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## Exploring Professional and Pedagogical Competence: a Quantitative Study of Junior Secondary Teachers in East Java

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### Abstract

The professional and pedagogical competence of teachers plays a pivotal role in shaping the quality of education globally. This study investigates the competence levels of junior high school teachers in East Java, Indonesia, while examining how various demographic and contextual variables may influence these competencies. Utilizing a quantitative research design, data were gathered from 1,030 participants through convenience sampling. Analytical methods included descriptive statistics, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and inferential techniques such as t-tests and ANOVA. Results reveal that factors such as gender, academic qualifications, and employment status have no significant impact on teacher competence. In contrast, age and institutional context emerge as influential, with more experienced teachers and those working in particular settings exhibiting higher competence levels. These findings offer empirical insights into regional disparities in teacher competence across Indonesia and underscore the role of professional experience and work environment. The study advocates for context-aware and experience-driven professional development strategies and provides evidence-based recommendations for policies aimed at enhancing teacher quality and reducing regional gaps.

**Keywords:** Educational Equity; Educational Policy; Exploratory Factor Analysis; Professional Development; Teacher Performance