

## **Utilization of Professional Allowances in Developing Teacher Professionalism at State Elementary School 9 Sembawa**

**M. Awaludin<sup>1</sup>, Edi Harapan<sup>2</sup>, Andi Rahman<sup>3</sup>**  
SD Negeri 9 Sembawa, Universitas PGRI Palembang  
[audin7059@gmail.com](mailto:audin7059@gmail.com)

Article History: Received on June 09, 2026, Revised on June 21, 2026, Published on June 28, 2026

### **Abstract:**

This study aimed to explore how teachers utilize the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG) to enhance their professional competencies at SD Negeri 9 Sembawa. A qualitative descriptive approach was employed involving the principal and certified teachers receiving the Teacher Professional Allowance as research informants selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation and analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that the Teacher Professional Allowance contributes significantly to strengthening teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies through participation in professional development activities, acquisition of learning resources, improvement of digital literacy, and instructional innovation. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of TPG utilization is influenced by leadership support, organizational culture, access to professional training, and teachers' individual motivation. This study contributes to educational management by demonstrating that professional allowances function not merely as financial incentives but also as strategic instruments for sustainable teacher professional development when supported by effective school management.

**Keywords:** *Teacher Professional Allowance; Teacher Professionalism; Teacher Competence; Elementary School; Educational Management; Teacher Professional Development.*

### **A. Introduction**

Education is one of the strategic sectors that plays a crucial role in the development of high-quality human resources. The success of educational implementation is greatly influenced by the quality of teachers as the primary actors in the teaching and learning process at schools. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering subject matter but also serve as educators, mentors, facilitators, and motivators who are accountable for the holistic development of students. Therefore, teacher professionalism is considered a key factor in improving educational quality and achieving learning objectives (Müller & Cook, 2024). Teacher professionalism reflects teachers' ability to perform their duties and responsibilities based on pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies established in national education standards. Professional teachers are characterized by their ability to manage learning effectively, engage in continuous self-development, and adapt to policy changes and advancements in educational technology (Avidov-Ungar,

2024).. Nevertheless, numerous studies indicate that teacher professionalism continues to face various challenges, including limited opportunities for competency development, low work motivation, excessive administrative workloads, and unequal access to professional training, particularly in rural areas (Bautista Jr., 2025).

As an effort to enhance teacher professionalism, the Indonesian government has implemented various policies, one of which is the provision of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG). The Teacher Professional Allowance is a form of recognition granted to teachers who have obtained teaching certification and fulfilled the requirements stipulated by applicable regulations (Indriati & Perrodin, 2022). This policy aims to improve teachers' welfare while encouraging better performance and professionalism in carrying out educational duties (Ati & Rosdiana, 2025). The allowance is equivalent to one month's basic salary and is expected to serve as a stimulus for teachers to continuously improve their competencies, instructional quality, and ongoing professional development (Rwigema, 2022).

Numerous studies have demonstrated that the Teacher Professional Allowance is associated with improvements in teacher performance and professionalism. Mislia et al. (2021) found that receiving the professional allowance contributed to greater discipline, responsibility, and quality in the execution of teachers' duties. Similarly, (Syam et al., 2025) reported that the Teacher Professional Allowance positively influences teacher professionalism through the enhancement of digital competencies and instructional innovation. Furthermore, Fadlani et al. (2025) revealed that the allowance significantly contributes to improved teacher performance by increasing work motivation and economic well-being.

Research on teacher professionalism has been widely conducted by previous scholars. Müller & Cook, (2024) explained that teacher professionalism is a multidimensional concept encompassing cognitive, ethical, social, and legal aspects of educational practice. Avidov-Ungar, (2024) emphasized the importance of continuous professional learning as a key factor in developing teacher professionalism. Bautista Jr., (2025) found that administrative support and collaborative working environments significantly influence the enhancement of teacher professionalism. Meanwhile, Rusdiana, *et al.* (2023) highlighted organizational communication, training opportunities, and workplace conditions as important factors affecting the quality of teacher professionalism.

Although previous studies have demonstrated that the Teacher Professional Allowance improves teacher performance and welfare, most have focused on measuring its statistical influence on teacher performance. Limited attention has been given to understanding how teachers strategically utilize the allowance to strengthen pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies within the context of rural elementary schools. Therefore, this study fills this gap by examining the actual utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances as a sustainable professional development strategy in an elementary school setting.

Other studies have shown that school leadership plays a crucial role in improving teacher professionalism and job performance (Herawati et al., 2022). (Putri & Azahra, 2023) found that work motivation positively affects teacher performance by increasing enthusiasm and fostering instructional innovation. Likewise, Mira et al., (2024) reported

that job satisfaction and workplace conditions significantly contribute to the enhancement of teacher professionalism and performance. On the other hand, Alam et al. (2021) explained that the rapid development of technology and digital learning requires teachers to continuously improve their professional competencies in order to adapt effectively to changes in the educational environment.

Although many studies have examined the influence of the Teacher Professional Allowance on teacher performance and professionalism, most have focused primarily on the statistical relationship between the allowance and teacher performance. Research specifically investigating how teachers utilize the Teacher Professional Allowance to foster and sustain their professional development, particularly in rural elementary schools, remains relatively limited. Furthermore, only a few studies have explored in depth how the allowance is used to support the improvement of pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies within the actual context of elementary school environments.

Based on these conditions, a research gap exists regarding the utilization of the Teacher Professional Allowance as an instrument for fostering teacher professionalism at the elementary school level. This study was conducted at SD Negeri 9 Sembawa to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers utilize the Teacher Professional Allowance to enhance their professionalism. The findings are expected to contribute to educational policy development, improve the management of educational human resources, and serve as a reference for schools in optimizing the utilization of the Teacher Professional Allowance to support sustainable improvements in educational quality.

## **B. Methods**

This study uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive qualitative method. This approach was chosen because it aims to gain a deep understanding of the use of the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG) in fostering teacher professionalism at SD Negeri 9 Sembawa. The study does not use experiments or simulations, but rather focuses on gathering empirical data through direct interaction with research subjects in a natural setting. The research location was SD Negeri 9 Sembawa, Banyuasin Regency, South Sumatra, Indonesia. The research subjects consisted of the principal and teachers who had received the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG). Informants were selected using a purposive sampling technique, namely selecting informants who were deemed to have knowledge and experience relevant to the research objectives (Himam & Anam, 2026).

The primary instrument in this study was the researcher (human instrument). Several research instruments were used to support data collection, including semi-structured interview guidelines, observation sheets, a digital voice recorder, a video camera, and school documents related to teacher certification, the use of the Teacher Professional Development Program (TPG), and teacher professional development activities.

The study involved the school principal and certified teachers receiving the Teacher Professional Allowance selected through purposive sampling because of their direct involvement in teacher professional development. Data trustworthiness was established through source triangulation, method triangulation, theory triangulation, prolonged

engagement, and member checking. Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion verification.

The research data consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews with the principal and teachers receiving the TPG, as well as observations of teachers' professional activities within the school environment (Nurdiniyya et al., 2025). Secondary data was obtained from official school documents, professional development activity reports, government regulations regarding Teacher Professional Allowances, scientific journals, reference books, and other supporting documents (Syuaib, 2023).

Data collection techniques are carried out through three main stages, namely:

1. Observation, Data collection in qualitative research can be carried out by researchers using several data collection techniques, namely observation (Jailani, 2023). According to Nasution in (Sugiyono, 2020) observation is a condition where direct observation is carried out by researchers to be better able to understand the context of the data in the overall social situation so that a holistic (comprehensive) view can be obtained.
2. Interviews are one technique that can be used to collect research data (Rivaldi et al., 2023). According to Esterberg (Sugiyono, 2020), an interview is a meeting between two people to exchange information and ideas through questions and answers, thereby contributing meaning to a particular topic. Interviews are used as a data collection technique when researchers want to conduct preliminary studies to identify research problems, or when researchers want to learn more in-depth information from respondents and the number of respondents is small. (Achjar et al., 2023).
3. Documentation According to Sugiyono, (2020), documentation is the collection of records of events that have occurred, whether in the form of writing, drawings/photographs, or monumental works by a person/institution. The documentation method is needed as a supporting method for obtaining data, because this documentation method can obtain historical data and other documents relevant to this research (Andrian Winata, 2025).

Data analysis uses the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña model, which consists of three stages, namely:

Stage 1: Data Reduction

- Select relevant data.
- Group data based on research themes.
- Simplify data from interviews, observations, and documentation.

Stage 2: Data Presentation

- Organize data in descriptive narrative form.
- Create data categorization matrices and tables.
- Display relationships between research findings.

Stage 3: Conclusion Drawing and Verification

- Identify research patterns and themes.
- Interpret data.
- Draw conclusions based on field verification results.

The validity of the data was tested using triangulation techniques consisting of source triangulation, method triangulation, theory triangulation, and researcher triangulation (Susanto & Jailani, 2023). Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from principals and teachers (Suparman et al., 2026). Method triangulation was conducted through a comparison of observations, interviews, and documentation. Theoretical triangulation was used to compare the research findings with relevant theories of teacher professionalism and work motivation.

The basic assumption of this research is that the Teacher Professional Allowance is a government policy instrument that can support the improvement of teacher professionalism if optimally utilized to develop pedagogical, professional, social, and personality competencies. The theoretical basis of this research refers to theories of teacher professionalism, work motivation theories, theories of human resource development in education, as well as policies on certification and the Teacher Professional Allowance in Indonesia.

### **C. Results and Discussion**

#### **1. Utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances in Improving Pedagogical Competence**

The research results show that teachers utilize the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG) to support the improvement of pedagogical competence through the procurement of learning tools, the purchase of learning resources, improving digital literacy, and participating in educational training and workshops. Teachers utilize a portion of the TPG funds to participate in competency development activities related to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum, differentiated learning, and diagnostic assessments.

These findings demonstrate that the TPG serves not only as a welfare supplement but also as a professional development tool that directly impacts the quality of learning. The results of this study align with those of (Syam et al., 2025), who stated that the Teacher Training and Development Program (TPG) encourages improved teacher competency through strengthening digital skills and learning innovation. These findings also support the opinion of (Avidov-Ungar, 2024) who explained that teacher professionalism develops through continuous professional learning and continuous individual capacity building.

Improved pedagogical competency is evident in teachers' ability to develop teaching modules, implement more varied learning strategies, and conduct more systematic learning evaluations. Thus, the use of TPG contributes to improving the quality of the learning process at SD Negeri 9 Sembawa.

#### **2. Utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances in Improving Professional Competence**

The research results show that teachers utilize the Teacher Training Program (TPG) to support their professional competency development through the purchase of reference books, learning technology devices, internet access, and participation in seminars and

professional training. This utilization provides teachers with opportunities to broaden their scientific knowledge and improve their ability to master learning materials.

This finding aligns with research by Fadlani et al. (2025), which found that the TPG contributes to improved teacher performance through increased work motivation and professional development. Furthermore, Müller & Cook, (2024) explain that teacher professionalism encompasses the mastery of knowledge, skills, and reflective abilities that are continuously developed through professional learning activities.

At Sembawa 9 Public Elementary School, teachers who received the TPG demonstrated improved skills in utilizing educational technology, developing learning media, and adapting teaching materials to student needs. This demonstrates that the TPG serves as an investment in human resources that supports the continuous improvement of teacher professional quality.

### **3. Utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances in Improving Social Competence**

Research has found that the TPG also impacts teachers' social competence. Improved well-being encourages teachers to participate more actively in school activities, teacher working groups (KKG), community activities, and various other professional forums. Improved social competence is reflected in teachers' ability to build effective communication with students, parents, colleagues, and the community surrounding the school. This finding supports research by Bautista Jr., (2025) which states that a collaborative work environment and positive professional relationships are important factors in building teacher professionalism. Furthermore, teachers demonstrate higher levels of participation in school activities and the development of professional learning communities. These conditions strengthen teachers' role as agents of change, functioning not only in the classroom but also in the broader social environment.

### **4. Utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances in Improving Personality Competence**

The research results show that the Teachers' Training Program (TPG) contributes to improving teachers' personal competencies by increasing motivation, responsibility, work discipline, and commitment to the profession. Teachers feel more valued for their profession, thus fostering a stronger drive to carry out their duties professionally. This finding aligns with Herzberg's motivation theory, which explains that financial rewards can increase job satisfaction and reduce job dissatisfaction. Mislia et al. (2021) also found that teachers receiving the TPG demonstrated improved discipline, responsibility, and the quality of their educational tasks.

At Sembawa 9 Public Elementary School, the improvement in personal competency was evident in teachers' punctuality in carrying out tasks, commitment to learning, and willingness to continuously improve their professional skills. This demonstrates that adequate welfare can strengthen teachers' integrity and work ethic.

### **5. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances**

The research results indicate that several factors support the effective utilization of the TPG, including high teacher motivation, principal support, a positive work culture, and access to training and educational technology. School organizational support is a crucial factor enabling teachers to optimally utilize the TPG for professional development. However, the study also identified several barriers, such as limited access to quality training, a lack of opportunities to participate in ongoing professional development activities, and family financial needs, which lead to some TPG funds being used for household expenses. These findings align with research by (Rusdiana, *et al.* 2023) which states that the work environment, organizational communication, and training opportunities significantly influence teacher professional development.

Overall, the research results indicate that the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG) makes a positive contribution to fostering teacher professionalism at Sembawa 9 Public Elementary School. The utilization of the TPG not only impacts economic welfare but also plays a role in supporting the development of teachers' pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. These findings reinforce the view that the TPG policy is a strategic government instrument for improving the quality of human resources in education.

These research findings reinforce the theory of teacher professionalism proposed by Müller & Cook, (2024), which asserts that professionalism develops through the integration of competencies, self-reflection, continuous learning, and institutional support. In the context of this research, the TPG is one form of institutional support capable of strengthening teacher motivation and professional capacity. However, the study also found that the effectiveness of TPG utilization is significantly influenced by individual teacher motivation, principal support, school organizational culture, and the availability of professional development programs. These findings align with research by Rusdiana, *et al.* (2023), which states that communication, training, leadership, and the work environment are key supporting factors in improving teacher professionalism. Overall, the research results indicate that appropriate and productive use of the Teacher Professional Allowance can be an effective strategy for improving teacher professionalism. Therefore, ongoing supervision, coaching, and mentoring are necessary to ensure the TPG is truly utilized to support the ongoing improvement of competency and educational quality.

Table 1. Summary of the Main Findings on Teacher Competency Development Through the Teacher Professional Allowance (TPG)

<b>Competency Aspect</b>	<b>Main Findings</b>
Pedagogical	TPG supports lesson planning, differentiated learning, digital literacy, and assessment improvement
Professional	Teachers purchase reference books, learning technology, attend seminars and training
Social	Increased participation in KKG, school collaboration, parent communication
Personality	Improved discipline, responsibility, motivation, and professional

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<b>Competency Aspect</b>	<b>Main Findings</b>
	commitment
Supporting Factors	Principal leadership, work culture, motivation, access to training
Inhibiting Factors	Limited training access, family financial needs, limited professional development opportunities

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The findings indicate that the effectiveness of Teacher Professional Allowances extends beyond improving teachers' economic welfare. Sustainable professional development depends on teachers' ability to transform financial incentives into continuous learning opportunities supported by school leadership, collaborative culture, and access to professional development programs. These findings reinforce educational management theories emphasizing that financial incentives produce meaningful professional improvement only when accompanied by institutional support and organizational commitment.

#### **D. Conclusions**

This study concludes that the Teacher Professional Allowance serves not only as a welfare policy but also as an important instrument for strengthening teachers' professional competencies. Teachers who utilize the allowance for continuous learning, instructional innovation, and competency development demonstrate improvements in pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of allowance utilization depends on leadership support, organizational culture, access to professional development, and teachers' intrinsic motivation. Therefore, educational policymakers should strengthen supervision, expand professional learning opportunities, and encourage strategic utilization of Teacher Professional Allowances to achieve sustainable teacher professionalism. Future studies are recommended to involve multiple schools and different educational contexts to improve the generalizability of the findings.

#### **E. Acknowledgement**

The author would like to express his gratitude to all parties who supported this research. He also thanks the principal of Sembawa 9 Public Elementary School, the teachers, and all informants who willingly provided the necessary data and information during the research process. He also thanks the supervising lecturers, academic colleagues, and educational institutions for their guidance, input, and support throughout the preparation of this research.

He also extends his deepest appreciation to his family, whose continued moral support, motivation, and prayers ensured the successful completion of this research. This research received no specific funding from government agencies, commercial organizations, or non-profit organizations. The entire research process was conducted independently for the benefit of advancing scientific knowledge and improving the quality of education.

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