AN ANALYSIS OF TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOR IN SCHOOLS

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	Abstrak
Keywords: *Teacher Professionalism,* *Ethical Behavior,* *Professional Ethics,* *School Environment,*	*Teacher professionalism plays a crucial role in achieving quality education grounded in ethical values within the school environment. Although teachers are required to master pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies, previous studies tend to discuss these competencies separately and have not sufficiently emphasized the integration of professionalism and ethical behavior in daily teaching practices. This study aims to analyze teacher professionalism in demonstrating the characteristics of professional teachers and ethical behavior in schools. The research employed a qualitative approach using a library research method by reviewing relevant books, journal articles, and academic publications related to teacher professionalism and professional ethics. Data were analyzed descriptively to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the concepts, indicators, and practices of teacher professionalism and ethical conduct in education. The findings indicate that teacher professionalism is reflected in responsibility in implementing learning activities, discipline, commitment to professional duties, and the ability to maintain positive and ethical relationships with students and school members. Ethical behavior is also demonstrated through adherence to the professional code of ethics, fairness, and respect for students' rights and dignity. However, challenges remain in the optimal implementation of teacher professionalism, particularly in continuous competency development and ethical awareness. Therefore, strengthening teachers' understanding and application of professional ethics is essential to improving the overall quality of education in schools.*

INTRODUCTION

Teacher professionalism plays a strategic role in supporting the implementation of quality education, particularly in developing learning processes that are not only academically effective but also aligned with ethical values within the school environment. Teachers are not merely responsible for delivering instructional content; they also serve as educators who guide, direct, and act as role models for students. Therefore, the presence of professional teachers is essential to ensure that the learning process provides positive impacts on students' development, both academically and in terms of character building. Teacher professionalism is closely related to the ability of teachers to perform their duties optimally based on pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. A teacher can be considered professional when they are able to integrate mastery of these competencies with ethical attitudes and behaviors in carrying out their roles and responsibilities as educators. Professional teachers are expected to demonstrate fairness, responsibility, discipline, and the ability to maintain harmonious relationships with students, colleagues, and all members of the school community. Thus, professionalism and ethical behavior are two interrelated aspects that cannot be separated in educational practice.

However, in reality, the implementation of teacher professionalism and ethical behavior in schools still faces various challenges. Common issues include a lack of awareness of professional codes of ethics, low commitment in carrying out professional duties, and the limited development of competencies on a continuous basis. These conditions can negatively affect the quality of learning and create an unfavorable educational climate within schools. In addition, the increasingly dynamic development of the educational world requires teachers to continuously improve their quality, both in terms of knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes. Changes in curriculum, advances in technology, and the diversity of students' characteristics demand that teachers adapt professionally while consistently upholding ethical values. In this context, professional and ethical attitudes become the fundamental basis for teachers to perform their roles responsibly and sustainably.

Teacher professionalism plays a strategic role in supporting the implementation of quality education, particularly in developing learning processes that are not only academically effective but also aligned with ethical values within the school environment (Hamid, 2020; Sari & Wahyuni, 2021). Teachers are not merely responsible for delivering instructional content; they also serve as educators who guide, direct, and act as role models for students. Therefore, the presence of professional teachers is essential to ensure that the learning process provides positive impacts on students' development, both academically and in terms of character building (Rahmawati, 2021). Based on these considerations, this study aims to analyze teacher professionalism in demonstrating the characteristics of professional teachers and ethical behavior in the school environment. This study employs a library research method by reviewing relevant academic sources, such as books and journal articles. The findings of this study are expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of teacher professionalism and professional ethics and to serve as a reference and reflection for.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher professionalism is a key factor in achieving quality education. Professional teachers are not only expected to master subject matter and instructional strategies, but also to demonstrate commitment, responsibility, and ethical attitudes in carrying out their duties. According to Hamid (2020, p. 78), teacher professionalism is

reflected in the ability to manage learning effectively and in continuous efforts to develop professional competencies in response to educational demands.

Ethical behavior serves as the moral foundation of teachers' professional practice. Ethics functions as a guideline for determining appropriate attitudes and actions, particularly in interactions with students and the school environment. Octavia (2020, p. 56) states that adherence to a professional code of ethics is essential to maintaining the dignity of the teaching profession and creating a conducive educational climate. Teachers who behave ethically demonstrate fairness, respect students' rights, and maintain integrity in the learning process.

Teacher professionalism and ethical behavior are closely interconnected and cannot be separated. Professional competencies must be guided by ethical values to ensure that teaching practices remain within moral and educational boundaries. Rahmawati (2021, p. 71) emphasizes that the integration of professionalism and ethics contributes to improved learning quality and strengthens public trust in educational institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research approach using a library research method. This approach was selected to obtain an in-depth understanding of teacher professionalism and ethical behavior based on a systematic review of relevant academic literature. Library research allows researchers to examine concepts, theories, and findings from previous studies that are closely related to the research topic. The data sources consisted of written materials, including academic books, peer-reviewed journal articles, research reports, and other scholarly publications discussing teacher professionalism and professional ethics. The selected literature was carefully chosen based on its relevance to the research focus, accuracy of information, and credibility of the sources to ensure the validity of the analysis.

Data collection was conducted through a process of searching, reading, and documenting key information from each selected source. The collected data were then classified into thematic categories related to the characteristics of professional teachers and ethical behavior in the school environment. Data analysis was carried out using descriptive qualitative techniques. The analysis involved an in-depth examination of the literature, comparison of experts' perspectives, and synthesis of key concepts to identify patterns and relationships among findings. The results of the analysis were systematically presented to provide a comprehensive understanding of teacher professionalism and the implementation of professional ethics in education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
The Concept of Teacher Professionalism in Education

The results of the literature review indicate that teacher professionalism is a concept that is not only related to mastery of teaching competencies but also encompasses teachers' attitudes, responsibilities, and commitment in consistently carrying out their roles as educators. Various sources reviewed emphasize that teacher professionalism is a crucial factor in determining the quality of both the learning process and learning outcomes in schools. Professional teachers tend to be able to design and implement learning activities that are well-planned, well-directed, and oriented toward students' needs. Teacher professionalism is one of the essential elements influencing the quality of

education in educational institutions. In the era of globalization and rapid technological development, the demands for teacher professionalism continue to increase.

In the field of education, students' performance is often used as a primary indicator of the success of the teaching and learning process. This performance involves not only cognitive abilities but also affective and psychomotor aspects (Ulfah & Arifudin, 2021). Research findings indicate that teachers with a high level of professionalism are generally able to create a supportive learning environment, motivate students, and apply creative teaching strategies. However, many schools still face challenges in improving teacher professionalism, which can negatively affect students' learning achievement.

Based on a review of several studies, teacher professionalism also has a significant influence on the classroom learning climate. Teachers who possess strong competencies and professional attitudes are able to build a conducive learning atmosphere, encourage active student participation, and provide sustained learning motivation. This demonstrates that teacher professionalism affects not only academic achievement but also the development of students' attitudes and character.

Within the educational context, teacher professionalism is a key factor in determining the quality of instructional implementation and the success of achieving educational goals. Teachers occupy a highly strategic position in the learning process, as they are directly involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating students' learning activities. Therefore, teacher professionalism serves as a fundamental basis for achieving educational objectives in an optimal and sustainable manner. Teacher professionalism needs to be developed through a balanced integration of competency mastery and the application of ethical values in daily teaching practices (Hasanah, 2021).

In formal education settings, teacher professionalism is reflected through the mastery of competencies, including pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies. Pedagogical competence relates to teachers' ability to understand students' characteristics, plan learning activities, implement effective instruction, and conduct appropriate assessments of learning outcomes. Professional competence refers to in-depth mastery of subject matter in accordance with the field being taught. Social competence includes the ability to communicate and interact positively with students, colleagues, parents, and the community. Meanwhile, personal competence reflects teachers' stable, mature, wise, and responsible attitudes and behaviors.

In instructional practice, teacher professionalism is manifested in the ability to create a learning environment that is conducive, active, and meaningful. Professional teachers are able to select appropriate strategies, methods, and learning media in accordance with students' characteristics and instructional objectives. In addition, teachers are expected to adapt to ongoing developments, including the use of technology as a supporting tool for learning. This adaptability demonstrates teachers' readiness to face educational challenges in the modern era.

Thus, teacher professionalism can be understood as the totality of teachers' attitudes, abilities, and responsibilities in carrying out their professional duties optimally, ethically, and with a clear orientation toward improving educational quality. Teacher professionalism is a vital factor in creating effective and meaningful learning processes and contributes significantly to the comprehensive achievement of educational goals.

Characteristics of Professional Teachers

There are three main characteristics of professional teachers that should be possessed by educators in Indonesia.

1. Professional teachers can be understood as educators who have comprehensive mastery of teaching competencies and instructional skills and are able to apply them effectively in accordance with students' needs. In the era of rapid technological and information development, teachers are required to implement 21st-century learning that prepares students to become individuals who are critical thinkers, creative, innovative, able to communicate effectively, and capable of collaboration. These objectives cannot be achieved if teachers stop learning and are unwilling to continuously improve their professional quality.

2. Professional teachers must be able to build collegial relationships. Through collaboration and knowledge sharing with fellow teachers, educators can continue to learn, develop their competencies, and adapt to ongoing educational changes. Participation in professional communities enables teachers to strengthen their professional roles while fostering a sense of togetherness, mutual support, and shared responsibility among colleagues.

3. Professional teachers are required to maintain strong social awareness. Indonesian teachers are often regarded as educational figures who carry out a noble mission driven by a sense of dedication and commitment. Despite facing various challenges, teachers remain at the forefront of efforts to educate the nation and improve the overall quality of education.

Ethical Behavior in Schools

According to Mukhlishah (2021), etymologically, the term *ethics* originates from the Greek word *ethos*, which refers to habits or values that serve as guidelines for individual behavior in social life. In the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (KBBI, 2008), ethics is defined as a field of study that examines goodness and badness in relation to moral rights and obligations. In line with the study conducted by Ruslan (2016), ethical development is closely connected to the field of philosophy. Thus, human reasoning becomes a primary reference for determining what is considered good or bad in ethical terms.

The term *ethics* can be explained through three different concepts as proposed by Bertens (2011). First, ethics is understood as a system of values, meaning that it functions as moral norms and values used by individuals or groups as guidelines for regulating behavior. Second, ethics refers to a set of moral principles or values embodied in a code of ethics. Third, ethics is defined as a scientific discipline that studies goodness and badness. Ethics is regarded as a science when ethical possibilities—namely principles and values related to what is considered good or bad—are no longer accepted uncritically by society but instead become subjects of systematic and methodological reflection through research. As a scientific discipline, ethics can contribute to the formulation of professional codes of ethics.

Fundamentally, ethics is related to the existence of norms that are closely associated with morality and cannot be separated from the surrounding culture. However, there are clear distinctions between ethics, morality, *akhlak*, and *adab* as guiding principles in determining what is right and wrong. Teachers' ethical behavior serves as an essential foundation for maintaining students' trust and creating a conducive learning environment within schools (Rahmawati, 2021).

The Relationship between Teacher Professionalism and Ethical Behavior

Teacher professionalism and ethical behavior are two inseparable aspects, as professional competence must be guided by ethical values to ensure that its

implementation remains within moral and educational boundaries. A teacher is considered professional not merely because of academic qualifications or mastery of subject matter, but also because of the ability to perform professional duties with responsibility, integrity, and moral awareness. Professionalism without ethics is reduced to technical skills devoid of meaning, as teaching fundamentally involves human values and character formation. Therefore, to become a true educator, teachers must integrate instructional competence with sound moral attitudes.

Teachers' ethical behavior serves as the moral foundation that directs the use of all professional competencies. Teachers may possess strong classroom management skills, deep understanding of child development psychology, and mastery of modern instructional strategies; however, these abilities must be accompanied by fairness, empathy, respect for students' rights, and the ability to maintain students' personal confidentiality. In this sense, ethics functions as a filter that ensures teachers' competencies are applied to protect and develop students' potential rather than to cause harm.

Furthermore, teacher professionalism is regulated and reinforced through professional codes of ethics. These codes are established by professional organizations, such as the Indonesian Teachers Association (PGRI), and contain behavioral guidelines that bind teachers in carrying out their professional duties. Through adherence to codes of ethics, teachers are provided with clear guidance on how to interact with students, fellow educators, school leaders, parents, and the wider community. Codes of ethics function not only as behavioral boundaries but also as mechanisms for maintaining professional integrity and safeguarding the dignity of the teaching profession. Teachers who comply with professional codes of ethics demonstrate the full realization of professionalism.

Teacher professionalism is also reflected in daily practices, not only during the delivery of instructional content. Punctuality, the use of respectful language, the ability to establish positive communication with students, and honesty in conducting assessments represent tangible expressions of the integration between professionalism and ethics. Professional teachers consistently serve as positive role models both inside and outside the classroom. Even teachers' behavior outside the school environment can influence public perceptions of schools and the teaching profession, as teachers are widely regarded as moral figures in society.

The relationship between professionalism and ethical behavior is also evident in the function of education as a process of character development. Teachers are responsible not only for teaching academic knowledge but also for instilling life values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, care, and tolerance. These values cannot be effectively transmitted to students if teachers themselves do not practice them in their daily actions. Therefore, ethics is not merely a formal requirement but a concrete manifestation of the educator's role as a moral exemplar for students.

From a social perspective, professional ethics help teachers build public trust in educational institutions. Society often evaluates the quality of schools based on teachers' attitudes and professionalism. When teachers perform their duties ethically—such as treating students fairly and respectfully—public trust increases. Conversely, ethical violations by teachers can damage the reputation of schools and reduce public confidence, even when teachers possess strong academic capabilities.

Thus, it can be affirmed that teacher professionalism and ethical behavior are not separate concepts but an integrated unity that must operate in harmony. Professional competence equips teachers with the ability to teach effectively, while professional ethics provide moral direction to ensure that these abilities are applied appropriately. A professional teacher is one who is both competent and ethical. Without ethics, professionalism loses its fundamental value; without professionalism, ethical principles cannot be effectively realized in the educational process.

CONCLUSION

This study employed a qualitative approach using a literature review method. This method was selected because the purpose of the study was to analyze and understand teacher professionalism and teachers' ethical behavior based on an examination of various relevant academic sources. Through a literature review, the researchers were able to explore concepts, theories, and findings from previous studies related to the issues under discussion.

This study concludes that teacher professionalism and ethical behavior are closely interconnected and cannot be separated in educational practice. Teacher professionalism is not limited to the mastery of pedagogical and subject-matter competencies, but also includes responsibility, commitment, integrity, and adherence to ethical values in carrying out professional duties. Professional teachers are able to create effective and meaningful learning environments while serving as moral role models for students. Ethical behavior guides the application of professional competencies, ensuring that teaching practices remain aligned with moral principles and educational values. Thus, the integration of professionalism and ethical conduct is essential for achieving high-quality education and fostering students' academic and character development.

The findings of this study have practical implications for educational practice. Teachers are encouraged to continuously develop their professional competencies while consistently upholding ethical principles in daily teaching activities. Schools and educational institutions should strengthen professional development programs that integrate pedagogical skills with ethical awareness, including training on professional codes of ethics. In addition, policymakers and professional organizations are expected to reinforce ethical standards and support teachers in maintaining professionalism to improve the overall quality of education.

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the research relied solely on a literature review method, which limited the findings to existing theories and previous research without incorporating empirical data from field observations or direct interactions with teachers and students. Second, the scope of the literature reviewed may not comprehensively represent all perspectives on teacher professionalism and ethical behavior, particularly those arising from diverse educational contexts and levels.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to employ empirical approaches, such as qualitative field studies, surveys, or mixed-methods research, to gain deeper insights into the implementation of teacher professionalism and ethical behavior in real school settings. Further studies may also explore the relationship between teacher professionalism, ethical conduct, and student learning outcomes across different educational levels and cultural contexts. Such research would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how professionalism and ethics can be effectively strengthened in the teaching profession.

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