Identity or Competency? Exploring the Impact of Demographic and Professional Factors on English Faculty Competencies

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Abstract

Grasping the factors that affect teacher competence is vital for developing programs that improve teaching effectiveness. Using a descriptive design, this study investigates the influence of demographic and professional variables on the competencies of English faculty in a higher education institution using a descriptive research design. Participants included department heads, English faculty, and students, totaling 250 individuals. Faculty selfassessed, while department heads and students evaluated faculty using a validated questionnaire with a four-point scale. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-tests revealed no significant competency differences by age, attainment, educational or field specialization. However, significant differences were noted by sex, with female faculty showing higher competencies in instruction, Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) theory knowledge, and assessment skills. Teaching experience impacted instructional competence, and attendance at professional development trainings affected TEFL knowledge. The tailored professional findings suggest development and policy adjustments based on these factors to enhance teaching effectiveness and improve English language instruction quality.

1 Introduction

The quality of English language instruction is essential in shaping students' communication skills and overall academic success. Teacher competence, encompassing a blend of knowledge, skills, and attitudes, plays a crucial role in this process. Understanding the factors that influence teacher competence is essential for developing targeted professional development programs and educational policies that enhance teaching effectiveness.

Competence refers to the adequacy of ability to do a task in accordance to proper qualifications and standards. It is the level of integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Hero et al., 2017) and it is indispensable in assuming responsibilities and liabilities in a field. In the field of education, competence is an essential aspect for the effective teaching and learning process to take place.

According to the framework proposed by Cooper (2010), competence encompasses a combination of theoretical understanding of learning processes, attitudes that encourage learning and foster positive relationships, subject-specific expertise, and a set of teaching skills. These elements equip teachers to make informed and effective professional decisions.

This suggests that teachers must be well-versed in these areas to excel in instructional decision-making. Achieving mastery, therefore, requires thorough proficiency in these four key areas of competence and the capacity to expertly apply the associated knowledge, attitudes, and skills to each instructional choice.

In a study on childhood education, Larsson (2010) identified four primary categories that shape teachers' and researchers' views on educational competence. These categories—pedagogical knowledge, pedagogical intentions, pedagogical considerations, and pedagogical assetsemphasize various dimensions of expertise essential for effective teaching. Larsson's use of the term "pedagogical" as a qualifier stresses the connection of each dimension to the educational context, underscoring how they collectively contribute to effective practice in specific teaching domains, such as English instruction. Each dimension encompasses distinct sub-components, adding depth to the understanding of competence in education by focusing on the knowledge, decision-making, motives. contextual resources that support student learning outcomes.

This framework offers a comprehensive view of the competencies needed to create meaningful and responsive educational experiences across specialized fields.

On one hand, Moriera et al. (2022) found a divergence in priorities between students and teachers. Students placed the greatest value on instructors' personal skills and qualities, while teachers emphasized the importance of curriculum design and instructional expertise. However, the study also revealed a significant gap in the areas of cultural competence and specialized skills for addressing diversity and fostering inclusivity in the higher education classroom, indicating that these competencies are largely underdeveloped.

On the other hand, various demographic and professional factors—such as age, sex, educational attainment, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and the number of professional development trainings—significantly impact teacher competence (Olayvar, 2022; Bibi and Khurshid, 2021; Krumsvik et al., 2016; Darling-Hammond, 2000). For instance, Batuigas et al. (2022) emphasize that ongoing professional development is vital for teachers to adapt to new educational challenges and improve their instructional practices.

Similarly, content knowledge, pedagogical skills, (Ramos, 2021) and pedagogical-psychological teaching knowledge (Hollenstein and Brühwiler, 2024) are important in effective teaching. The effectiveness of teachers' instructional strategies likewise exerts a substantial impact on 21st century pedagogical practices (Shafiee and Ghani, 2022).

Studies have also shown that teachers' educational backgrounds and specializations can influence their teaching efficacy. Teachers with advanced degrees and specialized training in English are often better equipped to address the diverse needs of their students (Cochran-Smith and Zeichner, 2005).

Moreover, professional experience and continuous training are crucial in keeping teachers updated with the latest pedagogical strategies and educational technologies (Krumsvik et al., 2016; Garet et al., 2001; Catalano, 2020) that promote student skills and lead to successful teaching and learning (Ventista and Brown, 2023).

Despite the importance of these factors, there remains a gap in research regarding their specific impact on the competencies of English faculty. This study seeks to address this gap by examining the competencies of English faculty at a university. By investigating how demographic and

professional factors influence teacher competence, this research aims to identify patterns and disparities that can inform the development of professional development initiatives and educational policies.

This study aims to answer critical questions: Are there significant differences in the competencies of English faculty when grouped according to profile variables? What are the implications of these differences for professional development and educational policy? By answering these questions, this research contributes to the ongoing efforts to improve English language instruction and, ultimately, the overall quality of education.

The findings of this study also contribute to the ongoing discourse on faculty development in higher education, offering insights that can inform policy and practice aimed at enhancing the quality of English instruction. By identifying areas of strength and opportunities for improvement, this research underscores the importance of continuous professional development and the need for targeted interventions to support faculty in their instructional roles.

2 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a descriptive research design to identify significant variables influencing the competencies of English faculty at a university, focusing on campuses offering Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English and Bachelor of Arts in English programs.

The investigation involves three respondent groups—department heads, English faculty, and students—totaling 250 participants. Each group provides unique perspectives based on their roles in English instruction. Faculty members conducted self-assessments of their competencies, while department heads and students evaluated the faculty. To ensure the reliability and validity of the collected data, the research followed rigorous ethical standards and used validated instruments.

2.2 Instrumentation

The primary instrument for data collection is a twopart, pilot-tested questionnaire. The first part collected demographic and professional profile data of the respondents, including variables such as age, sex, educational attainment, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and

Dimensions of Competency	DF	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	F-Prob.	Decision
I. Instruction		Squares	Squares			
Between Groups	3	.656	.219	1.693	.188	Accept
Within Groups	32	4.136	.129	1.075	.100	Null
Total	35	4.792	.12)			Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories						31
Between Groups	3	.375	.125	.674	.574	Accept
Within Groups	32	5.937	.186			Null
Total	35	6.312				Hypothesis
III. Assessment						
Between Groups	3	.478	.159	1.002	.405	Accept
Within Groups	32	5.090	.159			Null
Total	35	5.568				Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						
Between Groups	3	.401	.134	.792	.508	Accept
Within Groups	32	5.398	.169			Null
Total	35	5.799				Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills						
Between Groups	3	.136	.045	.324	.808	Accept
Within Groups	32	4.474	.140			Null
Total	35	4.610				Hypothesis
VI. Personality and Professional						
Between Groups	3	.043	.014	.110	.953	Accept
Within Groups	32	4.163	.130			Null
Total	35	4.206				Hypothesis

Table 1: ANOVA results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty when grouped according to age. The null hypothesis is accepted and the variance ratio is insignificant if p-value is higher than 0.05 level of significance.

professional development activities over the past decade. The second part consisted of a competency checklist, rated on a four-point scale, assessing various dimensions of teaching competencies: 4 – Outstanding, 3 – Very Satisfactory, 2 – Satisfactory, and 1- Unsatisfactory.

To determine the degree of competencies of the English faculty, the following scale was used based on the ratings given by the respondents: 3.5-4.0 Outstanding, 2.5-3.4 Very Satisfactory, 1.5-2.4 Satisfactory, 1-1.4 Unsatisfactory.

This study explores the impact of demographic and professional variables on these competencies, providing a comprehensive analysis through statistical methods such as the F-test and t-test. The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to determine significant differences in competencies when grouped according to profile variables, while the t-test was utilized to assess differences in competencies based on sex.

3 Results and Discussion

The analysis of the data collected from the study provides insights into the competencies of English faculty and examines how various demographic and professional variables influence these competencies. The results are presented and discussed based on the statistical analyses performed, including F-test and t-test computations.

The following sections detail the findings related to age, sex, educational attainment, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and the number of professional development trainings attended over the past ten years, highlighting significant and non-significant differences in faculty competencies.

The F-test computations, as shown in Table 1, indicated no significant differences in the competencies of English faculty when classified by age. ANOVA results further supported this finding, revealing no significant differences across all six competency dimensions at the 0.05 level of significance (Dimension 1: F(3,32)= 1.693, P= .188; Dimension 2: F(3,32)= .674, P= .574; Dimension 3: F(3,32)= 1.002, P=.405; Dimension 4: F(3,32)= .792, P= .508; Dimension 5: F(3,32)= .324, P= .808; Dimension 6: F(3,32)= .100, P= .953). Therefore, the null hypothesis that there are

Dimensions of	Df	Mean	Standard	t-ratio	t-prob	Decision
Competencies			Deviation			
I. Instruction						
Male	34	3.33	.36	-2.277	.029	Reject
Female		3.60	.33			Null Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories						
Male	34	3.18	.46	-2.960	.006	Reject
Female		3.56	.30			Null Hypothesis
III. Assessment						• 1
Male	34	3.31	.44	-2.371	.024	Reject
Female		3.61	.29			Null Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						• •
Male						
Female	34	3.44	.44	-1.530	.136	Accept
		3.64	.36			Null Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills						• 1
Male	34	3.59	.42	-1.011	.320	Accept
Female		3.71	.29			Null Hypothesis
VI. Personality and						71
Professional						
Male	34	3.58	.38	916	.366	Accept
Female		3.69	.32			Null Hypothesis

Table 2: t-Test results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty when grouped according to sex. If the p-value is lower than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected and the variance ratio is significant.

no significant differences in the competencies of the English faculty based on age is accepted, indicating consistent competencies across different age groups.

This finding aligns with the quantitative results of Odanga and Aloka (2024), which similarly contrast with their qualitative insights regarding the impact of teachers' self-efficacy on classroom management.

Table 2 shows the t-test computations which revealed significant differences in the competencies of English faculty based on sex across three dimensions (Dimension 1: t(34)= -2.277, p= 0.029; Dimension 2: t(34)= -2.960, p= 0.006; Dimension 3: t(34)= -2.371, p= 0.024). This rejection of the null hypothesis suggests that male and female English faculty exhibit varying competencies in instruction, knowledge of theories, approaches, methods, and strategies of TESL/TEFL, and assessment.

This discrepancy may be linked to variations in study habits between male and female students, which could influence the development of faculty competencies. SaizAja (2021) found that female students use language learning strategies considerably more frequently than male students, suggesting a gender-based difference in approaches to language acquisition.

Further analysis indicated no significant differences in classroom management (t(34)= -1.530, p= 0. 136), guidance (t(34)= -1.011, p= 0.320), and personality and professional competencies (t(34)= -.916, p= 0.366) based on sex, underscoring similar competencies across dimensions 4, 5, and 6. These findings suggest that these competencies are primarily honed through teaching experiences rather than formal education.

Regarding educational attainment, ANOVA results in Table 3 showed no significant differences in competencies across all six dimensions (Dimension 1: F(2,33)= .768, P=0.472; Dimension 2: F(2,33)= 1.252, P= 0.299; Dimension 3: F(2,33)= .648, P= 0.529; Dimension 4: F(2,33)= .637, P= 0.535; Dimension 5: F(2,33)= 1.246, P= 0.301; Dimension 6: F(2,33)= .593, P= 0.558). Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis that there are no significant differences in competencies based on educational attainment, indicating consistent competencies among English faculty with bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees.

In contrast, Matira and Ofrin's study (2024) highlighted notable differences in the skills and

Dimensions of Competency	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	F-Prob.	Decision
I. Instruction						
Between Groups	2	.213	.107	.768	.472	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.579	.139			Null
Total	35	4.792				Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories						
Between Groups	2	.445	.223	1.252	.299	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.867	.178			Null
Total	35	6.312				Hypothesis
III. Assessment						• •
Between Groups	2	.211	.105	.648	.529	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.357	.162			Null
Total	35	5.568				Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						• •
Between Groups	2	.215	.108	.637	.535	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.583	.169			Null
Total	35	5.799				Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills						
Between Groups	2	.324	.162	1.246	.301	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.286	.130			Null
Total	35	4.610				Hypothesis
VI. Personality and Professional						• •
Between Groups	2	.146	.073	.593	.558	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.060	.123			Null
Total	35	4.206				Hypothesis

Table 3: ANOVA results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty as to educational attainment. The p-value (F-Prob.) indicates whether the null hypothesis is accepted or rejected at the 0.05 level of significance.

Dimensions of Competency	Df	Sum of	Mean	F-ratio	F-	Decision
I. Instruction		Squares	Squares		Prob.	
_,, _ , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	2	151	227	1.726	104	A
Between Groups	2	.454	.227	1.726	.194	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.338	.131			Null
Total	35	4.792				Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories	_					
Between Groups	2	.179	.090	.482	.622	Accept
Within Groups	33	6.133	.186			Null
Total	35	6.312				Hypothesis
III. Assessment						
Between Groups	2	.091	.045	.274	.762	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.477	.166			Null
Total	35	5.568				Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						71
Between Groups	2	.056	.028	.161	.852	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.743	.174			Null
Total	35	5.799				Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills		2.755				11) potnesis
Between Groups	2	.216	.108	.810	.453	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.394	.133			Null
Total	35	4.610	.100			Hypothesis
VI. Personality and Professional						<i>J</i> P 0 0112013
Between Groups	2	.009	.005	.036	.965	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.197	.127	.050	.,, 0.5	Null
Total	35	4.206	.121			Hypothesis

Table 4: ANOVA results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty based on field of specialization. The obtained p-value for each dimension of competency is greater than 0.05, which accepts the null hypotheses and indicates an insignificant variance ratio.

Dimensions of Competency	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	F-Prob.	Decision
I. Instruction		_	-			
Between Groups	3	1.092	.364	3.146	.038	Reject
Within Groups	32	3.700	.116			Null
Total	35	4.792				Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories						
Between Groups	3	1.000	.333	2.008	.133	Accept
Within Groups	32	5.312	.166			Null
Total	35	6.312				Hypothesis
III. Assessment						
Between Groups	3	1.171	.390	2.840	.053	Accept
Within Groups	32	4.397	.137			Null
Total	35	5.568				Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						• 1
Between Groups	3	.776	.259	1.648	.198	Accept
Within Groups	32	5.023	.157			Null
Total	35	5.799				Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills						• •
Between Groups	3	.587	.196	1.557	.219	Accept
Within Groups	32	4.023	.126			Null
Total	35	4.610				Hypothesis
VI. Personality and Professional						
Between Groups	3	.211	.070	.564	.643	Accept
Within Groups	32	3.995	.125			Null
Total	35	4.206				Hypothesis

Table 5: ANOVA results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty when grouped according to number of years in teaching English.

knowledge that teachers possessed before beginning instruction. These disparities suggest that teachers enter the classroom with varying levels of preparedness, which can influence their ability to manage learning effectively from the outset.

The one-way ANOVA presented in Table 4 revealed no significant differences in competencies based on field of specialization across all six dimensions (Dimension 1: F(2,33)= 1.726, P= 0.194; Dimension 2: F(2,33)= .482, P= .622; Dimension 3: F(2,33)= .274, P= 0.762; Dimension 4: F(2,33)= .161, P= 0.852; Dimension 5: F(2,33)= .810, P= .453; Dimension 6: F(2,33)= .036, P= 0.965). Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted, indicating similar competencies across different fields of specialization among English faculty.

In contrast, ANOVA results in Table 5 demonstrated significant differences in instructional competence (Dimension 1: F(3,32)= 3.146, P= 0.038), rejecting the null hypothesis that there are no differences in instructional skills based on years of teaching English. This suggests varying competencies among faculty members based on their teaching experience. However, for

the remaining dimensions (Dimension 2: F(3,32)= 2.008, P= 0.133; Dimension 3: F(3,32)= 2.840, P= .053; Dimension 4: F(3,32)=1.648, P=0.198; Dimension 5: F(3.32) = 1.557, P = 0.219; F(3,32) = .564,Dimension 6: P = 0.643), **ANOVA** results indicated significant no differences in competencies based on years of teaching English.

Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted for these dimensions, suggesting similar competencies regardless of teaching experience. Hence, the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the competencies of the English faculty when grouped according to number of years in teaching English is accepted particularly in the second to sixth dimensions.

These findings are consistent with Matira and Ofrin's (2024) research, which found that teaching experience substantially affects teachers' presentation skills and instructional readiness. However, it does not seem to play a significant role in shaping their professionalism or the overall learning environment.

Dimensions of Competency	Df	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F-ratio	F-Prob.	Decision
I. Instruction		_	_			
Between Groups	2	.356	.178	1.324	.280	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.436	.134			Null
Total	35	4.792				Hypothesis
II. Knowledge of theories						
Between Groups	2	1.366	.683	4.555	.018	Reject
Within Groups	33	4.947	.150			Null
Total	35	6.312				Hypothesis
III. Assessment						• •
Between Groups	2	.290	.145	.908	.413	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.277	.160			Null
Total	35	5.568				Hypothesis
IV. Classroom Management						
Between Groups	2	.157	.079	.460	.635	Accept
Within Groups	33	5.642	.171			Null
Total	35	5.799				Hypothesis
V. Guidance Skills						
Between Groups	2	.292	.146	1.114	.340	Accept
Within Groups	33	4.318	.131			Null
Total	35	4.610				Hypothesis
VI. Personality and Professional						
Between Groups	2	.271	.135	1.134	.334	Accept
Within Groups	33	3.936	.119			Null
Total	35	4.206				Hypothesis

Table 6: ANOVA results for the differences in the competencies of the English faculty as to number of trainings/seminars attended for the past ten years.

Lastly, ANOVA findings in Table 6 showed no significant differences in competencies based on the number of trainings/seminars attended over the past ten years, except for Dimension 2 (F(2,33)= 4.555, P= 0.018). This indicates that faculty who attended more trainings/seminars exhibited higher competencies in the knowledge of theories, approaches, methods, and strategies of TESL/TEFL compared to those who attended fewer sessions.

This is consistent with the findings of Dela Cruz and Perez (2024), who emphasize that seminars play a crucial role in enhancing teaching effectiveness, particularly for newly appointed or less experienced educators.

In summary, while demographic and professional variables such as sex and educational attainment impact certain dimensions of English faculty competencies, age, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and the number of trainings/seminars attended do not significantly affect these competencies across various dimensions.

4 Conclusions

Based on the comprehensive analysis of English faculty competencies across various demographic and professional variables, several key conclusions can be drawn. Firstly, age does not significantly influence the competencies of English faculty, as evidenced by consistent performance across all assessed dimensions. This suggests that regardless of age, faculty members exhibit similar levels of proficiency in instructional practices, knowledge application, and assessment methodologies.

Conversely, significant differences were observed based on sex, highlighting distinct competencies between male and female faculty members in areas such as instruction, theoretical knowledge, and assessment strategies. This divergence may stem from varying study habits observed among male and female students, potentially influencing the development of teaching skills among faculty.

Educational attainment and field of specialization were found to have no significant impact on English faculty competencies across the evaluated dimensions. Whether holding bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees, and irrespective of their field of specialization, faculty members demonstrated consistent levels of competence. This indicates that academic credentials and specialized training do not necessarily correlate with enhanced teaching capabilities in the context of English language instruction at the university level.

Regarding professional experience, while instructional competence exhibited variability based on years of teaching English, other dimensions such as knowledge of theories, classroom management, and professional qualities showed no significant differences. This suggests that while teaching experience may enhance certain facets of teaching effectiveness, overall competencies in foundational skills remain stable among faculty members with varying levels of experience.

Furthermore, the number of trainings and seminars attended over the past decade influenced competencies in specific dimensions, particularly in enhancing theoretical knowledge and pedagogical strategies. Faculty members who participated in more professional development activities exhibited higher levels of competency in these areas compared to their less-engaged counterparts.

In conclusion, these findings underscore the complex interplay of demographic professional variables in shaping English faculty competencies. While age, educational background, and field of specialization show minimal impact, sex and engagement in professional development activities emerge as significant factors influencing teaching effectiveness. These insights are pivotal for designing targeted professional development initiatives and educational policies aimed at improving the quality of English language instruction in higher education settings. By understanding these dynamics, institutions can better support faculty development efforts, ultimately enhancing student learning outcomes and academic success.

5 Recommendations

Based on the findings regarding English faculty competencies, several recommendations and implications can be outlined to enhance teaching effectiveness and support faculty development initiatives. Firstly, given the significant differences identified between male and female faculty members in dimensions such as

instruction and knowledge of TESL/TEFL theories, institutions should consider tailored professional development programs. These programs could address gender-specific teaching strategies and support faculty in enhancing their competencies across all dimensions.

Furthermore, because the study highlights variations in instructional competence based on years of teaching experience, institutions should implement mentorship programs where experienced faculty mentor newer educators. This would facilitate knowledge transfer and the development of effective instructional skills among less-experienced faculty members.

In light of the significant impact of professional development activities on competencies, it is recommended that higher education institutions invest in expanding opportunities for faculty to participate in seminars, workshops, and training sessions. These initiatives should be strategically designed to cover a broad spectrum of teaching competencies, including but not limited to instructional methods, classroom management, and professional ethics. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and skill enhancement, higher education institutions can empower its faculty to adapt to evolving educational landscapes and improve student learning experiences.

On one hand, institutions should ensure equitable access to resources and support for faculty development. This includes distribution of teaching loads, access to updated teaching materials, and encouragement for interdisciplinary collaboration to enrich instructional practices to maintain consistent competencies across different demographic and professional groups (e.g., age, educational attainment, field of specialization).

Lastly, the findings highlight the importance of ongoing research and assessment of faculty competencies to inform evidence-based policies and practices. Regular evaluation of teaching effectiveness based on demographic and professional variables ensures that institutional resources are allocated effectively towards areas where improvements are most needed. This systematic approach not only enhances teaching quality but also strengthens the university's reputation as a center of excellence in English language instruction.

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