



## The effects of instructional leadership, PLC, and self-efficacy on teacher performance

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### ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the crucial role of teachers in determining the quality of education in schools, which is strongly influenced by school leadership, collaborative culture, and teachers' self-efficacy. The purpose of this research is to analyze the effects of instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and self-efficacy on the performance of public junior high school teachers in Banjarmasin Timur District. A quantitative correlational design was used. The population consisted of 227 teachers, and the samples were obtained through proportional random sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire that had been tested for validity and reliability. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression, path analysis, and the Sobel test to examine mediation effects. The findings reveal that instructional leadership, PLC, and self-efficacy have significant effects on teacher performance, both partially and simultaneously. Self-efficacy is confirmed as a psychological factor that strengthens the role of instructional leadership and PLC in enhancing teacher performance. These results highlight that the combination of effective instructional leadership, a strong collaborative culture, and high teacher self-efficacy is essential in improving the quality of education at the junior high school level.

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### ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh pentingnya peran guru dalam menentukan mutu pendidikan di sekolah, yang sangat dipengaruhi oleh kepemimpinan kepala sekolah, budaya kolaboratif, serta keyakinan diri guru. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh kepemimpinan instruksional kepala sekolah, professional learning community (PLC), dan efikasi diri terhadap kinerja guru SMP Negeri di Kecamatan Banjarmasin Timur. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain korelasional. Populasi penelitian terdiri dari 227 guru, dengan sampel yang diperoleh melalui proportional random sampling. Instrumen penelitian berupa angket skala Likert yang telah diuji validitas dan reliabilitasnya. Data dianalisis menggunakan regresi linier berganda, analisis jalur, serta uji Sobel untuk menguji peran mediasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan instruksional, PLC, dan efikasi diri berpengaruh signifikan terhadap kinerja guru, baik secara parsial maupun simultan. Efikasi diri terbukti menjadi faktor psikologis yang memperkuat peran kepemimpinan instruksional dan PLC dalam meningkatkan kinerja guru. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa kombinasi antara kepemimpinan instruksional yang efektif, budaya kolaboratif yang kuat, dan efikasi diri guru yang tinggi merupakan kunci dalam upaya peningkatan mutu pendidikan di sekolah menengah pertama.

**Kata Kunci:** efikasi diri; kepemimpinan instruksional; kinerja guru; professional learning community

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Education is a fundamental foundation in building a nation's future. Schools function not only as places for the transfer of knowledge but also as environments for developing students' character, social skills, and morality. In this context, teachers play a highly strategic role as the frontline of the learning process. The relationship between teacher performance and the quality of education in schools is supported by previous research findings, which reveal that students' learning outcomes are influenced by teacher performance, a highly dominant component in improving the learning process in schools (Normianti et al., 2019). Teacher performance is a determining factor in educational success, as the quality of learning is greatly influenced by teachers' ability to plan, implement, and evaluate the learning process. Teachers with strong performance are able to produce high-quality graduates. Conversely, if teacher performance is poor, school objectives will be difficult to achieve (Anwar, 2020). Instructional leadership by school principals and effective school management also play a crucial role in shaping a conducive learning climate and enhancing teacher performance (Permatasari et al., 2023). In addition, educational quality management and school leadership collectively contribute significantly to the overall quality of education (Hartini et al., 2025).

Several experts argue that instructional leadership plays a significant role in improving teacher performance, particularly in relation to the principal's responsibility for enhancing the quality of education in schools. Research conducted in Banjarbaru City shows that the principal's instructional leadership variable has a direct effect on teacher performance (Sanyoto et al., 2024). Other studies also indicate that transformational leadership influences teacher performance. Thus, it can be concluded that the principal's instructional leadership directly impacts teacher performance (Suriansyah, 2021). A study further concludes that instructional leadership by school principals directly affects teacher performance (Dutta & Sahney, 2022; Ma & Marion, 2021). In addition, the presence of a Professional Learning Community (PLC) fosters a collaborative culture among teachers, thereby positively impacting teaching quality and student learning outcomes. Another influencing factor is self-efficacy, which refers to teachers' beliefs in their own abilities. Research has found that variables such as motivation, work environment, and job satisfaction significantly influence improvements in teacher performance (Desiriani et al., 2023; Mokhtar et al., 2023; Setyaningsih & Sunaryo, 2021).

According to Bandura in the book *Guide to the Construction of Self-Efficacy Scales*, self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to achieve desired goals, which significantly influences individual performance. Teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more motivated, creative, and better able to face challenges in the learning process. Other research has found that self-efficacy significantly affects teachers' classroom management and students' learning outcomes (Ismawiyah et al., 2024). Self-efficacy has a significant influence on teacher performance, particularly in classroom management and student learning outcomes.

Although numerous studies have been conducted, most previous research has primarily focused on the direct effects of each variable on teacher performance. A study shows that

transformational leadership not only directly affects teacher performance but also operates through mediating variables, such as work climate and work engagement (Rahman et al., 2025). There is still limited research that integrates these three factors, instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and self-efficacy, into a single comprehensive model, particularly in the context of public junior high school teachers in Indonesia. In addition, studies highlighting the mediating role of self-efficacy or PLC in the relationship between instructional leadership and teacher performance remain scarce.

The novelty of this study lies in the simultaneous analysis of the influence of principals' instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and self-efficacy on the performance of public junior high school teachers, as well as in examining the mediating roles of self-efficacy and PLC. The focus on public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District also adds significance, considering that this area faces challenges in implementing the new curriculum and utilizing educational technology.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Teacher Performance

Etymologically, the term performance is derived from the word *performance*, which refers to the results achieved, accomplishments demonstrated, and the ability to carry out tasks. A teacher is a professional educator whose primary duties include educating, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students within formal education (Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers). Teacher performance is closely related to the competencies a teacher possesses. A study found that teachers' professional competence directly influences teacher performance, indicating that improvements in professional competence are followed by enhancements in teacher performance (Sukma et al., 2024). This implies that optimal performance can only be achieved when teachers possess adequate competencies. Previous research indicates that teachers with generally good performance can achieve optimal learning outcomes for students (Devitha et al., 2021; Khaira et al., 2023), with a positive and significant impact on both the learning process and students' academic achievement.

According to Supriyanto and Wahyudi, several factors influencing teacher performance include professional competence, work motivation, work environment, school leadership, training and professional development, and teacher welfare. Thus, teacher performance is not solely determined by individual competence but is also influenced by various external factors that simultaneously contribute to the creation of effective and sustainable learning quality (Supriyanto & Wahyudi, 2020).

### Instructional Leadership of School Principals

Instructional leadership encompasses all actions undertaken by school principals, including various activities aimed at strengthening the teaching and learning process (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). It can be interpreted as the efforts made by principals to enhance development and facilitate student learning through teachers and other learning resources

(Kilag & Sasan, 2023; Munna, 2023). The instructional leadership style implemented by principals is positively associated with student achievement and teacher performance, as it emphasizes the quality of instruction. Previous studies indicate that hypothesis testing results show a positive and significant influence of instructional leadership on teacher performance (Kosasih, 2024; Permadani et al., 2021). Other research has found that principals' instructional leadership directly influences teacher performance (Agustin et al., 2022).

This study adopts the conceptual model dimensions of instructional leadership developed by Hallinger and Murphy, which emphasize the definition of instructional leadership. Hallinger and Murphy propose the principal as an instructional leader, highlighting several key dimensions, including setting clear goals and a vision, managing instructional programs, and fostering a positive learning climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012).

### **Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

A Professional Learning Community (PLC) is a professional community consisting of groups of teachers, educational staff, and institutional leaders who demonstrate a commitment to collaborate in the learning process to improve the quality of education. PLC aims to build both individual and collective efforts among teaching teams toward higher levels of professionalism, as well as to develop its influence on the overall educational identity of the school, with the ultimate goal of creating a learning environment that is conducive to students (Admiraal et al., 2021; Voelkel, 2022). A community-based system involves the active participation of various stakeholders, including teachers, students, parents, and the wider community, in decision-making processes and the implementation of educational programs (Gil & Johnson, 2024). PLC can be realized through various collaborative learning activities, both formal and informal (Admiraal et al., 2021).

PLC is also a process of knowledge acquisition carried out through an inquiry-based approach to problem-solving. This is consistent with previous research findings indicating that teachers' PLC practices are categorized as high and that PLC practices among teachers in secondary schools in the Subis region show a significant positive correlation (Ahmad & Wahab, 2021). The purpose of implementing PLC is to facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices among educators, educational staff, and other relevant parties. To establish such a culture of sharing within schools, mutual respect and understanding are essential.

### **Self-Efficacy**

Teacher self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to plan, implement, and evaluate effective learning activities. In educational research, this concept is considered an important predictor of successful teaching practices and teacher innovativeness (Rahmani et al., 2025). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's perceptions and beliefs about their ability to complete assigned tasks. It plays an important role in shaping teacher performance because

it is associated with teachers' confidence in their ability to carry out the various stages of performing a task. Previous research indicates that higher self-efficacy is associated with better performance (Ma'wa et al., 2024).

Teachers' self-efficacy also influences the actions they take to remain resilient when facing obstacles and unpleasant experiences arising from curriculum changes. Teachers with strong self-efficacy believe they are capable of meeting the administrative demands of the curriculum and the expectations of school principals (Pramudya & Mardikaningsih, 2021). An individual's self-efficacy can be observed through their persistence and resilience in solving the problems they encounter.

## METHODS

This study employs a quantitative correlational design to examine the relationships and direct and indirect effects among the variables of principals' instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), teacher self-efficacy, and teacher performance. The research was conducted in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District. The population consisted of all teachers, totaling 227 individuals. The sampling technique used was proportional random sampling, which involved determining the proportion of teachers in each school and then randomly selecting teacher names within each school to ensure proportional representation.

The primary instrument used was a Likert-scale questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5. The questionnaire was developed based on theoretical indicators: instructional leadership referring to Hallinger and Murphy, PLC referring to Olivier and Huffman, self-efficacy referring to Bandura in *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, and teacher performance covering dimensions of quality, quantity, timeliness, effectiveness, and independence in task implementation (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012; Olivier & Huffman, 2016). Prior to distribution, the questionnaire was tested through a tryout involving 30 teachers from schools not included in the research sample. The results were analyzed using validity testing (item-total correlation) and reliability testing (Cronbach's Alpha). Only valid and reliable items were used in the main data collection. During data collection, the researcher visited each sample school, distributed the questionnaires directly to teachers, and provided a brief explanation of the research objectives and instructions for completing the questionnaires. Teachers completed the questionnaires independently and returned them on the same day to maintain a high response rate. After data collection, data processing was conducted. First, prerequisite tests were performed, including tests of normality, linearity, heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation, to ensure the suitability of the analysis model. Subsequently, direct effects among variables were tested using multiple linear regression. Indirect effects were examined through path analysis, and the mediating role of self-efficacy was tested using the Sobel test. All data analysis procedures were carried out using SPSS version 25.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Instructional Leadership of School Principals**

The study's results indicate that the instructional leadership of school principals in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District is very high. Based on the frequency distribution, 53.47% of respondents rated instructional leadership in the very high category and 46.53% in the high category. No respondents rated it as moderate, low, or very low. The overall mean score for the variable, 4.032, indicates a positive evaluation by teachers of the principal's role. A closer examination shows that the indicator with the highest mean is defining the school's vision and mission (mean = 4.091). This suggests that principals are perceived as successful in communicating the school's goals and development direction to teachers, thereby creating alignment of vision. The indicator of instructional program management also received a high rating (mean = 4.031), indicating that principals are capable of designing, implementing, and evaluating instructional programs effectively. Meanwhile, the indicator of developing a positive learning climate received the lowest score, although it still falls within the high category (mean = 3.974).

These findings confirm that principals in the research setting function not only as administrators but also as instructional leaders, able to motivate, guide, and foster a conducive learning environment. Therefore, it can be concluded that instructional leadership is one of the factors that significantly contributes to improving the quality of learning and teacher performance in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District.

### **Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

The findings indicate that the Professional Learning Community (PLC) variable falls within the high-to-very high category. A total of 41.67% of respondents rated PLC as very high, while 58.33% rated it as high. No respondents provided ratings in the moderate, low, or very low categories. The overall mean score of 4.025 suggests that PLC practices have been well implemented in the schools under study. The indicator with the highest mean is shared and supportive leadership (mean = 4.084), indicating that principals and teachers can build collaborative leadership that fosters a shared sense of ownership of school goals. Other indicators, such as shared values and vision (mean = 4.026) and shared personal practice (mean = 4.008), also received high ratings. Meanwhile, the indicator of collective learning and application had the lowest mean score (3.981), although it still falls within a positive category.

Overall, these results confirm that teachers in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District have developed a culture of collective learning, sharing teaching practices, and collaborating to achieve the school's educational vision. This condition illustrates that PLCs play an important role in improving learning quality, strengthening teachers' professional solidarity, and supporting the development of teacher performance at the junior high school level.

## **Self-Efficacy**

The self-efficacy variable of teachers in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District falls within the high to very high category. The frequency distribution shows that 45.14% of respondents rated self-efficacy as very high, 54.17% as high, and only 0.69% as moderate. No respondents rated it as low or very low. The overall mean score of 4.042 indicates that teachers have strong confidence in their ability to perform teaching tasks. The indicator with the highest mean is the level of strength (mean = 4.065), reflecting teachers' persistence in maintaining effort despite facing challenges. The competency level indicator also received a high score (mean = 4.030), indicating that teachers have confidence in their ability to master subject matter, instructional strategies, and classroom management skills. Meanwhile, the generality indicator (mean = 4.021) obtained the lowest score, although it still falls within the high category.

These findings indicate that teachers not only possess sufficient knowledge and skills but also strong self-confidence to succeed in their roles. High teacher self-efficacy encourages increased creativity, initiative, and resilience in overcoming challenges. Therefore, self-efficacy plays an important role as a psychological factor that supports teacher performance in the learning process at schools.

## **Teacher Performance**

Teacher performance in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District is generally categorized as high to very high. The frequency distribution shows that 42.36% of respondents rated it as very high and 57.64% as high. No respondents rated it as moderate, low, or very low. The overall mean score of 4.058 indicates that teacher performance is already optimal. In terms of indicators, the highest mean score is found in the quality aspect (mean = 4.077), indicating that teachers can plan and implement learning effectively and produce high-quality learning outcomes. Other indicators, such as quantity (mean = 4.059), timeliness (mean = 4.036), effectiveness (mean = 4.049), and independence (mean = 4.068), also received high ratings. This demonstrates that teachers are not only capable of producing good learning outcomes but also of doing so efficiently, with time discipline and a high level of independence.

These findings illustrate that teachers in the studied schools demonstrate work performance aligned with curriculum demands, professional competency standards, and the expectations of schools and society. The high level of teacher performance is supported by principals' leadership, the culture of Professional Learning Community (PLC), and internal factors such as self-efficacy. Therefore, it can be concluded that teacher performance in public junior high schools in East Banjarmasin District is strong and serves as an important foundation for improving the quality of education.

## **Interpretation of the Effects of Instructional Leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and Self-Efficacy on Teacher Performance**

Data analysis was conducted using multiple linear regression and path analysis to test the research hypotheses, as presented in Table 1. The results in Table 1 show that instructional leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.143, a t-value of 2.297, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.977, and a significance level of 0.023, which is less than 0.05. This indicates that the stronger the practice of instructional leadership by school principals, the higher the level of teacher performance. These findings are consistent with the theory of Hallinger and Murphy, which emphasizes the importance of principals in establishing vision and mission, managing instructional programs, and creating a positive learning climate (Hallinger & Murphy, 2012). The results also align with previous studies, which confirm the influence of instructional leadership on improving teacher performance (Sanyoto et al., 2024).

PLC has also been shown to have a positive, significant effect on teacher performance. The regression coefficient obtained in Table 1 is 0.251, with a t-value of 3.464 which is greater than the t-table value of 1.977 and a significance level of 0.001 which is less than 0.05. These findings indicate that PLC practices, including collective learning, teacher collaboration, and supportive leadership, are able to strengthen teacher performance. This is consistent with previous research emphasizing that PLC can enhance teaching effectiveness through a culture of sharing best practices and sustained collaboration (Lee et al., 2022; Haiyan & Alla, 2021).

The self-efficacy variable also shows a positive and significant effect on teacher performance, with a regression coefficient of 0.193 and a significance level of 0.002 (see Table 1). This value indicates that self-efficacy is the strongest predictor of teacher performance. Teachers who have high confidence in their abilities tend to be more persistent, resilient, and innovative in carrying out their instructional duties. Furthermore, the results of the Sobel test show that self-efficacy acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between instructional leadership and PLC on teacher performance. This means that the influence of instructional leadership and PLCs becomes stronger when teachers have high self-efficacy. Therefore, leadership strategies and collaborative school culture will be more effective when accompanied by efforts to enhance teachers' self-confidence.

**Table 1.** Summary of the Effects of Research Variables

<b>Variable Path</b>	<b>Direct Effect</b>	<b>Indirect Effect</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Description</b>
Instructional Leadership (X <sub>1</sub> ) – Teacher Performance (Y)	0,143		0,023	Significant
PLC (X <sub>2</sub> ) - Teacher Performance (Y)	0,251		0,001	Significant
Self-Efficacy (Z) - Teacher Performance (Y)	0,193		0,002	Significant
Kepemimpinan Instruksional (X <sub>1</sub> ) – Self-Efficacy (Z)	0,250		0,004	Significant
PLC (X <sub>2</sub> ) - Self-Efficacy (Z)	0,308		0,002	Significant
Instructional Leadership (X <sub>1</sub> ) – Teacher Performance (Y) Through Self-Efficacy (Z)		0,048	0,004	Significant
PLC (X <sub>2</sub> ) - Teacher Performance (Y) Through Self-Efficacy (Z)		0,059	0,002	Significant

Source: Research, 2025

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that principals' instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and self-efficacy play important roles in improving teacher performance. These findings provide practical contributions to improving educational quality in junior high schools, particularly in the East Banjarmasin area.

Instructional leadership has been proven to have a significant influence on teacher performance. Principals who can clearly define vision and mission, manage instructional programs, and foster a positive learning climate can encourage teachers to perform more effectively. Relevant research findings also indicate that one of the principal roles of a principal in improving teacher performance is through learning leadership or instructional leadership (Suriansyah & Hikmah, 2023). This finding is consistent with studies emphasizing that instructional leadership is a key factor in enhancing the quality of learning (Leithwood & Sun, 2024). PLC practices have also been shown to support improvements in teacher professionalism. Teachers who are accustomed to sharing practices, engaging in collective reflection, and embracing a shared vision are better prepared to face learning challenges. Previous research shows that learning communities are effective strategies for improving educators' competencies in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (Kalman et al., 2024). The results of this study also indicate that although the "collective learning and application" indicator received the lowest score, overall PLC practices have been effectively implemented.

Teacher self-efficacy has been shown to be an internal factor that drives performance. Teachers with high self-efficacy tend to be more confident, persistent, and resilient in facing difficulties. This result reinforces Bandura's findings in *Self-efficacy: The Exercise of Control*, which state that self-efficacy is an important predictor of individual performance. Teachers who believe in their abilities are more likely to be innovative in teaching and consistent in achieving learning objectives. Simultaneously, these three factors contribute significantly to teacher performance. This is evidenced by regression test results showing that instructional leadership, PLC, and self-efficacy have a significant effect on teacher performance, with significance values below 0.05. The practical implications of this study highlight the need to strengthen principals' instructional leadership programs, develop more intensive professional learning communities, and enhance teacher self-efficacy through training, supervision, and reward systems. There is a direct influence of principals' instructional leadership, PLC, and self-efficacy on junior high school teacher performance (Ismawiyah et al., 2024). Overall, this study confirms that instructional leadership, PLC, and self-efficacy are important factors contributing to the improvement of teacher performance, both partially and simultaneously. Therefore, efforts to improve the quality of education in public junior high schools, particularly in East Banjarmasin District, should focus on strengthening these three aspects simultaneously. School principals need to reinforce instructional leadership practices, build a collaborative culture through PLC, and enhance teachers' self-efficacy to optimize teaching performance.

## **CONCLUSION**

The results of this study indicate that instructional leadership, Professional Learning Community (PLC), and self-efficacy have a significant influence on the performance of public junior high school teachers in East Banjarmasin District. Principals who can formulate a clear vision, manage instructional programs, and foster a positive learning climate are proven to enhance teacher performance. In addition, teachers' involvement in PLC activities such as joint planning, peer discussions, and collective reflection encourages the development of a collaborative culture that supports the improvement of teacher professionalism. On the other hand, self-efficacy emerges as the strongest psychological factor in determining performance quality, as teachers who believe in their abilities tend to be more persistent, innovative, and able to face learning challenges.

Research conducted through teacher surveys, instrument testing, and statistical modeling confirms that the combination of leadership, collaboration, and teacher self-efficacy leads to a significant improvement in teacher performance. Therefore, schools need to strengthen instructional leadership practices by involving teachers in decision-making and optimizing PLC forums as spaces for reflection and sharing best practices. Furthermore, education authorities need to design teacher capacity development programs that not only focus on technical training but also on enhancing self-efficacy through mentoring, academic supervision, and reward systems. The government is also expected to support policies that strengthen PLC sustainably by providing adequate funding and resources. Through the implementation of these measures, schools and policymakers can build an educational ecosystem that is collaborative, adaptive, and oriented toward improving the quality of teacher performance.

## **AUTHOR'S NOTE**

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