

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF “CAPABILITY” IN THE EFFECTS OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING ON MADRASAH TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN KENDAL REGENCY

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ABSTRACT

This study was motivated by the importance of improving the performance of madrasah teachers in the face of demands for educational change, technological developments, and increasingly complex learning needs. Education and training are efforts undertaken to enhance teachers' knowledge, skills, and professionalism. However, improvements in education and training do not necessarily result directly in optimal teacher performance. This situation highlights the importance of “Capability”—defined as a teacher's ability to apply acquired knowledge, skills, experience, and resources in the performance of professional duties. This study aims to analyze the influence of Education (X1) and Training (X2) on Teacher Performance (Y), as well as to examine the role of Capability (Z) as a mediating variable in this relationship. This study employs a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. The study population consists of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency, with the sample determined using a sampling technique appropriate to the characteristics of the study population. Data collection was conducted through a questionnaire designed based on the indicators of each variable. Data analysis was used to test the influence of Education and Training on Teacher Performance, both directly and indirectly through Capability as a mediating variable. The relationships among the variables were tested using analyses appropriate to the research model. This study is expected to provide an empirical understanding of the relationship between Education, Training, Capability, and Teacher Performance. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich research on educational management and human resource development through the perspectives of Human Capital Theory, the Capability Approach, and the Resource-Based View. Practically, the research findings are expected to serve as a basis for consideration by madrasahs and policymakers in designing education and training programs that not only enhance teachers' competencies but also strengthen their Capability, thereby supporting sustainable improvements in Teacher Performance.

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INTRODUCTION

Teachers and lecturers are professional educators who play a vital role in the delivery of education. Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers stipulates that teachers and lecturers must hold at least a bachelor's degree (S1) or a four-year diploma (D4) and possess a teaching certificate. Additionally, professional educators are required to possess four core competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies. These competencies serve as the foundation for teachers to carry out their duties professionally and support the creation of quality education (Fitria & Slamet, 2024).

Education is one of the key factors in developing the quality of human resources. In the Indonesian context, madrasahs play a strategic role because they not only provide general education but also integrate Islamic values into the learning process. Madrasahs are expected to produce students who master science and technology (IPTEK) while also possessing faith, piety, and good character (IMTAK) (Kurniawan, 2025). To achieve this goal, teachers are a key element because they play a direct role in the learning process and in shaping students' character.

As part of the national education system, madrasahs face increasingly complex demands. In addition to meeting the National Education Standards (SNP), madrasahs are also required to adapt to curriculum developments and the digitization of education. It is not enough for madrasah teachers to simply master academic and religious subject matter; they must also possess the ability to use technology, select appropriate teaching methods, and develop innovative learning approaches. These conditions indicate that improving teacher quality is a crucial component of efforts to enhance the quality of madrasah education (Munawar et al., 2025).

One of the government's efforts to enhance teacher professionalism is through education and training. These programs are expected to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes in carrying out their duties. In Kendal Regency, various programs to develop the competencies and professionalism of madrasah teachers have been implemented by the Ministry of Religious Affairs and related institutions (Liawati et al., 2025). Official data from the Central Java Provincial Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs show that in August 2024, 39 teachers under the Kendal Regency Office of the Ministry of Religious Affairs took the Competency Test for Career Advancement (UKKJ), which was held at MAN Kendal. This activity is part of efforts to improve and meet competency standards for madrasah teachers (Ministry of Religious Affairs of Central Java Province, 2024). However, the implementation of education and training has not always been followed by an optimal improvement in teacher performance. This indicates that the success of education and training depends not only on the programs provided but also on teachers' ability to apply what they have learned in their work (Irmayanti et al., 2024).

From the perspective of Human Capital Theory, (Becker, 1964) views education and training as forms of investment in people that can enhance knowledge, skills, productivity, and performance. However, in practice, improvements in education and the intensity of training do not always result in equivalent performance improvements among all teachers. Some teachers are able to apply what they have learned through education and training in their teaching, while others are not yet able to use it optimally. Findings by (Jufendri et al., 2023) indicate that these differences suggest the presence of other mediating factors linking the knowledge and skills acquired to actual performance. However, the mechanisms connecting investments in education and training to teacher performance still require further examination, particularly regarding teachers' ability to effectively utilize the resources they have acquired in their work.

One relevant factor in explaining this situation is *capability*. *Capability* refers to an individual's ability to use their knowledge, skills, experience, and resources to address real-world situations at work. In the context of teachers, education provides knowledge, training provides skills, while *capability* enables teachers to use both in the learning process. This capability can be seen in a teacher's ability to adapt to technology, select learning strategies, solve problems, and continuously develop their competencies (Sustaningrum, 2022). Although this research has identified *capability* as a key factor in supporting job performance, its role as a mechanism that bridges education and training with teacher performance has not yet been a primary focus.

This concept aligns with the Capability Approach developed by (Sen, 2005). Sen explains that *capability* is not only related to the resources a person possesses but also to the actual ability to transform those resources into valuable actions and achievements. Thus, education and training as inputs do not automatically result in optimal performance. These results depend heavily on teachers' ability to implement the knowledge and skills they have acquired into teaching practice (Putra

& Nugroho, 2023). This study reinforces the importance of individual ability in transforming resources into action but has not yet specifically addressed the role of *capability* in the relationship between education, training, and the performance of madrasah teachers.

The importance of *capability* can also be viewed through the *Resource-Based View* (RBV) perspective. (Barney, 1991) explains that resources can be a source of competitive advantage if they possess the characteristics of being valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. In the context of madrasah teachers, education and training are increasingly becoming common resources. Therefore, differences in performance are determined not only by educational level or the number of training programs attended but also by teachers' ability to integrate knowledge, skills, experience, Islamic values, and technology into teaching practices (Abimanyu & Prakasa, 2022).

In this study, Human Capital Theory serves as the grand theory to explain that education and training are investments in human resources that can enhance knowledge and skills as the foundation for improved performance. The Capability Approach is used to complement this explanation by detailing the mechanisms through which knowledge and skills acquired through education and training are transformed into actual capabilities in performing work. Meanwhile, the Resource-Based View (RBV) is used as a supporting perspective to explain that *capabilities*—formed through the integration of knowledge, skills, experience, Islamic values, and technology—constitute internal resources capable of underpinning differences in teacher performance. Thus, these three perspectives form a sequential theoretical relationship: education and training as *human capital* investments provide the resources of knowledge and skills; *capabilities* serve as the mechanism that actualizes these resources; and the actualization of *capabilities* is reflected in teachers' performance.

Based on this research map, previous studies have described education and training as investments in human capital and *capability* as an individual's ability to actualize their resources. However, the relationship among these three factors tends to be discussed separately and has not yet explicitly positioned *capability* as the mechanism that bridges the influence of education and training on madrasah teachers' performance. Therefore, this study positions *capability* as a mediating variable in the relationship between education and training and the performance of madrasah teachers. This approach represents a novel contribution to the research by integrating the perspectives of Human Capital Theory, the Capability Approach, and the Resource-Based View to explain not only whether education and training influence performance but also how that influence operates through teachers' capabilities.

Teacher performance is one of the key indicators in determining the quality of madrasah education. Performance is not only related to student learning outcomes but also encompasses teachers' ability to plan and implement instruction, manage the classroom, conduct assessments, utilize media and technology, and develop their professionalism. In the context of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency, research on *capability* as a mediator between education and training and teacher performance still requires further study. The characteristics of madrasahs, teachers' backgrounds, the work environment, and the demands of digitalization make the relationship between education, training, *capability*, and performance a relevant issue for research.

Based on this discussion, a study titled "The Role of Capability in Mediating the Influence of Education and Training on Madrasah Teachers' Performance in Kendal Regency" is important to conduct. This study is expected to provide insight into the extent to which education and training are related to teacher performance and how *capability* plays a role in that relationship. Theoretically, this study can enrich the field of educational management through the perspectives of *Human Capital Theory* (Becker, 1964), *the Capability Approach* (Sen, 2005), and *the Resource-Based View* (Barney, 1991). Practically, the research findings are expected to serve as input for madrasahs and policymakers in developing educational and training programs that are more practical and oriented toward enhancing teachers' *capabilities* and performance.

METHOD

In social science research, research designs can be categorized into exploratory research, descriptive research, and explanatory research. Exploratory research aims to gain an initial understanding of a phenomenon; descriptive research describes the characteristics of a phenomenon; while explanatory research is used to explain the relationships between variables. Based on these objectives, this study falls under explanatory research with a causal approach, as it aims to explain the cause-and-effect relationships among the variables under investigation (Ilhami et al., 2024; Shmueli et al., 2019).

This study examines the relationship between Education (X1) and Training (X2) and Teacher Performance (Y), with Capability (Z) serving as the intervening or mediating variable. The inclusion of Capability as a mediating variable is based on the notion that education and training do not always directly improve performance. The knowledge and skills acquired by teachers must be supported by the ability to apply them in the performance of their duties and in dealing with various work situations. In this study, capability is operationally defined as a teacher's individual ability to actualize and apply their knowledge, skills, experience, and available resources in the performance of professional duties. This definition is consistently used to refer to the individual construct of capability and is distinguished from the concepts of innovation capability and dynamic capabilities, which operate at the organizational level. Sen's Capability Approach is used as the theoretical foundation to explain how an individual's resources can be transformed into actual capabilities, rather than as a separate construct measured in this study. Thus, capability is not positioned as one of the elements of competence but as a teacher's actual ability to use and integrate their competencies and resources to carry out professional duties.

The accessible population in this study consisted of 96 madrasah teachers at educational institutions serving as research sites in Kendal Regency. This population was selected based on the alignment of the teachers' characteristics with the scope of the study, namely active teachers who had experience participating in educational activities and/or training and who were carrying out teaching duties at the time the study was conducted. The unit of analysis for the study was the individual madrasah teacher; therefore, measurements of teachers' education, training, capability, and performance were conducted at the individual level.

With this design, this study examines the direct effect of Education and Training on Teacher Performance as well as the indirect effect via Capability. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The PLS-SEM analysis included an evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model). The measurement model evaluation was conducted to ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs used, while the structural model evaluation was conducted to test the relationships between variables in accordance with the research model. Hypothesis testing was performed by examining path coefficients, T-statistics, and P-values to determine the direction and significance of the relationships between variables.

Mediation analysis was conducted to determine the indirect effect of Education and Training on Teacher Performance through Capability. In this model, Education and Training are positioned as sources of knowledge and skill development, while Capability represents teachers' actual ability to transform and apply these resources in the performance of their professional duties. Teacher Performance represents the outcome of teachers' professional duties. Thus, the research model examines the pathways Education → Capability → Teacher Performance and Training → Capability → Teacher Performance, in addition to the direct effects of Education → Teacher Performance and Training → Teacher Performance. The significance of the direct and indirect effects was determined based on bootstrapping results in PLS-SEM using path coefficients, T-statistics, and P-values.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Effect of Education on the Performance of Madrasah Teachers in Kendal Regency

Based on the analysis results, it was found that education influences teacher performance, with a coefficient (effect) of 0.523, a t-statistic of 2.339 (>1.96), and a p-value of 0.010. These results indicate that the education factor has a significant influence on the performance of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. This means that the better and higher the quality of a teacher's education, the better the quality of performance (both in terms of knowledge and work ethic) that will be provided to students.

Theoretically, the higher a teacher's level of education, the broader their perspective and knowledge will be; this enhances their ability to think critically, facilitates effective task completion, and ultimately leads to better performance. According to (Becker, 1964), education is viewed as an investment that increases an individual's stock of knowledge, skills, and values. The higher a madrasah teacher's educational level, the deeper their mastery of subject matter and understanding of educational theories. This cognitive maturity directly enables teachers to design effective learning strategies, which are key indicators of high performance.

Thus, the quality of a teacher's education is a crucial factor to consider; the higher it is, the greater the likelihood of effective performance. Therefore, madrasahs must be able to support teachers to create a learning performance system that is both effective and satisfactory.

The Effect of Training on Madrasah Teachers' Performance in Kendal Regency

Based on the analysis results, it was found that training has no effect on teacher performance, with a coefficient (effect) of 0.107, a T-statistic of 0.795 (<1.96), and a P-value of 0.213. These results indicate that the training factor does not have a significant effect on the performance of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. This means that training, which is intended to support teachers' competencies, has not yet had an impact on improving performance itself. Moreover, since much of the training is currently conducted online, it is considered highly ineffective due to numerous obstacles and limitations. The results of this study indicate that the training variable does not have a significant effect on teacher performance.

This aligns with the views of (Baldwin & Ford, 1988), who stated that the success of training is determined not only by the quality of the training but also by participant characteristics, training design, and the post-training work environment. Thus, if training outcomes are not applied in daily work, performance improvements will not be evident even if the training has been conducted (Khusnah & Khoiriyah, 2025).

(Pakpahan et al., 2025) point out that training conducted routinely without a foundation in measurable competency needs and without a comprehensive management design often fails to have a direct impact on changes in performance or professionalism. Therefore, this clearly underscores that training does not automatically have a significant impact unless it is supported by a structured final management model, continuous evaluation, and the availability of adequate work support facilities for madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency to support or improve their performance.

The Influence of Education on the Capability of Madrasah Teachers in Kendal Regency

Based on the analysis results, it was found that education influences capability with a coefficient (effect) of 0.384, a t-statistic of 3.364 (>1.96), and a p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that the education factor has a significant effect on the capability of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. This means that the better and higher the quality of a teacher's education, the greater their knowledge and understanding will be.

According to Sen, education is one of the most important means of developing an individual's capability. Education expands an individual's capacity to think, make decisions, and perform professional duties effectively.

According to (Putri & Sustaningrum, 2025), improvements in educational attainment and targeted training programs have been shown to linearly boost personal capabilities, enabling individuals to understand their strengths and effectively optimize their work capacity. This is also consistent with the view of (Becker, 1964), who states that education is an investment in human capital capable of enhancing an individual's knowledge, skills, and abilities, thereby improving their capability to perform work effectively. In the context of the teaching profession, higher education strengthens pedagogical and professional competencies, as well as the ability to adapt to developments in education (Cascio & Aguinis, 2019).

Therefore, education has a significant impact on *capability*, as it serves as the primary pillar for enhancing an individual's capabilities. Based on the analysis above, it was found that education influences teachers' *capability* with a coefficient (effect size) of 0.484, a t-statistic of 4.017 (>1.96), and a p-value of 0.000. These results indicate that the training factor has a significant effect on *the capability* of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. This means that the better the training program designed, the more it enhances the teachers' knowledge and understanding.

Training is one of the tools for enhancing a teacher's capability. After receiving a foundation in formal education, teachers are provided with training aimed at improving their competencies or capabilities. A teacher's *capability* will continue to improve if supported by effective and visionary training programs, as capability does not develop on its own without the right resources—one of which is training. This, of course, will have a significant impact on the advancement of education itself. When an institution or madrasah organizes training for teachers, it signals that teachers are being encouraged to continually expand their knowledge base and enhance their capabilities to produce higher-quality and more effective teaching outcomes.

This aligns with the statement by (Darmanto & Supriyadi, 2022), who note that capabilities do not emerge spontaneously but must be developed through a mediating process. Training serves as a medium capable of transforming

passive knowledge into active capabilities. In the theory of Dynamic Capabilities, training is the primary means by which an organization reconfigures its human resources. Training is defined as a means to revisit and develop knowledge through new methods. Without continuous training, a teacher's capabilities will become obsolete; thus, training functions as a mechanism for renewing capabilities (Meitisari et al., 2026).

The Influence of Capability on the Performance of Madrasah Teachers in Kendal Regency

Based on the analysis results, it was found that *capability* influences teacher performance, with a coefficient (effect) of 0.339, a t-statistic of 1.970 (>1.96), and a p-value of 0.024. These results indicate that *the capability* factor has a significant effect on the performance of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. *Capability* is not merely what a teacher knows, but rather a teacher's ability to align, apply, and develop potential and talent so as to remain adaptable to the challenges ahead.

The positive and significant influence of capability on performance is supported by a human resource management study from Wahid Hasyim University. The study states that strengthening individual capability serves as the primary capital that directly boosts productivity, quality, and the timeliness of task completion in an operational environment, which in turn improves performance quality (Gutara et al., 2021).

When it comes to improving performance, *capability* is the most important factor for a teacher. This is because capability has a very positive and significant impact on performance. Teachers with strong capabilities will quickly adapt to new teaching methods, easily and swiftly analyze problems in the classroom, and be able to find the best solutions. This will directly and effectively improve the performance indicators of madrasah teachers. High capability leads to effective and satisfactory teacher performance. Without good capability, it is impossible for someone to consistently achieve good performance standards (Setyawan & Fikri, 2025).

(Boyatzis, 1982), argues that competence is a fundamental characteristic of an individual related to effectiveness and performance. Competence encompasses knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal characteristics that enable an individual to achieve better performance outcomes. Meanwhile, capability is one of the main elements of competence; thus, the higher a person's capability, the greater the opportunity to produce superior performance (Sutanto et al., 2023).

The Role of Capability in Mediating the Relationship Between Education and the Performance of Madrasah Teachers

Based on the results of the analysis, the coefficient of the indirect effect of education on performance through capability was found to be 0.154, with a t-statistic of 0.699 and a P-value of 0.242. This very small coefficient value (0.154) indicates that the indirect effect observed is not strong. Furthermore, the t-statistic value, which is well below the critical level, indicates no statistically significant effect. Thus, it can be concluded that *capability* does not mediate the relationship between education and the performance of madrasah teachers.

In the context of human resource management (HRM), the failure of the *capability* variable to mediate the effect of education on teacher performance may be due to several theoretical and practical factors in the field. The mediating role of *capability* is considered to have failed if education does not immediately enhance relevant capabilities, or if the capabilities possessed by teachers are unable to significantly boost their performance. This is due to the reality on the ground, which includes a gap between educational theory and practice (*capability*), an unsupportive work environment and inadequate facilities, as well as a lack of work motivation (Hindasah, 2025).

Knowledge acquired in the classroom through formal education is not necessarily transformable into practical capabilities (such as skills, management, mastery of adaptive instructional technology, or the ability to handle students with diverse psychological profiles).

Work environment factors and facilities also influence this mediation process, as a positive work environment is one of the most important factors in supporting a teacher's performance. Similarly, regarding facilities, even high teacher capability will not result in optimal performance if the madrasah or the organization lacks adequate teaching facilities.

This study aligns with the concept of performance proposed by (Robbins & Judge, 2018), who state that performance is a function of the interaction between ability, motivation, and opportunity. The lack of significance of *capability* in mediating the influence of education on performance indicates that the increase in teachers' capabilities following their education is not matched by supportive motivation or work opportunities within the school environment (Sangapan et al., 2025).

Furthermore, drawing on (Barney, 1991) Resource-Based View, teachers' capabilities that have improved through formal education will not be able to boost actual performance if the organization is not properly structured to harness the

potential of those capabilities—for example, due to a heavy non-academic administrative workload that diverts teachers' focus.

This study is also consistent with the views of (Kimberly et al., 2019), who state that enhancing individual capabilities through training or professional development will not automatically improve performance if not supported by a conducive organizational climate, an adequate incentive system, and clear job descriptions at the institutions where they work.

When a teacher possesses a higher education and strong capabilities but has low work motivation, those capabilities become a wasted asset and will not translate into tangible performance improvements, because *capability* can only mediate the influence of education on performance when accompanied by high work motivation, the influence of the principal's leadership and the work environment, as well as supportive learning facilities (Kurniawan, 2025).

The Effect of Capability in Mediating the Relationship Between Training and the Performance of Madrasah Teachers

Based on the analysis results, the coefficient of the indirect effect of training on performance through capability was found to be -0.012, with a t-statistic of 0.071 and a P-value of 0.472. This very small coefficient value (-0.012) indicates that the indirect effect is negative. Furthermore, the t-statistic value, which is well below the critical threshold, indicates no statistically significant effect. Thus, it can be concluded that capability does not mediate the relationship between training and madrasah teachers' performance.

Capability, as a mediating variable, does not have a significant effect in bridging the relationship between training and improvements in teacher performance. This may be because the training attended by teachers does not align with on-the-ground needs or was not even designed to enhance the capabilities required to boost performance. The training may be purely theoretical without practical application, or the material presented may already be familiar to the teachers, resulting in no significant increase in their capabilities.

(Kurniawan, 2025) explains that improvements in ability or capability following training are often hindered by structural barriers in the work environment, thereby failing to serve as a predictor of performance. During the training process, participants or teachers may experience an increase in capabilities after the training, but they are unable to apply them in madrasahs due to potential barriers in the work environment, such as a lack of supporting facilities and coworkers who do not support new innovations.

This aligns with the Transfer of Training theory proposed by (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). They explain that the success of training is determined not only by the quality of the training program but also by the transfer of training outcomes to the workplace. This transfer is influenced by three groups of factors: participant characteristics (e.g., prior skills and motivation), training design, and the work environment (e.g., support from the principal, coworkers, and opportunities to apply what was learned). If training transfer does not occur effectively, the capabilities gained through training will not translate into improved performance. Consequently, the capabilities that increase after training still fail to translate into improved performance.

The failure of capabilities to significantly mediate the effect of training on performance is further supported by the findings (Darmanto & Supriyadi, 2022). This study confirms that the variables of capability and training often show an insignificant mediation path in empirical models if the organization does not yet possess adequate dynamic capabilities, in which structural barriers in the work environment tend to reduce the effectiveness of knowledge transfer resulting from training.

CONCLUSION

Education (X1) and Training (X2) are variables related to Teacher Performance (Y). Education provides the foundation of knowledge and competencies needed by teachers, while Training helps develop the skills that support the performance of professional duties. However, Education and Training are not viewed solely in terms of the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also in terms of teachers' ability to apply them in their work. *Capability* (Z) is positioned as a mediating variable that explains the relationship between Education and Training and Teacher Performance. *Capability* reflects a teacher's ability to integrate the knowledge, skills, experience, and resources acquired through Education and

Training and apply them in the performance of their duties. Thus, *Capability* plays a crucial role in explaining how Education and Training can contribute to Teacher Performance.

This study examines the effect of Education (X1) and Training (X2) on Teacher Performance (Y), both directly and through *Capability* (Z) as a mediating variable. This research model provides a foundation for the development of programs to improve the performance of madrasah teachers in Kendal Regency. The implications of this study indicate that teacher professional development should not be limited to improving education and increasing the intensity of training but must also strengthen teachers' *capability* to implement the knowledge and skills they have acquired. Therefore, teacher development programs can be directed toward more practical activities, such as post-training mentoring, applying training outcomes in the classroom, utilizing technology, solving learning problems, and evaluating the application of competencies in the performance of duties.

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of respondents and research locations so that the model can be tested on a more diverse range of teacher and madrasah characteristics. Future research may also consider other variables that could potentially influence the relationship between Education, Training, *Capability*, and Teacher Performance, such as work motivation, organizational support, madrasah principal leadership, organizational culture, or digital literacy. Additionally, a longitudinal design could be considered to observe the development of teachers' *Capability* and Performance after participating in education or training over a specific period, allowing for a more in-depth analysis of the changes that occur.

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