The Principal's Strategy in Optimizing Learning Communities for the Pedagogical Competency Development of Kindergarten Teachers

Anis Sa'adah[1*]; Nunuk Hariyati[2]; Mohammad Syahidul Haq[3]; Amrozi Khamidi[4]; Mochamad Nursalim[5]

[1,2,3,4,5]*Educational Management, State University of Surabaya, Indonesia*
[1*]*Corresponding Email: anisamail6@gmail.com, Phone Number: 0857 xxxx xxxx*

Article History:
Received: Nov 27, 2024
Revised: Dec 29, 2024
Accepted: Jan 05, 2025
Online First: Jan 25, 2025

Keywords:
Learning Community, Pedagogical Competence, Strategy.

Kata Kunci:
Kompetensi Pedagogik, Komunitas Belajar, Strategi.

Abstract: The title of this research is The Principal's Strategy in Optimizing the Learning Community for the Development of Teacher Pedagogical Competence in Kindergarten. There are two research objectives: the principal's strategy and the pedagogical competence of teachers in kindergarten. This research describes the principal's strategy in optimizing the learning community to develop teacher pedagogical competence in kindergarten. The type of research is qualitative descriptive research, which uses interviews, observation, and documentation to collect data. Respondents included the school administrators, principals, teachers, and education staff. The research results show that the strategies used by school principals in developing teacher pedagogical competence include forming small teams, setting routine schedules, implementing collaboration, and creating an environment that supports sustainable learning. This strategy has proven effective in developing teacher competence in designing, implementing, and evaluating learning. However, this strategy is not without obstacles. The obstacles are related to time, facilities, and the school community's resistance to change.

Abstrak: Tujuan penelitian ini adalah *mendeskripsikan* strategi kepala sekolah dalam mengoptimalkan komunitas belajar guna pengembangan kompetensi *pedagogik* guru di taman kanak-kanak. Penelitian dilakukan di dua sekolah yaitu TKIT Handayani dan TK Kristen Budi Mulia. Objek penelitiannya adalah strategi kepala sekolah dan kompetensi *pedagogik* guru di taman kanak-kanak. Jenis penelitian ini adalah penelitian *deskriptif kualitatif* yaitu penelitian yang menggambarkan fenomena sosial di sekolah apa adanya tanpa *intervensi* atau *treatmen* dari peneliti. Teknik pengumpulan datanya menggunakan wawancara, *observasi*, dan dokumentasi. Untuk menguji keabsahan data, peneliti melakukan *triangulasi* sebagai alat pengecekan data dengan menggunakan triangulasi sumber, teknik, dan waktu. Responden yang terlibat dalam penelitian ini adalah penyelenggara sekolah, kepala sekolah, guru, dan tenaga kependidikan di kedua sekolah tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi yang digunakan kepala sekolah dalam pengembangan kompetensi pedagogik guru meliputi 3 tahap : 1) tahap perencanaan, 2) tahap pelaksanaan, dan 3) tahap evaluasi. Kepala sekolah juga memotivasi guru agar terlibat dalam komunitas belajar dengan : 1) menanamkan nilai dan komitmen bahwa mendidik siswa adalah tugas dan tangggung jawab bersama; 2) menciptakan kesadaran bahwa proses pembelajaran dan keberhasilan peserta didik adalah tanggung jawab semua guru; 3) menghadirkan suasana belajar yang saling membutuhkan satu sama yang lain. Kepala sekolah juga memfasilitasi agar guru bisa terlibat dalam komunitas belajar dengan menciptakan lingkungan komunitas belajar yang ramah guru.

How to cite:
Sa'adah, A., Hariyati, N., & Haq, M. S., Khamidi, A., & Nursalim, M. (2025). The Principal's Strategy in Optimizing Learning Communities for the Pedagogical Competency Development of Kindergarten Teachers. *Edunesia : Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan, 6*(1), 491-509.

This is an open-access article under the CC-BY-NC-ND license

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

A. Introduction

Teachers' pedagogical competence is one of the main factors influencing the quality of learning and student achievement. At the Kindergarten level, this competence is crucial in determining the quality and effectiveness of education. Early childhood education is vital as it is the foundational stage for developing children's character and cognitive abilities. Therefore, teachers play a vital role in Indonesia's education system, making developing their competencies urgent. This is essential to ensure that they can manage and teach effectively. Teachers' pedagogical competence is one of the main factors influencing the quality of learning and student achievement. At the Kindergarten (TK) level, this competence is crucial in determining the quality and effectiveness of education. Early childhood education is vital as it is the foundational stage for developing children's character and cognitive abilities. Therefore, teachers play a vital role in Indonesia's education system, making developing their competencies urgent. This is essential to ensure that they can manage and teach effectively (Prawitasari & Suharto, 2020). Among the various competencies of teachers, pedagogical competence is the most essential. This competence is one of the factors that influences the quality of learning and student achievement, in addition to determining the effectiveness of the teaching process. Pedagogical competence refers to the ability in the teaching and learning process, both inside and outside the classroom, to manage and implement learning evaluations (Sum & Taran, 2020).

Good teacher competence will lead to a good learning process, resulting in good student outcomes. However, facts show that many teachers still face challenges in their teaching practices, such as a lack of understanding of the curriculum, insufficient ability to design innovative lessons, monotonous teaching methods, and a lack of understanding of practical assessment (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023). Many Kindergarten teachers still face challenges in developing their pedagogical competence, whether due to limited resources or professional support. School principals play a strategic role in addressing these issues. One way to tackle this problem is by optimizing learning communities. Teachers can share experiences, gain new knowledge, and develop pedagogical skills through learning communities.

A learning community is one of the platforms that can be used to develop teachers' pedagogical competence. The two have a reciprocal relationship with one another. Both play an important role in realizing the professional development of teachers (Senge, 1994). A learning community is often interpreted as a group of people with an educational mission who collaborate within it and share knowledge for self-development (Sekar & Kamarubiani, 2020). A learning community can also consist of students and teachers who share information, knowledge, and experiences during the learning process (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023).

A learning community is often understood as a group of teachers within a school or cluster who desire to learn and collaborate intensively to improve the quality of learning (Muzaini et al., 2024). A learning community has a strong correlation with teachers'

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

pedagogical competence. Teachers can collaborate through learning communities and share best practices with other community members to develop their competencies, such as designing lessons, implementing learning, and conducting evaluations (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023). A learning community is built to share information about learning issues and facilitate continuous interaction among members. It also encourages personal development through discussions and aligns learning with real-life experiences.

Teachers play a central role in Indonesia's education system. Developing their competencies is essential to ensure they can teach effectively (Prawitasari & Suharto, 2020). Among the various teacher competencies, pedagogical competence is the most crucial to develop. Strong teacher competence leads to effective learning processes and better learning outcomes. Pedagogical competence refers to a teacher's ability in the teaching and learning process, whether conducted in the classroom or through activities outside the classroom, as well as their ability to manage and conduct learning evaluations (Sum and Taran, 2020).

The facts show that many teachers still face challenges in teaching practice, such as a lack of understanding of the curriculum, insufficient planning and innovative learning strategies, monotonous teaching methods, and a lack of practical assessments. These challenges drive various initiatives and policies to improve teacher performance. Some of these initiatives include training, seminars, workshops, and Teacher Working Group (KKG) forums (Harlita & Ramadan, 2024). The pedagogical competence of early childhood education (PAUD) teachers remains low, causing them to face challenges in teaching practices that tend to be monotonous. The pedagogical competence of early childhood education (PAUD) teachers remains low, causing them to face challenges in teaching practices that tend to be monotonous (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023).

The urgency of learning communities has not yet become a priority program for school principals. Based on a survey of 195 kindergarten (TK) principals in the Gresik district, 44% reported that their schools' learning community is not functioning well. This indicates that there are significant challenges in creating an optimal learning community for teachers in schools. The common obstacles faced in implementing learning communities include a lack of support, both in terms of policies and facilities that support the sustainability of these communities (Sari et al., 2024).

In contrast to what happens in other schools, based on interviews and initial observations, TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia have consistently and regularly implemented learning community programs. Each community meeting is well-planned, involving all educators, and is focused on developing competencies and enhancing teacher professionalism. Through the consistently held learning community activities, both schools have successfully created an environment that fosters collaboration and innovation, resulting in continuous improvements in the quality of learning. This achievement is mainly due to the school principals' strategy to optimize the learning community to play an effective role in teacher competency development. Optimizing school learning communities is a highly strategic effort to increase teachers' active involvement in the continuous learning process (Arifin & Hanif, 2024).

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Through dynamic learning communities, teachers can collaborate more intensively in addressing various challenges and developments in education, such as technology integration, increasing student needs, and curriculum changes (Ramadani et al., 2020). Through this community, teachers receive support from their peers and have the opportunity to exchange ideas, practices, and relevant, innovative solutions, creating an environment that fosters continuous professional development. As part of professional development, learning communities can also provide a platform for teachers to explore pedagogical innovations and improve their teaching performance (Ummah et al., 2023).

One important step that school principals must take is to optimize the learning community in the school. This approach is expected to help teachers improve their pedagogical skills and encourage the creation of a sustainable collaborative culture (Asriadi et al., 2024). The role of the principal is crucial in optimizing the learning community at the school. In carrying out their role as learning leaders, principals are not only responsible for organizing the teaching and learning process but also for fostering an atmosphere that supports collaboration and active participation among all members of the school community, including students, teachers, and parents (Muaharam et al., 2024).

An ideal learning community will prioritize learning needs, ensuring no significant performance gaps. In this aspect, the learning community utilizes data on the learning needs of its members by reviewing educational report cards, performance assessments, survey methods, observations, focus group discussions (FGD), joint reflection results, and student feedback. The activities focus on solving members' learning problems and involve various activities. An ideal learning community also implements action plans based on the topics discussed.

An ideal learning community will also use an inquiry cycle that includes initial reflection, planning, implementation, and evaluation. In the initial reflection phase, data is gathered from educational report cards, learning outcomes, formative and summative assessments, and teacher observations in the classroom, providing an overview of the learning challenges faced. The planning phase focuses on identifying learning objectives, developing strategies to enhance student learning, and providing guidance, enrichment, and assessment support according to students' needs. Community members then implement the plan and provide feedback to one another during the implementation process. In the evaluation phase, data from the initial reflection is compared with data after the implementation. Common obstacles in applying learning communities include a lack of support in terms of policies and facilities that sustain the community's continuity (Sari et al., 2024).

A study shows that teachers' pedagogical competence can be improved through distance learning (PJJ) via remote learning (BDR) online, offline, or a combination of both systems (Ahmad, 2020). Upon further examination, the improvement in competence was found to be minor, only 5%. The context of this study is also limited, as it was conducted in only one school using action research methods with a small sample size. Therefore, the contribution of the research findings is also limited.

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Another study shows that the presence of learning communities in schools is important and can enhance teacher competence and the learning culture within the school. (Rahayuningsih et al., 2023). Unfortunately, this study was conducted in only one school with a limited sample size. The study was also conducted over a short period, which raises doubts about its results, especially since the method used was solely action research. As a result, the contribution of this research is also limited. This current study aims to address these shortcomings and answer the question of what strategies school principals use to optimize learning communities in schools to develop teachers' pedagogical competence in kindergartens.

In general, the objective of this research is to (1) contribute to the development of educational management science, particularly in understanding school principals' strategies to optimize learning communities for enhancing teachers' pedagogical competencies, (2) strengthen the concept of transformational leadership by highlighting the role of school principals in building a shared vision, motivating teams, and fostering innovation through effective learning community management, (3) support the application of organizational learning principles, such as personal mastery for individual competency development, team learning for team collaboration, and system thinking for a holistic approach to problem-solving, (4) provide new insights and alternative strategies that are more effective in optimizing learning communities in schools, (5) serve as a reference for evaluating existing leadership practices, enabling significant improvements and advancements, and (6) offer examples or models of successful strategies implemented in optimizing learning communities to develop teachers' pedagogical competencies. Specifically, this research aims to describe in depth the strategies school principals employ to motivate teachers to actively participate in learning communities at TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia and the strategies used to facilitate and support learning communities in these schools.

B. Method

The research approach is qualitative, which aims to explore an understanding of human experiences in specific contexts (Creswell & Poth, 2016). In this research, the data is presented in the form of words or images rather than numbers, making it descriptive; thus, this research is categorized as qualitative descriptive research. This research aims to understand phenomena in specific contexts, such as real-world environments, without manipulating the studied phenomena (Patton, 2002). The primary focus of this research is on understanding and interpretation (Bogdan & Biklen, 1997).

The respondents in this research include school organizers, principals, teachers, and educational staff at both schools. The target respondents are two school organizers, two principals, 15 teachers, and two educational staff members. The research is conducted from July to November 2024. The research design is a multi-site study focusing on two educational institutions, TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia, within the same case. The case study design allows the researcher to delve deeply into the context, interaction

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

dynamics, and strategies the principals implement in developing teachers' pedagogical competencies.

The data collection techniques in this study consist of three methods: interviews, observation, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted based on an instrument where the researcher asked general questions to participants and recorded their responses (Creswell & Poth, 2016). The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews, which were interviews in which questions were posed, and the informants provided accountable data. The interviews were conducted with the foundation leaders, school principals, and teachers. The target respondents include two foundation leaders, two principals, and 15 teachers. The interviews focused on the strategies implemented by the principals, the challenges faced, and the impact of learning communities on the development of teachers' pedagogical competencies.

The second data collection technique is observation. Observation is gathering information directly and concretely through observing people and places at the research site (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Observations will be conducted, structured, and planned to produce accurate data. The method used is participatory observation, meaning the researcher is directly involved in the activities being observed as a source of research. The researcher will directly observe what the data sources are doing, how the principals and teachers are involved in implementing the learning community, how active the members are in participating, the methods of discussion used, and their implementation. The purpose of the observation is for the researcher to engage directly in the situations occurring in the field. The second data collection technique is observation. Observation is gathering information directly and concretely through observing people and places at the research site (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Observations will be conducted, structured, and planned to produce accurate data. The method used is participatory observation, meaning the researcher is directly involved in the activities being observed as a source of research. The researcher will directly observe what the data sources are doing, how the principals and teachers are involved in implementing the learning community, how active the members are in participating, the methods of discussion used, and their implementation. The purpose of the observation is for the researcher to engage directly in the situations occurring in the field. The researcher will directly observe (1) what the data sources are doing, (2) how the principals and teachers are involved in implementing the learning community, (3) how active the members are in participating, (4) the methods of discussion used, and (5) their implementation. The purpose of the observation is for the researcher to engage directly in the situations occurring in the field. The data explored in this research include (1) the structure and existence of the learning community, (2) the implementation of learning community activities, (3) teacher interaction and collaboration, (4) support from school management, (5) the impact on the development of teachers' pedagogical competencies, and (6) the challenges and obstacles identified.

The third data collection technique is documentation. The researcher will seek data in documents or records related to actions or social events connected to the research subject.

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Documentation is essential in qualitative research as it can strengthen the validity and reliability of the study, in addition to interviews and observations. This documentation may include (1) the curriculum of the educational unit, (2) worksheets, (3) school program activities, (4) learning community activity schedules, (5) photos, and (6) videos about teaching innovations gathered during data collection.

After the data is collected, it is analyzed, and the technique used is the model from Miles and Huberman. In this model, analysis is performed in four stages: (1) data collection, (2) data condensation, (3) data presentation, and (4) verification or conclusion drawing (Huberman, 2014). Below is the figure of the analysis model used

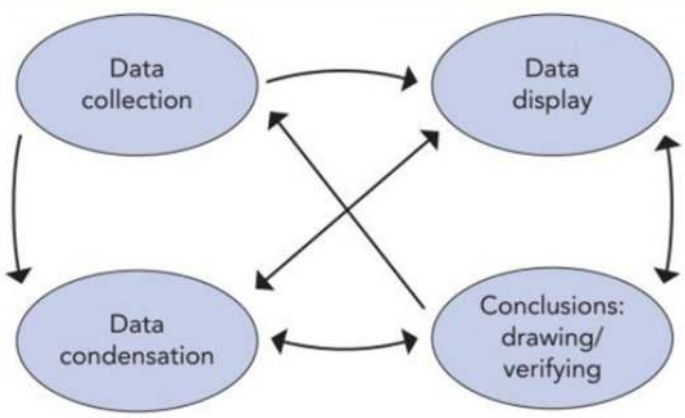

Figure 1. Qualitative Data Analysis Technique Model

C. Result and Discussion

Result

Based on interviews, observations, and reviewing various school documents, the implementation of learning communities at TKIT Handayani and TK Budi Mulia has similarities and differences. The interviews were conducted with (1) the foundation leader (organizer), (2) the school principals, and (3) the teachers, while observations were carried out for three months, focusing on the community activities at the school. The documents examined by the researcher include (1) the decision letter for the learning community, (2) photo documentation, (3) meeting minutes, and (4) attendance lists. The similarities and differences encompass (1) the background of the school conditions, (2) the timing of the learning community activities, and (3) their management.

Data 1

TKIT Handayani is a school located at Jl. Wisma Sidojangkung Indah Blok I/36, Desa Sidojangkung, Menganti Subdistrict, Gresik District. This school is in a multicultural residential complex in the southern area of Gresik and was established in 2019. It is located in a outskirts area as a buffer for Surabaya. The school has a distinctive religious (Islamic) characteristic and is part of the second cohort of the School for Movement program. It stands

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

within the same complex as the Handayani playgroup. The school has 12 teachers, all of whom hold degrees except for two who have not yet completed a degree in Early Childhood Education (PAUD). The number of students in Kindergarten A is three classes, and in Kindergarten B, there are also three classes, totaling 103. Most parents are employees or government or private sector workers, while the remaining are entrepreneurs. The school's vision is to create a devout and well-mannered generation from an early age.

Meanwhile, TK Kristen Budi Mulia is a school located at Perumahan Siwalan Indah Blok T/14-15, Desa Indrosari, Menganti Subdistrict, Gresik District. Like the previous school, this school is also located on the outskirts of Surabaya as a buffer. Established in 2017, this school has a Christian religious characteristic. However, it is not part of the School for Movement program and is in the same complex as the Budi Mulia playgroup. The school has five teachers, all of whom hold degrees except for one teacher who has not yet completed a degree in PAUD. The number of students in Kindergarten A is 2, and in Kindergarten B, there is 1 class, totaling 52 students. Like the previous school, most parents are employees or workers, with the rest being self-employed. The school's vision is to become an excellent school emphasizing faith, knowledge, and service.

Data 2

Implementing the learning community at TKIT Handayani every Friday from 10:30 AM to 12:00 PM. The school has formed an organizational structure for the learning community, consisting of a person in charge, chairman, secretary, treasurer, and several divisions, such as the program, public relations, publication, and documentation divisions. The person in charge of the community is the headmaster, while the other positions, such as chairperson, secretary, and treasurer, are held by teachers. The chairman of the learning community at TKIT Handayani is Mrs. Eka Nur Jannah, whose selection was based on the teacher's competence in motivating the community members.

The teachers at TKIT Handayani explain that the topics discussed in the community activities include problems related to students, student learning outcomes, the learning process, teacher competency development, etc. They claim that community activities positively impact their pedagogical competence, making them more innovative teachers who are eager to share experiences with colleagues and enthusiastic about the activities. Based on school documents, the researcher found several documents related to the learning community activities, including the SK (Decree) on the organizational structure of the learning community, activity journals, minutes, attendance lists, and activity evaluation reports. Below is one of the activity journals of the learning community at TKIT Handayani, as shown in Table 1.

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Table 1. Activity Journal of Kombel at Handayani Kindergarten

No	Date	Description Of The Activity Material	Person In Charge	Objectives Of The Activity
1	Friday, 6th September 2024	Discussing the difficulties in understanding student communication	Siti Fatimah, S. Pd	Providing stimulus so that children can communicate (Receptive and expressive language)
2	Friday, 13th September 2024	Discussing formative assessment	Eka Nurjanah, S. Pd	Presenting material/technical aspects of formative assessment
3	Friday, 20th September 2024	Discussing preparations for the children's hajj simulation at Al Akbar Mosque, Surabaya	Etik Budiwati, S. Psi	Assigning tasks to teachers in guiding students during the hajj simulation activity
4	Friday, 27th September 2024	Discussing preparations for the P5 activity	Nur Rahmadani (TK A) Ika Ririn Setyowati (TK B)	Designing a practical implementation of P5 according to the chosen theme in the P5 proposal

Figure 2. Learning Community Activities at TKIT Handayani

The image above illustrates the learning community activities that discuss the preparation plan for the Project Strengthening the Profile of Pancasila Students (P5) and explains the plan to create a class for speech development. Meanwhile, the second image shows the attendance of teachers at the learning community activities and a recap of attendance for each activity. Below is the image that shows the attendance recap.

Meanwhile, at TK Budi Mulia, the learning community activities are held every day after the learning process. All teachers, both in kindergarten and the playgroup, as well as the school principal, participate in these activities. The head of the community is Ibu Tabita Dasa, S.Pd. Based on observations, it was found that the learning community at TK Budi Mulia has been running well. These activities are held regularly and consistently. Each

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

community meeting is well-planned, involves all educators, and focuses on the development of teacher competencies, as well as the dissemination of good practices that are carried out.

There is positive interaction among participants during the activities, showing their interest in the activities. Participants respond positively when one member presents, provides feedback and follows up on actions. The teachers feel valued because they can share ideas or concepts in a planned program. They believe the program is better because it is designed with their colleagues. However, this is not without challenges, as tight schedules often hinder community activities, limited IT skills, and insufficient facilities and infrastructure.

Figure 3. Learning Community Activities at TK Budi Mulia

Another indicator is that the learning community runs consistently and successfully creates an environment that supports collaboration and innovation, improving the quality of learning. This is inseparable from the role of the principal in optimizing the learning community to enhance teachers' competencies.

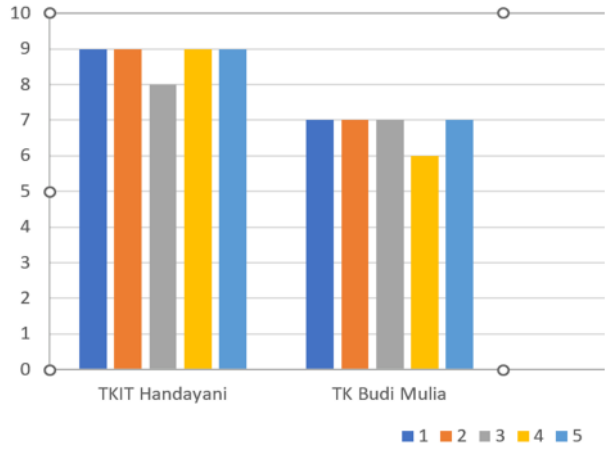

Figure 4. Attendance of the Learning Community Participants at TKIT Handayani

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Data 3

The school principal directly leads the management of the learning community at TK Handayani. The principal takes Several important actions, including forming an organizational structure, instilling shared values and commitments, providing motivation, and facilitating community activities. The principal forms the organizational structure, which involves assembling the management and accountability for the community. Additionally, the principal also socializes the fundamental values mutually believed at the school, such as openness, cooperation, professionalism, and mutual respect. The teachers must have a collective awareness of their tasks and responsibilities. The primary core value upheld by TKIT Handayani is that education is a form of worship and that teachers are lifelong learners.

Meanwhile, at TK Budi Mulia, the management of the learning community is also led by the school principal. The first thing the principal does is motivate teachers to engage in the learning community by 1) instilling the value and commitment that educating students is a shared responsibility and 2) creating awareness that the learning process and the success of students are the responsibility of all teachers; and 3) fostering a learning environment where mutual support is essential.

The principal also facilitates teacher involvement in the learning community by taking several actions, including 1) creating work programs that encourage all teachers to participate in community activities; 2) maximizing the potential available within the school to optimize community activities; 3) involving and collaborating with all community members; 4) coordinating and delegating tasks for planned programs; 5) creating a teacher-friendly learning community environment.

In general, the actions taken by the principal of TK Kristen Budi Mulia to optimize the learning community can be divided into three stages: 1) the planning stage, 2) the implementation stage, and 3) the evaluation stage. In the planning stage, the principal focuses on developing a work program, determining the types of activities, setting the schedule, and assigning responsibilities. All activities are directed towards the development of teachers' pedagogical competencies. In the implementation stage, the principal manages the activities by involving available school resources and delegating authority and responsibility. Finally, in the evaluation stage, the principal identifies obstacles in implementing the learning community and plans follow-up actions.

Almost the same as in TKIT Handayani, implementing the learning community at this school involves forming small teams, arranging regular schedules, applying collaboration, and creating an environment that supports continuous learning. This strategy has proven effective in developing teachers' pedagogical competencies in designing, implementing, and evaluating learning. However, this strategy is not without challenges, among which the principal faces issues related to time, facilities, and resistance from the school community towards change.

The learning community activities at TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia are perfect, with activities carried out regularly and systematically. This is a strategic effort

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

to increase teachers' involvement in continuous learning processes. Through this community, teachers not only receive support from one another but can also exchange ideas, innovative solutions, and best practices, leading to ongoing professional development. Meanwhile, the foundation leaders of both TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia support the program, mainly from the financial side. This support includes fulfilling the necessary facilities, infrastructure, and accommodations for the activities.

Data 4

The principal holds an important position and role in optimizing the learning community. In carrying out their role, the principal is responsible for managing the teaching and learning process and creating an atmosphere that supports collaboration and active participation among all school community members. The principal can also motivate teachers to become involved in the learning community. This means the principal must be able to influence, encourage, invite, move, and even compel others to change.

The principal can also facilitate teachers' involvement in the learning community. The principal oversees the school's overall management, development, and success. They also strategically achieve educational goals by managing human resources, curriculum, facilities, and interactions with the surrounding community. These efforts to achieve the school's goals are often called the principal's strategy. The principal involves and collaborates with all members of the learning community. Strong collaboration that grows within the learning community will enrich teaching strategies and create more effective and innovative learning activities. Ultimately, this strategy can impact individual teachers' development and improve the overall quality of education in these schools, creating an environment that is more responsive to the needs of students and the dynamics of modern education.

Discussion

Based on the research findings, several conclusions were drawn, including: 1) the role of the principal in the learning community activities is crucial, 2) the strategies for strengthening the learning community in each school may differ, 3) the activities of the learning community at school, and 4) the foundation chairperson acts as a supporter of the learning community program by providing support in terms of financing and fulfilling the necessary facilities and infrastructure.

1. The Principal's Position is Essential

One of the crucial steps that the principal must take is to optimize the learning community at the school. This policy not only helps teachers improve their pedagogical skills but also fosters the creation of a sustainable collaborative culture (Asriadi et al., 2024). The principal is responsible for organizing the teaching and learning process and creating an atmosphere that supports collaboration and active participation among all school

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

community members, including students, teachers, and parents (Yoseptry et al., 2024). As a leader, the principal must be able to see the big picture and guide the team toward that vision (Bennis, 2009). This means that the principal must be able to influence, encourage, invite, motivate, and even push others to accept the influence and do something to achieve the goals set (Ghufron, 2020).

This is known as transformational leadership, which is leadership that enhances employee motivation, satisfies employee needs, and treats them holistically (Northouse, 2020). The principal must 'provide' much positive energy to achieve their goals, and others will follow them (Muzakki et al., 2023). Moreover, the principal facilitates teachers' involvement in the learning community (Zhahira et al., 2022). The principal involves and collaborates with all members of the learning community. The strong collaboration that grows within the learning community will enrich teaching strategies and create more effective and innovative learning activities. Ultimately, this strategy can impact teachers' individual development and improve the overall quality of education in these schools, creating a more responsive environment to students' needs and the dynamics of modern education (Raharjo et aal., 2024).

2. The Principal's Strategy Varies

The strategy to strengthen the learning community in each school can vary. The steps in the principal's strategy to optimize the learning community are divided into three phases: 1) the planning phase, 2) the implementation phase, and 3) the evaluation phase. This is closely related to the scope of the principal's duties, ranging from planning and implementation to evaluating school programs (Mia et al., 2022). This scope includes human resource management to optimize the school's progress, developing measurable teacher competencies, curriculum management, and enhancing the collaborative culture at the school. This aligns with the view that the principal plays a crucial role in building the learning community to improve teachers' pedagogical competencies and the quality of learning (Itje et al., 2023).

A well-thought-out plan allows the principal to set priorities, create effective work programs, and maximize available resources. The implementation phase is key to realizing the program by involving all relevant parties, such as teachers and educational staff, through coordination and precise task distribution. Meanwhile, evaluation functions to assess the program's success, identify challenges faced, and provide feedback for future improvements. The principal can create an optimal and competitive learning environment with this continuous strategic cycle.

You want to create or describe a diagram illustrating the flow of the learning community activities. Please provide the details for the diagram, such as the steps or components you would like to include, and I can help generate a more specific image or description (Ferayanti et al., 2023).

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

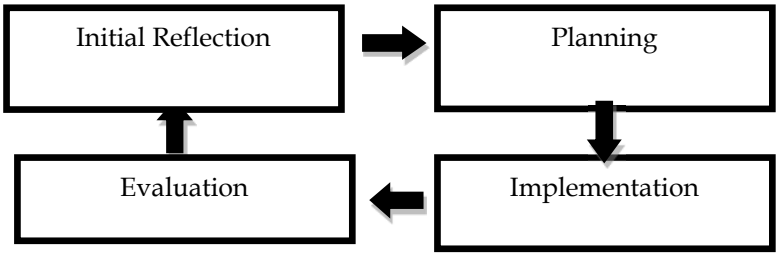

Figure 5. The Cycle of Learning Community Implementation

The learning communities in these two schools have different characteristics. This can be understood because each learning community has distinct features from the moment it is established. At least three key ideas are adopted from the theory of Professional Learning Community (PLC), where the learning community focuses on students, fostering collaboration and group responsibility, and ultimately aiming at student learning outcomes (Ferayanti et al., 2023).

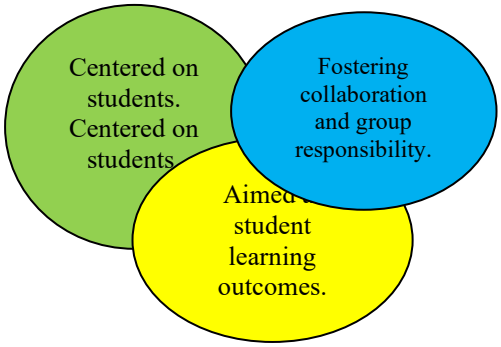

Figure 6. Three Key Ideas in Managing a Learning Community

The factors influencing improving learning quality include teachers, students, facilities and infrastructure, environment, and school management (Mutiani et al., 2020). In the learning community practices at TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia, teachers have consistently shared knowledge, experiences, and best practices. In the learning community practices at TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia, teachers have consistently shared knowledge, experiences, and best practices.

In practice, the principal is the leader in implementing planned programs to achieve the school's goals. One of these strategies is optimizing the learning community to enhance teachers' pedagogical competencies. In school management, strategy is often defined as a decision-making process to determine actions and specific steps to help the school achieve its vision. As the primary leader, the principal plays a strategic role in facilitating an environment that supports collaboration and the professional development of teachers.

Through a collaborative approach, the principal can establish a learning community focused on improving the quality of education by providing space for teachers to share experiences and best practices. Through a collaborative approach, the principal can establish

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

a learning community focused on improving the quality of education by providing space for teachers to share experiences and best practices.

3. Learning Community Activities

The learning community activities at TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia are categorized as very good, as they are conducted regularly and systematically. Optimizing the learning community in schools is a significant strategic effort to increase active teacher involvement in continuous learning processes (Arifin & Hanif, 2024). Through this community, teachers collaborate more intensively to face various learning challenges, such as technology integration, increasing student needs, and curriculum changes (Ramadani et al., 2020.). Through this community, teachers receive support from each other and exchange ideas, innovative practices, and relevant solutions, creating continuous professional development.

As part of professional development, the learning community also provides a platform for teachers to explore pedagogical innovations and improve teaching performance (Ummah et al., 2023). A learning community consists of individuals with interests and goals generally oriented toward academic fields. This group is centered on a shared vision and collaborates to share knowledge to achieve academic goals (Zhu & Baylen, 2005).

Each community meeting involves all educators and focuses on developing competencies and improving teachers' professionalism. The learning community is formed with several objectives, including 1) enabling teachers to support and collaborate to find solutions to learning problems (Aslam et al., 2023); 2) gaining new knowledge, enhancing skills, and building self-confidence 3) 3) providing opportunities for teachers to share experiences with community members, exchange ideas, and obtain relevant educational resources (Khusna & Priyanti, 2023); 4) serving as a forum for studying the latest educational trends, integrating current research findings into teaching practices, and discussing effective teaching strategies according to various class conditions and backgrounds (Harlita & Ramadan, 2024); 5) reducing knowledge and skill disparities among teachers and education staff so that students receive the same learning experience regardless of their teacher (Ferayanti et al., 2023); 6) studying students' learning outcomes and creating improvement programs and follow-up actions for the issues students face (DuFour, 2004); and 7) improving educators' skills and creating a sustainable learning culture that impacts students' academic achievements.

Consistent learning community activities have successfully created an environment that supports collaboration and innovation, leading to continuous improvement in the quality of education provided. The learning community activities, designed regularly for sharing expertise, evaluating students' work, developing teaching strategies, and working together to enhance teaching skills and academic achievements, contribute to improving the quality of the learning process (DuFour & Eaker, 2009). This perspective aligns with the idea that learning communities play a crucial role in improving the quality and effectiveness of

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

the learning process (Ramadani et al., 2020). This occurs because a learning community consists of individuals with shared interests and goals within an environment that supports the learning process, allowing them to develop their abilities (Ramadani et al., 2020). A learning community is a group of educators and educational staff in a school or between schools who gather regularly and systematically to learn, discuss, and share knowledge to enhance the quality of teaching (Giyanto et al., 2023).

A learning community is a tool for educators and education staff to engage in regular, collaborative learning with directed and measurable goals to improve the quality of teaching and positively impact students' learning outcomes (Rafli et al., 2024). The principal creates a teacher-friendly learning community environment. This strategy emphasizes transformational leadership to create an inclusive and adaptive learning environment for modern educational challenges (Pratiwi et al., 2022). It also involves the principal optimizing technology and innovation in school management, which is crucial in the digital era (Purba & Saragih, 2023).

4. Role of School Organizers

Meanwhile, the organizers or foundation leaders of both TKIT Handayani and TK Kristen Budi Mulia act as program supporters by assisting, particularly in funding. This support includes fulfilling the necessary facilities, infrastructure, and accommodation for the activities.

D. Conclusion

This research successfully shows that the principal's strategy in optimising learning communities is effective for developing teachers' pedagogical competence. Through the formation of small teams, a regular schedule of activities, active collaboration, and the creation of an environment that supports continuous learning, learning communities become a significant tool in improving teacher competence, particularly in planning, implementing and evaluating learning. This strategy not only encourages teachers' active involvement, but also creates a learning culture that supports professionalism on an ongoing basis.

The implications of this research provide practical and theoretical contributions to education management, particularly in the development of learning communities as a strategic tool for improving teacher competence. Principals have a central role in supporting the development of pedagogical competence through the optimisation of learning communities. Consistent implementation of this strategy can improve the quality of learning and reduce the competence gap between teachers. Education policies that support the development of learning communities can also be an important foundation for teacher professional development at various levels of education.

For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of the study by involving more schools from different levels of education to increase the generalisability of the research results. Research can also explore quantitative approaches to statistically measure

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

the impact of principals' strategies on improving teachers' competencies. In addition, integrating technology in learning communities could be a research focus to support learning in the digital era.

References

Ahmad, A. (2020). Peningkatan Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru dalam Pembelajaran Jarak Jauh Melalui Pendampingan Sistem Daring, Luring, atau Kombinasi pada Masa New Normal Covid-19. *Jurnal Paedagogy*, *7*(4), 258-264. https://doi.org/10.33394/jp.v7i4.2803.

Arifin, J., & Hanif, M. (2024). Manajemen Program Komunitas Belajar Sekolah untuk Peningkatan Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru. *Ideguru: Jurnal Karya Ilmiah Guru*, *9*(3), 1421-1432. https://doi.org/10.51169/ideguru.v9i3.1112.

Aslam, M. P., Nurdin, H. D., & Suharto, N. (2023). *Professional Learning Community: Strategi Tingkatkan Kinerja Guru*. Indonesia Emas Group.

Asriadi, A., Nur, M. A., Sukaria, M. I., & Shabir, A. (2024). Pendampingan Komunitas Belajar Sekolah Penggerak Melalui Lokakarya Refleksi untuk Meningkatkan Kualitas Proses Pembelajaran di Sekolah Dasar. *MAJU: Indonesian Journal of Community Empowerment*, *1*(3), 104-110. https://doi.org/10.62335/a7ha1f62.

Bennis, W. (2009). *On Becoming a Leader (revised edition)*. New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing.

Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. K. (1997). *Qualitative Research for Education*. Allyn & Bacon Boston, MA.

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Sage publications.

DuFour, R. (2004). What is a" Professional Learning Community"?. *Educational leadership*, *61*(8), 6-11.

DuFour, R., & Eaker, R. (2009). *Professional Learning Communities at Work Tm: Best Practices for Enhancing Students Achievement*. Solution Tree Press.

Ferayanti, M., Nissa, H., Kurnianingsih, S., Irfan, R., & Irfan, H. (2023). *Panduan Optimalisasi Komunitas Belajar*. Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi.

Ghufron, G. (2020). *Teori-teori Kepemimpinan: Leadership Theories*. Fenomena.

Giyanto, B., Hidayah, P. K. S., Julizar, K., Sari, D. K., & Hartono, D. (2023). Implementasi Kebijakan Komunitas Belajar dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar di Indonesia. *Jurnal Pembangunan Dan Administrasi Publik*, 37-50.

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Harlita, I., & Ramadan, Z. H. (2024). Peran Komunitas Belajar di Sekolah Dasar dalam Mengembangkan Kompetensi Guru. *Didaktika: Jurnal Kependidikan*, *13*(3), 2907-2920. https://doi.org/10.58230/27454312.989.

Huberman, A. (2014). *Qualitative Data Analysis a Methods Sourcebook*. Sidalc net.

Itje, T., Makaheming, F., Hohakay, K. O., Molle, M., & May, O. J. S. (2023). Analisis Peran Kepala Sekolah terhadap Kompetensi Pedagogik Guru. *Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Citra Bakti*, *10*(1), 70-83. https://doi.org/10.38048/jipcb.v10i1.952.

Khusna, R., & Priyanti, N. (2023). Pengaruh Komunitas Belajar terhadap Kemampuan Pedagogik Guru di Ikatan NSIN TK Bekasi. *Jurnal Ilmiah Potensia*, *8*(2), 252-260. https://doi.org/10.33369/jip.8.2.252-260.

Mia, Nugroho, P. J., & Sumarnie. (2022). Manajemen Pendidikan Karakter Sekolah Berasrama. Equity In Education Journal, 4(2), 66–73. https://doi.org/10.37304/eej.v4i2.4343.

Muharam, C. S., Kusnendi, N., Fauzi, M. I., Yoseptry, R., & Wasliman, E. D. (2024). Efektivitas Model Pembelajaran Teaching Factory (Tefa) dalam Meningkatkan Kualitas Lulusan pada SMK Negeri Pertanian Pembangunan Cianjur. *Edusaintek: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sains Dan Teknologi*, *11*(4), 1839-1853. https://doi.org/10.47668/edusaintek.v11i4.1304.

Mutiani, M., Abbas, E. W., Sandi, H. A. A., Syaharuddin, S., & Jumriani, J. (2022). Promoting Creative Learning in Social Studies by Exploring Floating Cage Fish Cultivation Activities as Learning Resources. *AL-ISHLAH: Jurnal Pendidikan*, *14*(3), 3973-3980. https://doi.org/10.35445/alishlah.v14i3.1744.

Muzakki, H., Maunah, B., & Patoni, A. (2023). Budaya Kepemimpinan Transformatif di Lembaga Pendidikan Islam. *JMPI: Jurnal Manajemen, Pendidikan dan Pemikiran Islam*, *1*(1), 57-70. https://doi.org/10.71305/jmpi.v1i1.2.

Northouse, P. G. (2020). *Pengantar Kepemimpinan Konsep & Praktik*. Andi.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications

Pratiwi, S. N., Wastuti, S. N. Y., & Jamila, J. (2022). Kepemimpinan Transformasional dalam Menghadapi Era Digitalisasi. *Biblio Couns: Jurnal Kajian Konseling dan Pendidikan*, *5*(1), 101-108. https://doi.org/10.30596/bibliocouns.v5i1.9886.

Prawitasari, B., & Suharto, N. (2020). The Role of Guru Penggerak (Organizer Teacher) in Komunitas Guru Belajar (Teacher Learning Community). In *3rd International Conference on Research of Educational Administration and Management (ICREAM 2019)*, 86-89. Atlantis Press.

Purba, A., & Saragih, A. (2023). Peran Teknologi dalam Transformasi Pendidikan Bahasa Indonesia di Era Digital. *All Fields of Science Journal Liaison Academia and Sosiety*, *3*(3), 43-52. https://doi.org/10.58939/afosj-las.v3i3.619.

https://doi.org/10.51276/edu.v6i1.1129

Rafli, M. F., Sidiq, F., Aprilia, R., Juliati, J., & Kenedi, A. K. (2024). Pendampingan Optimalisasi Komunitas Belajar di SD Negeri Kabu di Platform Merdeka Mengajar (PMM). *Journal Of Human And Education (JAHE)*, *4*(5), 870-877. https://doi.org/10.31004/jh.v4i5.1634.

Raharjo, R., Wahyulianto, A., Shokib Rondli, W., & Kanzunnudin, M. (2024). Studi Fenomenologi Implementasi Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi dalam Kurikulum Merdeka. *Jurnal Guru Sekolah Dasar*, *1*(1), 26-32. https://doi.org/10.70277/jgsd.v1i1.0004.

Rahayuningsih, S., Mardliyah, A. A., & Rijanto, A. (2023). Peningkatan Kompetensi Guru dan Membangun Budaya Belajar Berkelanjutan Melalui Pembentukan Komunitas Belajar. *AMMA: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat*, *2*(8), 934-940.

Ramadani, R. F., Setiawati, S., & Natsir, M. N. M. (2020). Cerdas dan Bijak Memanfaatkan Internet Melalui Komunitas Belajar. *Indonesian Journal of Adult and Community Education*, *2*(1), 51-65. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijace.v2i1.28291.

Sari, R. P., Zulkarnain, Z., & Latipah, N. (2022). Pengaruh Pelaksanaan Magang 3 terhadap Kompetensi Pedagogik Mahasiswa PAI Universitas Islam Negeri Fatmawati Soekarno Bengkulu. *GHAITSA: Islamic Education Journal*, *3*(2), 88-91. https://doi.org/10.62159/ghaitsa.v3i2.451.

Sekar, R. Y., & Kamarubiani, N. (2020). Komunitas Belajar sebagai Sarana Belajar dan Pengembangan Diri. *Indonesian Journal of Adult and Community Education*, *2*(1), 10-15. https://doi.org/10.17509/ijace.v2i1.28285.

Senge, P. (1994). *Building Learning Organizations*. The Training and Development Sourcebook.

Sum, T. A., & Taran, E. G. M. (2020). Kompetensi pedagogik Guru PAUD dalam perencanaan dan Pelaksanaan Pembelajaran. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, *4*(2), 543-550.

Ummah, K. R., Abdurahman, K., & Pribadi, R. A. (2023). Peran Guru Penggerak dalam Komunitas Belajar di Sekolah. *Indonesian Gender and Society Journal*, *4*(1).

Yoseptry, R., Astuti, S., Sumarwan, U., Ardiana, A., Nurrohmah, S., & Wasliman, E. D. (2024). Manajemen Komunitas Belajar dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Murid SMAN 1 Sukanagara. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kewirausahaan*, *12*(2), 604-617. https://doi.org/10.47668/pkwu.v12i2.1307.

Zhahira, J., Shalahudin, S., & Jamilah, J. (2022). Kompetensi Manajerial Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru. *Journal of Educational Research*, *1*(1), 85-100. https://doi.org/10.56436/jer.v1i1.16.

Zhu, E., & Baylen, D. M. (2005). From Learning Community to Community Learning: Pedagogy, Technology and Interactivity. *Educational Media International*, *42*(3), 251-268. https://doi.org/10.1080/09523980500161395.