

THE EFFECTS OF TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT ON SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER PERFORMANCE WITH COMPETENCE AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of training and career development on teacher performance, with competence as a mediating variable, at secondary schools in Tanah Jambo Aye and Baktiya, North Aceh Regency. A quantitative survey used a census approach to include all 110 teachers at SMA Negeri 2 Tanah Jambo Aye, SMA Negeri 3 Citra Bangsa, and SMA Negeri 1 Baktiya. Questionnaire data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. The analysis included measurement and structural model assessments and bootstrapping. Training significantly affected competence ($\beta = 0.469$; $p = 0.006$), as did career development ($\beta = 0.512$; $p = 0.003$). Competence did not significantly affect performance ($\beta = 0.540$; $p = 0.068$). The direct effects of training ($p = 0.335$) and career development ($p = 0.678$) on performance were also nonsignificant. Neither indirect effect through competence was statistically significant, with p -values of 0.183 and 0.103, respectively. The model explained 79.2% of the variance in competence and 62.9% of the variance in performance. These findings indicate a gap between competence development and its application to teachers' work. Professional development therefore requires attention to classroom application, organizational support, and performance evaluation.

Keywords: *Career development; Competence; PLS-SEM; Teacher performance; Training*

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management is central to educational institutions' ability to improve teaching and sustain organizational performance. Teachers are an important source of a school's intellectual capital because their knowledge, skills, and professional conduct shape the learning process. Investment in this capital includes training and career development, both of which are intended to strengthen teachers' capacity to fulfill their educational responsibilities effectively (Mahmood et al., 2018; Nwaeke & Obiekwe, 2017). Teacher performance extends beyond attendance and the completion of formal duties. It includes planning instruction, implementing appropriate learning activities, evaluating learning outcomes, collaborating with colleagues, and conducting self-evaluation. These activities connect teachers' individual capabilities with the school's educational objectives. Training and competence are therefore relevant to understanding differences in how teachers fulfill their professional responsibilities (Bastian et al., 2022; Maritasari et al., 2020).

Changes in curricula, instructional technology, and student needs require teachers to update their knowledge and teaching practices. Schools must therefore provide professional development that addresses actual instructional needs. Training is expected to strengthen knowledge and practical skills, while career development provides direction, recognition, and opportunities for continued professional growth. Such support is important for teachers who must balance classroom responsibilities, administrative work, and changing institutional expectations (Putra & Yahya, 2024; Lutfiyanto et al., 2020). Preliminary observations identified inconsistencies in instructional planning, the use of learning materials, and the evaluation of student learning in the study area. Some training activities were perceived as too general to address subject-specific needs, and follow-up was considered insufficiently systematic. These observations raised the question of whether professional development was contributing to the competencies and classroom practices required by the participating schools. School records provided further context for the study. SMA Negeri 2 Tanah Jambo Aye participated in science, research, debate, and other student competitions. SMA Negeri 3 Citra Bangsa recorded student achievements in literacy, including book publication, while SMA Negeri 1 Baktiya recorded university admissions through the achievement-based selection route and participation in science competitions. These differences describe the educational setting. The present analysis examines teachers'

questionnaire responses rather than estimating the determinants of student achievement. Previous research suggests positive relationships among professional development, competence, and performance. Pangestika et al. (2023) examined competence as a mediator of the relationship between training and development and employee performance, while Arifin et al. (2020) examined its role in the relationship between career development and employee performance. In education, Maritasari et al. (2020) investigated teacher competence as a mediator linking training and supervision to teacher performance. These studies support examining how development activities contribute to professional capacity.

However, previous studies report mixed findings on the direct relationship between training and performance. Meitisari et al. (2026) and Feryanto et al. (2025) describe contexts in which the direct effect of training does not adequately explain performance. This variation highlights the need to distinguish competence development from its subsequent application at work. Evidence from one educational level or organizational setting does not establish that the same relationships will be significant in another. This study therefore examines five direct relationships and two indirect relationships among training, career development, competence, and teacher performance. It focuses on teachers at three public senior secondary schools in Tanah Jambo Aye and Baktiya, North Aceh Regency. The study contributes evidence on whether competence mediates the relationship between professional development practices and teacher performance in this specific educational setting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical foundation

The study adopts a human capital perspective, which views education and professional development as investments in individuals' knowledge and capabilities. Within educational institutions, training and career opportunities are expected to develop teachers' professional capacity and support productive work. The proposed model distinguishes investment in teachers, the competence associated with that investment, and the performance expected to result from applying that competence (Schultz, 1961; Mahmood et al., 2018). Goal-setting theory offers a complementary explanation of teacher performance. Clear objectives and feedback can direct effort toward specific work outcomes (Locke, 1968). In this study, instructional plans, teaching responsibilities, and evaluation activities provide the practical context in which teachers are expected to apply their competence. This perspective connects teacher development with the accomplishment of educational tasks rather than treating participation in development activities as an outcome in itself. The competence framework draws on Spencer and Spencer (1993), who distinguish knowledge and skills from underlying characteristics such as motives, traits, and self-concept. This distinction matters because professional competence encompasses more than technical knowledge. Career stage theory further explains professional development as a continuing process across different phases of working life (Super, 1957). Teachers at different career stages may require induction, technical development, mentoring opportunities, or support to maintain their professional capacity.

Training and career development

Training is defined as a planned, systematic, and ongoing learning process intended to improve knowledge, skills, and work attitudes in line with professional requirements. For teachers, training supports the development of instructional knowledge, classroom management skills, and the ability to apply teaching methods and technology. The measurement of training in this study follows the indicators used by Pangestika et al. (2023), while its educational rationale draws on Bastian et al. (2022) and Maritasari et al. (2020). The training framework emphasizes analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. These stages focus attention on needs assessment, the relevance of training materials, appropriate delivery, and follow-up. Training should therefore be assessed in relation to the competencies it develops and the opportunities available to apply what has been learned. Its effectiveness cannot be inferred solely from attendance or fulfillment of an administrative requirement (Nwaeke & Obiekwe, 2017; Mahmood et al., 2018).

Career development is an organizational process that supports professional growth through career planning, guidance, and development opportunities. It seeks to align individual potential and aspirations with institutional needs. The concept encompasses promotion opportunities, professional learning, managerial support for career progression, access to career information, and satisfaction with development prospects (Arifin et al., 2020; Lutfiyanto et al., 2020). In schools, career development can encourage teachers to strengthen their qualifications and capabilities to meet professional requirements. Super's (1957) perspective emphasizes the need for continued support as individuals progress through their careers. The proposed relationship with competence rests on the expectation that clear career opportunities and development support encourage sustained professional learning. The proposed

relationship with performance concerns whether these opportunities are also associated with more effective teaching practices.

Competence and teacher performance

Competence integrates the knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes required to perform work effectively and responsibly. Teacher competence includes pedagogical, professional, social, and personal dimensions. In this study, these dimensions are represented by indicators covering learning theory, information and communication technology, moral conduct, adaptation and communication, and knowledge development (Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Maritasari et al., 2020). Teacher performance refers to the work outcomes and professional behavior demonstrated in planning, delivering, and evaluating instruction. It also includes collaboration within working groups, understanding and performing work tasks, and self-evaluation. These indicators distinguish performance from competence: competence concerns professional capacity, whereas performance concerns the application of that capacity in educational work. The performance measure follows Bastian et al. (2022).

Hypothesis development

Training provides opportunities to update professional knowledge and acquire skills relevant to instruction. Mahmood et al. (2018), Maritasari et al. (2020), and Pangestika et al. (2023) provide a basis for expecting relevant training to improve competence. Accordingly, the first hypothesis is proposed: H1: Training has a significant effect on teacher competence. Career development can motivate teachers to improve their capabilities by clarifying professional requirements and providing opportunities for advancement. Arifin et al. (2020) and Maulid et al. (2025) support examining competence within organizational development processes. The second hypothesis is therefore proposed: H2: Career development has a significant effect on teacher competence.

Competent teachers are expected to plan lessons, deliver instruction, and assess student learning more effectively. Research on teacher performance provides an empirical basis for this expectation (Bastian et al., 2022; Herlina et al., 2023). The third hypothesis is therefore proposed: H3: Competence has a significant effect on teacher performance. Training may also influence performance directly by introducing practical teaching methods and improving the execution of instructional tasks. Relevant educational studies include Maritasari et al. (2020) and Pambreni et al. (2023). The fourth hypothesis is therefore proposed: H4: Training has a significant effect on teacher performance.

Career development can encourage professional responsibility and strengthen commitment to institutional goals. Ajitama et al. (2023) and Lutfiyanto et al. (2020) provide a basis for examining this relationship among teachers. The fifth hypothesis is therefore proposed: H5: Career development has a significant effect on teacher performance. The model further proposes that training and career development may affect performance through competence. Training may improve knowledge and skills, while career opportunities may encourage teachers to acquire the capabilities needed for greater responsibility. These capabilities are then expected to support performance. This reasoning is consistent with the mediation frameworks examined by Maritasari et al. (2020), Arifin et al. (2020), and Pangestika et al. (2023). Two mediation hypotheses are proposed: H6: Competence mediates the relationship between training and teacher performance. H7: Competence mediates the relationship between career development and teacher performance.

METHODS

Research design and setting

This study employed a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design. The unit of analysis was the individual teacher employed at SMA Negeri 2 Tanah Jambo Aye, SMA Negeri 3 Citra Bangsa, or SMA Negeri 1 Baktiya in North Aceh Regency, Aceh Province. The schools were selected based on their location, number of teachers, and differences in educational achievements. The study population comprised 110 teachers, all of whom were included using a census approach.

Table 1. Study population by school

School	Teachers
SMA Negeri 2 Tanah Jambo Aye	30
SMA Negeri 3 Citra Bangsa	40
SMA Negeri 1 Baktiya	40
Total	110

Source: Teacher records of the participating schools.

Primary data were collected by distributing questionnaires directly to teachers at the schools between 23 March and 26 May 2026. All 110 questionnaires were returned, with no missing data reported. Direct distribution enabled the researcher to reach the entire study population and collect responses for descriptive and inferential analyses.

Measures and questionnaire

The questionnaire consisted of structured statements rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Training and career development were the independent variables, competence was the mediating variable, and teacher performance was the dependent variable. The measurement model comprised 22 indicators: six for training, five for career development, five for competence, and six for teacher performance. All constructs were specified as reflective.

Table 2. Operational measures

Construct and item codes	Indicators	Source
Training (X1) P1–P6	Development training; work improvement; work development; work procedures; training programs; career objectives.	Pangestika <i>et al.</i> (2023)
Career development (X2) PK1–PK5	Fairness in promotion; support for career development; access to career information; interest in promotion; satisfaction.	Lutfiyanto <i>et al.</i> (2020)
Competence (Z) K1–K5	Mastery of learning theory; use of information and communication technology; moral conduct; adaptation and communication; knowledge development.	Maritasari <i>et al.</i> (2020)
Teacher performance (Y) KG1–KG6	Instructional planning; delivery of instruction; evaluation of learning; collaboration within working groups; understanding and ability to perform work tasks; self-evaluation.	Bastian <i>et al.</i> (2022)

All indicators used a five-point Likert scale. Source: Operational variable definitions in the study.

Questionnaires provide a structured means of collecting respondents' perceptions for descriptive and explanatory research (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019). Teachers completed the questionnaires themselves. The competence and performance measures therefore reflect their self-reported perceptions of professional capacity and work performance. These measures were not based on independent classroom observations or separate assessments by supervisors.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) in SmartPLS. The measurement model was evaluated before the structural relationships were assessed. Convergent validity was examined using outer loadings and average variance extracted (AVE), with adopted thresholds of 0.70 and 0.50, respectively. Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, with a threshold of 0.70.

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Discriminant validity was assessed using cross-loadings, the Fornell–Larcker criterion, and the heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT). The distinction between related constructs was evaluated against the HTMT threshold of 0.90 specified in the analytical framework. Structural model assessment included the reported model fit statistics, coefficients of determination (R^2), and effect sizes (f^2), followed by an evaluation of the path coefficients (Hair & Alamer, 2022; Henseler et al., 2016). Bootstrapping was used to assess five direct effects and two specific indirect effects. Statistical significance was evaluated at the 5% level, with t-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values below 0.05 indicating statistical support. Mediation was assessed through the indirect paths linking each independent variable to performance through competence. The conceptual discussion also drew on Baron and Kenny (1986). The results distinguish the direction of each coefficient from evidence of its statistical significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent characteristics

The respondents comprised all teachers at the three selected schools. Of the 110 respondents, 80 were women and 30 were men. Most held a bachelor's degree, and 92 were employed as state civil personnel (ASN). During the preceding three years, 96 respondents had participated in professional training, while 14 reported no participation. Table 3 summarizes their characteristics.

Table 3. Respondent profile

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Women	80	72.7
	Men	30	27.3
Education	Senior high school	8	7.3
	Diploma III	1	0.9
	Bachelor's degree	96	87.3
	Master's degree	5	4.5
Employment status	State civil personnel (ASN)	92	83.6
	Non-ASN	18	16.4
Training in the preceding three years	Participated	96	87.3
	Did not participate	14	12.7

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

Most respondents held undergraduate qualifications, worked in public-sector employment, and had recently participated in training. These characteristics describe the study setting; the structural analysis did not examine differences between demographic subgroups.

Descriptive statistics

Responses were concentrated at the upper end of the five-point scale. The reported construct means were 4.69 for training, 4.73 for career development, 4.76 for competence, and 4.77 for performance. Table 4 presents the aggregate descriptive statistics and the ranges of item means reported in the results tables.

Table 4. Descriptive statistics

Construct	Mean	SD	Item-mean range
Training	4.69	0.464	4.76–4.87
Career development	4.73	0.500	4.70–4.77
Competence	4.76	0.446	4.72–4.81
Teacher performance	4.77	0.455	4.72–4.80

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026. The reported training mean (4.69) is below the range of its item means.

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For training, P1 had the highest item mean (4.87), while P3 had the lowest (4.76). For career development, PK3 had both the lowest mean (4.70) and the largest item standard deviation (0.567). Competence item means ranged from 4.72 to 4.81, and performance item means ranged from 4.72 to 4.80. These patterns indicate strongly positive self-assessments across all constructs, with relatively limited variation in responses.

Measurement model

All 22 reported outer loadings exceeded 0.70. Loadings ranged from 0.701 to 0.953 for training, from 0.777 to 0.822 for career development, from 0.746 to 0.872 for competence, and from 0.758 to 0.944 for performance. AVE exceeded 0.50 for every construct, while Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability exceeded 0.70. These results supported convergent validity and internal consistency according to the adopted criteria.

Table 5. Outer loadings and reliability

Construct	Item loadings	AVE	Alpha	CR
Training	P1 0.929; P2 0.908; P3 0.701; P4 0.812; P5 0.953; P6 0.914	0.764	0.936	0.950
Career development	PK1 0.818; PK2 0.822; PK3 0.777; PK4 0.809; PK5 0.809	0.651	0.868	0.903
Competence	K1 0.746; K2 0.868; K3 0.863; K4 0.872; K5 0.801	0.691	0.887	0.918
Teacher performance	KG1 0.758; KG2 0.930; KG3 0.944; KG4 0.824; KG5 0.854; KG6 0.898	0.757	0.935	0.949

AVE = average variance extracted; Alpha = Cronbach's alpha; CR = composite reliability. Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

HTMT values ranged from 0.705 to 0.890, with the highest value between competence and career development, followed by competence and training (0.865). All values were below the 0.90 threshold adopted for closely related constructs. Table 6 presents the pairwise values.

Table 6. HTMT ratios

Construct pair	HTMT	Construct pair	HTMT
Performance / Competence	0.840	Performance / Training	0.724
Performance / Career development	0.705	Competence / Training	0.865
Competence / Career development	0.890	Training / Career development	0.705

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

The Fornell–Larcker results and cross-loadings further assess the distinction between competence, career development, and performance. Table 7 reproduces the original matrix. Career development correlated with competence at 0.815, exceeding its reported diagonal value of 0.807. KG4 loaded at 0.824 on performance and 0.856 on competence. These patterns warrant caution when interpreting the constructs as fully distinct, although HTMT remained below the adopted 0.90 threshold.

Table 7. Fornell–Larcker matrix

Construct	Y	Z	X1	X2
Teacher performance (Y)	0.873			
Competence (Z)	0.782	0.831		
Training (X1)	0.695	0.800	0.874	
Career development (X2)	0.672	0.815	0.647	0.807

Diagonal values and correlations are reproduced from the study output. Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

The measurement results indicate strong internal consistency and convergent validity, although closely related constructs require careful interpretation. Structural coefficients are reported with bootstrap significance levels to distinguish positive associations from statistically supported effects.

Structural model and direct effects

The reported R^2 for competence was 0.792, with an adjusted R^2 of 0.781. For teacher performance, R^2 was 0.629 and adjusted R^2 was 0.598. The model therefore explained 79.2% of the variance in competence and 62.9% of the variance in performance in the study data. These values indicate the proportion of variance explained; they do not establish the significance of individual paths.

Table 8. Explained variance

Endogenous construct	R^2	Adjusted R^2
Competence	0.792	0.781
Teacher performance	0.629	0.598

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

The model fit results showed an SRMR of 0.118 and a d_ULS of 3.541 for both the saturated and estimated models. Values for d_G and NFI were unavailable, and the chi-square value was reported as infinite. SRMR exceeded the criterion of 0.08 stated in the methodological framework. These results warrant caution when interpreting overall model adequacy. The assessment also considered R^2 , f^2 , and bootstrapped path estimates, as reported below.

Table 9. Effect sizes

Predictor	Competence (f^2)	Performance (f^2)
Training	0.615	0.037
Career development	0.733	0.010
Competence		0.164

Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

The largest f^2 values were observed for the paths from career development and training to competence, at 0.733 and 0.615, respectively. For performance, competence had an f^2 of 0.164, while training and career development had smaller values of 0.037 and 0.010. The magnitude of these contributions should be distinguished from statistical significance, which was assessed through bootstrapping.

Table 10. Bootstrapped direct effects

H	Path	β	Mean	SD	t	p	Decision
H1	Training → Competence	0.469	0.497	0.172	2.726	0.006	Supported
H2	Career development → Competence	0.512	0.486	0.174	2.950	0.003	Supported
H3	Competence → Performance	0.540	0.489	0.296	1.824	0.068	Unsupported
H4	Training → Performance	0.195	0.203	0.202	0.965	0.335	Unsupported
H5	Career development → Performance	0.106	0.158	0.255	0.415	0.678	Unsupported

β = original sample coefficient; Mean = bootstrap sample mean; SD = bootstrap standard deviation. Significance level: 5%. Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

Training had a significant effect on competence ($\beta = 0.469$; $t = 2.726$; $p = 0.006$), supporting H1. Career development also had a significant effect on competence ($\beta = 0.512$; $t = 2.950$; $p = 0.003$), supporting H2. The path coefficient from competence to performance was positive but not significant at the 5% level ($\beta = 0.540$; $t = 1.824$; $p = 0.068$). H3 was therefore not supported. The direct effect of training on performance was not significant ($\beta = 0.195$; $t = 0.965$; $p = 0.335$), nor was the direct effect of career development on performance ($\beta = 0.106$; $t = 0.415$; $p = 0.678$). H4 and H5 were therefore not supported. Only the two direct paths to competence met the significance criteria.

Indirect effects and the mediating role of competence

The indirect effect of training on performance through competence was 0.253, with $t = 1.333$ and $p = 0.183$. The corresponding indirect effect of career development was 0.277, with $t = 1.629$ and $p = 0.103$. Neither indirect effect was significant at the 5% level. H6 and H7 were therefore not supported, and the mediating role of competence was not established in either relationship.

Table 11. Bootstrapped specific indirect effects

H	Path	β	Mean	SD	t	p	Decision
H6	Training → Competence → Performance	0.253	0.246	0.190	1.333	0.183	Unsupported
H7	Career development → Competence → Performance	0.277	0.236	0.170	1.629	0.103	Unsupported

Significance level: 5%. Source: Primary data analysis, 2026.

Training and career development were significantly related to competence, but these initial relationships were insufficient to establish mediation. The specific indirect effects supported neither partial nor full mediation.

Training and career development as predictors of competence

The significant effect of training on competence is consistent with the human capital perspective that professional development is associated with stronger individual capabilities. It also aligns with the role of training in the competence frameworks examined by Mahmood et al. (2018), Maritasari et al. (2020), and Pangestika et al. (2023). Among the participating teachers, training was associated with capabilities related to instructional knowledge, technology, professional conduct, communication, and continued learning.

The significant effect of career development on competence indicates the importance of professional opportunities and institutional support for capacity development. This result is consistent with the relationships examined by Arifin et al. (2020) and Maulid et al. (2025). From the perspective of career stage theory, continued opportunities can support teachers as they establish, maintain, and renew their professional capabilities (Super, 1957).

Competence and teacher performance

The positive path coefficient from competence to performance did not reach statistical significance. This finding differs from the significant relationships reported by Bastian et al. (2022) and Herlina et al. (2023). It indicates that the proposed effect was not established in the participating schools at the adopted significance level. It should not be interpreted as evidence that competence is irrelevant to teaching practice. The concentration of competence and performance responses at the upper end of the scale offers one possible explanation. Both variables received favorable self-ratings with limited variation, which may reduce the ability to distinguish differences among respondents. Self-assessment may also fail to capture differences observable in classroom practice. Administrative workload, instructional facilities, supervision, and organizational support offer other possible explanations. These factors were not tested as predictors, so their roles remain possible interpretations rather than demonstrated findings.

Training and teacher performance

The nonsignificant direct effect of training highlights the distinction between participation, learning, and classroom application. Although 96 teachers had attended training, neither participation nor favorable perceptions established a significant effect on performance. This finding differs from the positive effects reported by Pambreni et al. (2023) and Herlina et al. (2023). Meitisari et al. (2026) and Feryanto et al. (2025) provide relevant examples of nonsignificant direct effects. Follow-up support and opportunities to apply new skills therefore warrant further examination.

Career development and the gap between competence and performance

Career development did not have a significant direct effect on performance, unlike the significant relationships reported by Ajitama et al. (2023) and Rahmah and Prasada (2024). Formal career development arrangements may strengthen capacity without immediately changing instructional behavior. PK3, which concerns promotion opportunities, showed the greatest variation in responses among the career development items. This indicates differing perceptions but does not establish uncertainty about promotion as the cause of the nonsignificant effect.

The absence of significant indirect effects limits support for the proposed mediating role of competence. Previous studies examined competence as a mechanism linking development activities to performance (Arifin et al., 2020; Maritasari et al., 2020; Pangestika et al., 2023). Meitisari et al. (2026) specifically addressed competence as a full mediator in vocational schools. The present results show that this mechanism was not statistically supported in the three schools studied. Development activities were associated with competence, but their contribution to performance through competence remained unconfirmed.

The findings suggest that professional development should address learning application and feedback. Schools can align training needs with classroom tasks, provide follow-up support, and assess teachers' use of newly acquired methods. Career guidance and transparent development opportunities can include supervision and recognition of instructional improvement. These practical recommendations follow from the observed pattern; their effectiveness was not tested in this survey.

Limitations and directions for further research

The findings concern the three participating schools rather than all secondary schools in North Aceh. Although the census covered the entire local study population, generalization to other settings requires caution. The cross-sectional design cannot establish changes in competence or performance following development activities. The measures relied on teachers' perceptions. Future studies should combine questionnaires with classroom observations, principals' assessments, academic supervision, and performance records. The consistently high ratings suggest including more diverse schools and respondents. Indicators capturing training application, changes in lesson planning, and the clarity of promotion opportunities may provide a more specific assessment of the proposed relationships. Further research could examine leadership, motivation, job satisfaction, workload, supervision, and organizational support. Motivation is particularly relevant to the relationship between career development and performance discussed by Zulbahri et al. (2023). Longitudinal or before-and-after designs could assess change, while interviews and observations could clarify barriers to applying competence. These approaches would address the study's limitations without treating proposed explanations as established findings.

CONCLUSION

Training and career development had positive, significant effects on teacher competence in the three secondary schools studied. Competence, training, and career development did not have significant direct effects on teacher performance at the 5% level. Neither the indirect effect of training nor that of career development through competence was significant. H1 and H2 were therefore supported, whereas H3 through H7 were not supported. The findings indicate a gap between professional capacity and its application in teachers' reported performance. Schools should consider how training and career development relate to classroom practice, supervision, and evaluation. Research across broader settings, using multiple measurement sources and longitudinal designs, is needed to establish when stronger competence contributes to instructional performance.

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