

## **The Influence of Teacher Competency, Motivation on Graduates' Performance and their Implications for Graduate Absorption in Aceh**

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### **Abstract**

*The research objective was to explore the effect of teacher competency, motivation on graduate performance and their implications for the graduate absorption at SMK 3 Banda Aceh. The population in this study were students of SMK 3 Banda Aceh with samples of all grade 3 students. The data analysis employed multiple linear regression and path analysis. The results showed learning motivation can affect graduate performance. This is inseparable from the fact that students who have the motivation to graduate quickly and earn adjustments/ranks are expected to have better learning achievements. Teacher competence can affect graduates' performance. Research has shown that there is a strong relationship between teacher ability and appropriate learning. A competent teacher has the ability to manage a classroom, which can significantly impact student performance. Teacher competency, motivation affect graduate performance, and have the implications for graduate absorption rate. This shows that the quality of graduate competency depends on the teacher's performance in carrying out the learning process, while the factor that affect teacher performance is the teacher's own competency.*

**Keywords:** *Teacher Competency, SMK 3 Banda Aceh, graduate performance.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

The quality of Indonesia's education at the moment is facing serious and concerning challenges. Even though there have been efforts to improve this situation, several fundamental problems need to be tackled (Subantari, 2021). One of the main problems is the lack of access to education in remote areas and the disparity between education in urban and rural areas, and among the islands in Indonesia. In addition, the educational curriculum is often considered irrelevant to real world demands and technological developments. Teaching methods that tend to be traditional and less interactive also hinder students' ability to develop important critical and creative skills. The quality of teachers is also a concern, as there are still deficiencies in qualifications and training.

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Educational infrastructure is also often inadequate, with a number of schools lacking facilities such as libraries, laboratories and sports facilities. An assessment system that focuses more on memorization than in-depth understanding is also an obstacle in advancing the educational quality. In spite of the commitment to increase the allocation of educational budget, further efforts are still needed to ensure that the available budget is sufficient to address these problems. Improvement in the quality of higher education is also an important aspect because higher education institutions in Indonesia also face challenges in terms of curricula that are relevant to the world of work and quality research. Quality education deals with developing not only academic knowledge, but also essential soft skills. This improvement is a shared struggle that requires collaboration from the government, educational institutions and society as a whole.

National Education has a crucial role in developing potential and shaping the nation's character and civilization with dignity. The aim is to brighten the life of the nation, by prioritizing the development of students to become healthy, independent, faithful, and devoted individuals who have noble character, and serve as democratic and responsible citizens (El-Senousy & Alquda, 2017). Education is also directed at achieving the peak of cognitive abilities referred to as Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS), which strives to develop human resources with the capacity for critical and creative thought, have the capacity to solve various problems, and combine cognitive, affective (attitude) and psychomotor aspects in learning. Thus, education is expected to produce individuals who are able to innovate and overcome existing challenges (R. Mohamed & Lebar, 2017).

Education is a leading sector in nation building, every nation makes teachers the most important part of making changes to its national education system (Imsen et al., 2017), and teachers are an essential component in implementing education in schools, and their role is fundamental due to their efforts to create a decent and targeted learning to the maximum (Akarowhe, 2017). Teachers must realize in their line of work it is necessary to always be thoughtful and open to transformations and growths taking place in society, particularly in the field of education. Therefore, teachers are required to have professional skills and have good performance. Teaching is not easy to do because it is a very complex process (Karakozov et al., 2021).

To accomplish the objectives established, teaching must be carefully planned, complemented by the teacher's capacity to implement efficient learning models and approaches, and impartially assessed. The application of learning models and strategies must be adapted to educational needs in the 21st century, an era of information openness and very rapid technological progress. Since this may have implications to moral degradation, the competence of 21st century teachers who are able to adapt the learning process and implement strategies in learning based on character education, competency, and literacy is essential (Fischer et al., 2018). Teacher competence and motivation has a significant impact on educational performance in the context of the learning. Teacher competence refers to knowledge, skills and in-depth understanding of the subject taught and the ability to apply effective teaching methods. Competent teachers have the potential to provide a better learning experience for students because they can convey material clearly, design interesting learning activities, and respond to students' individual needs. A teacher who has high motivation in his work will usually continue to study and will not be contented by his or her achievement. Competency and motivation will affect the success of teachers in all fields of work (Ulfathmi et al., 2021). Competency is needed to carry out a task or job based on knowledge, abilities and manners in accordance with the implementation of the work required (Bakar, 2014).

Apart from competence, motivation also plays a key role in determining teacher performance. High motivation can encourage teachers to try harder, develop innovation in teaching, and pay extra attention to student needs with the application of appropriate competencies (Liu et al., 2020). Motivated teachers tend to be more enthusiastic in overcoming challenges and facing changes in the world of education. When these two

factors are combined, teacher competence and motivation influence each other. Teachers who feel competent in their field tend to be more motivated to create a positive impact on student learning. On the other hand, strong motivation can encourage teachers to continue to improve their competence through training and professional development. Motivation is not only vital to make students pick up knowledge from the tasks they perform or the data they come across. Students who are motivated exhibit strong cognitive capabilities for learning, taking in, and retaining new information (Alif et al., 2020).

An educational approach that includes character development, higher order thinking skills (HOTS), and a balance of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects has been supported by research in the field of education. These studies show that education that focuses on moral values, critical, creative and innovative thinking skills has a positive impact on graduates' ability to deal with the complexities of the contemporary world. Studies have shown that graduates who have higher order thinking skills are better able to face challenges at work and are able to provide better solutions. The emphasis on character and work ethics has also been shown to encourage graduates to act with integrity and responsibility in the work environment. In addition, an approach that integrates affective (attitude) and psychomotor (physical skills) aspects helps graduates apply knowledge more effectively in real situations.

Empirical studies also show that graduates who are trained in creative thinking tend to be better able to develop innovations and effective solutions to the problems they face. The development of character and democratic values in education has also been proven to encourage active participation of graduates in society and the social environment. Overall, these studies indicate that an educational approach that includes character development, HOTS, and a balance of cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects has positive implications for the absorption capacity of graduates in the world of work and society. By referring to the findings of this research, such education is believed to be more effective in preparing graduates to face modern changes and demands.

Graduates' absorption refers to how graduates of an educational institution (such as a school, college or university) can successfully integrate the knowledge, skills and attitudes they acquire during their education period into the world of work or real life. Tracer studies are used to track graduates, map their competencies and measure competency gaps acquired during studies and those needed in the world of work (Sitepu & Kehm, 2011). Process Standards are requirements for how learning is put into practice in educational settings in order to meet graduate competency criteria (Andriansyah & Kamalia, 2021). The absorption rate of SMK graduates in the TKR (Light Vehicle Engineering) and TBSM (Motorcycle Engineering and Business) majors is low (Kurniawan et al., 2021), and teacher competency and motivation affect graduate performance (Subantari, 2021).

This research was conducted at vocational schools in Banda Aceh where previous research shows that high student learning motivation resulted in increased desire to improve students' creativity and innovation, thereby spurring vocational schools to improve human resource competence, infrastructure and learning process activities, both through teaching factory learning, teaching industry, techno parks, and so on (Mustikawanto, 2019). Vocational high school is a formal education pathway aiming to prepare graduates that have excellence in the world of work. The research objective was to explore the effect of teacher competency, motivation on graduate performance and their implications for the graduate absorption at SMK 3 Banda Aceh.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Teacher Competency

Competency is the ability to act logically to accomplish necessary goals in anticipated circumstances (Miller et al., 2017). Teacher competency is a teacher's ability to responsibly and appropriately fulfill commitments (Z. Mohamed et al., 2017). Furthermore, according to König et al., (2020), teacher competency provides a qualitative definition of the type of meaningful teacher behavior. Teacher competency standards are established as a unit from four primary competencies, namely pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competencies, in compliance with Regulation 16 of 2007 pertaining to academic qualification criteria and teacher competency issued by the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia. All the four competencies are integrated in teacher performance. Competency is a set of knowledge, abilities, and habits that teachers and lecturers must demonstrate, embrace, and regulate in order to effectively carry out their professional tasks, according to Law number 14 of 2005 governing teachers and lecturers.

From this explanation, it can be inferred that the term "competency" alludes to the skill acquired via education, as well as competency and action to adhere to particular requirements in the implementation of educational duties. According to Karakozov et al., (2021), in the teaching profession, competency has a very important meaning. Teachers are not only tasked with conveying knowledge to students, but also play an important role in shaping their attitudes, values and worldview. Therefore, teacher competency is not only limited to mastery of subject matter and teaching methods, but also involves good communication skills, ability to manage the class, sensitivity to the needs of students with various backgrounds, as well as the ability to motivate and provide support to students (Orishev & Burkhnov, 2021).

Competency refers to proficiency in the tasks, abilities, attitudes, and perspectives required for success (Caena & Redecker, 2019). Competence consists of skills, knowledge, and attitudes, and especially their unfailing application to the performance standards prerequisite in the job (Oberländer et al., 2020). Competency is an individual's basic characteristics related to the performance criteria for being effective and/or superior in certain jobs and situations. Competency is a deep and inherent quality of a person's character and is able predict various situations and types of work, so competency can really predict anyone's performance as good or bad based on certain criteria or standards. The capacity to perform a task that is learned through education is referred to as competence. Teacher competency is the ability to conduct and act logically in order to perform educational duties according to predetermined standards. It has a goal and a purpose, which is why it is regarded as sensible (Ameli, 2020).

### Motivation

The word impulse, which refers to the force that prompts both the mind and the body to take action, is frequently used to describe motivation. The motive is what propels a person to act in a way that advances the objectives that have been established. Each person has their own reasons, which naturally can vary from others (Priyono, 2016). The motivation underlies an act of submission. Basically, it is the desire of the suspects to submit voluntarily to the authority of the sharia court regarding practical considerations in the aspect of social and economic sense of justice and human rights (Surbakti, 2010). The need to construct national identity, which may be lost as a result of dialectical crossover or owing to acculturation and transformation that has been, is being, and will continue to be inevitable, is the driving force behind the investigation of local wisdom as a major topic in particular (Daniah, 2016).

Motivation will implement a larger spending plan even though the spending is not necessary because of available savings funds (Ariffianto & Adhariani, 2018). Motivation

is an individual's incentive to act in a certain way to achieve a goal or to carry out their role. Motivational strategies are needed to increase effective contributions in achieving goals (Sunyoto et al., 2017). Motivation is very important because motivation is what causes, channels and supports human behavior, so that they are willing to work hard and enthusiastically to achieve optimal goals or results (Ida et al., 2011).

#### Graduate Performance

Performance refers to work achievement. The quality and amount of work completed by an employee while doing his or her duties in accordance with the obligations assigned to him or her is known as job performance or real (Mariana & Rahmانيar, 2022). Typically, the terms "performance" and "job performance" are synonymous. Performance is the quantity and quality of work completed by an employee while carrying out their activities in accordance with their assigned obligations (Kurnia, 2019).

Performance is one of the measurements used to evaluate the performance itself (Liza & Mariana, 2023). Also, performance is measured by the level of ability to produce (Eni & Suaryana, 2018). The application of accrual-based accounting can also assist in monitoring performance (Ramadana et al., 2023). Performance is the degree to which an individual or group of individuals succeeds in carrying out their tasks and obligations as well as their capacity to meet the criteria and goals that have been established (Widiastuti, 2013).

#### Graduate Absorbtion

Several aspects, including students' IQ, interests, talents, positive psychological factors, abilities, motivation, attitudes, maturity, discipline, etc., are necessary to achieve successful learning outcomes (Kambuaya, 2015). Absorption rate is one of the factors that influence the effort made by an individual. Strong or high absorption rate will lead to easy effort in dealing with problems. Current graduate users search for and recruit prospective employees with various competencies and certifications but in the end, they will select based on the suitability of their competencies with job requirements. Therefore, career centers not only offer training to students but also direct and find appropriate training (Dikti, 2012).

The alignment of vocational school graduates' knowledge with industry needs is assessed from 4 aspects, namely theoretical understanding, digital literacy, data literacy and humanities literacy. The knowledge of vocational school graduates in supporting existing jobs in the industry as a whole according to the industry is quite good. The overall character of vocational school graduates in work is quite good. 75% of the industry stated that vocational school graduates have quite good work characteristics in terms of discipline, responsibility, honesty and self-confidence (Kurniawan et al., 2021). To achieve optimal graduate competency as required, schools also need to meet the needs for facilities and productive subject group teachers (Sumantri et al., 2019).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

This research is a type of: 1). Ex-post facto research since the data collected was in the form of facts that occur without being manipulated by researchers, 2). Causal associative research since it sought to analyze causation, 3). Census since all members of the population are used as research subjects (Nugroho, 2017).

Statistical analysis of the data was carried out using SPSS V 21.0 for Windows (Jang & Lee, 2023). The data analysis method in this research uses the path analysis method (Firdaus, 2011; Liza & Mariana, 2023). Hypothesis testing includes simultaneous hypothesis testing (F test) and partial hypothesis testing (t test). In addition to testing the hypothesis, the description test was also carried out first (Mariana et al., 2018; Mariana &

Ramadana, 2020). The population in this study were students of SMK 3 Banda Aceh with samples of all grade 3 students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Description Results

The data description provides an overview of the characteristics of the data used in this study (Mariana & Ramadana, 2020). The results of descriptive statistical analysis of the influence of teacher competence, motivation on graduate performance and the implications for graduate absorption rate are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics (N=244)

Statement Code	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Graduates Absorption Rate (Z)	3.2459	1.05262	1.00	5.00
Motivation (X1)	3.5369	1.21491	1.00	5.00
Teacher Competency (X2)	2.6926	1.30202	1.00	5.00
Graduate Performance (Y)	2.7418	1.26805	1.00	5.00
Valid N (listwise)	62			

Source: Primary Data processed, 2023

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the average level of answer to all respondents' statements for the graduate absorption capacity variable, motivation, is 3.7903 with a standard deviation value of 1.10345, and in terms of the level of auditor independence, the average value of auditor independence is 4.1613, with the standard deviation value being 0.83359. Furthermore, looking at the level of auditor performance, the average value of auditor performance is 3.9355, with the standard deviation value being 0.88468 from the average value. It can be concluded that respondents agree with the auditor's performance assessment.

### Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analyses were used to test hypotheses. In Table 2 below, the outcomes of multiple linear regression are shown.

Table 2 Multiple Regression Analysis

Model	B	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.001		.018	.985
Motivasi (X1)	.056	.054	5.018	.000
Kompetensi Guru (X2)	.944	.970	90.783	.000
Nilai F	Sig.	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
4710.752	.000 <sup>b</sup>	.987 <sup>a</sup>	.975	.975

Source: Primary Data processed, 2023

From these results a regression equation can be constructed as follows:

$$Y = 0.001 + 0.056X_1 + 0.944X_2 + \epsilon_1$$

Table 2 shows the F value of 4710.752 with a significance value of 0.000, meaning that the independent variables together have an effect on the dependent variable because the significance value is smaller than 5% or 0.05. This shows that motivation and teacher competency as variables can be used to predict the performance of graduates at SMK 3 Banda Aceh. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination value shown in Table 2 is 0.975 or 97.5%, meaning that the motivation and teacher competency variables are able to explain graduate performance by 97.5%. The ability to explain this independent

variable is relatively large since it almost reaches 100%, and the rest is explained by other variables that are not included in this research.

#### The Effect of Motivation on Graduate Performance

Based on the regression results in Table 2, it is known that the significance value of motivation is 0.000 with a t value of 5.018. The value 0.000 is smaller than  $\alpha=5\%$  or  $0.000 < 0.05$ . Thus, H01 is accepted and Ha2 is not accepted, which means that motivation has a positive and significant effect on the performance of graduates at SMK 3 Banda Aceh. The motivation variable coefficient value of 0.056 explains that if motivation increases by one percent, it will result in an increase in graduate performance by 5.6 percent, assuming other variables are constant.

Learning motivation can influence graduate performance. This is inseparable from the fact that students who have the motivation to graduate quickly and get adjustments/ranks are expected to have better learning achievements. The demand for high quality graduates encourages the world of education to obtain quality input, including learning motivation (Nilawati & Bimo, 2011). Teacher performance in class can affect student learning motivation, which in turn can affect graduate performance (Nugraeni, 2012). The motivation of the bachelors of education in finding employment in the world of tutoring can influence graduate performance (Ulumiyah & Ramly, 2019). Teacher performance and student learning motivation can affect student learning outcomes, which in turn can affect graduate performance. Learning motivation can affect student learning achievement, which in turn can impact graduate performance.

This study supports previous research which shows that learning motivation can affect graduate performance (X. Li et al., 2022; Mauliya et al., 2020; SIVRIKAYA, 2019; Ulumiyah & Ramly, 2019; Velasco et al., 2022; Zlate & Cucui, 2015). Therefore, it is important for educators and institutions to pay attention to factors that can affect learning motivation, such as teacher performance and graduate motivation, to improve graduate performance.

#### The Influence of Teacher Competency on Graduate Performance

It is known that the significant value for teacher competence is 0.000 with a t value of 90.783 based on the regression analysis results in Table 2. Less than 5% or 0.05 is the value 0.000. Thus, H02 is not accepted and Ha2 is accepted, which means that teacher competency has a significant effect on graduate performance at SMK 3 Banda Aceh. The coefficient value of the teacher competency variable of 0.944 explains that if the ratcheting budget increases by one percent, it will result in a decrease in capital expenditure by 94.4 percent, assuming other variables are constant.

Teacher competency has a significant impact on graduate performance. Research has shown that there is a strong relationship between teacher ability and appropriate learning. A competent teacher has the ability to manage the classroom, which can significantly influence student performance (Sultan & Shafi, 2014). Teacher competency, comprising self-efficacy, excitement for teaching, and understanding of pedagogical content, has been found to be positively correlated to student interest and achievement (Fauth et al., 2019; Istiqomah et al., 2019). Additionally, teacher competency has been found to be positively correlated to student academic performance in senior secondary schools (Podungge et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important for teachers to have the necessary competencies to manage classrooms effectively and facilitate student learning.

This study supports previous research which shows that teacher competence can affect graduate performance (Fauth et al., 2019; Istiqomah et al., 2019; Podungge et al., 2020; Sultan & Shafi, 2014). This shows that teacher competency plays an important role in determining graduate performance. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have adequate competency in order to provide effective and quality learning.

## Path Analysis

Hypothesis testing is done by path analysis. The results are presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Path Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.987 <sup>a</sup>	.975	.975
2	.988 <sup>b</sup>	.976	.976

Source: Primary Data processed, 2023

Table 2 shows that the coefficient value of Adjusted R Square in the first model (1) before mediation was 0.975 or 97.5% and in the second model after mediation (2) it was 0.976 or 97.6%. This shows a change in value from 0.975 before mediation to 0.976 after mediation. Therefore, H03 is not accepted and H03 accepted, which means that the influence of motivation (X1) on teacher competence (X2) can be moderated by the absorption rate of graduates (Z).

Learning motivation can influence graduate performance and have an impact on students' absorption capacity. Several factors that have an impact on students' absorption rate include learning motivation, interest in learning, school environment, readiness and teacher competency (Nugroho, 2017; Yuniarti et al., 2022). Motivation can affect the absorption of graduates in the workforce. The following are several factors that can affect graduate absorption, including how graduates obtain information about job vacancies (Lamijan & Hadi, 2022), career success (Papadourakis & Karpathiotaki, 2014), learning engagement, including energy, involvement, professional efficacy, and absorption (H. Li et al., 2020), academic motivation theories, such as expectancy-value theory, social cognitive theory, and self-determination theory (Urhahne & Wijnia, 2023), achievement motivation, which is positively correlated with academic performance (X. Li et al., 2022), cognitive-behavioral motivation, which is related to student engagement (Singh et al., 2022).

Teacher competency, motivation affect graduate performance, and their implications for graduate absorption capacity indicate that the quality of graduate competency depends on the teacher's performance in carrying out the learning process, while the factor that affects teacher performance are the teacher's own competency. Teacher competency, motivation affect graduate performance and have the implications on graduate absorption in that a teacher's performance influences the learning process because the main goal of a teacher is to manage learning and the class (Suryani et al., 2020).

The research results show that the influence of competence and motivation on performance through satisfaction cannot intervene the variables (Istiqomah et al., 2019); Former research findings related to teacher competence have identified that there is a strong relationship between teacher ability and appropriate learning (Sultan & Shafi, 2014); Teacher competence can significantly influence student performance because competent teachers have the ability to manage the class. Teacher competency, comprising self-efficacy, excitement for teaching, and understanding of pedagogical content, has been found to be positively correlated to student interest and achievement (Fauth et al., 2019); In learning evaluation, pedagogical proficiency significantly affects students' learning results (Rumhadi, 2017).

Teacher competency and motivation have a positive effect on graduate performance and absorption (Fauth et al., 2019; Istiqomah et al., 2019; Mauliya et al., 2020; Podungge et al., 2020; SIVRIKAYA, 2019; Ulumiyah & Ramly, 2019; Velasco et al., 2022; Zlate & Cucui, 2015). A competent teacher with sufficient motivation can manage the classroom effectively, leading to better learning outcomes. Additionally, teacher competency has been found to be positively correlated to student performance, interest, and academic

achievement. Therefore, it is important for teachers to have the necessary competencies and motivation to facilitate student learning effectively.

## CONCLUSION

1. Learning motivation can affect graduate performance. This is inseparable from the fact that students who have the motivation to graduate quickly and earn adjustments/ranks are expected to have better learning achievements.
2. Teacher competence can affect graduates' performance. Research has shown that there is a strong relationship between teacher ability and appropriate learning. A competent teacher has the ability to manage a classroom, which can significantly impact student performance
3. Teacher competency, motivation affect graduate performance, and have the implications for graduate absorption rate. This demonstrates how the effectiveness of graduate competency depends on the teacher's performance in carrying out the learning process, while the teacher's own competency has an impact on teacher performance.

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