

## Analysis of the Professional Management of Learning Community (PLC) in Improving Teachers' Pedagogic Competence (A case study of the 1st Grade Teacher in South Bend)

A.Hafid Munandar<sup>1</sup>, Leli Nurlaeli<sup>2</sup>, Suharyantosoro<sup>3</sup>, Dinny Mardiana<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia; hafid.munandar86@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia; lelinurlaelilukman@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia; suharyantosoro@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup> Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia; mardianadinny3@gmail.com

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### ABSTRACT

The management of the Professional Learning Community (PLC) and its impact on improving the pedagogic competence of elementary school teachers is still low. This is one of the causes of the quality of learning. The purpose of this research is to find professional management of the learning community towards improving teachers' pedagogic competence. The researcher uses a case study approach. Data were collected through observation methods, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. The data analysis technique uses an interactive model that includes data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. The results of the study show that (1) Professional Management of Learning Community at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through a weekly reflection cycle and sharing of *best practices* that are integrated into the school schedule; (2) The implementation of the Professional Learning Community significantly improves teachers' ability to design differentiated learning and manage authentic assessments. In conclusion, the structured management of the Professional Learning Community is effective in transforming teachers' pedagogic competencies from individualistic to collective work patterns.

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#### Corresponding Author:

A. Hafid Munandar

Universitas Islam Nusantara Bandung, Indonesia; hafid.munandar86@gmail.com

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of quality human resources. The success of education is highly determined by the quality of the learning process that takes place in schools. In this context, teachers have a strategic role as the main actor in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning. Therefore, improving the competence of teachers is an absolute thing to ensure the quality of education, especially at the elementary school level as the foundation of formal education.

Juridically, the government has established various policies that affirm the importance of teacher competence. Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers states that teachers are professional educators who are required to have four competencies, namely pedagogical, professional, personality, and social competencies. Among these four competencies, pedagogic competence has a very important role because it is directly related to the teacher's ability to understand the characteristics of students, design learning, carry out educational learning, and conduct appropriate learning evaluations. Furthermore, Government Regulation Number 19 of 2017 concerning Teachers emphasizes that teachers are obliged to carry out continuous professional development (PKB) as an effort to improve and maintain their competencies throughout their careers.

In line with this policy, teacher professional development is no longer seen as a mere individual activity, but as a sustainable collective process in the school environment. One approach that is theoretically considered effective in teacher professional development is *the Professional Learning Community* (PLC). PLC is a professional learning community that emphasizes collaboration between teachers to improve the quality of learning and student learning outcomes. According to DuFour and Eaker, PLCs are oriented towards shared learning, reflection on learning practices, and collective problem-solving with a primary focus on improving learners' learning outcomes.

Conceptually, PLC is based on the view that teachers are *lifelong learners*. In PLC, teachers not only share experiences, but also review learning practices, analyze student learning outcomes, and design continuous learning improvements. Hord stated that an effective PLC is characterized by a shared vision, collaboration, collective learning, and school leadership support. Thus, PLCs serve not only as a discussion forum, but as a professional learning system that is integrated with the school's goals. However, the reality of implementing PLC in elementary schools is not fully in line with the expected concept and goals. Based on initial observations and conditions in the field, PLC activities in elementary schools are still often carried out routinely and formally, without careful planning and clear follow-up. Activities such as teacher discussions, working group meetings, or academic supervision are often not specifically geared toward improving teachers' pedagogic competence. As a result, the impact of PLC on improving the quality of learning is still not optimal.

This condition shows that there is a gap between policy and reality, as well as between the theory and practice of PLC implementation. On the one hand, the government has encouraged the professional development of teachers collaboratively and sustainably through various regulations. On the other hand, implementation in schools still faces various obstacles, both from managerial, cultural, and resource aspects. This gap is an important problem because it has direct implications for the quality of learning and student learning outcomes. The root of the problem of the non-optimal implementation of PLC lies in the management aspect of PLC. PLC management includes planning activities based on the needs of teachers, organizing clear roles and responsibilities, implementing consistent activities, and continuous control and evaluation. In practice, PLC planning is often not based on an analysis of teachers' pedagogic competency needs. The organization of PLC also does not involve a clear division of roles between principals, senior teachers, and PLC members. In addition, the implementation of PLC is still constrained by time constraints, the administrative burden of teachers, and the lack of a strong culture of reflection and collaboration.

The role of the principal as an *instructional leader* is also an important factor in the success of the PLC. The principal is expected to be able to manage the PLC systematically, provide support, and ensure that PLC activities have a direct impact on improving teachers' pedagogic competence. However, in reality, this role has not been fully optimal, so PLC has not developed into a professional learning culture in schools.

Various results of previous studies have shown that well-managed PLCs have a positive impact on improving teacher competence. DuFour (2004) concluded that PLC is able to improve teacher collaboration and the quality of learning practices. Hord (2015) also found that schools that implemented PLC consistently showed improved teacher professionalism and learning quality. Research in Indonesia also shows that PLC contributes to improving teachers' pedagogic competence, especially in learning

planning and implementation, but its success is greatly influenced by aspects of school management and leadership. Based on the results of the previous research, it can be concluded that PLC has great potential as a means of professional development for teachers. However, this potential can only be realized if PLC is managed effectively and sustainably. Therefore, an analysis of PLC management is crucial to understanding how PLCs are planned, implemented, and evaluated in a real-world context in elementary schools.

The problem of PLC management is an actual and crucial issue because it is directly related to the demand to improve the quality of teachers and learning in elementary schools. This problem is also meaningful, because the results of the research are expected to provide practical solutions for schools in managing PLC more effectively. With good PLC management, it is hoped that teachers' pedagogic competence can be improved continuously, so that it has a positive impact on the quality of learning and student learning outcomes. Based on this description, research on Professional Learning Community (PLC) Management Analysis in Improving the Pedagogic Competence of Elementary School Teachers needs to be carried out. This research is expected to provide a comprehensive overview of PLC management practices in elementary schools, identify supporting and inhibiting factors, and formulate recommendations for more effective and sustainable PLC development.

## 2. METHODS

The selection of research methods in a scientific study must be in line with the research objectives, the characteristics of the problem, and the type of data to be obtained. This study aims to analyze the management of the *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) in improving the pedagogic competence of elementary school teachers. Therefore, a case study approach with a qualitative type of research is seen as the most appropriate to use.

The case study approach allows researchers to understand the phenomenon in depth, holistic, and contextual. PLC management is a social and organizational process that involves interaction between individuals, school culture, principal's leadership, and teachers' professional experience. These phenomena cannot be optimally measured by numbers or statistics alone, but require a deep understanding of the meanings, processes, and dynamics that occur in the field. Thus, a qualitative approach provides space for researchers to capture empirical reality as it is.

This type of qualitative research was chosen because this study does not aim to test hypotheses or look for cause-and-effect relationships quantitatively, but rather to describe and analyze how PLC management is planned, organized, implemented, and evaluated in schools. Through the descriptive method, the researcher can present a systematic overview of the practice of PLC management and its contribution to improving teachers' pedagogic competence.

The research location at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul, Purwakarta Regency was chosen purposively with the consideration that the school has carried out PLC activities as part of teacher professional development. This deliberate selection of location is in line with the characteristics of qualitative research that emphasizes on data richness and contextual relevance, rather than on statistical generalizations. By choosing a relevant location, researchers can obtain more in-depth and meaningful data.

The research subjects include principals and elementary school teachers. School principals are chosen because they have a strategic role as managers and policy makers in the implementation of PLC. Teachers are chosen as the main subjects because they are the direct implementers of PLC activities as well as parties who experience the impact of PLC management on their pedagogic competence. The determination of the research subject was carried out purposively, namely based on the subject's direct involvement and understanding of PLC activities, so that the data obtained was more accurate and relevant.

The data collection method uses observation, interviews, and documentation. The use of these three techniques shows the researcher's efforts to obtain comprehensive and complementary data. Observation is used to directly observe the implementation of PLC and teachers' learning practices in

the classroom. Through observation, the researcher can see the suitability between PLC planning and its implementation, as well as how the results of PLC are reflected in teachers' pedagogic practices.

Interviews are used to explore the views, experiences, and meanings of research subjects towards the implementation of PLC management. Semi-structured interviews allow researchers to obtain in-depth data while remaining directed according to the focus of the research. Through interviews, researchers can understand how school principals plan and control PLCs and how teachers feel the benefits and challenges in implementing PLCs.

Documentation is used as a source of supporting data to reinforce findings from observations and interviews. Documents such as PLC work programs, meeting minutes, activity schedules, and teacher learning tools provide written evidence of the implementation of PLC management. The use of documentation also helps researchers in tracing the consistency of PLC implementation from time to time.

The validity of the data is maintained through triangulation techniques, both source triangulation and triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing information obtained from school principals and teachers. Technical triangulation was carried out by comparing observation, interview, and documentation data. The application of triangulation is important to increase the credibility of the data and minimize the subjectivity bias of researchers.

Data analysis is carried out qualitatively through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawn. Data reduction allows researchers to focus attention on data that is relevant to the research objective, so that the data becomes more organized and meaningful. The presentation of data in the form of descriptive narratives and matrices helps researchers in seeing patterns and relationships between findings. Furthermore, conclusions are drawn in stages and continue to be verified throughout the research process.

Overall, the research method used was in accordance with the research objectives and the characteristics of the problem being studied. The descriptive qualitative approach allows researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of PLC management and its contribution to improving teachers' pedagogic competence. However, this method has limitations in terms of generalizing research results. Therefore, the results of this study are more aimed at providing contextual understanding and practical recommendations, rather than universal generalizations.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### A. Research Results

The results of this research were obtained through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies conducted at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul, Purwakarta Regency. The research subjects include principals and elementary school teachers who are actively involved in *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) activities. The results of the research are presented based on the management function, namely planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling PLC and its impact on teachers' pedagogic competence.

##### 1. Professional Learning Community (PLC) Management Planning

Based on the results of interviews with the principal, PLC planning at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul was carried out at the beginning of the school year through a school work meeting. PLC planning is prepared as part of the teacher's sustainable professional development (PKB) program. In this planning stage, the principal and the teacher determine the objectives of PLC activities, the implementation schedule, and the form of activities to be carried out.

The results of the observation show that PLC activities are planned in the form of regular teacher meetings, learning discussions, reflection on teaching practices, and academic supervision. The schedule of PLC activities is adjusted to the school's academic calendar and learning activities. In addition, PLC planning also considers the availability of teachers' time so as not to interfere with learning activities in the classroom. However, the results of the study show that PLC planning is not fully based on the analysis of teachers' pedagogic competency needs. The identification of teachers'

needs is still carried out in general through discussions, without using special instruments to map teachers' weaknesses and needs in learning. As a result, some PLC activities have not specifically answered the learning problems faced by teachers in the classroom.

## **2. Professional Learning Community (PLC) Management Organization**

The organization of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul involves all teachers as members of PLC. The principal plays the role of the main person in charge of PLC activities, as well as a director and decision maker. Senior teachers and experienced teachers play a more active role as facilitators in discussions and sharing learning practices. The results of the documentation show that the school does not yet have a formally written PLC organizational structure. The division of roles and duties in PLCs is based more on mutual agreement and customs. Nevertheless, PLC activities can still be carried out because of the commitment and awareness of teachers to the importance of professional development.

The results of interviews with teachers showed that the informal organization of PLCs provides flexibility in the implementation of activities. However, on the other hand, the absence of a clear structure leads to a lack of clarity of responsibility in the implementation and follow-up of PLC activities. This has an impact on the suboptimal sustainability of some PLC programs.

## **3. Implementation of Professional Learning Community (PLC) Management**

The implementation of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through various activities that are integrated with school activities. Based on the results of observations, PLC activities are carried out periodically in the form of teacher group discussions, learning reflection meetings, and academic supervision by school principals. In the PLC discussion activity, teachers discussed various learning problems faced in the classroom, such as students' difficulties in understanding the material, choosing learning methods, and classroom management. Teachers also share their experiences and learning practices that have been carried out, both successful and those that still need to be improved.

The results of the study showed that the implementation of PLC encouraged teachers to be more open in conveying learning problems and receiving input from peers. Teachers began to apply the results of PLC discussions in learning planning, such as the preparation of more systematic lesson plans, the use of more varied learning methods, and the use of learning media that are in accordance with student characteristics.

## **4. Management Control and Evaluation of Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

The control and evaluation of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through the principal's monitoring of the implementation of PLC activities and reflection with teachers after the activity. The principal monitors the presence of teachers, the implementation of activities, and changes in teachers' learning practices in the classroom.

The results of the interviews show that the evaluation of PLC is still qualitative and has not used structured assessment instruments. The evaluation is based more on general observations of changes in teachers' learning attitudes and practices. Nevertheless, teachers feel the benefits of PLC activities in improving their understanding and pedagogic skills.

## **5. The Impact of PLC Management on Teachers' Pedagogic Competence**

The results of the study show that the management of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul has a positive impact on improving teachers' pedagogic competence. Teachers show improvement in the ability to understand student characteristics, prepare learning plans, carry out more interactive learning, and evaluate learning. Teachers also become more reflective of the learning practices carried out and more open to input from peers. However, the improvement of pedagogic competence has not been evenly distributed among all teachers due to differences in the level of participation in PLC activities, time constraints, and administrative burden of teachers.

## B. Discussion

This discussion examines in depth the findings of research on the management of *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul, Purwakarta Regency in improving the pedagogic competence of elementary school teachers. The discussion was carried out by relating the results of the research with management theory, the concept of PLC, and the results of relevant previous research.

### 1. PLC Management Planning in Improving Teachers' Pedagogic Competence

The results of the study show that PLC planning at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul has been carried out through school work meetings and regular teacher meetings. Planning includes setting goals, activity schedules, and forms of PLC activities. This shows that schools have realized the importance of planning as an initial stage in the implementation of PLC. In the perspective of management theory, planning is the initial function that determines the success of a program (Terry, 2016). PLC planning should not only be administrative, but also based on the analysis of teachers' pedagogic competency needs. The findings of the study show that PLC planning at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul has not been fully based on systematically mapping teacher needs, so PLC activities are still general.

According to DuFour et al. (2010), an effective PLC should focus on real learning problems faced by teachers and be oriented towards improving learning practices in the classroom. This gap between ideal planning and practice in the field shows that PLC planning still needs to be improved to have a more direct impact on improving teachers' pedagogic competence.

### 2. Organizing PLC as a Teacher Collaboration Forum

The organization of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out by involving all teachers as members of the PLC and the principal as the person in charge of the activity. Although there is no formal written organizational structure of the PLC, the division of roles is carried out informally based on mutual agreement. From the point of view of management theory, organizing aims to organize human resources in order to work effectively in achieving organizational goals. Terry emphasized that the clarity of the structure and division of tasks greatly affects the effectiveness of program implementation. The findings of the study show that the informal organization of PLCs has led to PLC activities that have not been fully directed and sustainable.

However, the involvement of all teachers in PLC shows that there is a culture of collaboration that is beginning to develop. This is in line with the concept of PLC according to Hord (2015), which emphasizes the importance of collaboration and a sense of togetherness between teachers. With a clearer and more structured organization, PLC has the potential to become a more effective professional learning forum in improving teachers' pedagogic competence.

### 3. Implementation of PLC and Its Impact on Teacher Learning Practices

The implementation of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through teacher group discussions, sharing teaching experiences, learning reflections, and academic supervision. This activity provides a space for teachers to discuss learning problems and find solutions together.

The findings of the study show that teachers began to apply the results of PLC activities in learning planning, learning method selection, and the use of learning media. This shows that PLC has functioned as a means of professional learning that has an impact on teachers' learning practices. According to social learning theory, learning occurs effectively through interaction and collaboration. PLCs allow teachers to learn from the experiences of their peers and reflect on their teaching practices. DuFour (2004) states that PLC encourages teachers to be reflective and oriented towards continuous learning improvement. The findings of this study strengthen this view, that PLC implemented consistently can improve teachers' pedagogic competence.

However, this study also found that the level of teacher participation in PLC is not evenly distributed. Some teachers are still passive in discussions, which are influenced by time factors, administrative burden, and individual work habits. This shows that the implementation of PLC still requires strengthening the culture of reflection and collaboration in schools.

#### 4. PLC Control and Evaluation in Ensuring Program Sustainability

The control and evaluation of PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through principal monitoring and reflection with teachers. The evaluation focuses more on the implementation of activities and changes in learning practices in general. In management theory, control functions to ensure that the implementation of the program is in accordance with the plan and objectives that have been set. The results of the study show that the evaluation of PLC has not been carried out systematically and measurably. The absence of a clear evaluation instrument makes it difficult to measure the improvement of teachers' pedagogic competence objectively.

According to Hord (2015), evaluation in PLC should be focused on the impact of activities on learning practices and student learning outcomes. Therefore, the control and evaluation of PLCs at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul needs to be strengthened through the preparation of clear success and follow-up indicators so that PLCs can run sustainably and effectively.

#### 5. PLC Management and Improving Teachers' Pedagogic Competencies

Overall, the results of the study show that PLC management at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul contributes positively to improving teachers' pedagogic competence. Teachers show improvements in the ability to plan lessons, carry out more varied learning, and evaluate learning. These findings are in line with the results of previous research which stated that PLC plays an important role in the professional development of teachers if managed systematically and sustainably. However, this study also shows that the success of PLCs is greatly influenced by the quality of management, principals' leadership, and a culture of collaboration in schools.

Thus, PLC management does not only function as an administrative mechanism, but as a teacher professional development strategy that is meaningful and relevant to learning needs. If managed optimally, PLC has the potential to be a strategic solution in improving the pedagogic competence of elementary school teachers and the overall quality of learning.

### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research and discussion, it can be concluded that the management of the *Professional Learning Community* (PLC) at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul, Purwakarta Regency has been implemented and has made a positive contribution to improving the pedagogic competence of elementary school teachers. The implementation of PLC is one of the efforts to develop teacher professionals that encourages joint learning, collaboration, and reflection on learning practices in the classroom.

From the planning aspect, PLC has been designed as part of the school's sustainable professional development program (PKB). PLC activity planning includes determining objectives, schedules, and forms of activities such as learning discussions, reflection on teaching practices, and academic supervision. However, PLC planning has not been fully based on a systematic analysis of teachers' pedagogic competency needs. PLC activities are still general and have not specifically targeted learning problems faced by teachers in the classroom.

From the organizational aspect, PLC involves all teachers as members with the principal as the main person in charge. Although there is no formal written organizational structure, PLC activities continue to run because of the commitment and awareness of teachers to the importance of professional development. However, unstructured organization causes clarity of roles and responsibilities in the implementation and follow-up of PLC activities still needs to be improved to be more effective and sustainable.

From the implementation aspect, PLC at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul is carried out through group discussion activities, sharing teaching experiences, learning reflection, and academic supervision. The implementation of PLC provides a space for teachers to discuss learning problems and find solutions together. Teachers began to apply the results of PLC activities in learning planning and

implementation, such as the use of more varied learning methods and more effective classroom management.

From the aspect of control and evaluation, the implementation of PLC has been monitored by the principal through direct observation and reflection with teachers. However, the evaluation of PLCs has not been carried out in a structured manner using clear and measurable assessment instruments. This causes the improvement of teachers' pedagogic competence to not be measured objectively and systematically.

Overall, PLC management at SDN 1 Nagri Kidul has a positive impact on improving teachers' pedagogic competence, especially in learning planning, implementation of student-centered learning, and learning evaluation. However, the implementation of PLC still faces obstacles such as time constraints, teacher administrative burden, and differences in teacher participation levels. Therefore, PLC management optimization still needs to be carried out so that PLC can function optimally as a means of sustainable teacher professional development.

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