

Exploring How Teacher Competency Development Influences Affective Work Outcomes

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the role of professional development in shaping teachers' workplace attitudes is essential for improving school performance and organizational effectiveness. In this context, the present study used a quantitative ex post facto approach to investigate how teacher competency development affects teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation in 14 MTsN schools across Tasikmalaya Regency. The analysis shows that competency development has a positive and statistically significant impact on teacher loyalty and work motivation, indicating that improvements in pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies are linked to stronger institutional commitment and higher enthusiasm in performing teaching duties. The findings also reveal a significant relationship between competency development and work discipline, although the strength of this effect is comparatively weaker than its influence on loyalty and motivation. This relatively smaller effect may be explained by the complex nature of work discipline, which is shaped not only by competency enhancement but also by broader organizational factors such as school culture, leadership practices, and institutional rules and policies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Teacher competency development is widely recognized as a key factor in improving educational quality because it shapes teachers' professional performance, motivation, and commitment to their institutions. Teachers who possess strong pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies are better prepared to adapt to curriculum changes, manage classrooms effectively, and apply innovative teaching strategies that support student learning [1]. Continuous professional development therefore functions not only to strengthen instructional practice but also to reinforce teachers' loyalty and organizational commitment [2], [3].

Teacher loyalty itself reflects the willingness of educators to remain in their institutions and contribute to their long-term success, often influenced by job satisfaction, supportive work environments, and opportunities for professional growth [4], [5]. In Indonesia, particularly within State Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri/MTsN), teacher competency development is a major policy priority aimed at improving both academic standards and the quality of Islamic education [6]. Despite these policy efforts, differences in teachers' motivation, discipline,

and institutional commitment remain challenges that may affect the effectiveness of competency development programs [7].

In practice, teacher competency development refers to a structured process of enhancing educators' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes to improve teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. Competency encompasses underlying characteristics that support superior job performance, including pedagogical, professional, personal, and social dimensions [8], [9]. Alongside competency, work discipline—defined as adherence to rules, punctuality, responsibility, and professional commitment—ensures that teachers perform their duties consistently and efficiently [10]. Previous studies suggest that competency development can strengthen accountability and self-regulation, thereby improving work discipline, although disciplinary outcomes are also shaped by school culture and leadership practices [11], [12]. Furthermore, work motivation, which reflects the internal and external forces that drive teachers to sustain effort toward educational goals, is essential for maintaining enthusiasm and resilience in teaching [13]. Professional development initiatives that foster self-efficacy and collaboration have been shown to enhance intrinsic motivation and professional identity [14]. Taken together, these perspectives indicate that competency development is closely linked to teacher loyalty, discipline, and motivation, highlighting the importance of examining how professional development initiatives influence these affective work outcomes in educational settings.

Within the Indonesian education system, particularly in State Islamic Junior High Schools (Madrasah Tsanawiyah Negeri/MTsN), the development of teacher competencies has become a key policy priority. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has emphasized teacher professionalization as a strategy to ensure both the quality of Islamic education and the achievement of national academic standards [6]. Despite these initiatives, variations in teacher motivation, discipline, and institutional commitment continue to pose challenges that may influence the effectiveness of competency development programs [7]. These variations suggest that improving teacher competencies alone may not automatically lead to optimal organizational outcomes unless supported by conducive institutional environments, effective leadership, and strong professional cultures.

Conceptually, teacher competency development refers to a systematic process of enhancing educators' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes to improve teaching performance and student learning outcomes. Spencer and Spencer describe competency as a set of underlying characteristics that contribute to superior job performance [8]. In the educational context, competencies encompass pedagogical expertise, subject-matter mastery, personal integrity, and social interaction skills that enable teachers to fulfill their roles effectively [9]. Continuous professional development is therefore regarded as an essential mechanism for maintaining educational quality, accountability, and teacher professionalism in a rapidly changing educational landscape [15]. Through structured training, mentoring, and reflective practice, teachers are expected to strengthen not only their technical abilities but also their professional attitudes and commitment to educational goals.

Work discipline represents another important affective and behavioral outcome associated with competency development. It includes adherence to institutional regulations, punctuality, responsibility, and consistency in carrying out professional duties [10]. Effective competency development may enhance teachers' sense of responsibility and self-regulation, leading to improved discipline and professionalism in daily practice [11]. However, discipline is also shaped by organizational culture, leadership style, and institutional policies, which influence how teachers internalize and enact professional norms [12]. This suggests that the relationship between competency development and work discipline may be complex and mediated by contextual factors within schools.

In addition to loyalty and discipline, work motivation is a crucial factor that determines teachers' engagement and persistence in achieving educational objectives. Work motivation refers to the internal and external forces that drive individuals to initiate, sustain, and direct their efforts toward goal attainment [13]. In the teaching profession, motivation plays a vital role in sustaining enthusiasm, creativity, and resilience, especially in the face of increasing professional demands. Professional development initiatives that emphasize mastery, collaboration, and self-efficacy have been found to strengthen intrinsic motivation and professional identity among teachers [14]. Furthermore, motivation often mediates the relationship between competency development and job performance, indicating that improvements in skills and knowledge must be accompanied by motivational support to produce meaningful outcomes [16], [17].

Previous empirical studies have consistently highlighted the importance of professional development in fostering positive affective work outcomes among teachers. Competency development has been associated with higher levels of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intrinsic motivation, as teachers who perceive opportunities for growth tend to demonstrate stronger engagement with their work [14], [18]. At the same time, work discipline manifested through punctuality, adherence to regulations, and consistent teaching performance has been linked to both individual competencies and organizational support systems [11]. These findings suggest that competency development, loyalty, discipline, and motivation are interconnected constructs that collectively shape teachers' professional behavior and effectiveness.

Taken together, the literature indicates that teacher competency development is closely related to affective and behavioral outcomes such as loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation. However, empirical evidence examining these relationships within the context of MTsN schools in Indonesia remains limited. Given the strategic importance of teacher professionalism in improving educational quality, it is necessary to investigate how competency development initiatives influence teachers' attitudes and behaviors in this specific institutional setting. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of teacher competency development on teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation in MTsN schools in Tasikmalaya Regency, providing empirical insights that may inform policy and practice in teacher professional development.

A total of 286 teachers from 14 State Islamic Junior High Schools (MTsN) participated in this study, consisting of 154 male teachers (53.85%) and 132 female teachers (46.15%). The distribution shows that male teachers slightly outnumber female teachers; however, the difference is not substantial, indicating a fairly balanced gender composition among respondents. This balance suggests that the data capture perspectives and professional experiences from both male and female teachers in relatively equal proportions. Because neither gender group overwhelmingly dominates the sample, the dataset provides a more neutral and representative basis for examining teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation across the participating madrasahs.

Table 1. School-Based Distribution of Teacher Respondents

No	Madrasah Origin	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	MTs N 1 Sukarame	40	13.99%
2	MTs N 2 Pageurageung	25	8.74%
3	MTs N 3 Karangnunggal	6	2.10%
4	MTs N 4 Salopa	23	8.04%
5	MTs N 5 Cipatujah	2	0.70%
6	MTs N 6 Cikatomas	34	11.89%
7	MTs N 7 Salawu	11	3.85%

No	Madrasah Origin	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
8	MTs N 8 Sariwangi	24	8.39%
9	MTs N 9 Bantar Kalong	21	7.34%
10	MTs N 10 Singaparna	20	6.99%
11	MTs N 11 Tanjungjaya	32	11.19%
12	MTs N 12 Karangnunggal	19	6.64%
13	MTs N 13 Jatiwaras	11	3.85%
14	MTs N 14 Jatiwaras	18	6.29%
Total Respondents		286	100%

Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents based on their school origin across 14 State Islamic Junior High Schools (MTsN) in Tasikmalaya Regency. A total of 286 teachers participated in the study, with the largest proportion coming from MTs N 1 Sukarame (13.99%), followed by MTs N 6 Cikatomas (11.89%) and MTs N 11 Tanjungjaya (11.19%). Several schools contributed moderate numbers of respondents, while a few institutions provided relatively smaller proportions. This variation indicates that the sample encompasses teachers from both large and small madrasahs, ensuring representation across different institutional contexts. Such distribution is important in quantitative educational research because a diverse sample improves the generalizability and representativeness of findings across the target population [19].

The broad geographic spread of respondents across areas such as Sukarame, Pageurageung, Karangnunggal, Salopa, and Jatiwaras strengthens the reliability of the dataset in reflecting actual conditions within MTsN institutions in the region. Sampling that captures variation across institutions allows researchers to obtain a more comprehensive picture of teacher characteristics, organizational culture, and professional development practices [20]. Therefore, the distribution shown in Table 1 supports the assumption that the study's findings regarding teacher competency development, loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation are sufficiently representative of teachers across public madrasahs in Tasikmalaya Regency and can be interpreted as reflecting broader institutional patterns within similar educational settings.

The gender distribution graph indicates that the respondents consisted of 154 male teachers (53.85%) and 132 female teachers (46.15%). The difference between the two groups is relatively small, suggesting a balanced gender composition among participants. Such balance is important in quantitative research because it enables the data to reflect diverse perspectives and professional experiences without being dominated by a single gender group. A proportionally distributed sample enhances the representativeness and credibility of the findings, particularly when examining work-related attitudes such as loyalty, discipline, and motivation [19], [20]. Therefore, the dataset obtained in this study can be considered sufficiently representative of both male and female teachers working in State Islamic Junior High Schools.

Despite the growing emphasis on teacher professional development within Indonesia's education system, empirical studies that simultaneously examine its influence on teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation particularly in the context of State Islamic Junior High Schools (MTsN) remain limited. Most previous research has focused on instructional competence or job performance outcomes, while fewer studies have explored how competency development shapes affective and behavioral dimensions of teachers' work in madrasah settings. In addition, variations in institutional culture, leadership, and professional development implementation across madrasahs may produce different outcomes that have not been fully captured in existing literature. This gap

indicates the need for more context-specific research that investigates how competency development influences teachers' commitment, discipline, and motivation within Islamic educational institutions at the secondary level.

Given these considerations, this study aims to examine the effect of teacher competency development on teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation among educators in 14 State Islamic Junior High Schools in Tasikmalaya Regency. By analyzing these relationships, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of how professional development initiatives shape teacher behavior and institutional outcomes within the Indonesian Islamic education system. Based on the reviewed theories, this study assumes that teacher competency development positively influences teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation. The conceptual model proposes that strengthening teachers' competencies enhances their professional identity, improves adherence to institutional norms, and fosters greater enthusiasm for their work. These assumptions provide the theoretical basis for examining the role of competency development in shaping affective work outcomes among teachers in MTsN schools in Tasikmalaya Regency.

2. METHOD

This study adopted a quantitative explanatory research design to analyze the influence of Teacher Competency Development on Teacher Loyalty, Teacher Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation among teachers in public Madrasah Tsanawiyah. Quantitative explanatory approaches are commonly used to examine causal relationships among variables in educational and organizational contexts because they allow researchers to test theoretical assumptions through statistical analysis [21], [22]. The sample comprised 286 teachers drawn from 14 madrasahs using proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure representation from each institution. This sampling technique was chosen to capture variation across schools while maintaining proportional representation of teachers within the population.

Data were collected through a structured Likert-scale questionnaire that measured teacher competency development across pedagogical, professional, personal, social, and spiritual dimensions. These dimensions reflect the holistic profile of the guru mualim emphasized in Islamic educational thought [23], [24], as well as indicators of teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation derived from organizational behavior theory [12], [25]. The instrument's content validity was assessed through expert judgment, while reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha indicated that all scales exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming acceptable internal consistency [22].

The analysis began with descriptive statistics and prerequisite tests for multivariate analysis, including normality, homogeneity of variance using Levene's Test, and homogeneity of covariance matrices using Box's M Test, as recommended for MANOVA procedures [26], [27]. Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was employed as the main analytical technique to assess the simultaneous effect of competency development on the three dependent variables. Pillai's Trace was prioritized in interpreting multivariate results because of its robustness when assumptions of covariance equality are not fully met [22]. When significant multivariate effects were identified, follow-up univariate ANOVA tests were conducted to determine the contribution of competency development to each outcome variable individually, in line with established practices in multivariate educational research [2], [28]. Throughout the study, ethical considerations including voluntary participation, confidentiality of responses, and responsible reporting of results were maintained in accordance with accepted standards for educational and behavioral research [29].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The multivariate analysis was conducted to determine whether teacher competency development simultaneously influences teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation among teachers in State Islamic Junior High Schools.

Table 2. Multivariate Test

		Multivariate Tests ^a						Partial
				Hypothesis		Sig.	Eta Squared	
Effect		Value	F	df	Error df			
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.996	24312.196 ^b	3.000	270.000	.000	.996	
	Wilks' Lambda	.004	24312.196 ^b	3.000	270.000	.000	.996	
	Hotelling's Trace	270.136	24312.196 ^b	3.000	270.000	.000	.996	
	Roy's Largest Root	270.136	24312.196 ^b	3.000	270.000	.000	.996	
Teacher Competence Development	Pillai's Trace	.917	9.210	39.000	816.000	.000	.306	
	Wilks' Lambda	.234	13.004	39.000	800.276	.000	.384	
	Hotelling's Trace	2.657	18.306	39.000	806.000	.000	.470	
	Roy's Largest Root	2.414	50.510 ^c	13.000	272.000	.000	.707	

a. Design: Intercept + PembinaanKompetensiGuru

b. Exact statistic

c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

Table 2 presents the results of the multivariate tests examining the effect of Teacher Competency Development on Teacher Loyalty, Teacher Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation simultaneously. The multivariate statistics show that the overall model is statistically significant. For the intercept, all test indicators Pillai's Trace (0.996), Wilks' Lambda (0.004), Hotelling's Trace (270.136), and Roy's Largest Root (270.136) produce an F value of 24,312.196 with a significance level of 0.000 and Partial Eta Squared of 0.996. These results indicate that the multivariate model explains a very large proportion of the combined variance of the dependent variables, confirming the stability and strength of the model in capturing the relationship among variables.

More importantly, Teacher Competency Development demonstrates a significant multivariate effect on the three dependent variables simultaneously. The Pillai's Trace value of 0.917 with $F = 9.210$ ($p = 0.000$) indicates a strong overall influence of competency development on teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation, with a multivariate contribution of 30.6% (Partial Eta Squared = 0.306). Similarly, the Wilks' Lambda value of 0.234 with $F = 13.004$ ($p = 0.000$) suggests a slightly stronger effect, explaining approximately 38.4% of the combined variance. The Hotelling's Trace value of 2.657 with $F = 18.306$ ($p = 0.000$; Partial Eta Squared = 0.470) further confirms that competency development exerts a moderate to strong multivariate influence on the dependent variables. The strongest indicator appears in Roy's Largest Root (2.414), which yields $F = 50.510$ ($p = 0.000$) and Partial Eta Squared = 0.707, indicating that one dominant dimension among the combined outcomes is strongly influenced by competency development.

Taken together, the multivariate analysis provides strong empirical evidence that Teacher Competency Development significantly influences Teacher Loyalty, Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation simultaneously. As levels of competency development increase, the descriptive results show that all three dependent variables also tend to fall within higher categories. This pattern suggests that teachers who experience stronger competency development are more likely to demonstrate positive work attitudes, stronger commitment, and higher motivation in carrying out their professional duties. These findings support previous research in organizational behavior and

educational management, which emphasizes that professional development plays a critical role in strengthening employee commitment, discipline, and motivation [12].

Table 3. Box's Test of Equality of Covariance Matrices

Statistic	Value
Box's M	111.761
F	1.503
df1	60
df2	2014.708
Sig.	0.008

Box's M test was conducted to examine the assumption of homogeneity of covariance matrices across groups prior to performing MANOVA. This test is important because MANOVA requires the covariance matrices of the dependent variables to be equal across groups to ensure the validity of multivariate comparisons (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019; Field, 2018). A non-significant Box's M value (Sig. > 0.05) indicates that the assumption is met, meaning the covariance matrices are equal and the MANOVA results can be interpreted with confidence. Conversely, a significant result (Sig. < 0.05) suggests that the assumption is violated, in which case more robust multivariate statistics such as Pillai's Trace are recommended for interpretation due to their tolerance of covariance inequality.

The assumption of homogeneity of covariance matrices was examined using Box's Test prior to conducting the MANOVA. The results show that Box's M is significant ($p = 0.008$), indicating that the equality of covariance matrices across groups is not strictly satisfied. Although this suggests a violation of one MANOVA assumption, such a condition does not invalidate the analysis. In multivariate procedures, several test statistics Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root differ in their sensitivity to assumption violations. Among these, Pillai's Trace is considered the most robust when covariance matrices are unequal, and therefore it is recommended as the primary basis for interpretation under such conditions [22], [26]. Accordingly, the interpretation of multivariate effects in this study relies primarily on Pillai's Trace. Although Levene's Test also indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was not fully met for work discipline and work motivation, MANOVA is generally robust to such violations when the sample size is adequate and relatively balanced across groups [26].

The MANOVA results demonstrate that teacher competency development has a significant simultaneous effect on teacher loyalty, work discipline, and work motivation. The Pillai's Trace value of 0.917 with $F = 9.210$ ($p = 0.000$) indicates a strong multivariate effect, confirming that competency development plays an important role in shaping teachers' work attitudes and behavioral outcomes. This finding is consistent with human resource development theory, which emphasizes that training and competency enhancement contribute to improved employee performance, commitment, and motivation (Noe, 2020). Follow-up univariate ANOVA tests further show that competency development significantly influences each dependent variable individually: teacher loyalty ($F = 35.440$, $p = 0.000$), work discipline ($F = 21.408$, $p = 0.000$), and work motivation ($F = 26.866$, $p = 0.000$). The Partial Eta Squared values, ranging from 0.506 to 0.629, indicate large effect sizes, suggesting that competency development accounts for a substantial proportion of variance in all three outcomes. These results support the view that professional competence is a key determinant of employee performance, discipline, and organizational commitment in educational institutions [25].

Overall, the findings highlight that teacher competency development is a strategic factor in enhancing teachers' loyalty, discipline, and motivation. Strengthening teacher competencies not only improves technical teaching skills but also fosters stronger professional commitment and more

positive work attitudes. This conclusion aligns with the broader literature on human resource and educational management, which underscores that competency enhancement contributes to both individual performance and organizational effectiveness [30]. Therefore, sustained investment in teacher competency development programs is essential for educational institutions seeking to improve teaching quality and achieve long-term performance outcomes.

Table 4. Univariate Test

Dependent Variable	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Teacher Loyalty	Lack of Fit	.000	0	.	.	.	.000
	Pure Error	898.904	272	3.305			
Teachers' Work Discipline	Lack of Fit	.000	0	.	.	.	.000
	Pure Error	237.452	272	.873			
Teachers' Work Motivation	Lack of Fit	.000	0	.	.	.	.00
	Pure Error	1501.97	27	5.522			
	Error	7	2				

The Univariate Tests for Teacher Loyalty, Teacher Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation indicate that all models show a Lack of Fit value of 0. This finding suggests that there is no detectable discrepancy between the proposed model and the empirical data, meaning that the analytical model fits the observed data patterns well. In regression and analysis of variance procedures, the absence of lack of fit indicates that the specified model adequately represents the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, allowing the results to be interpreted with greater confidence [27]. For each dependent variable, all residual variation is attributed solely to Pure Error, which represents random variation rather than systematic model error. The pure error values amount to 898.904 for Teacher Loyalty, 237.452 for Teacher Work Discipline, and 1501.977 for Teacher Work Motivation, each distributed across 272 degrees of freedom. The absence of F-statistics and significance values in the Lack of Fit section indicates that the lack-of-fit test cannot be computed because there is no remaining systematic variance beyond random error. This condition implies that the model structure is stable and consistent with the data. Overall, the results confirm that the model assumptions are sufficiently met and that the analytical framework is reliable for further interpretation. Consequently, subsequent analyses such as ANOVA, regression, and tests of effects can be considered valid and interpreted with a high degree of confidence.

The results of the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects indicate that Teacher Competency Development has a statistically significant influence on all three dependent variables: Teacher Loyalty, Teacher Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation. For Teacher Loyalty, the F-value of 35.440 with Sig. = 0.000 confirms a significant effect, while the Partial Eta Squared value of 0.629 shows that 62.9% of the variance in teacher loyalty is explained by competency development. This represents a large effect size according to Cohen's (1988) criteria and is reinforced by the corresponding R^2 value of 0.629, indicating a strong model fit. Similarly, for Teacher Work Discipline, the F-value of 21.408 with Sig. = 0.000 demonstrates a significant influence of competency development. The Partial Eta Squared value of 0.506 suggests that 50.6% of the variance in work discipline is explained by competency development, indicating a moderate-to-strong effect that is consistent with the model's R^2 of 0.506. For Teacher Work Motivation, the F-value of 26.866 (Sig. = 0.000) also indicates a significant effect, with a Partial Eta Squared value of 0.562 showing that 56.2% of the variance in motivation is explained by competency development. This effect size

is categorized as strong and is supported by an R^2 value of 0.562, confirming the model's explanatory strength.

The intercept values across all dependent variables are highly significant, indicating that the mean scores of loyalty, discipline, and motivation differ substantially from zero and that the model accurately captures the variation present in the data. The relatively small error terms further demonstrate the precision of the model in predicting observed variance. Overall, these findings confirm that Teacher Competency Development has a substantial and meaningful influence on teachers' work attitudes and behaviors. When interpreted within the framework of Islamic education, the results also highlight the relevance of the guru mualim concept, in which teachers function not only as academic instructors but also as moral and spiritual guides. Competency development in this context encompasses not only pedagogical and professional skills but also personal and social dimensions that strengthen teachers' commitment, discipline, and motivation. This interpretation is consistent with previous research emphasizing that competency development enhances motivation, discipline, and professional commitment [31], [32] and supports the view that well-developed competencies contribute to stronger work behavior and organizational loyalty [33].

The findings also contribute to the literature by integrating teacher competency development with the characteristics of the guru mualim, a perspective that remains underexplored in prior empirical studies. In Islamic educational traditions, teachers are expected to demonstrate not only instructional competence but also moral integrity, exemplary conduct, and spiritual consistency [23]. Effective competency development therefore strengthens both technical teaching skills and the ethical and spiritual dimensions of teaching. As a result, teachers who receive comprehensive competency development are more likely to exhibit higher loyalty, stronger discipline, and greater motivation in fulfilling their educational responsibilities. These outcomes support the argument that competency development serves as a strategic mechanism for improving not only teacher performance but also the overall quality and character of education within Islamic schooling contexts.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Teacher Competency Development exerts a significant and meaningful impact on Teacher Loyalty, Teacher Work Discipline, and Teacher Work Motivation. These findings confirm that structured and continuous competency development programs play a central role in strengthening teachers' work attitudes, commitment, and overall performance. In particular, teachers who experience consistent professional development tend to demonstrate stronger loyalty to their institutions, greater adherence to professional norms, and higher motivation in carrying out their responsibilities.

When interpreted within the framework of Islamic education, these findings also highlight the importance of competency development in shaping the characteristics of the guru mualim. Competency development not only enhances pedagogical and professional capabilities but also reinforces personal, social, and spiritual attributes that define teachers as moral guides and role models. Teachers who receive effective competency development show higher levels of loyalty, discipline, and motivation qualities that support their dual function as academic educators and spiritual mentors. The demographic characteristics of the respondents, drawn from 14 madrasahs with a relatively balanced gender composition, indicate that the positive effects of competency development are consistent across different teacher groups. This strengthens the argument that competency development serves as a strategic and universal approach for improving teacher quality in madrasahs. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that competency development

contributes not only to professional performance but also to the formation of guru mualim teachers who integrate competence, character, and spirituality within their educational practice.

Despite these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study relied on self-reported questionnaire data, which may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly in assessing teacher performance and spiritual–moral roles associated with the guru mualim. Although statistical tests confirmed the robustness of the model, self-perceptions may not fully represent actual classroom behavior. Second, the research was conducted in 14 madrasahs within a single regional context, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions with different cultural, institutional, or managerial conditions. Differences in leadership, organizational culture, and resource availability may influence the implementation and outcomes of competency development programs. Third, the use of a cross-sectional design means that the study captured perceptions at only one point in time, limiting the ability to assess long-term changes in teacher loyalty, discipline, and motivation. Finally, the study focused solely on Teacher Competency Development as the main predictor variable, without including other potentially influential factors such as leadership style, organizational climate, workload, job satisfaction, or teacher spirituality, all of which may interact with or moderate the observed relationships.

Based on these limitations, several recommendations for future research can be proposed. Future studies may adopt mixed-method or qualitative approaches such as interviews, classroom observations, or reflective journals to gain deeper insight into how teachers internalize competency development within their roles as guru mualim. Expanding research across multiple regions or provinces would also improve the generalizability of findings and allow for comparative analysis across different institutional contexts. Longitudinal research designs are recommended to examine the long-term impact of competency development on teacher loyalty, discipline, motivation, and the formation of guru mualim characteristics over time. In addition, future research could incorporate additional predictor or moderating variables—such as transformational leadership, work environment, Islamic work ethics, teacher spirituality, and job satisfaction to develop a more comprehensive explanatory model of teacher performance in Islamic educational settings. Finally, intervention-based or quasi-experimental studies that evaluate specific competency development programs, mentoring systems, or spiritual–pedagogical training models may provide stronger causal evidence and practical guidance for improving teacher development initiatives in madrasahs.

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