

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TEACHING PROFESSION PERCEPTION IN THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL AND CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (TPACK) AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON TEACHER READINESS

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Abstract

This study addresses the issue of teacher readiness among students enrolled in the Education Study Programs at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Medan, as teacher readiness is a crucial aspect of preparing qualified future educators. The study aims to examine the effects of Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) and the social environment on teacher readiness, with teaching profession perception serving as the mediating variable. A quantitative approach with a causal research design was employed. The population consisted of students from the Education Study Programs at the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Negeri Medan, from the 2022 cohort. A total of 153 students were selected as the research sample. Data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS). The results indicate that TPACK and the social environment have positive and significant effects on teacher readiness. The social environment also has a positive and significant effect on teaching profession perception, while teaching profession perception has a positive and significant effect on teacher readiness. Furthermore, the mediation analysis reveals that teaching profession perception mediates the relationship between the social environment and teacher readiness. These findings suggest that TPACK, the social environment, and teaching profession perception are important factors in enhancing teacher readiness among students in education study programs.

Keywords: TPACK, Social Environment, Teaching Profession Perception

INTRODUCTION

The quality of Indonesian education still faces various challenges. This is reflected in Indonesia's ranking of 45th out of 72 countries with a score of 66.85 in the Global Education Report 2025, indicating that the quality of national education still needs to be improved to be globally competitive. This condition indicates that the national education goals as mandated by Law Number 20 of 2003 have not been optimally achieved (Wahyudi et al. 2022). One factor suspected of contributing to this condition is the readiness of prospective educators to face the demands of 21st-century learning. This readiness is influenced by mastery of Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) and the social environment that plays a role in supporting effective learning (Lesasunanda & Malik, 2024). However, the readiness of prospective teacher students is still relatively low, thus indicating the need to strengthen the competency aspects and supporting factors in developing their career readiness.

Competency gaps are a major obstacle to teacher readiness. Research by (Suyamto et al., 2020) shows that prospective teachers' mastery of TPACK remains moderate, particularly in the aspect of integrating technology into teaching methods. This finding is reinforced by (Nurmatin, 2024), who found that although many educators possess strong personal digital literacy, they often fail to translate it into instructional strategies in the classroom, thus reducing their confidence and teaching readiness. This gap is further exacerbated by the growing competency disparity resulting from differing responses to digital literacy demands in schools (Soepriyanti et al. 2022). In addition to pedagogical mastery, technology integration skills are a crucial indicator of teacher readiness in the digital era (Moorhouse, 2024). Teachers are not only required to be able to operate applications, but must also be able to effectively integrate technology, methods, and teaching materials in the learning process (Zulhazlinda et al., 2023). Gaps arise when students are able to organize learning tools administratively but fail to integrate them into dynamic

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teaching practices. Referring to Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), limitations in integrating the TPACK dimensions have a direct impact on student self-efficacy (Silvester et al. 2024) When mastery of TPACK components is low, students' self-confidence in carrying out professional roles will decrease, ultimately hampering their readiness to enter the teaching profession (Muschaweck, 2023).

The determination of external factors (social environment) on career readiness does not operate in a vacuum, but is mediated by students' perceptions of the teaching profession a subjective assessment of the status, well-being, and moral responsibility of the teaching profession (Ananda & Totalia, 2025). Students' views on professional appreciation are a significant determinant of their persistence in pursuing a teaching career (Nurrikza & Nofiana, 2022). The novelty of this research lies in placing the perception of the teaching profession as a mediating variable in the structural model, to bridge how technical mastery (TPACK) and social environmental support are transformed into concrete career readiness.

Apart from practical gaps in the field, this research is also rooted in research gaps from previous studies which show inconsistencies in results. (Zulhazlinda et al., 2023), confirmed that mastery of TPACK contributed positively and significantly to teacher readiness, however (Firmansyah & Bahtiar, 2025) actually found a theoretical anomaly where self-efficacy had no significant effect on teaching readiness. The dissimilarity of these findings indicates that education students' readiness is not simply determined by cognitive aspects and internal beliefs, but there are other contextual and psychological factors that need to be explored in depth.

Therefore, this research aims to explore in depth the mediating role of perceptions of the teaching profession in the relationship between TPACK and the social environment on readiness to become a teacher. By integrating perceptions of the teaching profession as a mediating variable, this research attempts to dissect the complex dynamics between technical competence, social support, and students' internal beliefs. In this research, the researcher makes a theoretical contribution to the development of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) and provides practical implications for educational institutions in formulating human resource development strategies that are able to construct prospective educators who are competent, adaptive, and have strong professional commitment amidst the challenges of today's teaching profession.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Technological Pedagogical And Content Knowledge (TPACK)

TPACK is the knowledge teachers need to optimally integrate technology into learning. TPACK is the effectiveness of lesson delivery with technology integration, an ideal application in all aspects of learning, all of which are essential in the teaching and learning process (Santos & Castro, 2021). Mastery of pedagogy, technology, and teaching materials is crucial for effective learning, both in theory and practice (Reyes-Rojas et al., 2026). TPACK emphasizes the interaction between content, pedagogy, and technology and is an extension of the concept of pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) into the technology domain. Within the framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), high TPACK mastery reflects students' self-efficacy regarding their technical and pedagogical abilities. Students who believe in their TPACK abilities will be more confident in projecting themselves as professional teachers in the digital era.

Social Environment

The social environment is a forum or means for interacting with others and takes the form of a personality that influences a person's behavior. The social environment is an external factor that includes the family environment, school environment, and community environment that plays a role in shaping an individual's attitudes, behavior, and discipline during the learning process (Dwi et al., 2021). According to (Pakaya & Posumah, 2021), the social environment can influence an individual or group to take action and change the behavior of each individual. A positive social environment will influence a person's personality or behavior for the better (Larasti, 2024). Within the framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the social environment reflects contextual support that influences the formation of students' perceptions of their career choices. Students who receive support from family, peers, lecturers, and the academic environment will be more confident in their choice to become teachers.

Teaching Profession Perception

The perception of the teaching profession is the process of assessment and interpretation carried out by individuals towards the teaching profession based on information, experience, and interaction with the environment, which is then reflected in the individual's attitudes, views, and behavioral tendencies towards the profession. The perception of the teaching profession is an individual's views, assessments, and beliefs towards the teaching

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profession formed from experience, information, and the social environment (Alfiantini et al., 2024). Perception is the process by which individuals organize and interpret sensory information to give meaning to their environment (Agustina, 2024). Within the framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the perception of the teaching profession represents outcome expectations, namely individual beliefs regarding the results or consequences that will be obtained from a career choice. Students who have a positive perception of the teaching profession will view the profession as a valuable career, providing opportunities for self-development, and being able to fulfill hopes in the future.

Teacher Readiness

Readiness is a state in which a person has the ability to face certain situations (Aulianisa, 2024). According to (Aini et al., 2023), readiness to become a teacher is a condition in which prospective teachers have the physical, mental, and professional abilities needed to carry out educational tasks effectively, and meet the teacher competency standards set in professional education. These abilities include physical and mental readiness, including the ability to master and deliver learning materials effectively (Manik et al., 2025). In Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, it is explained that there are four competencies that teachers must have, consisting of pedagogical competence, personality competence, professional competence, and social competence. Within the framework of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), readiness to become a teacher reflects career choice goals, namely career goals that are formed after an individual evaluates their own abilities (self-efficacy), environmental support (contextual support), and expectations of results (outcome expectations). Students who have confidence in their competence, receive adequate social support, and view the teaching profession positively will demonstrate greater readiness to carry out their duties and responsibilities as professional teachers.

METHOD

This study applies a quantitative approach with a causal research design to empirically analyze causal relationships between variables (Sugiyono, 2023). The object of the study focused on readiness to become a teacher, with TPACK and the social environment as independent variables, and the perception of the teaching profession as a mediating variable. The research subjects included 153 students of the 2022 intake from four educational study programs (Economics Education, Office Administration Education, Business Education, and Accounting Education) at the Faculty of Economics and Business, UNIMED. The research sample of 153 students was selected using a proportionate stratified sampling technique from a total population of 249 students. Data were collected using a Likert scale questionnaire instrument (1-4) that measured the dimensions of TPACK mastery, the social environment, perceptions of the teaching profession, and indicators of readiness to become a teacher.

Table 1. Variable and Indicator

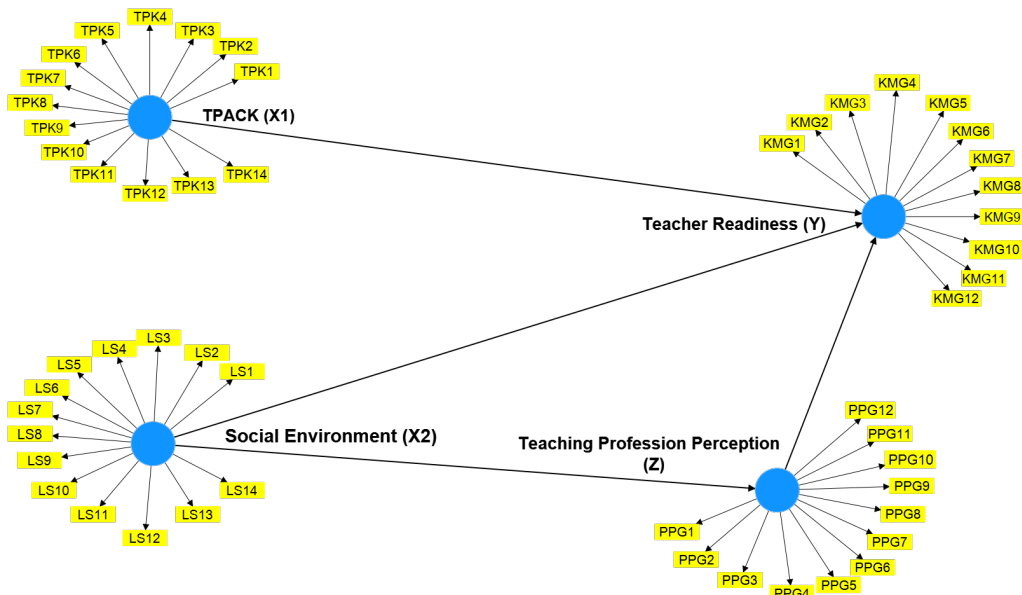
Variabel	Indikator
Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) (Muschaweck, 2023)	Technological Knowledge (TK) Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) Content Knowledge (CK) Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) Technological Content Knowledge (TCK) Technological Pedagogical Knowledge (TPK) Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)
Social Environment (Slimmen et al., 2025)	Social Norms Social Cohesion Community Integration Community Organization Social Support Social Network Satisfaction Social Trust
Teaching Profession Perception	Expert career High demand

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(Alexander et al., 2020)	Social status Salary Social dissuasion Satisfaction with choice
Teacher Readiness (Slimmen et al., 2025)	Knowledge Skills Attitudes

This study assumes that the collected data are representative and capable of representing real phenomena in the field. All data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) through SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis procedure was carried out in two crucial stages: first, evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) to ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument; second, evaluation of the structural model (inner model) through a bootstrapping procedure to test the significance of the relationship between variables and prove the mediating role of the perception of the teaching profession within the framework of the hypothesized model.



Picture 1. Research Model

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

The data analysis in this study used the Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method, which includes two main stages: measurement model evaluation (outer model) and structural model evaluation (inner model).

a. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

This stage was conducted to ensure the research instrument met validity and reliability criteria. Convergent validity testing was demonstrated through factor loading values (> 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.50) (Hair et al., 2019), confirming that each indicator accurately represented its latent variable. Meanwhile, instrument reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values (> 0.70), (Husnawati et al., 2019), which demonstrated the internal consistency of the questionnaire used in this study.

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Table 2. Output Convergent Validity and Internal Consistency Reliability

Variable	Total Indicator	Convergent Validity		Internal Consistency Reliability	
		Outer Loading Range	AVE	Cronbach' alpha	Composite Realibility
TPACK (X1)	14	0.701–0.787	0.542	0.935	0.943
Social Environment (X2)	14	0.707–0.801	0.576	0.943	0.950
Teacher Readiness (Y)	12	0.753–0.857	0.655	0.952	0.958
Teaching Profession Perception (Z)	12	0.718–0.839	0.628	0.946	0.953

The convergent validity of the measurement model is assessed based on the outer loading value of each indicator against its latent variable. An indicator is considered to meet the ideal convergent validity requirements if its outer loading value is greater than 0.70 (>0.70) (Hair et al. 2019). Based on Table , the outer loading values for all indicators in the variables TPACK Mastery (X1), Social Environment (X2), Readiness to Become a Teacher (Y), and Perception of the Teaching Profession (Z) are all above 0.70. Furthermore, the AVE values for all latent variables in this study also show values above 0.50. Therefore, it can be concluded that all indicators used in this study have a high level of validity and are valid for measuring each variable construct.

All study variables consistently have Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values well above the minimum threshold of 0.70. Thus, it can be concluded that all instruments used in this study have met the criteria for very good reliability, so they have high consistency for use as data collection tools.

b. Structural Model (Inner Model)

After the measurement model is declared feasible, the next stage is evaluating the structural model to test the hypothesis. The influence between variables is evaluated through the path coefficient which shows the direction and strength of the causal relationship. The results of the analysis show the R-square value which indicates the large proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables in the model. In addition, the f-square value is calculated to determine the substantial influence of exogenous variables on endogenous variables in the structural model. Next, the Q-square (Predictive Relevance) value is used to assess the predictive relevance of the model, where the Q^2 value > 0 indicates that the model has good predictive ability for endogenous variables. The bootstrapping procedure was carried out to test the significance of the effect, where the relationship between variables was declared significant if the p-value < 0.05 and t-statistic > 1.96 , (Hair et al. 2019).

Table 3. Output R^2 And Q^2

Variable	<i>R-square (R^2)</i>	<i>Q- Square (Q^2)</i>
Teacher Readiness (Y)	0.580	0.369
Teaching Profession Perception (Z)	0.501	0.305

The R-square test results indicate that TPACK and the social environment explain 58% of the variance in teacher readiness. Furthermore, the social environment explains 50.1% of the variance in teacher profession perceptions. Based on these values, the R-square in this study is classified as moderate.

Furthermore, the Q-square test results indicate that both endogenous variables (Z and Y) have Q^2 values > 0 , indicating that the structural model has predictive relevance. This indicates that the model has good predictive ability for the endogenous variables.

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Table 4. Output f square

	Teacher Readiness (Y)	Teaching Profession Perception (Z)
Social Environment (X2)	0.065 (small)	1.005 (large)
TPACK (X1)	0.091 (small)	
Teaching Profession Perception (Z)	0.162 (medium)	

The f-square test results indicate that the influence of TPACK mastery and social environment on teacher readiness is small, while the perception of the teaching profession is medium. Meanwhile, the social environment has a significant influence on the perception of the teaching profession.

Table 5. Output Path Coefficients

	<i>Path Koefisien</i>	<i>T statistics</i>	<i>P values</i>	<i>Explanation</i>
X1 -> Y	0.250	2.922	0.003	Influential
X2 -> Y	0.247	2.363	0.018	Influential
X2 -> Z	0.708	14.009	0.000	Influential
Z -> Y	0.380	3.252	0.001	Influential
X2 -> Z -> Y	0.269	3.266	0.001	Influential

The path coefficient test results indicate that TPACK mastery (X1) and the social environment (X2) significantly influence teacher readiness (Y). The social environment (X2) also significantly influences the perception of the teaching profession perception (Z), and teaching profession perception (Z) significantly influences teacher readiness (Y). Furthermore, the teaching profession perception (Z) mediates the influence of the social environment (X2) on teacher readiness (Y), indicating a mediation effect. The mediation role testing in this study used the Upsilon (v) approach to measure the strength of the indirect effect of the Social Environment (X2) on Teacher Readiness (Y) through teaching profession perception (Z). The analysis results showed an indirect effect of 0.269 with an Upsilon (v) value of 0.072. Based on the classification proposed by (Ogbeibu et al. 2021), an Upsilon (v) value < 0.075 is categorized as a low-level mediation effect.

Discussion

The Influence of TPACK On Teacher Readiness

The results of the study indicate that mastery of Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) has a positive and significant effect on readiness to become a teacher with a small contribution ($f^2 = 0.091$). This indicates that the integration of technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge plays a role in shaping students' readiness to become professional teachers. From the perspective of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), mastery of TPACK can increase students' self-confidence (self-efficacy) in facing the challenges of 21st-century learning, thus impacting career readiness as prospective teachers. This finding supports the results of previous studies that stated that TPACK has a significant effect on teacher readiness, (Firmansyah & Bahtiar, 2025; Perdani & Andayani, 2021; Putri & Surjanti, 2024). Thus, TPACK is an important factor in increasing students' readiness to become teachers.

The Influence of Social Environment On Teacher Readiness

The results of the study indicate that the social environment has a positive and significant effect on readiness to become a teacher with a small contribution ($f^2 = 0.065$). This indicates that support from family, peers, and the community environment plays a role in shaping students' readiness to become teachers. A supportive social environment provides moral encouragement, motivation, and reinforcement in career decision-making, thereby strengthening students' readiness to enter the teaching profession. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) emphasizes the existence of contextual affordances or contextual support in career selection. A supportive social environment acts as environmental support that strengthens students' outcome expectations. This finding is in line with previous research showing that the social environment has a significant effect on readiness to become a teacher (Mujayanti & Latifah, 2022; Perwitasari et al., 2023). Thus, the social environment is an important external factor in shaping students' readiness to become teachers.

The Influence of Social Environment On Teacher Readiness

In addition to influencing readiness to become a teacher, the social environment also influences perceptions of the teaching profession. The results showed that the social environment had a positive and significant effect on perceptions of the teaching profession, with a significant contribution ($f^2 = 1.005$). This indicates that social support is a very dominant external factor in shaping students' perceptions of the teaching profession. The more positive support received from the social environment, the better the students' perceptions of the teaching profession. The social environment plays a role in shaping students' perspectives through the internalization of values acquired through social interactions. In this context, a supportive environment builds a positive image of the teaching profession as professional and possessing high social value, while simultaneously reducing negative perceptions related to low appreciation and welfare for the profession. From the perspective of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the social environment functions as contextual affordances that influence the formation of students' outcome expectations regarding the teaching profession. This finding aligns with previous research showing that external factors such as the social environment and information obtained significantly influence the formation of professional perceptions ((Ibrahim, 2014; Sukmawati, 2019). Thus, the social environment is a crucial determinant in shaping positive perceptions of the teaching profession.

The Influence of Teaching Profession Perception On Teacher Readiness

The teaching profession perception is an internal factor that influences teacher readiness. The results showed that the perception of the teaching profession had a positive and significant effect on readiness to become teachers, with a moderate contribution ($f^2 = 0.162$). This indicates that students' perceptions of the teaching profession play a crucial internal role in shaping their readiness to become professional educators. The more positive students' perceptions of the teaching profession, the greater their readiness to enter the workforce as teachers. The perception of the teaching profession reflects how students interpret the profession, both in terms of competency requirements and its social value. Positive perceptions strengthen students' belief that teaching is a meaningful career requiring high levels of professional competence, thus encouraging their readiness to prepare more seriously. From a Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) perspective, perceptions of the teaching profession serve as outcome expectations that influence individual readiness in making career choices. This finding aligns with previous research showing that perceptions of the teaching profession significantly influence readiness to become (Anggraini et al., 2024; Puspitasari & Asrori, 2019). Thus, teaching profession perception are an important psychological factor in enhancing students' readiness to become teachers.

The Mediating Role of Teacher Profession Perception in the Influence of the Social Environment on Teacher Readiness

The results of the indirect path analysis indicate a mediating role of the perception of the teaching profession in the relationship between the social environment and readiness to become a teacher, with a path coefficient of 0.269 and an Upsilon (υ) value of 0.072, indicating partial mediation with a low effect. These findings indicate that the social environment not only directly influences readiness to become a teacher but also through the formation of students' perceptions of the teaching profession. Social environments such as family, peers, and academic environments provide information and social validation that shape students' views of the teaching profession. Positive support will strengthen the perception that the teaching profession has social value and good prospects, thereby increasing students' readiness in choosing a teaching career. From the perspective of Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), the social environment functions as contextual affordances that shape outcome expectations through perceptions of the teaching profession, which ultimately influence students' career readiness. This finding aligns with previous research showing that perceptions of the teaching profession influence readiness to become a teacher (Aayn & Listiadi, 2022) and that the social environment influences readiness to become a teacher (Anggraini et al., 2024; Laily & Sunaryanto, 2022). Thus, perceptions of the teaching profession act as a psychological mechanism that bridges the influence of the social environment on readiness to become a teacher. Although mastery of TPACK and the social environment have been shown to influence readiness to become a teacher, this study has limitations. This study was conducted only on prospective teacher students, so it does not directly describe the readiness conditions of teachers already teaching in the field. Therefore, the results of this study still need to be further studied in the context of a broader range of respondents, particularly professional teachers, to obtain a more comprehensive picture.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that teacher readiness is a complex construct built through the integration of internal competencies in the form of Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) and external support from the social environment. Statistically, this research model confirms that all hypotheses are accepted, with mastery of TPACK and the social environment having a significant direct influence on teacher readiness. The study's findings highlight the role of the teacher's professional perception as a partial mediator, bridging the influence of the social environment on student readiness. This demonstrates that social support not only provides emotional support but also cognitively shapes positive perceptions that strengthen students' professional commitment. Thus, this model confirms that teacher readiness among FEB students at Medan State University is the result of a synergy between adaptive technical skills, a supportive social ecosystem, and a healthy career perception. Educational institutions are expected to strengthen the integration of technology in learning and provide spaces for students to interact with educational practitioners to maintain positive perceptions of the teaching profession. In addition, further research is recommended to add other variables such as academic resilience and teacher professional identity to explain the variance in teacher readiness that has not been accommodated in this research model, as well as conducting further studies to see the influence of other internal factors that may be relevant.

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THE MEDIATING ROLE OF TEACHING PROFESSION PERCEPTION IN THE EFFECT OF TECHNOLOGICAL PEDAGOGICAL AND CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (TPACK) AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT ON TEACHER READINESS

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