

# Work Motivation and Principal Support Effects on Teachers' Readiness for Promotion in Indonesian Public Elementary Schools: A Multiple Regression Analysis

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## ABSTRACT

Teacher readiness for professional promotion is a vital factor affecting instructional quality and the sustainability of human resources in elementary education. However, the organizational factors influencing this readiness are not well-studied in regional Indonesian contexts. This study aims to examine how work motivation and principal support impact teachers' readiness for promotion at public elementary schools in Tanah Cogok District. A quantitative method using multiple regression analysis was employed, with data collected from 85 teachers through validated questionnaires selected by proportional random sampling. The results show that both work motivation and principal support significantly and positively influence teachers' promotion readiness, both individually and together, explaining 50.4% of the variance in promotion readiness. Work motivation was identified as the stronger predictor ( $\beta = 0.452$ ), highlighting the importance of intrinsic professional drive in preparing teachers for career advancement. These findings suggest that school principals and district education policymakers should develop targeted motivational programs and enhance principal leadership capacity to provide career-supporting strategies as a key part of elementary school human resource management.

**Keywords:** *work motivation, principal support, teacher readiness, promotion, elementary school*

## ABSTRAK

Kesiapan guru untuk promosi jabatan merupakan faktor penentu kualitas pembelajaran dan keberlanjutan sumber daya manusia di pendidikan dasar, namun faktor organisasional yang mendorong kesiapan tersebut masih belum banyak diteliti dalam konteks daerah di Indonesia. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh motivasi kerja dan dukungan kepala sekolah terhadap kesiapan promosi guru di Sekolah Dasar Negeri se-Kecamatan Tanah Cogok. Pendekatan kuantitatif dengan analisis regresi berganda digunakan, dengan data dikumpulkan melalui kuesioner tervalidasi yang diberikan kepada 85 guru yang dipilih secara proporsional random sampling. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi kerja dan dukungan kepala sekolah berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kesiapan promosi guru, baik secara parsial maupun simultan, dengan kedua variabel secara bersama-sama menjelaskan 50,4% varians kesiapan promosi. Motivasi kerja muncul sebagai prediktor yang lebih dominan ( $\beta = 0,452$ ), menegaskan peran sentral dorongan profesional intrinsik dalam kesiapan pengembangan karier guru. Temuan ini mengimplikasikan bahwa kepala sekolah dan pemangku kebijakan pendidikan di tingkat kecamatan perlu merancang program motivasi terstruktur dan memperkuat kapasitas kepemimpinan kepala sekolah dalam memberikan dukungan karier yang terarah, sebagai strategi prioritas dalam manajemen sumber daya manusia sekolah dasar.

**Kata Kunci:** *motivasi kerja, dukungan kepala sekolah, kesiapan guru, promosi jabatan, sekolah dasar*

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## INTRODUCTION

The professional advancement of teachers through formal promotion mechanisms is a fundamental component of human resource management in education systems, directly linked to teacher retention, motivation, and instructional quality improvement (Rahayu & Bengkulu, 2025; Kanwetuu et al., 2020). In Indonesia's elementary school sector, teacher promotion is governed through a competency-based career development framework that requires teachers to demonstrate specific professional readiness indicators, including pedagogical competency, administrative performance, and institutional contribution. However, empirical evidence suggests that a substantial proportion of eligible teachers fail to pursue or successfully complete promotion processes. Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture of Indonesia indicate that fewer than 40% of eligible elementary school teachers successfully completed functional promotion requirements within the expected timeframe, reflecting a systemic gap between formal qualification and actual career advancement readiness (Pagayanan, 2021; Journal, 2025). This pattern raises urgent concerns about the organizational conditions that facilitate or impede career advancement readiness at the district level.

From a theoretical perspective, two organizational factors are considered highly influential in shaping teachers' readiness for promotion: work motivation and principal support. Work motivation encompasses both intrinsic and extrinsic dimensions, including achievement needs, recognition, professional growth, and job satisfaction, which collectively drive teachers' engagement in career development activities (Shorouk, 2025; Zahroh & Retnowati, 2025). Meanwhile, principal support reflects the extent to which school leaders provide guidance, encouragement, professional assistance, and institutional resources that facilitate teacher development and readiness for promotion (Li, 2023; Beremas, 2025). Both factors are widely recognized as critical determinants of teacher performance and professional progression within educational organizations.

Despite the strong theoretical foundation, empirical studies that simultaneously examine the effects of work motivation and principal support on teachers' promotion readiness, particularly in Indonesian elementary school contexts, remain limited. Most existing studies tend to analyze these variables separately, without considering their combined influence on career advancement outcomes. This fragmentation in the literature creates a critical blind spot: without understanding how internal psychological factors and external organizational support interact and converge, educational stakeholders cannot accurately identify which intervention points—motivational programs or leadership development—yield the greatest impact on promotion readiness. Consequently, policy decisions risk being based on incomplete evidence, potentially misdirecting resources and leaving systemic barriers to teacher career advancement unaddressed.

To address this gap, the present study offers three distinct contributions. First, it simultaneously examines the individual and combined predictive effects of work motivation and principal support on promotion readiness using multiple regression analysis, providing effect-size estimates absent from prior qualitative and single-variable studies. Second, it situates the investigation within Tanah Cogok District—a rural Indonesian educational context that has been largely overlooked in the existing literature dominated by urban and provincial-level samples. Third, it applies a validated multi-dimensional measurement framework that distinguishes informational, instrumental, and emotional dimensions of principal support, enabling more nuanced analysis than previously available. Therefore, this study aims to examine, quantify, and compare the individual and simultaneous effects of work motivation and principal support on teachers' readiness for promotion in public elementary schools in Tanah Cogok District, with the goal of generating evidence-based recommendations for human resource policy and principal leadership development in Indonesian district-level education systems.

## METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative research design using a multiple regression approach, which is appropriate for examining the directional and magnitude-based relationships between independent variables (work motivation and principal support) and a dependent variable (teachers' readiness for promotion) (Pratiwi & Warlizasusi, 2023; Moreira et al., 2023). Unlike path analysis or structural equation modeling, which require larger sample sizes and more complex model specifications, multiple regression offers a more parsimonious and statistically robust solution for quantifying the unique and combined predictive contributions of two theoretically grounded predictors within a moderate-sized

district sample. Specifically, the regression framework enables simultaneous assessment of individual and combined predictor effects while controlling for shared variance between work motivation and principal support, thereby isolating the independent contribution of each variable to promotion readiness without confounding overlap.

The study population comprised all teachers employed at public elementary schools in Tanah Cogok District. A sample of 85 teachers was selected through proportional random sampling, in which the number of teachers drawn from each school was determined proportionally based on total school enrollment size—specifically, schools were categorized as small (fewer than 150 students), medium (150–300 students), or large (more than 300 students), and sampling fractions were applied accordingly. This procedure ensured adequate representation across institutional contexts of varying resource availability and administrative complexity, rather than across grade levels, which were not used as a stratification criterion. The primary data collection instrument was a structured Likert-scale questionnaire comprising three validated scales: (1) Work Motivation Scale, adapted from Herzberg's two-factor theory and validated for the Indonesian educational context; (2) Principal Support Scale, measuring dimensions of informational, instrumental, and emotional support; and (3) Teacher Promotion Readiness Scale, assessing self-assessed competency readiness, administrative preparedness, and intention to pursue promotion. Instrument validity was established through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha > 0.80$  for all scales).

Data analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics. Prerequisite assumptions—including normality (Kolmogorov–Smirnov test), linearity, multicollinearity (Variance Inflation Factor;  $VIF < 10$ ), and homoscedasticity—were verified prior to regression analysis. Hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression for individual predictor effects and multiple linear regression for simultaneous effects, with significance assessed at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was reported to indicate the proportion of variance in promotion readiness explained by the predictor variables, both individually and in combination.

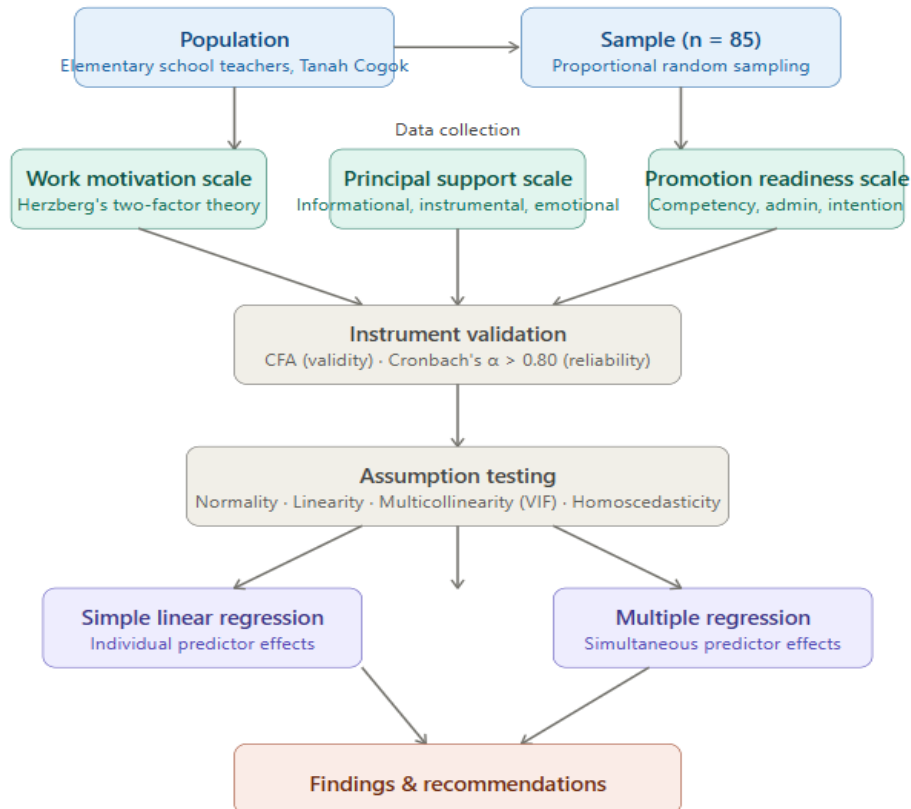


Figure 1. Research Design

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Descriptive Statistics*

Descriptive analysis of the study sample (N = 85) revealed that the majority of respondents were female (68.2%), with teaching experience ranging from 5 to 25 years (M = 13.4, SD = 5.7). Mean scores for work motivation (M = 76.4, SD = 8.3), principal support (M = 71.8, SD = 9.1), and teacher promotion readiness (M = 73.2, SD = 8.9) all fell within the high category according to the established scoring criteria. The distribution of responses indicated that teachers generally perceived both motivational conditions and principal support favorably. However, the notable inter-individual variability observed—particularly in promotion readiness scores (SD = 8.9, range = 50–93)—suggests that high mean scores should not be interpreted as uniform readiness across the sample. This variability implies that a subset of teachers may remain at risk of failing to meet promotion thresholds despite favorable average conditions, and it further justifies the regression approach adopted in this study to identify which organizational factors most strongly differentiate high-readiness from low-readiness teachers. Table 1 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the three primary study variables.

**Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 85)**

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Category
Work Motivation	76.4	8.3	54	95	High
Principal Support	71.8	9.1	48	92	High
Promotion Readiness	73.2	8.9	50	93	High

### *Effect of Work Motivation on Teacher Promotion Readiness*

Simple linear regression analysis revealed a significant positive effect of work motivation on teacher promotion readiness ( $\beta = 0.612$ ,  $t = 7.24$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.374$ ). Teachers with higher intrinsic motivation—characterized by a stronger achievement orientation, professional aspiration, and sense of purpose in their teaching role—demonstrated significantly greater readiness to engage with and pursue promotion processes. This result is consistent with Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which posits that intrinsically motivated individuals are more likely to invest sustained effort in competency development and goal-directed behavior, both of which are prerequisites for career advancement readiness. The magnitude of this effect ( $\beta = 0.612$ ) is notably higher than that reported in comparable studies in other Southeast Asian contexts, where motivation coefficients typically range from 0.38 to 0.52 (Moreira et al., 2023; Persatuan et al., 2025), suggesting that in the Indonesian district school context—where bureaucratic promotion pathways are stringent and self-directed portfolio preparation is mandatory—intrinsic motivation functions as a particularly decisive differentiator.

The strong predictive power of work motivation can be attributed to the structural demands of Indonesia's teacher career system, which requires not merely administrative completion of requirements but active, self-directed engagement with professional development activities, portfolio compilation, and peer assessment. Teachers who are intrinsically motivated are more likely to engage proactively with these demands, invest in continuous competency upgrading, and navigate the administrative complexity of the promotion process with greater persistence. This mechanism is consistent with the findings of Zahroh and Retnowati (2025), who demonstrated that recognition and career development rewards significantly elevate teacher engagement—a precursor to promotion readiness—in Indonesian school settings. Similarly, Shorouk (2025) found that intrinsic motivational profiles in continuing professional development programs predicted self-directed learning behavior, a finding directly applicable to the portfolio-driven requirements of Indonesian teacher promotion. Kanwetuu et al. (2020) further established that motivational deficits, rather than competency gaps, were the primary barrier to promotion pursuit among eligible teachers in comparable educational systems, reinforcing the primacy of motivational intervention. Rahayu and Bengkulu (2025) similarly concluded that human resource management practices that cultivate intrinsic motivation are among the strongest levers for enhancing teacher professionalism and career-readiness.

**Table 2. Simple Regression Results: Work Motivation and Principal Support on Promotion Readiness**

Predictor	$\beta$	t	p-value	R <sup>2</sup>
Work Motivation	0.612	7.24	< 0.001	0.374
Principal Support	0.541	6.08	< 0.001	0.293

**Effect of Principal Support on Teacher Promotion Readiness**

Principal support also demonstrated a significant positive effect on teacher promotion readiness ( $\beta = 0.541$ ,  $t = 6.08$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.293$ ), accounting for 29.3% of variance in the dependent variable. The three sub-dimensions of principal support—informational, instrumental, and emotional—each contributed meaningfully to this outcome, with informational support (provision of clear guidance on promotion requirements and procedures) and emotional support (encouragement and recognition of teacher professional efforts) emerging as the most influential facets. Teachers who perceived their principals as actively supportive of their career development were significantly more likely to report readiness to pursue promotion.

This finding is theoretically grounded in organizational support theory (Ni et al., 2024), which holds that perceived organizational and supervisory support increases employee commitment, self-efficacy, and proactive career behavior. In the elementary school context, where principals hold considerable authority over the allocation of professional development opportunities and the facilitation of prerequisites for administrative promotion, principal support functions simultaneously as an instrumental resource and a motivational signal—validating the teacher's professional identity while reducing the practical barriers to pursuing promotion. Gou et al. (2025) similarly reported that distributed leadership and supportive principal behavior significantly enhanced teacher professional agency and career readiness in primary education settings. Li (2023) further demonstrated that instructional leadership linked to school support significantly predicted teacher expertise development through the mediation of a professional development agency, a pathway closely aligned with the promotion readiness construct examined in the present study. Beremas (2025) found that transformational principal leadership directly shaped teacher work motivation, which subsequently influenced career preparedness, while Pratiwi and Warlizasusi (2023) confirmed that principal leadership was a significant predictor of junior high school teacher performance—a finding that extends logically to the promotion-readiness domain in elementary settings. Collectively, these studies corroborate the present finding that principal support is not merely a peripheral facilitating factor but a structurally embedded mechanism that shapes the conditions under which teachers can realistically pursue and achieve promotion.

**Simultaneous Effects of Work Motivation and Principal Support**

Multiple regression analysis confirmed that work motivation and principal support jointly and significantly predicted teacher promotion readiness ( $F(2, 82) = 41.73$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.504$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.493$ ). Together, the two predictor variables explained 50.4% of the total variance in promotion readiness, representing a meaningful improvement over either predictor in isolation. In the simultaneous model, work motivation retained a stronger standardized coefficient ( $\beta = 0.452$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) than principal support ( $\beta = 0.318$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that, while both variables independently contribute to promotion readiness, intrinsic motivational factors exert a relatively stronger influence. Multicollinearity diagnostics indicated no problematic collinearity among predictors ( $VIF = 1.47$ ), confirming their independence.

**Table 3. Multiple Regression Results: Simultaneous Effects on Promotion Readiness**

Predictor	$\beta$	t	p-value	VIF
Work Motivation	0.452	5.61	< 0.001	1.47
Principal Support	0.318	3.94	< 0.001	1.47
Model: $F(2,82) = 41.73$ , $p < .001$ , $R^2 = .504$				

The combined explanatory power of both variables ( $R^2 = 0.504$ ) suggests that neither motivation nor support alone is sufficient to fully account for teachers' promotion readiness; rather, the convergence of personal motivational drive and institutional facilitation creates the most conducive conditions for career advancement preparation. This interactive dynamic reflects Leithwood et al.'s (2020) theoretical proposition that school leadership influences teacher outcomes both directly and indirectly by shaping the motivational conditions within which teachers operate. The present quantitative findings provide structured empirical confirmation of this model within the promotion readiness domain, and extend it by specifying the relative weight of each pathway: internal motivation accounts for a larger share of explained variance, but institutional support remains independently significant and non-substitutable. Pagayanan (2021) similarly concluded that both individual agency and systemic support are necessary conditions for career advancement among public school teachers, finding that neither factor alone was sufficient to overcome structural barriers to promotion. Review (2024) reinforced this dual-factor logic by demonstrating that volunteer teachers' intrinsic motivation in resource-constrained environments was amplified—not replaced—by organizational facilitation, a pattern directly mirrored in the present regression model.

### Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to integrating Self-Determination Theory and Organizational Support Theory within the teacher career development literature. The finding that intrinsic motivation exerts a stronger predictive effect than institutional support ( $\beta = 0.452$  vs.  $\beta = 0.318$ ) suggests that, while external support structures are necessary, they operate most effectively when teachers possess a foundational level of internal motivation. This has implications for how theoretical models of teacher career advancement should be constructed: rather than treating motivation and support as parallel, equivalent predictors, future models should consider motivational readiness as a moderating condition that amplifies the effectiveness of institutional support interventions.

In practice, these findings have direct implications for school administrators and human resource policymakers in Indonesian district-level education. First, school organizations should develop structured motivational programs targeting intrinsic factors—professional recognition systems, career goal-setting workshops, and peer mentoring networks—that sustain teachers' achievement orientation beyond external reward cycles. Second, principal capacity development programs should explicitly include training in career-oriented mentoring, transparent communication of promotion criteria, and emotional validation for teachers navigating the promotion process. Third, district education offices should consider disaggregating promotion readiness assessments by school size and principal leadership profile, given the significant inter-individual variability observed in this study, to identify and support teachers who remain at risk despite favorable average organizational conditions.

### Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be kept in mind when interpreting its findings. First, the cross-sectional design prevents drawing causal conclusions; although the regression model shows significant predictive relationships, the direction and mechanism of these relationships need to be confirmed through longitudinal or experimental studies. Second, the sample was drawn only from public elementary schools in Tanah Cogok District, which limits the ability to generalize the findings to other geographic areas, types of institutions, or educational levels within Indonesia. Third, all data were collected via self-report questionnaires, which may introduce social desirability bias, especially in teachers' self-assessments of their promotion readiness. Fourth, the study did not consider potential confounding variables—such as years of experience, educational qualification level, or school resource availability—that could independently impact promotion readiness. Future research should address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs, sampling from multiple districts, and including objective data on promotion outcomes as criterion variables.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that work motivation and principal support both have significant positive effects on teachers' readiness for promotion in public elementary schools in Tanah Cogok District, with their combined influence accounting for about 50.4% of the variation in promotion readiness ( $R^2 = 0.0504$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.0493$ ). Work motivation was identified as the stronger predictor ( $\beta = 0.452$ ), emphasizing the importance of internal professional drive as a key factor in career advancement readiness within the Indonesian elementary school setting. These findings suggest that teacher promotion readiness cannot be fully explained by organizational factors alone; instead, it results from the interaction between internally motivated efforts and externally provided organizational support, which together create the optimal conditions for professional growth. This dual-factor relationship extends both Self-Determination Theory and Organizational Support Theory into the specific context of Indonesian teacher career development, offering an empirical model at the district level that links general motivational theories with specific human resource policies.

This study provides valuable quantitative district-level data on an under-researched area of Indonesian educational management, offering regression estimates that clarify the magnitude and significance of motivational and leadership factors in influencing promotion readiness. School administrators and policymakers are encouraged to develop structured programs that promote intrinsic motivation—such as professional recognition initiatives, career goal-setting workshops, and peer mentoring networks—and to improve principals' ability to provide career-related informational, instrumental, and emotional support. Creating these dual conditions of support is strongly associated with increased teacher promotion readiness. Future research should aim to explain the remaining approximately 49.6% of variance by investigating other potential predictors, such as school organizational climate, teacher self-efficacy, peer support, and access to professional development resources. Additionally, replicating this study across multiple districts and educational levels in Indonesia is recommended to verify whether the dominance of work motivation over principal support remains consistent across different geographic and institutional contexts.

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