

## Survey of the Implementation of Professional Learning Community (PLC) Program in Primary Schools

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**Abstract.** This research aims at illustrating the implementation of Professional Learning Community (PLC) programs, which later will be used to be the basic data for the preparation of PLC program design that is applicable and easily implemented by the teachers. The low contribution and discontinuity of teachers in the PLC programs in primary schools have impacted on the lack of optimization of the PLC programs as a support for sustained improvement of teacher professionalism. This research employed a descriptive research design with a survey approach involving 52 primary school teachers in Sumerdang Regency. The research results revealed that even though the teachers' understanding of the PLC program objectives was very high, the teachers' understanding of the PLC program mechanism was still low. Thus, this resulted in the low level of the implementation of the PLC program in primary schools, both in programs and regulations. Therefore, further research is expected to produce the operational, structured, and applicable PLC programs in order to increase the teachers' participation in implementing the PLC programs for improving teacher professionalism, and having a real impact on the improvement of the quality of learning in primary schools.

**Keywords:** implementation, professional learning community (PLC), primary School, teacher

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**INTRODUCTION**~ Powerlessness of Profesional Learning Community (PLC) to participate a lot in implementing the policy of Continuing Professional Development (PKB – *Pengembangan Keprofesian Berkelanjutan*) causes the PKB policy implemented by teachers not to work optimally (Komariah et al., 2019). the PKB that is legally organized and structured, both in flow and in procedure, still cannot be followed by the teachers well, even the level of teachers' understanding of the PKB was still low. However, based on some of these

problems, PLC is one of the most prominent problems related to the implementation of the PKB policy. PLC is not empowered optimally, inactive teachers and lack of continuous implementation in the PLC activity become the main problem in the implementation of the PLC programs (Komariah & Sunaengsih, 2016). Whereas ideally, he existence of PLC is expected to be a bridge for teachers in implementing the PKB policy. PLC is a means of solving the problems related to educational tasks in a professional manner that can be

developed by teachers (Schuck et al., 2013; Sjoer & Meirink, 2016). In Indonesia, PLC is renowned as the Subject Teacher Consultative Forum (MGMP – *Musyawarah Guru Mata Pelajaran*), and the Teacher Working Group (KKG – *Kelompok Kerja Guru*) in which these activities become a professional learning community for teachers, both on certain subjects and teachers' continuing professional development (Komariah & Sunaengsih, 2016). Several factors that becomes a measure of the less optimal role of PLC are the lack of teachers' understanding related to PLC, the low participation of teachers in the PLC activity. and one of the most prominent problems is that the PLC activity is not implemented in a sustainable manner (Schaap & de Bruijn, 2018; Samoot, Prawit, & Sudharm, 2015; Komariah et al., 2019; Komariah & Sunaengsih, 2016).

PLC is a group of learners formed on the basis of shared vision with the aims of helping each other to achieve the desired objectives (Sai & Saedah, 2015, Antinluoma et al., 2018). Some of the activities carried out include self-evaluation, reflective discovery, dialogue, joint learning, and problem solving (Addley, 2014). Based on the activities carried out, the output obtained include the existence of a special time, focus on learning problems, initiation from the leadership, the existence of innovation, and the school as a unit of change (Stoll dan Louis, 2007). Basically, the objective of

the PLC programs is to stimulate teachers to have a perspective on the reality and problems, skills, and organizational capabilities (Hord, 2003). Eventually, the desired objective leads to the creation of quality schools. Therefore, the development of teachers who are able to provide motivation can affect the implementation of their job well. If the teachers are able to carry out their jobs, the principals can involve the teachers in various school activities by giving greater responsibility (Halverson & Halverson, 2003).

PLC is a working method with the aims of motivating teachers in order to motivate and be sensitive towards the changes (Bonces, 2014). Thus, if the emergence of openness from teachers regarding the a change, the PLC will make a change lead to continuous improvement that is embedded into a value in an organization (Carpenter, 2015). When the PLC is implemented, it will certainly bring up some activities that are able to have a positive impact on the teachers, such as discussion activities related to the implementation of learning in the classroom, which will certainly generate the exchange of new and good ideas, compared to when the teachers carry out other activities, such as reading a book, and following seminars or further studies (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). In other words, the teachers' role in the PLC programs is considered as a conceiver through the identification of problems and solutions

encountered in educational practices (Hord, 2003).

According to Battersby & Verdi (2015), Bonces, (2014), Carpenter (2015), Hord (2003), and Payne, Gottfredson, & Gottfredson (2003), schools with the PLC implementation have a significant positive impact on teacher quality. However, the research has not yet explained in detail related to the PLC programs implemented in primary schools. Therefore, in this research, the researchers conducted a survey of the PLC programs implemented in primary schools in Indonesia, so that it is expected to be the basis for developing the PLC program designs that can be implemented by teachers. The research focuses on the implementation of PLC in primary schools with the research question, as follows:

1. How is the PLC implementation comprising of socialization, communication, understanding, compliance and propriety, and the strengths and weaknesses, in primary schools in Sumedang Regency?
2. What is the role of PLC programs, including the definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards, for teachers in primary schools in Sumedang Regency?

In addition, the purpose of this research is to obtain the PLC program design in primary schools in Sumedang Regency, and the specific purpose of this research is

to produce answers to the problem formulations as follows:

1. Analyzing the PLC implementation comprising of socialization, communication, understanding, compliance and propriety, and the strengths and weaknesses, in primary schools in Sumedang Regency.
2. Describing the role of the PLC programs, including the definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards, for teachers in primary schools in Sumedang Regency.

Based on the aforementioned research questions, this research is expected to be the basis for researchers to carry out deepening of further research in designing PLC programs that are easy to understand, operational, structured and applicable in order to facilitate teachers to actively participate in the PLC activities.

## **METHOD**

This research employed a descriptive method with a survey approach. A survey research design is used to depict quantitative descriptions of the characteristics, behavior, and attitudes of students, teachers, principals, parents and other specific populations, so that the data collected is likely to be accurate, and it can be used as a tool for effective decision making (Walston, Redford, & Bhatt, 2017). This research was conducted at primary schools in Sumedang Regency

for around 7 months, starting from April to October 2019. The sample of the research location was determined randomly. The

research involved 52 primary school teachers from 26 sub-disticts in Sumedang Regency.

**Table 1.** Data Collection Matrix

Purpose	Primary Data		Secondary Data
	In-depth	Survey	
<b>Seeking the data regarding PLC implementation and PLC programs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tool: interview guideline</li> <li>• Substance: all information about PLC implementation, such as socialization, communication, understanding, compliance and propriety, strengths and weaknesses, and PLC programs, comprising of definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards.</li> <li>• Informant: the teachers</li> <li>• Selection of informant: random</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tool: questionnaires</li> <li>• Substance: relating to the respondents' perception of PLC implementation, such as socialization, communication, understanding, compliance and propriety, strengths and weaknesses, and PLC programs, comprising of definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards</li> <li>• Informant: the teachers</li> <li>• Selection of informant: random</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substance: supporting data related to PLC implementation and PLC programs.</li> <li>• Informant: Principals / vice principals</li> </ul>

Based on the data collection matrix above, the research flow in this research is started with a preliminary research by conducting a literature study on continuuing professional development policies, and PLC programs for teachers, especially primary school teachers. In addition to carrying out literature study in a preliminary research, the field study

related to the PLC implementation and programs in primary schools was also carried out. In the next stage, the development of research instruments was carried out. The researchers developed the instruments related to the PLC implementation consisted of 12 questions comprising of socialization, communication, understanding,

compliance and propriety, strengths and weaknesses in the primary schools; and the PLC programs consisted of 7 questions comprising of definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards in the primary schools. In addition, the researchers also conducted an instrument's validity test, so that the instrument used can be measured in accordance with the desired construct. (Indriantoro & Supomo, 1999). In the last stage, the researchers then conducted a survey research by determining the research sample, conducting the distribution of questionnaires and interviews related to the PLC implementation and programs in the primary schools. After obtaining the data,

then data processing and analysis are carried out. Furthermore, at the end of this research stage, the researchers can produce a PLC design draft for primary schools that can be developed into the PLC programs in accordance with the needs of teachers in primary schools.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

PLC in schools in Indonesia, which is manifested in the activities MGMP or KKG, in real conditions cannot always be implemented in accordance with the programs. Therefore, based on the research objectives set by the researchers previously, the results of the research that had been obtained were illustrated as follows:

**Table 2.** Resultts of Data Collection

Category	Sub-category	Graph	Conclusion
PLC implementation	Socialization		The frequency of socialization in the PLC programs was higher than that in the PLC regulations.
	Communication		The communication process in the PLC programs was carried out more than the communication process in the PLC regulations.

Category	Sub-category	Graph	Conclusion
	Understanding		The teachers' understanding of the PLC programs was better than the teachers' understanding of the PLC regulations.
	Compliance and Propriety		The teachers' compliance and propriety of the PLC programs was higher than the teachers' compliance and propriety of the regulations in implementing the PLC programs.
	Strengths and Weaknesses		The indicators of the PLC management became the main weakness in the PLC implementation. While the opportunity became the main strength in the PLC implementation.
PLC Programs	Definitions Objectives Targets Types Benefits Mechanism Requirements / Standars		The teachers' understanding of the PLC objectives had a high percentage compared with the other PLC programs. While the teachers' understanding of the PLC mechanism had a low percentage compared with the indicators of other PLC programs.

**The PLC Implementation comprising of socialization, communication, understanding, compliance and propriety, strengths and weaknesses in the primary schools in Sumedang Regency**

Socialization including directions from the principals regarding the introduction of the program and regulation that can be carried out by the teachers in primary schools in Sumedang Regency was recorded that there were 65% of the

teachers who stated that the teachers had obtained socialization of the PLC programs from each school. While 56% of the teachers had obtained socialization of

the PLC regulations. Therefore, the frequency of socialization in the PLC programs was higher than that in the PLC regulations.

**Table 3.** Socialization of the PLC programs

		Programs	Regulations
N	Valid	52	52
	Missing	0	0
Mean		.65	.56
Sum		34	29

The importance of socialization process in implementing the programs can be seen through the program results achieved. Teachers will be easier to implement and support the PLC programs, if they understand the actions that must be carried out (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). Good socialization allows teachers to know the PLC activities, such as self-evaluation, reflective discovery, dialogue, joint learning, and problem solving (Addley, 2014). In this case, it relates to the ability of the principals to understand every flow of programs that will be directed at teachers (Carpenter, 2015).

Based on the research results, the socialization of the PLC programs and regulations, which was given by the principals, and occurred massively in each school, was able to be carried out well.

The results of the communication of the PLC showed that there were 28 teachers out of 52 teachers as respondents who implemented the communication process of the PLC programs in their schools (54%). In addition, regarding the communication process of the PLC regulations, there were 22 teachers out of 52 teachers who had implemented the communication process of the PLC regulations (42%).

**Table 4.** Communication of the PLC programs

		Program	Regulations
N	Valid	52	52
	Missing	0	0
Mean		.54	.42
Sum		28	22

Communication is the process of conveying a message from a messenger to a recipient of the message, this communication process must be in two-way direction (Schuck et al., 2013). In this communication process, feedback between the messenger and a recipient of the message is required, so that the communication process will conduct effectively and the information conveyed will be well received (Berendt et al., 2012). The research results revealed that the communication of the PLC programs had a good criterion, while the communication of the PLC regulations had a quite good criterion. This means that the teachers and the principals actually had given each other feedback related to how the PLC program and regulations were implemented. Thus, in this process, the principals probably had given the directions that must be implemented in the

PLC. Therefore, this conditions allowed the teachers and the principals to help each other to work together in order to achieve the desired goals (Sai & Saedah, 2015, Antinluoma et al., 2018). Furthermore, the final process was dependent on how the teachers coordinate with each other to realize the PLC program, so that it can be implemented well.

In the category of the teachers' understanding of the PLC, there were 37 teachers out of 52 teachers who had understood the PLC programs (71%), and 34 teachers out of 52 teachers who had understood the PLC regulations (65%). This results showed that the teachers' understanding of the PLC programs was better than the teachers' understanding of the PLC regulations. This indicated that the teachers' understanding of the PLC programs showed a good criterion compared to the PLC regulations.

**Table 5.** Understanding of the PLC programs

		Program	Regulation
N	Valid	52	52
	Missing	0	0
Mean		.71	.65
Sum		37	34

If teachers obtain the good understanding related to the PLC regulations, it will be related to the implementation of the sustained PLC programs (Giles & Hargreaves, 2006). In other words, it will provide the easiness that can be felt by teachers. The similarity of the understanding between teachers and principals will facilitate schools to realize

the main purpose of the PLC programs, which is to stimulate teachers to have a perspective on reality and problems, skills, and organizational capabilities (Hord, 2003). This understanding will emerge through the process of communication between principals and teachers related to how to improve professionalism in carrying out PLC programs, and



establishing the same perspective between the two parties, so that the misunderstanding will not occur. In addition, the another factor determining an understanding that is built by teachers is the motivation within teachers and principals to create an effective working culture, such as professionalism (Tam, 2015). Hence, the understanding is not created immediately without any strong encouragement from teachers and principals who aim at jointly improving their professionalism (DiNardo, 2010).

The results of the teachers' compliance and propriety towards the PLC programs

and regulations showed different results in which there were 56% of the primary school teachers had the level of compliance and propriety towards the PLC programs, while 44% of the primary school teachers had the level of compliance and propriety towards the PLC regulations. This indicated that the teachers' compliance and propriety towards the PLC programs was better than the compliance and propriety towards the PLC regulations, which had a quite good criterion.

**Table 6.** Compliance and Propriety of the PLC programs

		Programs	Regulations
N	Valid	52	52
	Missing	0	0
Mean		.56	.44
Sum		29	23

Compliance and propriety are two inseparable aspects as the criteria for teacher commitment in carrying out tasks. The PLC program is a supporting task that must be carried out by teachers in a continuous and consistent manner that requires compliance and propriety. Compliance and propriety of the implementation of the PLC program depends on how much the teacher is open to any changes occurred in the school. Thus, if the emergence of openness from teachers regarding the a change, the PLC will make a change lead to continuous improvement that is

embedded into a value in an organization (Carpenter, 2015). Compliance means that the teachers want to carry out the program in accordance with the applicable regulations. Whereas propriety means that teachers are eligible to take part in PLC programs organized by schools. However, compliance and propriety do not always go hand in hand. Based on the research results above, there were 29 teachers out of the 52 teachers who had compliance and propriety in running the PLC program, while in running the PLC regulations, there were only 23 teachers who had compliance and

compliance. This indicates that in carrying out compliance and propriety of PLC both programmatically and legally, the teacher still became a big task and challenge for schools.

In the category of strengths and weaknesses of the PLC programs, the results revealed that there were 38% of the primary school teachers who had time to participate in the PLC programs, while there were 42% of the primary school teachers who had ability to participate in the PLC programs. Moreover, there were 46% of the primary school teachers who had an opportunity to participate in the PLC programs. Meanwhile, there were 31% of the teachers who had implemented the PLC management system. Based on this results, it indicated that the teachers'

understanding of the PLC programs became the weakest indicator with 16 respondents who stated it. Meanwhile, the indicator of time became the second weakness, it had been proven that there were only 20 teachers who had time in running a PLC. Basically, teachers have many tasks, but this can be overcome by teachers using their time maximally in accordance with their many tasks. In addition to the weaknesses, the teachers' ability or competency are also considered. There were 22 teachers who stated that they had sufficient ability to implement the PLC programs, while in fact they needed opportunities. There were 24 teachers who stated that they had the opportunity to participate in PLC activities, although they did not have sufficient ability.

**Table 7.** Strengths dan Weaknesses of the PLC programs

		Time	Ability	Opportunity	PLC Management
N	Valid	52	52	52	52
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		.38	.42	.46	.31
Sum		20	22	24	16

The research results revealed that the teachers certainly had weaknesses and strengths in implementing the PLC. However, a matter of opportunity and time, this does not become a problem that is difficult to overcome. The teachers' motivation to continue to develop and be sensitive to any changes becomes the key to the realization of the PLC programs with all the teachers' weaknesses and strengths (Bonces, 2014). To overcome these

problems, it depends on school management in organizing the power of teachers in order to be implemented well. The emergence of several activities that were initiated and led by the principals were felt to be able to have a positive impact on teachers, such as discussions regarding the implementation of learning in the classroom, which will certainly generate the exchange of new and good ideas (Battersby & Verdi, 2015).

Therefore, it can be explained that based on an analysis of the implementation of the PLC including several indicators, there are still many implementations on the PLC programs that have not worked well in primary schools in Sumedang Regency. This result is expected to be the basis of researchers in conducting further research to formulate an applicative PLC program, so that the PLC activities consisting of MGMP or KKG can run optimally in the future. Hence, the teachers more realize that the learning community has a significant impact on the improvement of teacher professionalism (Cansoy & Parlar, 2013).

Learning community is a process of exchanging ideas or ideas that are believed to have the same objective, which is mutual learning together (Bonces, 2014). Based on the learning community, teachers will be more developed, if they share information with each other regarding what has been obtained during the practice of education, because in fact, the results of practice in the field are considered the main key to success in finding solutions to educational problems, especially in schools (Samoot et al., 2015). Preparation of human resources, which is a product of educational institutions that have competence, can be obtained through the learning community. Relating to this, a good PLC implementation actually has become a necessity for every school (Tam, 2015).

**Professional Learning Community (PLC) programs comprising of definition, objectives, targets, types, benefits, mechanism and requirements/standards in the primary schools in Sumedang Regency**

This research focus is based on the PLC programs that must be implemented. From basic program to core program, all of these programs will support the effectiveness of the PLC implementation in the primary schools in Sumedang Regency. The results of PLC programs in primary schools in Sumedang Regency revealed that there were 62% of the teachers who understood the definition of the PLC programs, then 63% of the teachers who understood the PLC objectives, 58% of the teachers who understood the PLC targets, 37% of the teachers who understood the types of the PLC programs, 60% of the teachers who understood the PLC benefits, 35% of the teachers who understood the PLC mechanism and 37% of the teachers who understood the requirements/standards of the PLC programs. These results indicated that the teachers' understanding of the PLC objectives had a higher percentage compared with other indicators of the PLC programs. On the other hand, the teachers' understanding of the PLC mechanism had a lower percentage compared with other indicators of the PLC programs.

The PLC programs implemented by the teachers in the primary schools in Sumedang Regency were interrelated to

each other, hence it was required a synergy from the teachers and the principals to realize the programs in schools (Halverson & Halverson, 2003). The efforts of the school have been significantly right in relation to teacher improvement, because in addition to following training or seminars that are often followed, various aspects, namely adjusting needs, practicality values, time flexibility, and control at the school level by teachers and principals, will be able to be effective and efficient by implementing the PLC programs. (Brown, Horn, & King, 2018). When the teachers are able to implement the PLC programs, the principal can involve the teachers in various school activities by giving greater responsibilities (Halverson & Halverson, 2003). Moreover, the teachers must be able to identify the obstacles that hinder the improvement of his professionalism, so that through the identification of the PLC programs, the teachers will be more proficient in solving any problems occurred during the learning process (Allen, 2014). The data obtained above are expected to be the researchers' reference to explore further research in order to develop the PLC programs with simple and applicative mechanisms, thus the teachers will be able to play an active role in the PLC activities.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the research that had been conducted, the PLC programs that had been implemented in schools actually had been designed and formed

by the principals and the teachers through the direction given by the governments. However, in fact, every planned program cannot be implemented in the field. This problem is affected by the teachers' understanding related to the basic values in the programs has been prepared. In addition, It also explains that if teachers do not have a full understanding of the programs provided by the government, the programs will still not be able to be implemented properly by them (Hassan, Ahmad, & Boon, 2018). Moreover, the researchers found several identifications that became the reason of the PLC programs not implemented properly, which are:

1. The frequency of socialization of the PLC programs was higher than compared to the socialization of the PLC regulations.
2. The communication process of the PLC programs was conducted more than the communication process of the PLC regulations
3. The teachers' understanding of the PLC program was better than the teachers' understanding of the PLC regulations.
4. The teachers' compliance and propriety in implementing the PLC programs was higher than the the teachers' compliance and propriety in implementing the PLC regulations.
5. The indicators of the PLC management became the main in

implementing the PLC programs. While the opportunity became the main strength in implementing the PLC programs.

6. The teacher's understanding of the objectives of the PLC programs had a higher percentage compared with other indicators of the PLC programs. Whereas the teachers' understanding of the PLC mechanism had a lower percentage compared to other indicators of the PLC programs.

In addition, the researchers make a recommendation that there is a need for specific further research related to the PLC program that facilitates the needs of teachers, and refers to the continuing professional development (PKB) program from the governments. Furthermore, in order to implement the PLC programs properly, a PLC program design that is operational, structured and applicable is required to increase the teacher's participation in activities that are in accordance with the aims and basic concepts of the PLC programs.

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