

## Research Article

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# The Effect of Freedom of Learning Policy and Work Discipline on Teacher Performance with Teacher Competence as an Intervening Variable in SMA Esa Prakasa Langkat Regency

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**Abstract:** *This study aims to analyze the effect of the Free Learning Policy and Work Discipline on Teacher Performance with Teacher Competence as an Intervening Variable. The research was conducted at Prakasa High School, Langkat Regency. The population in this study was a sample of 80 teachers. The sample technique used is a saturated sample. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires. The research model used is Path Analysis and Smart PLS as measurement tools. The results of this study are that work discipline has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence. Teacher competence has a negative and insignificant effect on teacher performance. Merdeka Learning has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. Merdeka Learning has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence. Work Discipline has an effect on Teacher Performance through teacher competence which has no significant negative effect. Merdeka Belajar has an insignificant negative effect on teacher performance through teacher competence.*

**Keywords:** *Independent Learning, Work Discipline, Teacher Competence, Teacher Performance*

## Introduction

Teachers are professionals who have the task of teaching, educating and training. Educating means continuing and developing the values of life. Teaching means continuing and developing science and technology. While training means developing skills in students. And professional is something that plays an important role in a job or business. Teachers can be said to be professional if the learning process involves several elements or components of learning. Learning according to Oemar Hamalik the criteria for professional teachers include: being able to solve and implement good teaching techniques in achieving educational goals. The Freedom to Learn curriculum is motivated by the results of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which shows that 70% of students aged 15 years are below the minimum competence in understanding simple reading or applying basic mathematical concepts. Free Learning! is an educational slogan that is currently being stirred up by the Minister of Education and Culture. It is hoped that the principle of independent learning can accelerate the process of education reform in Indonesia, which has so far been considered to be slowly withering. Medikbud even initiated the term education deregulation because education regulations have so far been considered to hamper the process of achieving education reform which leads to the quality and quality of education in Indonesia.

Work discipline is something that must be instilled in every employee. Employee awareness is required by complying with applicable regulations. Regulations are very necessary to provide guidance and counseling for employees in creating good order in agencies. In addition, the agency itself must make sure that the regulations are clear, easy to understand and apply to all employees. Hasibuan (2008) Mangkuprawira (2007) argues that discipline is the nature of an employee who consciously obeys certain organizational rules and regulations. Discipline greatly affects the performance of Employees and the Government, because discipline is a form of training for Employees in carrying out Government

regulations. Competence or competency is the ability to carry out a task/job based on knowledge, skills and attitudes in accordance with the required performance. Competence for some professions is an important requirement in carrying out organizational frameworks and goals. Competency issues are important, because competence offers an organizational framework that is effective and efficient in utilizing limited resources. In every job or profession, especially in the field of education within the scope of the school, education personnel, especially teachers, must have competence in accordance with their fields and responsibilities. A teacher who has competence in his profession will be able to carry out his duties properly and efficiently, effectively, on time, and on target. Competence for some professions is an important requirement in carrying out organizational frameworks and goals. The issue of competence is important, because competence offers an effective and efficient organizational framework in utilizing limited resources. In every job or profession, especially in the field of education within the scope of the school, education personnel, especially teachers, must have competence in accordance with their fields and responsibilities. A teacher who has competence in his profession will be able to carry out his duties properly and efficiently, effectively, on time, and on target. Competence for some professions is an important requirement in carrying out organizational frameworks and goals. The issue of competence is important, because competence offers an effective and efficient organizational framework in utilizing limited resources. In every job or profession, especially in the field of education within the scope of the school, education personnel, especially teachers, must have competence in accordance with their fields and responsibilities. A teacher who has competence in his profession will be able to carry out his duties properly and efficiently, effectively, on time, and on target. because competence offers an effective and efficient organizational framework in utilizing limited resources. In every job or profession, especially in the field of education within the scope of the school, education personnel, especially teachers, must have competence in accordance with their fields and responsibilities. A teacher who has competence in his profession will be able to carry out his duties properly and efficiently, effectively, on time, and on target. because competence offers an effective and efficient organizational framework in utilizing limited resources. In every job or profession, especially in the field of education within the scope of the school, education personnel, especially teachers, must have competence in accordance with their fields and responsibilities. A teacher who has competence in his profession will be able to carry out his duties properly and efficiently, effectively, on time, and on target.

To get good performance from an employee, an organization must provide facilities and infrastructure as a support in completing work. One of the ways used to see the company's development is by looking at the results of performance appraisal. The means that become the object of performance appraisal are skills, the ability of employees to carry out a job or task which is evaluated using certain benchmarks objectively and is carried out periodically. From the results of the assessment, it can be seen that the company's performance is reflected by the employee's performance.

## Literature Review

### Free Learning

According to the Minister of Education and Research and Technology, (Makarim) Merdeka Learning is a concept of educational development in which all stakeholders are expected to become agents of change. These stakeholders include families, teachers, educational institutions, industry, and society. According to Makarim in Hendri (2020:), "Freedom to Learn" can be interpreted as freedom of thought. Meanwhile,

according to Dewantara in Hendri (2020), freedom of learning is freedom for students to learn through their way of thinking.

### **Independent Learning Indicator**

According to the Minister of Education and Research and Technology, (Nadiem Makarim), there are three indicators of the success of the Free Learning program initiated by his ministry, namely

1. Equitable participation of students in Indonesian education,
2. Effective learning, and
3. There is no lag behind students.

### **Work Discipline**

Order is the main characteristic of organization and discipline is one of the methods for maintaining this order. Discipline is a certain situation in which people who are members of an organization comply with existing regulations with pleasure. In the life of an organization, the obedience of its members is needed so that the company's goals can be achieved. In addition, an organization seeks to make the regulations that are made clear, easy to understand, apply fairly to both the highest leadership and the lowest employees. According to Hasibuan (2017) suggests that work discipline is a person's awareness and willingness to obey all company regulations and applicable social norms.

### **Work Discipline Indicator**

According to Hasibuan (2017) the indicators of Work Discipline are:

1. Purpose and Capabilities
2. Exemplary leadership
3. Refund
4. Justice
5. Waskat
6. Punishment
7. Firmness
8. Human relations

### **Professional Teacher Competence**

According to Usman (2016), competence means something that describes a person's qualifications or abilities, both qualitatively and quantitatively. This definition looks more at the administrative side of science. Thus, competence shows skills or knowledge characterized by professionalism in a particular field as something that is most important, as a superior in a particular field, Rahmat (2019) states that competence is a characteristic of a person related to effective and or superior performance in certain work situations.

### **Professional Teacher Competency Indicators**

According to Usman (2016), professional competence specifically can be seen from the following indicators.

1. Mastering the foundation of education, namely knowing
  - a. Educational goals,
  - b. The function of school and community, as well

- c. Principles of educational psychology.
2. Mastering teaching materials, namely mastering teaching materials for primary and secondary education curriculum, mastering appreciation materials.
3. Develop teaching programs, ie
  - a. Setting learning goals,
  - b. Selecting and developing teaching materials,
  - c. Selecting and developing teaching and learning strategies,
  - d. Selecting appropriate learning media,
  - e. Selecting and utilizing learning resources,
  - f. Carry out teaching programs,
  - g. Creating an appropriate teaching and learning climate,
  - h. Organize the study room,
  - i. Manage teaching and learning interactions.
4. Assess the results and learning processes that have been implemented.

### **Performance**

According to Fahmi (2017) "Performance is the result of a process that refers to and is measured over a certain period of time based on predetermined conditions or agreements." According to Sedarmayanti (2014) performance is the result of the work of a worker, a management process or an organization as a whole, where the work results must be shown concretely and can be measured (compared to predetermined standards).

### **Performance Indicator**

According to Sedarmayanti (2014) there are several performance indicator requirements, which are as follows:

1. Specifications and clear, so that it can be understood and there is no possibility of misinterpretation.
2. It can be measured objectively, both quantitatively and qualitatively, namely: two or more performance indicators that measure the same conclusion.
3. Relevant, must go through relevant objective aspects.
4. Achievable, important and must be useful to demonstrate the success of inputs, outputs, outcomes, benefits, and impacts and processes.
5. Must be flexible and sensitive to changes/adjustments, implementation and results of activity implementation.

### **Method**

The type of research that will be used is quantitative associative, namely research that aims to determine the relationship between two or more variables (Sugiyono, 2013). This research was conducted at Esa Prakasa High School, Langkat Regency. The population in this study were all teachers at Esa Prakasa High School, Langkat Regency, totaling 80 teachers. The number of samples in this study were 80 teachers (saturated sample). The data used in this study were primary data, namely data obtained and had to be reprocessed, namely questionnaires. In collecting data related to what will be discussed, it is carried out directly by means of the questionnaire method. Data processing in this study uses the Smart PLS software program

## Data analysis technique

The data analysis technique used in this study is a quantitative data analysis method. Data analysis in this study used Partial Least Square (PLS) based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using SmartPLS 3.3.3 software

### *Measurement Model (Outer Model)*

The procedure for testing the measurement model consists of a validity test and a reliability test.

#### 1. Validity Test

The validity test is used to assess whether or not a questionnaire is valid. A questionnaire is said to be valid if the questionnaire questions are able to reveal something that is measured by the questionnaire. Validity testing is applied to all question items in each variable. There are several stages of testing that will be carried out, namely through Test

#### 2. Reliability Test

In general, reliability is defined as a series of tests to assess the reliability of statement items. The reliability test is used to measure the consistency of measuring instruments in measuring a concept or measuring the consistency of respondents in answering statement items in questionnaires or research instruments. To measure the level of reliability of research variables in PLS, you can use the value of the alpha coefficient or Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability). Cronbach's alpha value is suggested to be greater than 0.7 and composite reliability is also suggested to be greater than 0.7. (Now, 2014)

### *Structural Model (Inner Model)*

This test was conducted to determine the relationship between exogenous and endogenous constructs which has become a hypothesis in this study (Hair et al., 2017). To produce inner model test values, steps in SmartPLS are carried out using the bootstrapping method. The structural model is evaluated using the R-square for the dependent variable, the Stone-Geisser Q-square test for predictive elevation and the t test and the significance of the structural path parameter coefficients with the following explanation:

#### 1. Coefficient of Determination / R Square (R<sup>2</sup>)

In assessing the model with PLS begins by looking at the R-square for each dependent latent variable. The interpretation is the same as the interpretation of the regression. Changes in the R-square value can be used to assess the effect of certain independent latent variables on the dependent latent variable whether it has a substantive effect (Ghozali, 2012). The value of R<sup>2</sup> is generally between 0 and 1.

#### 2. Predictive Relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>)

This test is used to measure how well the observed values are generated by the model and also the parameter estimates. If the Q<sup>2</sup> value is greater than 0, it indicates that the model has predictive relevance, which means it has a good observation value, whereas if the value is less than 0, it indicates that the model does not have predictive relevance (Ghozali, 2014).

#### 3. t-Statistics

at this stage it is used for hypothesis testing, namely to determine the significance of the relationship between variables in research using the bootstrapping method. In the full Structural Equation Modeling model besides confirming the theory, it also explains whether or not there is a relationship between latent

variables (Ghozali, 2012). The hypothesis is said to be accepted if the t statistic value is greater than the t table. According to (Latan and Ghozali, 2012) the criteria for a t table value of 1.96 with a significance level of 5%

4. Path Coefficient (Path Coefficient)

This test is used to determine the direction of the relationship between variables (positive/negative). If the value is 0 to 1, then the direction of the relationship between variables is positive. Meanwhile, if the value is 0 to -1, then the direction of the relationship between variables is declared negative.

5. Model Fit

This test is used to determine the level of suitability (fit) of the research model with the ideal model for this study, by looking at the NFI value in the program. If the value is closer to 1, the better (good fit).

Result and Discussion

Outer Model Analysis

Testing the measurement model (outer model) is used to determine the specification of the relationship between latent variables and their manifest variables, this test includes convergent validity, discriminant validity and reliability.

1. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is used to determine the validity of each indicator on its latent variables, in the SmartPLS software to see the results of the validity, it can be seen in the outer loading table. In the outer loading table there are numbers or values that indicate indicators that show similarities with the construct variables. The value for the indicator is said to be valid, if the indicator explains the construct variable with a value of > 0.7. The structural model in this study is shown in the following figure:

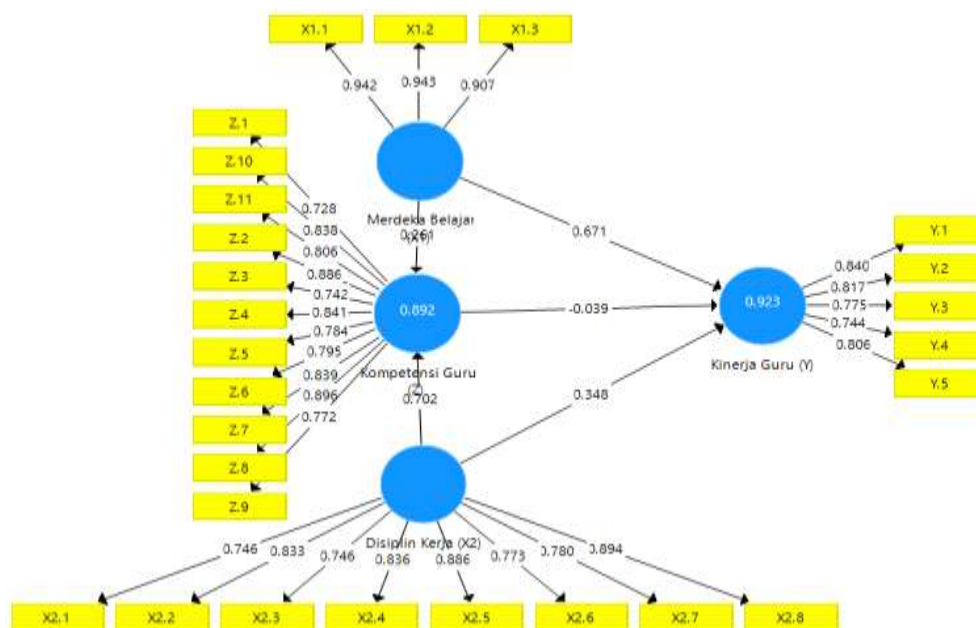


Figure 1. Outer Model  
Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3



The Smart PLS output for the loading factor gives the results in the following table: Outer Loadings  
In this study there are equations and the equation consists of two substructures for substructure 1

$$Z = b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + e_1$$

$$Z = 0.261 + 0.702 + e_1$$

For substructure 2

$$Y = b_3X_1 + b_4X_2 + b_5Z + e_2$$

$$Y = 0.671 + 0.348 - 0.039 + e_2$$

**Table 1. Outer Loadings**

	Work Discipline (X2)	Teacher Performance (Y)	Teacher Competency (Z)	Free Learning (X1)
X1.1				<b>0.942</b>
X1.2				<b>0.943</b>
X1.3				<b>0.907</b>
X2.1	<b>0.746</b>			
X2.2	<b>0.833</b>			
X2.3	<b>0.746</b>			
X2.4	<b>0.836</b>			
X2.5	<b>0.886</b>			
X2.6	<b>0.773</b>			
X2.7	<b>0.780</b>			
X2.8	<b>0.894</b>			
Y. 1		<b>0.840</b>		
Y.2		<b>0.817</b>		
Y.3		<b>0.775</b>		
Y.4		<b>0.744</b>		
Y.5		<b>0.806</b>		
Z. 1			<b>0.728</b>	
Z. 10			<b>0.838</b>	
Z. 11			<b>0.806</b>	
Z. 2			<b>0.886</b>	
Z. 3			<b>0.742</b>	
Z. 4			<b>0.841</b>	
Z. 5			<b>0.784</b>	
Z. 6			<b>0.795</b>	
Z. 7			<b>0.839</b>	
Z. 8			<b>0.896</b>	
Z. 9			<b>0.772</b>	

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

It can be seen in table 1 above that the outer loading shows that the value of each outer loading indicator is greater than 0.7 so that it is determined that the indicators in each variable have a value greater than 0.7 so that each indicator is declared valid and can continue research in The next step.

## 2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant Validity can be tested by looking at the cross loading table, this output is used to test discriminant validity at the indicator level with the condition that the correlation between indicators and their late variables is  $>$  compared to the correlation between indicators and other latent variables (outside the block). For more details can be seen in the table below:

Table 2. Discriminant Validity

	Work Discipline (X2)	Teacher Performance (Y)	Teacher Competency (Z)	Free Learning (X1)
X1.1	0.890	0.704	0.875	0.942
X1.2	0.837	0.820	0.853	<b>0.943</b>
X1.3	0.790	0.870	0.767	0.907
X2.1	0.746	0.696	0.723	0.716
X2.2	0.833	0.705	0.812	0.653
X2.3	0.746	0.586	0.666	0.632
X2.4	0.836	0.688	0.752	0.723
X2.5	<b>0.886</b>	0.760	0.802	0.722
X2.6	0.773	0.767	0.767	0.699
X2.7	0.780	0.814	0.705	0.775
X2.8	0.894	0.809	0.855	0.920
Y. 1	0.786	<b>0.840</b>	0.855	0.886
Y.2	0.766	0.817	0.805	0.859
Y.3	0.762	0.775	0.639	0.659
Y.4	0.649	0.744	0.595	0.613
Y.5	0.680	0.806	0.598	0.724
Z. 1	0.641	0.631	0.728	0.635
Z. 10	0.843	0.763	0.838	0.727
Z. 11	0.724	0.714	0.806	0.677
Z. 2	0.844	0.794	0.886	0.832
Z. 3	0.644	0.627	0.742	0.658
Z. 4	0.812	0.730	0.841	0.702
Z. 5	0.735	0.663	0.784	0.693
Z. 6	0.740	0.750	0.795	0.713
Z. 7	0.780	0.763	0.839	0.791
Z. 8	0.806	0.806	<b>0.896</b>	0.841
Z. 9	0.784	0.671	0.772	0.704

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3



Based on the results of table 2 above, it shows that the loading factor of the Work Discipline variable is greater than the loading factor of other latent variables, for the loading factor of the Teacher Performance variable there is greater than the cross loading of other latent factors, for the loading factor of the teacher's competence variable it looks greater than the loading factor other latent variable factors, for the results of loading the factor of the Independent Learning variable, it can be seen that the loading value is greater than the loading factor values of other latent variables. This means that this research is valid with discriminatory validity and continues other research.

### 3. Composite reliability

Subsequent tests determine the reliable value with the composite reliability of each construct, the construct value that is considered reliability is where the composite reliability value is above 0.6 or greater than 0.6. If the value of Cronbach's alpha is also greater than 0.7 then the value of each construct in the block is considered reliable in each construct variable and if the AVE value is also above 0.7 then each construct variable is considered valid. The following is a table of loading values for the research variable construct resulting from running the Smart PLS program in the next table:

**Table 3. Construct Reliability and Validity**

	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Work Discipline (X2)	0.926	0.940	0.662
Teacher Performance (Y)	0.857	0.897	0.635
Teacher Competency (Z)	0.948	0.955	0.661
Free Learning (X1)	0.923	0.951	0.866

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

Based on the table above, there is a value from the Cronbach's alpha column, each variable has a value greater than 0.7, which means that this research is reliability in Cronbach's alpha and seen from the composite reliability column, with the value of each variable, there is a value greater than 0.6 so that the reliability of each variable is stated and in the AVE column it looks greater than 0.7 so that this research is considered valid by the AVE column which means that all variables have valid values in all sectors.

### Inner Model Analysis

Evaluation of the structural model (inner model) is carried out to ensure that the structural model built is robust and accurate. The stages of analysis carried out in the evaluation of the structural model are seen from several indicators, namely:

#### 1. Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

Based on the data processing that has been done using the SmartPLS 3.0 program, the R Square value is obtained as follows:

**Table.4. R Square results**

	R Square	Adjusted R Square
Teacher Performance (Y)	0.923	0.920

<b>Teacher Competency (Z)</b>	0.892	0.889
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Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

There is an R Square value of 0.923 for the teacher performance variable with the percentage value being 92.3%, which means that in this study the influence of Freedom of Learning, Work Discipline and Teacher Competence on Teacher Performance is 92.3% and the balance of 07.7% is in another variable. For the R Square Teacher Competency value of 0.892 with a percentage of 89.2%, it means that the influence of Freedom to Learn, Work Discipline on Competence is 89.3% and the remaining 10.8% is in other variables.

## 2. Assessment of Goodness of Fit (GoF)

The goodness of fit model test can be seen from the NFI value  $\geq 0.697$  which is declared fit. Based on the data processing that has been done using the SmartPLS 3.3 program, the Fit Model values are obtained as follows:

**Table 5. Model Fit**

	<b>Saturated Model</b>	<b>Estimation Models</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0.099	0.099
<b>d_ ULS</b>	3,727	3,727
<b>d_ G</b>	1,854	1,854
<b>Chi-Square</b>	2,902	2,902
<b>NFIs</b>	0.944	0.944

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

The results of the goodness of fit test for the PLS model in table 5 above show that the NFI value is 0.944, meaning that this study is considered FIT because the NFI value is greater than 0.819. Thus, from these results it can be concluded that the model in this study has high goodness of fit and feasible to use to test the research hypothesis.

## 3. Hypothesis Testing

After assessing the inner model, the next thing is to evaluate the relationship between latent constructs as hypothesized in this study. Hypothesis testing in this study was carried out by looking at the T-Statistics and P-Values. The hypothesis is declared accepted if the T-Statistics value is  $> 1.96$  and the P-Values are  $< 0.05$ . The following are the results of the Path Coefficients of direct influence:

**Table 6. Path Coefficients (Direct Effects)**

	<b>Original Sample (O)</b>	<b>T Statistics (  O/STDEV  )</b>	<b>P Values</b>	<b>Results</b>
<b>Work Discipline (X2) -&gt; Teacher Performance (Y)</b>	0.348	2,769	<b>0.006</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Work Discipline (X2) -&gt; Teacher Competency (Z)</b>	0.702	5,812	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Teacher Competency (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	-0.039	0.325	<b>0.745</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
Freedom of Learning (X1) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	0.671	7,036	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Freedom of Learning (X1) -> Teacher Competency (Z)	0.261	2.154	<b>0.032</b>	<b>Accepted</b>

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

Based on this research we can see the table above is the value of the hypothesis and will be explained as follows:

1. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance with an original sample value of 0.348 and a P value of 0.006 < 0.05 meaning that work discipline is very important in performance without discipline, the performance will not be completed on time.
2. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence with an original sample value of 0.702 and P values 0.000 < 0.05 meaning that if work discipline increases, teacher competence will also increase; if it decreases, teacher competence also decreases.
3. Teacher competence has a negative and insignificant effect on teacher performance with an original sample value of -0.039 and P values 0.745 > 0.05 meaning that low teacher competence makes teacher performance less good. substitute more competent teachers.
4. Independent Learning has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Performance with an original sample value of 0.671 and P values of 0.000 < 0.05 meaning that by using the independent learning curriculum the performance of teachers and students is increasing rapidly in their respective fields so that students know what their respective expertise is.
5. Independent Learning has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence with an original sample value of 0.261 and a P value of 0.032, meaning that teacher competence greatly influences the independent learning curriculum so that students can understand what their teacher teaches. If the teacher's competence is good, the quality of learning will increase.

**Table 7. Path Coefficients (Indirect Effects)**

	Original Sample (O)	T Statistics (  O/STDEV  )	P Values	Results
Work Discipline (X2) -> Teacher Competence (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	-0.027	0.292	<b>0.770</b>	<b>Rejected</b>
Freedom of Learning (X1) -> Teacher Competence (Z) -> Teacher Performance (Y)	-0.010	0.351	<b>0.726</b>	<b>Rejected</b>

Source: Smart PLS 3.3.3

Based on the research above, there is an indirect effect which will be explained as follows:

1. Work Discipline affects Teacher Performance through Teacher competence has no significant negative effect with the original sample value -0.027 and P values 0.770 > 0.05 meaning that competence cannot affect Work Discipline and teacher performance.

2. Independent Learning has an effect on Teacher Performance through Teacher Competency with a negatively insignificant sample value of -0.010, which means that Competence cannot affect Independent Learning and Teacher Performance.

In the explanation above, it can be seen that teacher competence is not an intervening variable because it cannot significantly influence the X and Y variables so that the teacher competency variable is only an independent or dependent variable, not an intervening variable.

## Closing

### Conclusion

Based on the results of the research above, the data can be drawn the following conclusions:

1. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.
2. Work Discipline has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence.
3. Teacher competence has a negative and insignificant effect on teacher performance.
4. Independent Learning has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.
5. Independent Learning has a positive and significant effect on Teacher Competence.
6. Work Discipline has an effect on Teacher Performance through teacher competence which has no significant negative effect.
7. Merdeka Belajar has an insignificant negative effect on teacher performance through teacher competence.

### Suggestion

1. The school must order teachers to be sensitive and know the skills that stand out in their students so that these skills can be developed by the students concerned and for lessons that are not mastered, give basic teaching for other subjects to serve as a counterweight.
2. Students will not develop if the teachers are not disciplined in time and teaching so that teachers must be monitored regarding when they come to work and when they enter school so that study time is not wasted.
3. Independent Learning Curriculum is very active if you look at it so teachers who teach must be highly competent and creative so that students are eager to learn.
4. The teacher's performance must be good and the school must demand teachers to be better at work and teaching.

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