: training content, training objectives, training methods, instructor competence, training facilities, and training benefits. Work Motivation comprised 24 indicators covering responsibility, work achievement, self-development, independence, and perseverance, while Teacher Performance consisted of 14 indicators representing instructional planning, instructional implementation, and assessment and evaluation. The pilot study confirmed excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's Alpha: Training Quality = 0.980, Work

Motivation = 0.981, and Teacher Performance = 0.939). Following measurement model evaluation, the final model retained 52 valid indicators consisting of 23 indicators for Training Quality, 19 indicators for Work Motivation, and 10 indicators for Teacher Performance.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 4.1.0.8. PLS-SEM was selected because it is appropriate for explanatory and predictive studies involving relatively small sample sizes, reflective measurement models, and data that do not require multivariate normality assumptions. The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the measurement model was evaluated using indicator loadings (>0.70), Average Variance Extracted (AVE >0.50), Composite Reliability (CR >0.70), Cronbach's Alpha (>0.70), and discriminant validity based on the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT <0.85). Second, the structural model was assessed by examining multicollinearity using Variance Inflation Factor (VIF <5.00), path coefficients through bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples, coefficients of determination (R^2), effect sizes (f^2), and model fit using the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR <0.08). Statistical significance was determined at the 95% confidence level using a threshold of $p < 0.05$.

Results and Discussions

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to examine the relationships between Training Quality, Work Motivation, and Teacher Performance among teachers at SMKN 7 Sijunjung. The results are presented sequentially, beginning with respondent characteristics and descriptive statistics, followed by the evaluation of the measurement model and structural model. Prior to hypothesis testing, the measurement model was refined through a two-stage outer model purification process to ensure that all retained indicators satisfied the recommended reliability and validity criteria for PLS-SEM.

Respondent Characteristics

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents (N = 31)

Characteristic	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	21	67.7
	Male	10	32.3
Education	Bachelor (S1/DIV)	27	87.1
	Master (S2)	4	12.9
Employment Status	PPPK	14	45.2
	Civil Servant	10	32.3
	Non-Civil Servant	7	22.6
Training Experience	<5 training programs	13	41.9
	5–10 training programs	11	35.5
	>10 training programs	7	22.6

All 31 teachers at SMKN 7 Sijunjung participated in the study through a census sampling approach. Female teachers constituted the majority of respondents (67.7%), while most participants held a bachelor's degree (87.1%). PPPK teachers represented the largest employment group (45.2%), followed by civil servants (32.3%) and non-civil servant teachers (22.6%). In addition, 58.1% of respondents had attended at least five professional training programs, indicating sufficient experience to evaluate training quality and its relationship with teacher performance.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Final Indicators	TCR (%)	Category
Training Quality	23	90.32	Very Good
Work Motivation	19	89.46	Good
Teacher Performance	10	89.22	Good

Descriptive analysis indicated that all study variables were perceived positively by the respondents. Training Quality obtained the highest Total Respondent Achievement (TCR) score (90.32%), followed by Work Motivation (89.46%) and Teacher Performance (89.22%). These findings suggest that teachers generally perceived the quality of training programs, their work motivation, and their professional performance favorably, providing an appropriate basis for subsequent inferential analysis using PLS-SEM.

Measurement Model Assessment**Table 3.** Measurement Model Evaluation

Construct	Initial Indicators	Final Indicators	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Training Quality	28	23	0.978	0.980	0.677
Work Motivation	24	19	0.969	0.971	0.643
Teacher Performance	14	10	0.938	0.948	0.646

The measurement model was evaluated through a two-stage outer model purification process. Fourteen indicators were removed, reducing the total number of indicators from 66 to 52 while preserving all theoretical dimensions of the constructs. The final model demonstrated excellent internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.938 to 0.978, Composite Reliability ranged from 0.948 to 0.980, and AVE values ranged from 0.643 to 0.677, all exceeding the recommended thresholds for PLS-SEM measurement models.

Table 4. Indicator Reliability and Discriminant Validity

Construct	Loading Range	HTMT Criterion
Training Quality	0.725–0.913	<0.85
Work Motivation	0.687–0.872	<0.85
Teacher Performance	0.687–0.885	<0.85

All retained indicators demonstrated satisfactory reliability, with outer loadings ranging from 0.687 to 0.913. Although two indicators exhibited loadings slightly below 0.70, both remained statistically significant during bootstrapping and were retained to preserve theoretical representation without compromising construct validity. Furthermore, all HTMT values satisfied the recommended criterion (< 0.85), confirming adequate discriminant validity and indicating that each construct measured a distinct conceptual domain.

Structural Model Assessment**Table 5.** Structural Model Results

Path	β	t-value	p-value	95% CI	f^2	Decision
Training Quality to Teacher Performance	0.646	5.057	<0.001	0.344–0.826	1.175	Supported
Work Motivation to Teacher Performance	0.416	5.163	<0.001	0.299–0.611	0.488	Supported
Coefficient of Determination						
Teacher Performance (R^2)	0.649					
Adjusted R^2	0.624					

The structural model supported both proposed hypotheses. Training Quality had a positive and statistically significant effect on Teacher Performance ($\beta = 0.646$, $t = 5.057$, $p < 0.001$), representing the strongest predictor with a large effect size ($f^2 = 1.175$). Work Motivation also showed a positive and significant influence on Teacher Performance ($\beta = 0.416$, $t = 5.163$, $p < 0.001$), with a substantial effect size ($f^2 = 0.488$). The confidence intervals for both relationships excluded zero, confirming the robustness of the estimated effects. Moreover, the structural model explained 64.9% of the variance in Teacher Performance ($R^2 = 0.649$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.624$), indicating substantial explanatory power and suggesting that Training Quality and Work Motivation jointly contributed to explaining teacher performance.

The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity, indicating that the latent constructs adequately represented the theoretical concepts examined in this study. After the purification process, 52 indicators were retained while preserving all theoretical dimensions of Training Quality, Work Motivation, and Teacher Performance. The high values of Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, AVE, outer loadings, and HTMT confirm that the observed relationships among the variables were not substantially influenced by measurement error, thereby providing a reliable basis for interpreting the structural model. Consequently, the significant structural relationships identified in this study can be interpreted with greater confidence because the measurement quality met the recommended standards for PLS-SEM (Bektiarso et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2025; Sahidin et al., 2026).

The findings revealed that Training Quality was the strongest predictor of Teacher Performance ($\beta = 0.646$; $f^2 = 1.175$). This result indicates that improvements in the quality of professional training contribute more

substantially to teacher performance than motivational factors alone. In the context of vocational education, teachers are continuously required to update both pedagogical and technical competencies to keep pace with industrial and technological developments. Therefore, training that provides relevant content, competent instructors, practical learning experiences, and opportunities to apply newly acquired knowledge directly strengthens teachers' instructional performance. This finding is consistent with previous studies reporting that high-quality professional development improves instructional competence and teaching effectiveness (Andilah et al., 2024; Sulasminten, 2016; Suratman et al., 2020). However, the present study extends previous findings by demonstrating that the quality of training contributes more strongly than work motivation when both variables are evaluated simultaneously within a single structural model, emphasizing the strategic importance of competency-based professional development in vocational schools (Ingsih et al., 2021; Ratnasari et al., 2019; Utomo et al., 2025; Zubaidah et al., 2021).

Work Motivation also exerted a significant positive influence on Teacher Performance ($\beta = 0.416$; $f^2 = 0.488$), although its contribution was lower than that of Training Quality. This finding supports previous studies indicating that motivated teachers demonstrate stronger commitment, persistence, and engagement in instructional activities (Amtu et al., 2020; Nasution, 2018; Septiani et al., 2024). Nevertheless, unlike several earlier studies that identified motivation as the dominant predictor, the present findings suggest that vocational teachers rely more heavily on opportunities to strengthen professional competence because their instructional responsibilities require continuous adaptation to technological and industrial change. These results indicate that motivation functions as a supporting factor that encourages teachers to consistently apply the competencies acquired through professional development rather than replacing the need for high-quality training.

The structural model explained 64.9% of the variance in Teacher Performance ($R^2 = 0.649$), indicating substantial explanatory power. This result demonstrates that integrating Training Quality and Work Motivation provides a comprehensive explanation of teacher performance within vocational education. At the same time, the remaining 35.1% of unexplained variance suggests that other organizational and individual factors, such as leadership, organizational climate, teaching experience, digital competence, or job satisfaction, may also contribute to teacher performance. Therefore, this study not only confirms the importance of competency development and motivation but also enriches the theoretical understanding that teacher performance is influenced by the interaction of multiple organizational and personal factors rather than a single determinant (Arman et al., 2016; Layek & Koodamara, 2024; Wiyono et al., 2022).

The findings provide important implications for both educational practice and future research. School leaders and policymakers should prioritize professional development programs that emphasize training quality while simultaneously strengthening teachers' work motivation through supportive leadership, recognition systems, and opportunities for continuous professional growth. Such an integrated strategy is expected to generate greater improvements in teacher performance than implementing either approach independently. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted cautiously because the study involved only one vocational high school with a relatively small sample, limiting the generalizability of the results. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples, include additional organizational variables, and employ longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of teacher performance across different educational contexts (Fahmi et al., 2022; Phytanza & Burhaein, 2020; Podung et al., 2018; Seknun & Bugis, 2022).

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that both Training Quality and Work Motivation significantly influence Teacher Performance among teachers at SMKN 7 Sijunjung. Training Quality emerged as the strongest predictor, indicating that professional development programs characterized by relevant content, effective instructional methods, competent instructors, adequate facilities, and practical applicability contribute substantially to improving teacher performance. Work Motivation also positively affected teacher performance, confirming that motivated teachers are more likely to demonstrate greater commitment and effectiveness in carrying out their professional responsibilities. Collectively, these two factors explained a substantial proportion of the variance in teacher performance, highlighting the complementary roles of competency development and motivational support in enhancing teaching effectiveness. These findings suggest that improving teacher performance requires an integrated approach that combines high-quality professional development with strategies to strengthen teachers' work motivation. Future studies are encouraged to involve larger and more diverse samples, incorporate additional organizational and individual variables, and employ longitudinal or mixed-method designs to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors shaping teacher performance across different educational contexts.

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