

# THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY, PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE, AND ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION ON EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN ACEH TAMIANG REGENCY

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## Abstract

This study aims to: (1) analyze the effect of personality on the achievement motivation of early childhood education teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency; (2) analyze the effect of pedagogical competence on the achievement motivation of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency; (3) analyze the effect of personality on the performance of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency; (4) analyze the effect of pedagogical competence on the performance of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency; (5) analyze the effect of achievement motivation on the performance of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency; and (6) analyze the simultaneous effect of personality, pedagogical competence, and achievement motivation on the performance of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This research uses a quantitative approach with an associative research design. The population consisted of 784 PAUD teachers, with a sample of 100 selected proportionally using Slovin's formula and probability sampling techniques. The results indicate that: (1) there is a positive and significant effect between personality and teachers' achievement motivation, (2) pedagogical competence and teachers' achievement motivation, (3) personality and teacher performance, (4) pedagogical competence and teacher performance, (5) achievement motivation and teacher performance. All relationships are statistically significant with a significance level below 0.05. (6) Simultaneously, personality, pedagogical competence, and achievement motivation contribute significantly to teacher performance, with a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.934 or 93.4%. Based on the findings, it is recommended that schools and educational policymakers give serious attention to developing teachers' personality and pedagogical competence as the main foundation for improving performance. Efforts in character building, instilling values of responsibility, discipline, and work ethic should be conducted continuously through internal development and constructive supervision.

**Keywords:** Achievement Motivation, Pedagogical Competence, Personality, Teacher Performance



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## INTRODUCTION

Becoming a teacher in early childhood education is a profound challenge, often considered the most demanding level within the educational spectrum (Lepóla et al., 2004). Beyond possessing a natural love for children and an energetic, engaging personality, teachers must master educational science, child development psychology, and the fundamental concepts of early growth. As secondary parental figures, these educators play a crucial role in establishing a foundation for faith, morality, and general knowledge (Schrodt et al., 2024). Consequently, they must provide the necessary stimulation to develop a child's spiritual, affective, cognitive, and psychomotor aspects simultaneously.

The role of an early childhood educator extends far beyond teaching physical or motor skills; it requires a comprehensive approach to learning that addresses all developmental domains. This necessitates a deep understanding of teacher competency. Because educational backgrounds vary, the level of understanding regarding these competencies often differs among staff (Gibbs, 2005). Ultimately, a teacher's competency determines the quality of instruction and the success of the learning environment. When teachers effectively apply their core competencies to organize activities, they serve as vital learning leaders and facilitators who drive the success of the institution.

Teacher competency is supported by several key components, including subject matter expertise, professional ethics, instructional processes, and the ability to adapt (Li et al., 2013). The pinnacle of these attributes is the performance component—the actual set of behaviors demonstrated while teaching. A teacher's ability to carry out these responsibilities directly influences student success. Therefore, regular assessment of these abilities is essential to optimize how teachers realize their potential and fulfill their professional duties.

A teacher should ideally possess a stable, mature, wise, and noble personality. By developing a strong work ethic and independence, they can positively influence their students' daily lives. Pedagogical competence stands out as the unique characteristic of the teaching profession, distinguishing it from all others (Eisenberg & Schneider, 2007). It is essential for educators to foster an awareness that mastering student development, learning theories, curriculum development, and evaluation techniques is just as vital as mastering the specific subjects or technology used in the classroom.

To be effective, teachers must implement specific pedagogical requirements. This includes staying updated on educational technology, understanding the physical and psychological needs of students individually and in groups, and developing syllabi tailored to their specific educational unit (Marks et al., 2009). Furthermore, they must create appropriate lesson plans, use enjoyable and multi-directional learning methods, evaluate outcomes according to regulations, and help every child actualize their unique potential.

Motivation also serves as a critical engine for instructional success. High work motivation drives teachers to implement their lesson plans fully and adhere to professional standards (Halliday et al., 2018). This motivation is often linked to a person's level of need; whether seeking material rewards or non-material fulfillment, these internal drives influence how a teacher performs (Huang et al., 2022). In regions where educational backgrounds are diverse, strengthening these motivations and competencies through formal programs is necessary to ensure that teaching does not become a mere routine.

Observations in the field suggest that when teachers lack a deep internalization of their role, they may rely too heavily on lecture-based methods, which are unsuitable for the exploratory nature of early childhood (Apiwattanalunggarn & Luster, 2005). However, a competent teacher understands that young children think concretely. For instance, instead of just talking about trees, a skilled educator will invite children to role-play—imagining themselves as trees with many leaves, leaning right and left as the wind blows (Anyanwu & Campbell, 2001). This shift from passive listening to active, enthusiastic experience is the hallmark of a truly competent educator.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The following sections detail the systematic approach used to examine the relationships between research variables through quantitative measurement and statistical analysis.

### *Research Design*

This study employs a quantitative research design aimed at testing specific theories by examining the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2013). The design is structured to produce numerical data that can be analyzed statistically, ensuring an objective evaluation of the hypothesized relationships. This approach focuses on the systematic measurement of pre-defined indicators to identify patterns of association within the collected data.

### *Research Target/Subject*

The primary objective of this research is to test theoretical hypotheses through the statistical analysis of variable relationships. The study targets the production of empirical evidence by quantifying specific indicators. By using a structured grid-based approach, the research aims to ensure that every aspect of the measured variables is accurately captured and analyzed to provide a clear description of the data trends.

The subjects of this study were selected based on their relevance to the four research variables. While the specific population is defined by the study's context, a non-test methodology was utilized to gather data from these participants. This approach ensures that the findings are derived directly from the experiences and perceptions of the individuals who interact with the phenomena under investigation.

### *Research Procedure*

The research procedures involved a rigorous three-step instrument development process: (1) creating a grid based on variable indicators, (2) compiling statement items according to those indicators, and (3) conducting a rational analysis to ensure compliance and accuracy. Following the development of the instrument, data were collected through questionnaires and supplemented by a literature review. The final stage involved processing the data and performing various calculations to test the research hypotheses.

### *Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques*

Data were collected using non-test methods, specifically structured questionnaires and a literature review. The primary instrument utilized a five-point Likert scale with the following alternatives: Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely, and Never. This scale allows for the quantification of frequency or agreement across the four research variables. The instrument's validity was ensured through a rational analysis phase that checked the alignment between the statement items and the underlying theoretical indicators.

### *Data Analysis Technique*

The study utilized descriptive and inferential statistical analysis to process the numerical data. The analysis included data cleaning, processing, and presentation in a format that describes the sample characteristics. Hypothesis testing was then conducted through various statistical calculations to determine the significance of the relationships between the variables. This quantitative approach ensures that the final conclusions are grounded in rigorous mathematical evidence rather than subjective interpretation.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of the data from this study's responses shows a general overview of the variation among respondents regarding the variables studied: personality, pedagogical competence, achievement motivation, and teacher performance. Each variable was tested on 100 respondents by measuring the range of scores obtained, including the minimum, maximum, average (mean), and standard deviation.

Table 1. SPSS Processed Data

		<b>Personality</b>	<b>Pedagogical Competence</b>	<b>Achievement Motivation</b>	<b>Teacher Performance</b>
N	Valid	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		43.07	43.02	43.15	43.16
Std. Error of Mean		.418	.416	.421	.424
Median		42.50	42.00	42.00	42.50
Std. Deviation		4.181	4.163	4.205	4.240
Variance		17.480	17.333	17.684	17.974
Range		15	15	15	15
Minimum		35	35	35	35
Maximum		50	50	50	50

Source: SPSS Processed Data (2025)

Based on the results of the descriptive statistical analysis, it was found that all research variables—personality, pedagogical competence, achievement motivation, and teacher performance—each had valid data from 100 respondents with no missing data. The average (mean) scores for all four variables were in a relatively similar range, at around 43, indicating that respondents generally had fairly good levels of personality, pedagogical competence, achievement motivation, and teacher performance. The median value, which was slightly lower than the mean, indicated a relatively symmetrical data distribution with a slight tendency toward higher values.

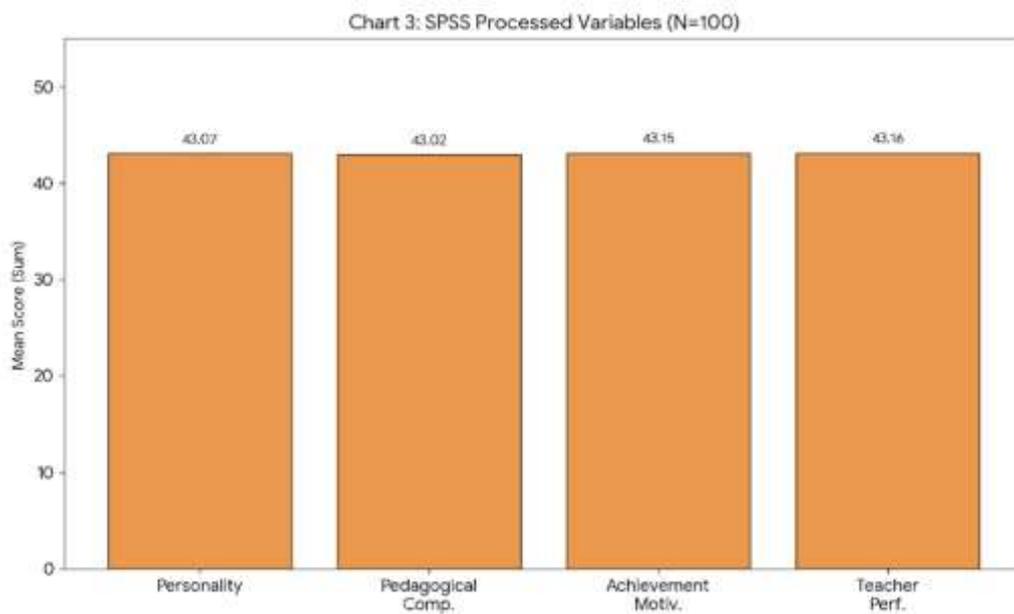
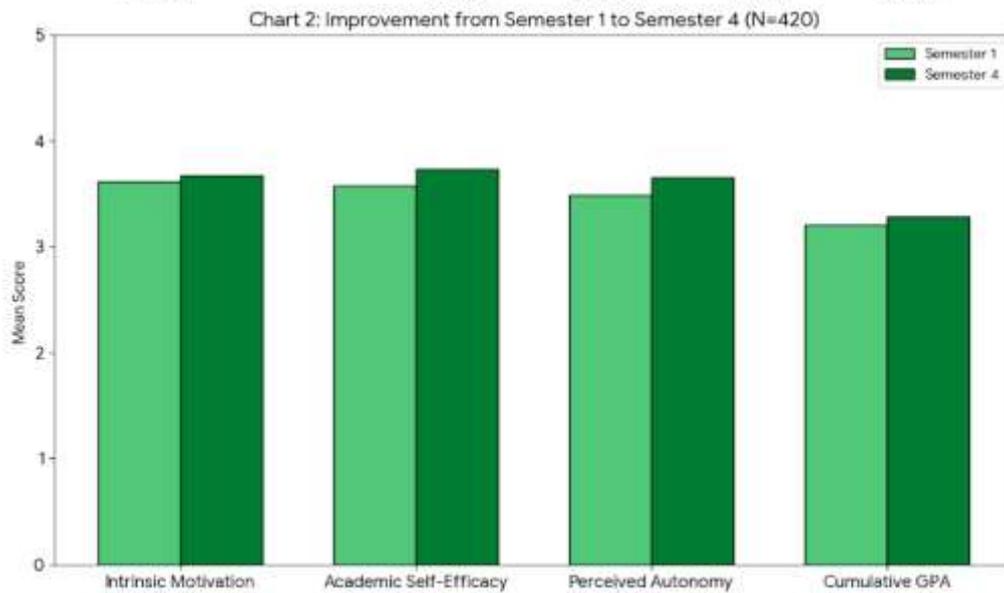
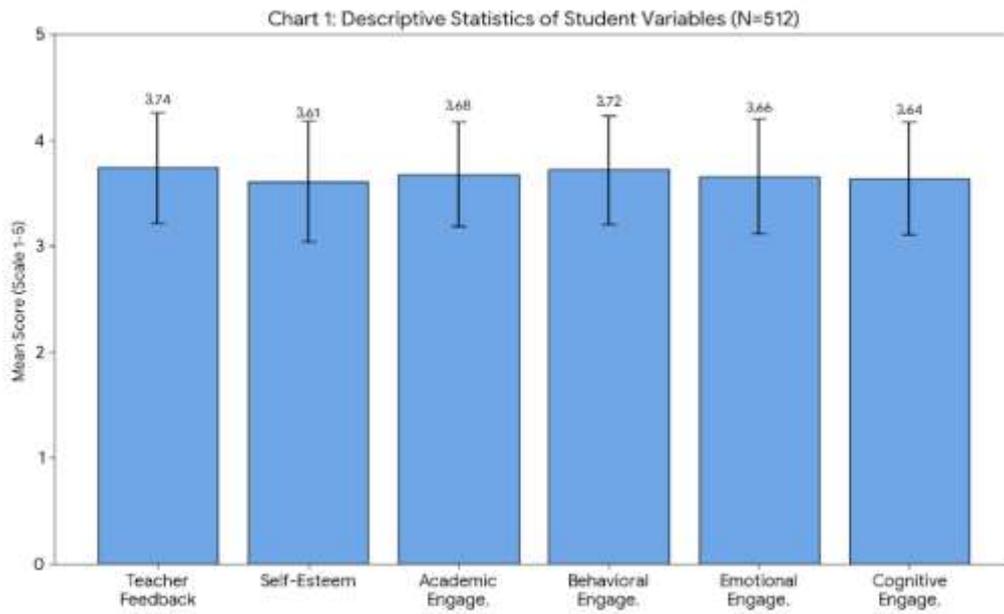


Figure 1. Descriptive Statistics of Student Variables

Hypothesis testing in this study was conducted using a partial t-test to determine the extent of influence of each independent variable individually on the dependent variable. This test aims to verify the validity of the previously formulated hypothesis by comparing the significance value (p-value) to the established significance limit ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ). If the p-value  $< 0.05$ , the alternative hypothesis is accepted, indicating a significant influence between the tested variables.

Table 2. SPSS Processed Data Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

	Model	t	Sig.	
1	(Constant)	.988	.326	
	Personality	4.411	.000	
	Pedagogical Competence	3.039	.003	
Dependent Variable: Achievement Motivation				

Source: SPSS Processed Data (2025)

Based on the table above, testing was conducted to determine the partial effect of personality and pedagogical competence on achievement motivation. Decision-making was carried out by comparing the calculated t-value of each variable with the t-table of 1.984 at a 5% significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) and certain degrees of freedom (df). The following is the interpretation:

Personality has a calculated t-value of 4.411, greater than the t-table of 1.984, and a sig = 0.000, less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that personality has a significant effect on achievement motivation.

Pedagogical competence has a calculated t-value of 3.039, greater than the t-table of 1.984, and a sig = 0.003, less than 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that pedagogical competence has a significant effect on achievement motivation.

Personality is an individual characteristic that reflects a relatively persistent pattern of attitudes, ways of thinking, emotions, and behaviors within an individual. In the context of early childhood education, particularly for PAUD teachers, personality plays a crucial role because it directly relates to how teachers behave, interact with students, face work challenges, and carry out their professional responsibilities. Positive personality traits, such as responsibility, discipline, self-confidence, and perseverance, can provide a strong foundation for fostering teacher achievement motivation.

The results of this study indicate that personality has a positive and significant effect on PAUD teachers' achievement motivation in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This is evidenced by the partial test (t-test) results in substructure model I, where the personality variable has a calculated t-value of 4.411, which is greater than the t-table of 1.984, and a significance value (Sig.) of 0.000  $< 0.05$ . These findings indicate that personality has a statistically significant influence on teachers' achievement motivation, thus the hypothesis proposed in this study is accepted.

The significant influence of personality on achievement motivation indicates that teachers' internal character and attitudes are crucial factors in fostering the desire to achieve. Early childhood education teachers with positive personalities tend to have high work ethic, are diligent in carrying out their duties, and possess a strong drive to achieve optimal results. A positive personality also helps teachers manage their emotions, cope with work pressure, and stay focused on learning objectives, thus fostering motivation to continuously improve their personal qualities and performance.

In practice at Early Childhood Education in Aceh Tamiang Regency, teacher personality is reflected through a responsible attitude in teaching, discipline in carrying out tasks, the ability to adapt to the characteristics of young children, and a willingness to continuously learn

and develop. Teachers with mature personalities find it easier to set personal goals, feel satisfied with their work achievements, and are driven to provide the best for their students. This condition strengthens achievement motivation as an internal drive that arises from within the teacher, not solely due to external demands.

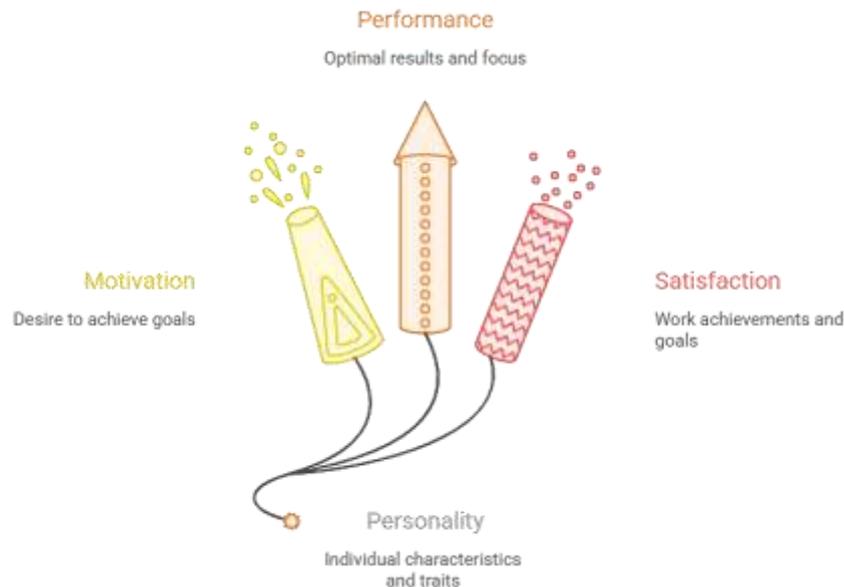


Figure 2. Personality Impacts Teacher Motivation

The findings of this study align with previous research. Putri and Rahman (2021) stated that personality significantly influences teacher achievement motivation because it is related to work attitudes and individual achievement orientation. Furthermore, Hidayat (2022) found that teachers with positive personalities tend to have higher achievement motivation in carrying out their professional duties. Another study by Lestari and Wahyuni (2023) also confirmed that personality traits such as responsibility and perseverance are important predictors of increasing teacher achievement motivation, particularly in early childhood education.

Based on these research results, it can be concluded that personality plays a strategic role in enhancing achievement motivation for Early Childhood Education teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. Therefore, efforts to develop teacher personality require attention from PAUD administrators and education policymakers, through fostering professional attitudes, strengthening work ethics, and developing positive character traits. These efforts are expected to encourage a sustainable increase in teacher achievement motivation and impact the quality of early childhood education services.

Pedagogical competence is a teacher's ability to effectively design, implement, and evaluate learning processes according to student characteristics. In the context of Early Childhood Education, pedagogical competence is not only related to mastery of learning methods and strategies, but also encompasses an understanding of child development, the ability to create a pleasant learning environment, and the skills to provide appropriate stimulation for child development. Strong pedagogical competence will build teacher confidence in carrying out their professional duties, which ultimately contributes to increased achievement motivation.

The results of the study indicate that pedagogical competence has a positive and significant effect on achievement motivation of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This finding is supported by the results of the partial test (t-test) in substructure model I, which shows that pedagogical competence has a calculated t-value of 3.039, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.984, and a significance value (Sig.) of  $0.003 < 0.05$ . Pedagogical competence has a statistically significant effect on teacher achievement motivation. Thus, the hypothesis

stating that there is an influence of pedagogical competence on achievement motivation can be accepted.

The significant influence of pedagogical competence on achievement motivation indicates that teachers' ability to manage learning is a crucial factor in fostering an internal drive for achievement. Teachers with strong pedagogical competence tend to be able to design structured lessons, understand children's learning needs, and overcome various challenges in the learning process. This fosters self-confidence, professional satisfaction, and a desire to achieve better results, both in terms of learning quality and student development outcomes.

In practice at the Early Childhood Education Center in Aceh Tamiang Regency, pedagogical competence is reflected in teachers' ability to develop lesson plans, select methods appropriate to children's characteristics, utilize learning media, and conduct ongoing evaluations of children's development. When teachers feel capable and skilled in carrying out their role as educators, they are driven to continuously improve themselves and demonstrate optimal work performance. This achievement motivation serves as an important foundation for teachers to continuously innovate and improve the quality of early childhood education services.

The results of this study align with previous research findings. Sari and Handayani (2021) stated that pedagogical competence significantly influences teachers' achievement motivation because it provides a sense of competence in carrying out learning tasks. Pratama (2022) also found that teachers with high pedagogical competence have stronger achievement motivation because they are able to see the connection between their efforts and the results achieved. Furthermore, Yuliani and Fadli (2023) emphasized that mastery of pedagogical competence encourages early childhood education (PAUD) teachers to continuously excel through improving the quality of learning and ongoing professional development.

Based on this description, it can be concluded that pedagogical competence plays a strategic role in enhancing the achievement motivation of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. Therefore, efforts to improve pedagogical competence through training, mentoring, and teacher professional development are necessary. Strengthening pedagogical competence is expected to continuously encourage teachers' achievement motivation and positively impact the quality of early childhood education.

Personality is an internal individual factor that plays a crucial role in shaping attitudes, behavior, and how a person carries out their role within an organization. In the context of early childhood education, teacher personality serves as a primary foundation influencing how teachers interact with students, colleagues, and the school environment. Personality reflects relatively stable psychological characteristics, such as responsibility, discipline, emotional stability, openness, and self-control, which directly contribute to the quality of teacher performance.

Early childhood education teachers with positive personalities tend to demonstrate consistent work behavior, dedication, and a high commitment to their professional duties. A mature personality is reflected in a teacher's ability to be patient, empathetic, and adaptive in dealing with the diverse characteristics of early childhood children. Furthermore, a positive personality also supports a teacher's ability to manage the classroom, communicate effectively, and resolve learning problems constructively. These conditions ultimately have a direct impact on overall teacher performance.

Personality is understood as a relatively enduring pattern of characteristics within an individual that influences how they think, feel, and act in various situations. Robbins and Judge (2022) explain that personality is a crucial determinant of work behavior because it directly relates to an individual's attitude, motivation, and response to organizational demands. In the context of the teaching profession, personality plays a role in determining how teachers deal with work pressure, interact with students, and maintain consistent professional behavior in the school environment. Teachers with positive personalities tend to have good emotional control,

are responsible for their tasks, and demonstrate a strong work ethic, which ultimately impacts the quality of their performance.

The Big Five Personality approach also provides a strong foundation for explaining the relationship between personality and performance. According to McCrae and Costa (2021), personality dimensions such as conscientiousness (conscientiousness and responsibility), emotional stability, agreeableness, openness, and extraversion are closely related to individual work performance. In early childhood education, conscientiousness and emotional stability are crucial because teachers are required to work consistently, patiently, and manage their emotions when dealing with children's diverse characteristics. A supportive personality will help teachers fulfill their role optimally, resulting in more effective and sustainable performance.

In practice at the Early Childhood Education Center in Aceh Tamiang Regency, teacher personality is reflected through a responsible attitude in preparing lessons, discipline in carrying out tasks, the ability to collaborate with fellow teachers, and exemplary attitudes and behaviors. Teachers with positive personalities tend to be more consistent in carrying out their teaching duties, are able to maintain quality interactions with students, and demonstrate a commitment to supporting optimal child development. On the other hand, a less stable personality can affect the consistency of performance, especially in dealing with work demands and the dynamics of the school environment.

The results of this study indicate that personality has a positive and significant effect on the performance of PAUD teachers in Aceh Tamiang Regency. This is evidenced by the results of the partial test (t-test), where the personality variable has a t-count value of 2.143, greater than the t-table of 1.984, and  $\text{sig} = 0.035$ , smaller than 0.05. This finding indicates that statistically, personality makes a significant contribution to teacher performance. Thus, the hypothesis stating that there is an influence of personality on PAUD teacher performance can be accepted. Quantitatively, the direct influence between personality on teacher performance is indicated by a coefficient of 0.287 (28.7%), while the indirect influence through the achievement motivation variable is 0.245 (24.5%), so that the total influence of personality on teacher performance is 0.532 (53.2%). Because the value of the direct influence is greater than the indirect influence, it can be concluded that teacher personality plays a significant role in influencing teacher performance directly, without having to go through achievement motivation as an intermediary variable, so that the contribution of personality to teacher performance is proven to be significant in this research model.

## CONCLUSION

The performance of early childhood education teachers in this study can be understood as the result of the interaction between personality factors, pedagogical competence, and achievement motivation. These findings enrich the study of performance theory by demonstrating that teacher performance is determined not only by technical teaching skills but also by personal character and psychological drive. Thus, this study supports an integrative theoretical model that positions individual and motivational aspects as the primary determinants of early childhood education teacher performance.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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