

## ANALYSIS OF PEDAGOGICAL AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PERFORMANCE OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PARIGI MOUTONG DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of pedagogical and professional competence on teacher performance in elementary schools across Parigi Moutong Regency. Recognising the importance of these competencies in maintaining teaching effectiveness, this research examines their crucial role in the educational landscape. Employing a quantitative research design with a survey method, data were collected from a sample of 127 elementary school teachers selected from a population of 1,685 teachers in Parigi Moutong Regency. A questionnaire, distributed via Google Forms, was used to gather data on pedagogical competence, professional competence, and teacher performance. The collected data were analysed using multiple regression analysis, specifically the F-test, to determine the simultaneous influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The results of the analysis revealed a significant positive influence of both pedagogical and professional competence on teacher performance in the elementary schools of Parigi Moutong Regency. This is evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 ( $<0.05$ ) for the combined effect of pedagogical and professional competence, and an F-statistic of 40.666, which is greater than the F-table value of 3.06. The findings underscore the critical importance of pedagogical and professional competencies in supporting effective teacher performance. This suggests that investments in enhancing these competencies can significantly contribute to maintaining the quality of education. A limitation of this study is its reliance on self-reported data, which may be subject to bias. Additionally, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causal relationships definitively. Future research could explore these relationships longitudinally and incorporate qualitative data for a richer understanding.

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### INTRODUCTIONS

Education, as a consciously designed and systematically implemented endeavor, fundamentally aims to cultivate an optimal learning environment and effective teaching methodologies (National Education System Law,

2003:1-2; Suroyo et al., 2022). The ultimate goal is to empower students to actively develop their multifaceted potential, encompassing spiritual and religious fortitude, self-regulation, personality development, intellectual capacity, moral integrity, and essential skills for their individual growth, community engagement, national contribution, and civic responsibility. Indeed, the core aspiration of education lies in fostering positive societal transformation by elevating the overall quality of life and nurturing the inherent abilities and potential within each individual. This aligns with the National Education System Law (2003, Chapter II, Article 3), which posits that national education serves to cultivate capabilities, shape character, and advance a dignified civilization, thereby enriching the nation's intellectual landscape. Its specific purpose is to develop students' potential into individuals who are faithful and devout, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and responsible democratic citizens.

In the pursuit of these overarching educational objectives, teachers occupy a central and indispensable role. Their responsibilities transcend the mere transmission of subject matter; they are also tasked with the crucial roles of educating, motivating, and providing comprehensive support to students to maximize their learning trajectories. This perspective is echoed by Hartini (2019) and Sopandi (2019), who underscore teachers as vital components within the educational ecosystem, engaging directly with students to facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technological understanding. Teachers function as cognitive facilitators, moral and political exemplars, innovators in pedagogical practices, collaborators within the school community, and agents of social and educational equity. Consequently, they are expected to execute their professional duties with proficiency, encompassing four fundamental competencies: pedagogical, social, professional, and personal. A truly professional teacher is characterized by specialized skills and in-depth expertise in the science and art of education, demonstrating mastery across these critical competency domains (Tarigan, 2020; Yusuf and Suci, 2018). Specifically, professional competence refers to a teacher's profound understanding of subject matter, including the academic knowledge directly relevant to student learning outcomes (Hasan, 2017; Trianawati and Etiyasningsih, 2018).

Furthermore, government regulations, such as Permenpan No. 16 of 2009, formally define teachers as professional teachers whose primary responsibilities include teaching, guiding, training, assessing, and evaluating students across all levels of education. Continuous professional development is strongly emphasized as a means to consistently enhance teachers' expertise and effectiveness. Effective classroom management, significantly facilitated by teachers' well-developed competencies, is paramount for fostering student comprehension and engagement (Ringo, Ulfah, and Okianna, 2017). Therefore, teachers' robust mastery of these competencies is undeniably vital for impactful instruction and meaningful learning experiences.

Observations within Parigi Moutong Regency, however, suggest a degree of variability in teacher performance. Several interconnected factors potentially contribute to this situation. These include persistent teacher shortages, particularly acute in geographically remote schools, often leading to teachers managing multiple classes simultaneously. Moreover, concerns exist regarding inadequate lesson preparation, a potential over-reliance on teacher-centered instructional methods, limited integration of diverse teaching strategies, insufficient depth in content knowledge among some teachers, and the need for further development of essential teaching skills. These critical issues were brought to the forefront during the 2021 Parigi Moutong Regency Education Deliberation, highlighting an urgent need for effective and sustainable solutions.

While a significant body of research on teacher competence has traditionally focused on their direct classroom roles (Selvi, 2010), the conceptualization of teacher competence has evolved considerably alongside educational reforms and advancements in educational science (Rusman, 2012, identifies pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies). These competencies are not isolated entities but rather interconnected and mutually reinforcing elements crucial for overall teaching effectiveness. Given that teachers are pivotal to student learning

outcomes, their mastery of these interconnected areas, particularly those directly impacting the learning environment such as pedagogical competence (encompassing understanding students, designing and implementing instruction, evaluating learning, and facilitating student development) and subject matter expertise (professional competence), is of paramount importance (Hakim, 2015). Strong professional competence is foundational for cultivating a conducive and enriching learning environment, while well-developed pedagogical competence directly influences the effectiveness of instructional delivery and student engagement. Consequently, teacher performance, which can be defined as the tangible outcomes of their assigned duties and responsibilities over a defined period, is significantly shaped and influenced by the level of these underlying competencies.

Parigi Moutong Regency, characterized by its geographically diverse and expansive landscape, including numerous communities in remote and underserved areas, faces unique challenges in ensuring equitable access to essential infrastructure such as reliable network connectivity and transportation. Preliminary observations suggest potentially lower levels of teacher performance in the region's elementary schools, possibly stemming from the use of less effective teaching approaches, excessive workloads resulting from chronic teacher shortages, and limitations in technological proficiency. Notably, data from 423 elementary schools with a total of 1,262 teachers indicates a significant teacher deficit, with an average of only three teachers per school compared to an ideal staffing level of eight (Sunarti, 2021; Suroyo And Putra, 2022). This substantial shortage likely exacerbates teacher workload and, consequently, potentially impacts their overall performance and well-being.

Considering these persistent challenges and the acknowledged importance of teacher competence in fostering quality education, this study aims to investigate the influence of pedagogical and professional competence on the performance of elementary school teachers specifically within the context of Parigi.

This research uniquely contributes by focusing on teacher effectiveness in the specific socio-educational context of Moutong Regency, a region characterized by geographical complexities and resource limitations often overlooked in broader studies. By analyzing two fundamental competencies within this unique setting, the study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the key factors shaping teacher effectiveness, offering insights beyond generalized findings. The anticipated findings will inform targeted policy decisions and practical interventions to enhance teacher quality and improve educational outcomes in the region. Ultimately, this research will create new knowledge by bridging the gap in understanding teacher effectiveness in such challenging, under-researched environments.

## **METHOD**

This research employed a quantitative research design, aligning with the objective of examining the relationship between teachers' pedagogical competence, professional competence, and their performance in the educational setting (Sugiyono, 2017). The quantitative approach was deemed appropriate as it allows for the systematic measurement of variables and the statistical analysis of their relationships, providing objective and generalizable findings. This study was conducted in Parigi Moutong Regency, a region selected due to preliminary observations suggesting potential variations in teacher performance possibly influenced by factors such as geographical challenges and teacher distribution. The population of this study comprised all elementary school teachers within the 42 elementary schools in Parigi Moutong Regency, totaling 1,262 teachers. To obtain a representative subset of this population, a stratified random sampling technique was utilized. This method ensured that subgroups within the population (e.g., teachers from different school levels or geographical areas) were proportionally represented in the final sample of 127 teachers, which constituted approximately 10% of the total population.

The primary instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire consisting of closed-ended questions measured on a Likert scale. This questionnaire was specifically designed to assess the three key variables under investigation: pedagogical competence, professional competence, and teacher performance. Prior to its deployment, the questionnaire underwent a pilot study with a smaller group of teachers outside the main sample to identify any ambiguities or areas for improvement, ensuring clarity and ease of understanding. To guarantee the trustworthiness of the data, the research instruments were subjected to rigorous validity and reliability testing. Validity, referring to the extent to which the instrument measures what it intends to measure, was assessed through the correlation of individual questionnaire items with established theoretical constructs related to each competency and performance dimension. Reliability, indicating the consistency and stability of the instrument in measuring the intended constructs, was measured using the Cronbach's Alpha method, with a threshold of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable.

Data collection was carried out through the distribution of the questionnaires to the selected sample of teachers. The collected data were then analyzed using quantitative statistical techniques. Before conducting the main hypothesis testing, prerequisite tests, including normality, linearity, and homogeneity of variance, were performed to ensure that the data met the assumptions required for parametric statistical analysis. Subsequently, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to determine the simultaneous and individual influence of pedagogical competence (independent variable X1) and professional competence (independent variable X2) on teacher performance (dependent variable Y). Hypothesis testing involved the use of both t-tests to evaluate the significance of the individual independent variables and an F-test to assess the overall significance of the model.

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research process, ensuring informed consent was obtained from all participating teachers. Their voluntary participation was secured, and the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses were guaranteed. Participants were fully informed about the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any point without consequence. The collected data were stored securely and used solely for this research, adhering to ethical guidelines for studies involving human subjects. Beyond pedagogical and professional competence, it's recognized that other crucial factors significantly influence teacher performance. For instance, teacher motivation, stemming from intrinsic passion or extrinsic rewards, can profoundly impact their engagement and dedication. Similarly, school conditions, including leadership support, access to resources, class sizes, and the overall school climate, play a vital role in enabling or hindering a teacher's ability to perform effectively. These broader contextual elements can either amplify or diminish the impact of a teacher's skills and knowledge in the classroom.

## RESULT

This study collected data through the distribution of questionnaires and direct interviews, complemented by information from various relevant sources. The gathered data were categorized into two primary sections: questionnaire descriptions and respondent demographics. The respondents comprised 127 teachers from elementary schools throughout Parigi Moutong Regency. The demographic profile of the respondents indicated that 70.9% were female and 20.1% were male. The age distribution of the participants showed a tendency towards more experienced teachers, with 34.6% of respondents aged between 51 and 60 years. Regarding educational qualifications, a significant majority, 98.4%, held bachelor's degrees, suggesting a strong prevalence of formal academic credentials among the teaching professionals in the region. This high level of educational attainment potentially correlates with the expertise and instructional capabilities observed within the elementary school teacher population of Parigi Moutong Regency.

### a. Teacher Pedagogical Competence

The quality of a teacher can be assessed through their mastery of four fundamental competencies: pedagogical competency, social competency, professional competency, and personal competency. Among these, pedagogical

competency is particularly distinctive, setting teachers apart from other professions. This competency is essential for teachers and encompasses a comprehensive understanding of student characteristics and psychology. By mastering this competency, teachers can effectively and efficiently interact with their students, addressing various issues that may arise in the educational context. To foster their development, teachers must continuously enhance their knowledge and skills related to teaching and student engagement. Several strategies for skill enhancement include regular reading of educational literature, writing and reviewing scholarly articles, staying updated with current news through reputable media outlets, and participating in professional training opportunities (Akbar, 2021).

**Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Answers to Teacher Pedagogical Competence Variables**

Statement	Respondent's answer score										N	Score Total	Mean
	Point 4		Point3		Point2		Point1						
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%					
I identify the strengths and weaknesses of students in the classroom	52	40.9	52	41	18	14	5	4	127	405	3.19		
	31	24.4	63	50	24	19	9	7	127	370	2.91		
I identify the characteristics of each student based on physical, moral, social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual aspects	62	48.8	45	35	18	14	2	2	127	421	3.31		
	64	50.4	37	29	22	17	4	3	127	415	3.27		
I do not provide special treatment for students who experience behavioral deviations in the classroom.	71	55.9	45	35	10	8	1	1	127	440	3.46		
	19	15	73	57	31	24	4	3	127	361	2.84		
I help students develop their potential	75	59.1	14	11	10	8	28	22	127	390	3		
I identify students' level of understanding of the subject matter in class.	66	52	23	18	14	11	24	19	127	385	3		
	62	48.8	25	20	15	12	25	20	127	378	3		
I use varied approaches, methods, strategies, and learning techniques for each learning material.	52	40.9	31	24	12	9	32	25	127	357	3		
I do not understand the factors that influence student learning outcomes	46	36.2	37	29	15	12	29	23	127	354	3		
	67	52.8	18	14	7	6	35	28	127	371	3		
I carry out learning activities according to the plan that has been previously developed in the lesson plan	63	49.6	25	20	9	7	30	24	127	375	3		
The learning activities I do are not related to students' daily lives	62	48.8	23	18	8	6	34	27	127	367	3		
	72	56.7	42	33	5	4	8	6	127	432	3		

Statement	Respondent's answer score								N	Score Total	Mean
	Point 4		Point3		Point2		Point1				
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%			
The learning activities I carry out are adjusted to the age and learning ability level of students	72	56.7	42	33	9	7	4	3	127	436	3
I provide many opportunities for students	79	62.2	38	30	4	3	6	5	127	444	3
to ask questions, demonstrate, and express their opinions during learning	71	55.9	38	30	9	7	9	7	127	425	3
The learning media I use aims to increase learning motivation and focus students' attention on learning	55	43.3	46	36	16	13	10	8	127	400	3
I am not proficient in operating computers.	58	45.7	46	36	12	9	11	9	127	405	3
I use teaching aids based on	83	65.4	36	28	4	3	4	3	127	452	4
information and communication technology (ICT) to support the delivery of learning materials.	34	26.8	18	14	22	17	53	42	127	287	2
I use news/events on TV as materials	26	20.5	23	18	18	14	60	47	127	269	2
to support learning.	9	7.09	29	23	24	19	65	51	127	236	2

The significance of pedagogical competency cannot be overstated, as it serves as a benchmark for evaluating the quality of a teacher. The pedagogical variables applied in the research of elementary school teachers in Parigi Moutong regency consist of 40 statements, as outlined in Table 1. These variables indicate the essential competencies that every teacher must possess to determine their effectiveness and quality as teachers. In a study conducted among elementary schools in Parigi Moutong, the average mean score of the responses from teachers was found to be 2.6, placing it in the "fairly good" category on the interval scale. Notably, the highest mean score was associated with the statement expressing that the teacher does not provide special treatment to students exhibiting behavioral deviations, which scored 3.31, also falling within the "fairly good" range. The distribution of responses indicated a high level of agreement, with 48.8% strongly agreeing, 35% agreeing, 14% disagreeing, and 2% strongly disagreeing.

Conversely, the statement with the lowest mean score pertained to the teacher's self-reported lack of proficiency in assessment and evaluation, which scored 2.0, categorizing it in the "poor" range. The distribution of responses reflected that 18.15% of respondents strongly agreed, 13% agreed, 19% disagreed, and a substantial 50% strongly disagreed with their capacity to conduct effective assessments. This highlights a significant gap within the pedagogical competency framework, particularly in regards to the ability of teachers to carry out evaluations of students' learning outcomes.

The survey results underscore that a notable proportion of teachers perceive themselves as lacking the necessary skills for conducting assessments and evaluations effectively. Given that 50% of respondents indicated a deficiency in this area, it becomes evident that acquiring robust pedagogical competency is crucial for teachers to

implement effective assessment and evaluation strategies. Such strategies should be underpinned by comprehensive data reflecting measured capabilities, clearly defined procedures, and established criteria for evaluation. In summary, the findings from the research emphasize the vital role of pedagogical competencies in shaping the quality of education delivered by teachers. The evident need for improvement in specific areas, such as assessment and evaluation, presents an opportunity for professional development initiatives aimed at enhancing teachers' effectiveness. Ensuring that teachers possess strong pedagogical skills is essential for fostering an environment conducive to student learning and overall educational achievement

#### **b. Teacher Professional Competence**

Professional teachers continuously strive to enhance their quality and keep their competencies up to date. A teacher is considered competent in their field when they possess knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for effective teaching. As the primary component in the learning process within schools, teachers significantly influence their students' success. According to Barghava et al. (2011), the most critical factor in education is the teacher, wherein teaching becomes a habitual practice as teachers fulfill their roles. Learning occurs through the interaction between teachers and students, leading to behavioral changes that include the acquisition of new knowledge, the reinforcement of understanding, and the development of experiential learning. Teachers deserve respect due to their deep commitment to enhancing the educational experiences of their students. Furthermore, they play a crucial role in supporting the personal development of learners, helping them to achieve their life goals optimally. This responsibility necessitates that teachers consider the needs of students both collectively and individually (Nurqomah, 2021). Such dual consideration ensures that the diverse requirements of students are met, fostering an inclusive learning environment. According to recent survey results obtained from teachers responding to a questionnaire, the mean score for the variable representing professional teacher competency was 2.64, indicating a level categorized as "sufficiently good." The highest mean score was associated with the statement regarding lesson plan (RPP) preparation in alignment with the syllabus, which scored 3.44, falling within the "good" range. The distribution of responses showed that 55.1% of respondents strongly agreed, 36% agreed, while 8% disagreed, and 2% strongly disagreed with this statement.

Conversely, there were 19 statements with the lowest mean scores; notably, one statement related to not paying attention to student engagement and needs within the classroom scored poorly. This statement revealed a troubling trend, as the mean score fell within the "poor" range. The distribution of responses indicated that only 22% strongly agreed, 15% agreed, while 18% disagreed, and a significant 45% disagreed with the notion of neglecting students' involvement and needs. In conclusion, professional teachers are a decisive factor in fostering effective educational experiences. It is essential for teachers to prioritize effective communication and collaboration with their peers in order to achieve shared educational goals. By addressing the diverse needs of students and continually striving for their own professional development, teachers can create a more impactful learning environment that ultimately benefits their students.

#### **c. Teacher Performance**

The motivation to learn in students can be effectively stimulated by the presence of teachers and school principals. Both teachers and school leaders can collaborate to ignite, cultivate, and enhance students' motivation to engage in learning activities. The analysis of questionnaire results revealed a mean score of 2.80 for the variable of teacher performance, which indicates a satisfactory level on the interval scale. Among the statements evaluated, the one receiving the highest mean score was, "I organize teaching materials from simple to complex, easy to difficult, and concrete to abstract in accordance with learning objectives," which achieved a mean score of 3.49, placing it

within the good category on the interval scale. The distribution of respondents' answers to this particular statement was notably positive, with 57.5% indicating strong agreement, 35% agreeing, 7% expressing disagreement, and only 1% indicating strong disagreement. Such a response highlights the importance of effective lesson planning and organization in fostering a conducive learning environment. A well-structured approach to presenting educational materials plays a vital role in enhancing student comprehension and motivation.

Conversely, when examining the statement with the lowest mean score, which was, "I do not inform students about the subject matter for the next meeting," a mean score of only 2 was observed, categorizing it as unsatisfactory on the interval scale. This finding reveals potential shortcomings in communication and preparedness between teachers and students, which can adversely affect student engagement and anticipation for upcoming lessons. The distribution of responses showed that 24.4% strongly agreed, 18% agreed, 14% were somewhat disagreeing, while a significant 43% of respondents disagreed with the statement. The implications of these findings are critical for both teacher performance and student motivation. Teachers must recognize the significance of providing students with expectations regarding future lesson content, as such communication is integral to sustaining students' interest and commitment to their studies. Insufficient information and clarity can lead to disengagement, making it necessary for teachers to prioritize transparency in their instructional strategies.

In conclusion, the collaboration between teachers and school administrators is paramount in fostering an engaging learning environment. By leveraging effective teaching methods and ensuring clear communication about the curriculum, teachers can significantly enhance student motivation and overall academic performance. Continuous assessment of teaching practices and openness to feedback will allow for ongoing improvements, ultimately leading to a more vibrant and effective educational experience for all students.

#### d. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

The R-Squared (Coefficient of Determination) test is utilized to explain the proportion of variance in the dependent variable that can be predicted from the independent variables. This test also evaluates the goodness of fit of the regression model (Winarjono, 2018). The results of the determination test indicate that the independent variables (pedagogical competence and professional competence) account for 39.6% of the variation in teacher performance. The first hypothesis examined the effect of pedagogical competence on teacher performance in elementary schools throughout Parigi Moutong. The analysis, as presented in the relevant table, reveals a significance level of 0.012 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and a t-value of -2.754 (absolute value greater than the critical t-value). Based on these statistical findings, the null hypothesis, which stated no significant effect of pedagogical competence on teacher performance, is rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis, asserting a significant influence of pedagogical competence on teacher performance in elementary schools across Parigi Moutong, is accepted. Teacher performance encompasses the achievements of teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities within the educational setting, and pedagogical competence emerges as a significant factor influencing this performance.

**Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents' Answers to Teacher Pedagogical Competence Variables**

Model	R	R Square	AdjustedR Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.629 <sup>a</sup>	.396	.386	11.71191

**Table 3. Result of t-test Analysis**



Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
1 (Constant)	29.154	9.424		3.094	.002
Pedagogic	.590	.232	.476	2.543	.012
Profesional	.205	.236	.162	.868	.387

Conversely, the second hypothesis posited that no significant impact exists between professional competence and teacher performance in elementary schools throughout Parigi Moutong Regency. The analysis indicates that the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is rejected, as the significance value of 0.387 ( $p > 0.05$ ) and t-value of 0.867 ( $t < 1.979$ ) signify a lack of significant influence. This finding contrasts with those reported by Suebudin (2021), who identified a significant positive effect of professional competence on teacher performance in vocational schools in Indramayu. The absence of a significant correlation between professional competence and teacher performance in this study may suggest that other factors are more influential in determining teacher effectiveness within the specific context of elementary schools in Parigi Moutong Regency. It highlights the complexity of the relationship between teacher characteristics and their performance in diverse educational settings. As such, the necessity for teachers to possess and continuously develop a broad range of competencies relevant to contemporary educational demands remains crucial.

In conclusion, the evolving landscape of the education sector necessitates teachers who not only possess strong pedagogical skills but also exhibit high levels of professional competence. A commitment to continuous professional development and a readiness to adapt to evolving educational needs will be vital in ensuring that teachers effectively meet the learning requirements of students. The findings underscore the importance of aligning teacher qualifications with their teaching assignments, thereby fostering an environment conducive to high-quality educational outcomes (Octavia, 2019; Wahyono et al., 2020). The interplay between various teacher competencies and their impact on performance warrants further investigation to inform targeted strategies for enhancing educational quality.

**Table 4. Result of f-test Analysis**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	11156.123	2	5578.061	40.666	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	17008.932	124	137.169		
Total	28165.055	126			

Based on the results of the F-test analysis,  $H_0$  is rejected, and  $H_1$  is accepted, indicating a significant effect of pedagogical and professional competence on teachers' performance during the COVID-19 pandemic in elementary schools throughout Parigi Moutong, as evidenced by a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) and an F-statistic of 40.666 (which exceeds 3.06). This finding aligns with the research conducted by Suparti (2021), which also identified a significant impact of pedagogical and professional competence on the performance of teachers in Raudhatul Athfal in Prigen District, Pasuruan.

In relation to teachers' performance in executing teaching and learning activities, the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005, Article 20(a) states that the duties of teachers and lecturers involve planning effective learning, implementing quality learning processes, and assessing and evaluating learning outcomes. Effective teacher

performance is reflected in their academic abilities as well as their professionalism, signifying their capacity to manage classroom learning and educate students appropriately. Teachers must adapt to contemporary advancements to avoid lagging behind increasingly critical students. Society expects that their children receive education from professional teachers, making it imperative for teachers to evolve their paradigms as professional teachers consistently. The results obtained from schools in Parigi Moutong District demonstrate a significant relationship between the pedagogical and professional competence of teachers and their performance. In the realm of education, these three competencies are vital for teachers, as they contribute to an effective teaching-learning process that yields responsible and high-achieving students. Teacher performance can also be assessed through students' achievements, as reflected in school accreditation, student enrollment numbers, available facilities, and the qualifications of faculty members.

Distance learning, or online education, was not a new concept prior to the COVID-19 pandemic; it was initially regarded as an alternative and less prestigious form of education compared to traditional classroom settings. However, the rapid development of information and communication technology has enabled online learning to be more prevalent and accepted over time. Online distance learning has received mixed responses from society, with some perceiving it as more prestigious compared to conventional education that underutilizes technology. Notably, distance learning represents an educational approach that does not involve direct face-to-face interaction, and various e-learning tools—ranging from emails and blogs to platforms such as Google Classroom and Edmodo—are available to enhance the learning experience. The transition to online learning poses unique challenges for teachers across all educational levels, necessitating a professional approach to fulfill their instructional responsibilities. Teachers encounter various obstacles during the teaching process, particularly in adapting to emerging technologies. A study conducted by Rizaldi et al. (2022) emphasizes that to cultivate a superior generation, we must confront multiple challenges, including the rapid advancement of technology. Many teachers, particularly those aged between 40 and 57 in Parigi Moutong District, still struggle with using electronic media for online learning (PJOK, 2022). To evolve as professional teachers, they must continuously improve their competencies through mastering content, developing educational materials, extensively reading literature, and participating in relevant training programs. As Sudrajat (2020) notes, essential competencies for successful distance learning include technology literacy, classroom management skills, and effective communication with parents, all of which must be developed to foster a supportive and active learning environment amid the challenges posed by the pandemic.

However, the findings of our study diverge significantly from previous research that often identifies a substantial positive impact of professional competence on teacher performance. In many contexts, a strong correlation is observed between a teacher's mastery of their craft and their effectiveness in the classroom. This widely accepted notion often underpins educational reform efforts, emphasizing continuous professional development as a key driver for improved student outcomes and overall educational quality. In Parigi Moutong District, our observations suggest a different narrative. While the enhancement of professional competence remains an undeniable necessity for educators, it appears that other factors exert a more dominant influence on teacher performance, especially concerning the adoption and effective utilization of technology for online learning. This unexpected outcome prompts a re-evaluation of the prevailing assumptions regarding the sole or primary role of professional competence in this specific regional context.

This discrepancy highlights the importance of localized research and the nuanced complexities of educational environments. Therefore, we recommend further research to specifically explore other external and internal factors that potentially affect teacher performance in this region. Such investigations could delve into aspects like infrastructure support, teachers' intrinsic motivation, school policies, or even socio-economic conditions, all of which might play a more significant role in shaping teacher effectiveness in Parigi Moutong District. A more holistic

understanding of these influences will provide a more comprehensive framework for developing targeted interventions and support systems to truly enhance teacher performance in the area.

## Discussion

This study investigated the influence of pedagogical and professional competence on teacher performance in elementary schools within Parigi Moutong Regency. The R-Squared value of 0.396 indicates that approximately 39.6% of the variance in teacher performance can be explained by the combined effect of pedagogical and professional competence (Winarjono, 2018). The F-test yielded a statistically significant result ( $F = 40.666$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), indicating that the model as a whole significantly predicts teacher performance. This finding aligns with the research of Suparti (2021), which also found a significant combined impact of pedagogical and professional competence on teacher performance in early childhood education settings

Further analysis of the individual contributions of each independent variable revealed a significant positive effect of pedagogical competence on teacher performance ( $t = 2.543$ ,  $p = 0.012$ ). This suggests that teachers with stronger pedagogical skills, encompassing their ability to plan effective instruction, manage classrooms, and assess student learning, tend to exhibit higher levels of performance in their duties and responsibilities (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005, Article 20a; Wahyono et al., 2020). The frequency distribution of responses on pedagogical competence (Table 2) highlights areas where teachers perceive themselves as competent, such as identifying student strengths and weaknesses. However, it also points to potential areas for improvement, particularly in assessment and evaluation practices, which could be a focus for professional development initiatives (Akbar, 2021). The finding that professional competence did not exhibit a statistically significant independent effect on teacher performance ( $t = 0.868$ ,  $p = 0.387$ ) warrants a deeper exploration of potential reasons for this non-significant relationship, particularly when juxtaposed with Suebudin's (2021) findings in vocational schools. Several factors could contribute to this outcome in the context of elementary education in Parigi Moutong Regency.

One potential explanation lies in the nature of elementary education itself. While a strong grasp of subject matter is undoubtedly crucial for teachers at this level, the translation of that knowledge into effective teaching practices might be more heavily reliant on pedagogical skills. For instance, a teacher might possess excellent knowledge of mathematics (high professional competence), but their ability to explain fundamental concepts in an age-appropriate manner, manage a classroom of diverse learners, or design engaging activities (pedagogical competence) could be the more direct determinants of their observable teaching performance. In a practical school setting, an elementary teacher with strong pedagogical skills but perhaps slightly less in-depth subject knowledge might still be highly effective at facilitating learning and managing their classroom, leading to positive performance evaluations based on instructional delivery and student engagement. Conversely, a teacher with exceptional subject matter expertise might struggle to convey that knowledge effectively to young learners if their pedagogical skills in areas like differentiation, assessment, or classroom management are less developed. Furthermore, the specific context of Parigi Moutong Regency, with its unique geographical challenges and potential variations in resources and training opportunities, might influence how professional competence manifests in teacher performance. It is possible that systemic factors or the immediate demands of the classroom environment in this region place a greater emphasis on pedagogical adaptability and resourcefulness.

Prior research offers some insights into the complex relationship between teacher competencies and performance. For example, a study by Baumert et al. (2010) investigating the impact of teachers' mathematical knowledge on student achievement found that while content knowledge was important, pedagogical content knowledge (how teachers specifically understand and teach mathematics to students) had a more direct impact on student learning gains, suggesting that the application of knowledge is key. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Wayne and

Youngs (2003) on teacher characteristics and student achievement highlighted that measures of teacher knowledge often show weaker correlations with student outcomes compared to measures of teaching practices, which are closely linked to pedagogical competence. Cross-cultural studies also provide relevant perspectives. For instance, a study conducted in several Asian countries by Darling-Hammond et al. (2012) emphasized the importance of teacher preparation programs that integrate both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills, suggesting that effective teaching relies on the synergy between these two domains. The non-significant independent effect of professional competence in the current study might indicate a context where the translation and application of subject matter knowledge through pedagogical practices are the more salient drivers of observed teacher performance in elementary schools.

In conclusion, while professional competence forms a vital foundation for teaching, its direct and independent influence on observable teacher performance in the elementary school context of Parigi Moutong Regency, as indicated by this study, might be less pronounced than that of pedagogical competence. This could be due to the nature of elementary education emphasizing foundational teaching skills, the specific contextual factors of the region, and findings from prior research suggesting that the application of knowledge through effective pedagogy is a critical determinant of teaching success (Baumert et al., 2010; Wayne & Youngs, 2003). Further research exploring the interplay between these competencies and the contextual variables in Parigi Moutong Regency could provide a more nuanced understanding of these relationships. The significant overall model and the specific impact of pedagogical competence underscore the importance of these competencies in shaping teacher effectiveness. Teacher performance, encompassing the execution of teaching and learning activities, is fundamentally linked to a teacher's ability to plan, implement, and evaluate instruction effectively (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005). The findings emphasize the need for continuous professional development programs that strengthen both pedagogical skills and the effective application of professional knowledge in the classroom. As Sudrajat (2020) suggests, essential competencies for effective teaching include not only content mastery but also classroom management and communication skills. While professional competence might not directly translate to higher performance in this specific context, its foundational role in supporting pedagogical practices should not be understated. Ensuring a strong alignment between teachers' qualifications and their teaching assignments remains a crucial factor in fostering a high-quality educational environment (Octavia, 2019). Further research could explore the mediating factors that influence the relationship between professional competence and teacher performance in elementary school settings.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research questions and hypotheses tested, this study yields several key conclusions. First, pedagogical competence demonstrates a statistically significant positive effect on teacher performance in elementary schools throughout Parigi Moutong Regency. The statistical analysis revealed a significance level below 0.05 and a t-statistic exceeding the critical value, indicating a meaningful positive relationship between a teacher's instructional skills and their overall performance. Conversely, the study found no statistically significant independent effect of professional competence on teacher performance within the same educational context. The statistical analysis showed a significance level above 0.05 and a t-statistic below the critical value, suggesting that, in this specific setting, a teacher's subject matter knowledge alone did not significantly predict their performance. However, the combined influence of both pedagogical and professional competencies as a whole does significantly predict teacher performance, as indicated by a significance level well below 0.05 and a substantial F-statistic exceeding the critical value.

In light of these findings, several recommendations are pertinent. For schools, it is crucial to prioritize and invest in initiatives specifically designed to enhance teacher performance, with a particular emphasis on strengthening

pedagogical competencies. This could involve providing targeted professional development opportunities focused on instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, and effective assessment methods. Teachers themselves should recognize the continuous need for improvement in both their pedagogical and professional skills to optimize student learning outcomes. Engaging in ongoing professional development, seeking opportunities for collaboration and peer learning, and reflecting on their teaching practices are essential for continuous growth. Furthermore, schools and teachers should explore and cultivate other factors that contribute to teacher effectiveness, such as supportive school leadership, collaborative school cultures, and access to relevant resources.

For future research, it is essential to broaden the scope of investigation beyond pedagogical and professional competencies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing teacher performance. Subsequent studies could explore the role of social competence, personal competence, teacher motivation, job satisfaction, school climate, and available resources as potential predictors of teacher effectiveness in elementary school settings. Employing longitudinal research designs and incorporating qualitative data collection methods could also provide richer insights into the complex interplay of factors that shape teacher performance over time. The findings of this study underscore the interconnectedness of teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies with their performance, highlighting the ongoing need for attention and development in these critical areas within educational institutions.

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