

## The Role of Learning Community in Improving Teachers' ICT Competence at SDN 02 Gumawang

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### Abstract

*This study examines the role of learning community in enhancing teachers' ICT competence at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang. Recognizing the increasing importance of technology in education, this research explores how collaborative learning environments contribute to professional development among educators. Utilizing a qualitative approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation analysis of the activities conducted within the learning community.*

*The findings reveal that the learning community fosters a supportive and interactive space for teachers to share knowledge, practice new ICT skills, and address challenges collaboratively. Key activities, such as workshops, peer mentoring, and group discussions, significantly improved teachers' ability to integrate technology into their teaching practices. Participants reported increased confidence in using digital tools and adopting innovative methods to enhance classroom engagement.*

*This study concludes that learning community is effective in promoting ICT competence among teachers, highlighting their potential to drive meaningful educational transformation. The findings suggest that similar models can be implemented in other schools to support professional development and adapt to the growing demands of digital education.*

**Keywords:** learning community, teachers, ICT competence.

### Introduction

The quality of education reflects the country's great progress. If the education system is good, it can be guaranteed that specialist graduates or human resources will be produced who are then able to compete with other developing countries. Especially in the current era of globalization, we believe that quality education is indispensable, because competition in all aspects is inevitable and must be implemented (Patilima, 2022).

The Indonesian nation is facing a very tragic phenomenon, namely low competitiveness, a sign that education has not been able to create quality human resources (HR). Education is expected to play a role in combating this

phenomenon, in accordance with the functions and objectives of national education as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 (Sisdiknas) as follows: to develop the potential of students to become human beings who believe in God Almighty and are devoted to Him, have noble character and are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, become independent and responsible citizens and democratic.

To achieve the goals of national education, teachers are of course the most decisive factor. Teachers play an important role in educational development, especially their official role in schools. Teachers also determine the success of students, especially in the teaching and learning process. Teachers are the most influential factor in creating

quality educational processes and outcomes.

According to the Government Regulation on Teachers, teacher teaching competence is the teacher's ability to manage student learning, which includes at least: understanding of educational ideas or foundations, understanding students, curriculum development, learning design, implementing dialogical education and learning, using learning technology, assessing learning outcomes, developing students to realize maximize the various potentials of children. The importance of efforts to increase teaching capacity to improve the quality of learning in schools, especially for elementary school teachers, the author finds that there are still many teachers and education personnel in the field who have not or do not even clearly understand teaching skills or do not master them. Therefore, it is very important to make efforts to improve the teaching skills of elementary school teachers.

Based on the objectives of the self-directed curriculum, there are tools to achieve these objectives, one of them is by building learning communities. According to (Kiriana, 2022; Pandiangan, 2019), a learning community is defined as an environment that allows teachers to share experiences, knowledge and resources to improve the quality of learning.

In this increasingly advanced era, various educational innovations continue to emerge, including the use of learning communities as a means to develop educational professionalism (Azima, 2019; Permana and Sudarsyah, 2016). Learning communities are defined as environments that allow teachers to share experiences, knowledge and

resources to improve the quality of learning (Kiriana, 2022; Pandiangan, 2019). Learning communities are also considered as informal spaces that can be used for further learning. It is also considered an association whose members share the same learning goals (Ritonga, 2021; Fibrianto & Bakhri, 2018).

Teacher professionalism is the ability of teachers to carry out their main functions as educators and teachers. Teacher professionalism has certain criteria that can be seen and measured based on the skills that every teacher should have. In carrying out their duties, teachers are also the human part of the learning process, so they have an important role in communicating the success or failure of each lesson, so teaching is a professional job that requires techniques, processes and intelligence. The foundation must be learned deliberately, planned, and used for the benefit of others. Professionalism is the traits (abilities, skills, ways of working, etc.) required in a professional person. Professionalism comes from the word profession which means related to a profession and requires special expertise to carry out the profession. Therefore, professionalism is the behavior, expertise, or quality of someone who is professional.

Considering the above problems is the reason why researchers focus their research on the role of learning community in improving teachers' professional competence particularly ICT competence. These objectives are analyzed through the guiding components of the learning community program, therefore the title discussed is "The Role of Learning Communities in Improving Teachers' ICT Competence at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang"

## Methods

The research was conducted at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang, Belitang District, East OKU Regency. Observations were made by going directly to the field to obtain the required data by ensuring its truth and validity. The location determined is the object that will be further analyzed using an observation approach to the specified samples.

The type of research determined uses a descriptive qualitative approach, which is a form of research that provides an interpretation of the object of observation or research focus. Descriptive qualitative is a method used by researchers to find knowledge and research theories at a certain point in time. Content analysis is a study that combines the results of many studies.

The method of selecting informants carried out in this study was purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2016), purposive sampling is a data source sampling technique with certain considerations. This certain consideration is for example that the person is considered to know best about what we expect or maybe he is the ruler, making it easier for researchers to explore the object or social situation under study (Sugiyono, 2016). In qualitative research, data collection is carried out in natural settings (natural conditions), primary data sources and data collection techniques play more roles in in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation (Sugiyono, 2016).

## Results and Discussions

The need for integrating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into teacher training programs has been widely recognized (Edu et al., 2012). Teachers' knowledge and skills in the use of ICT,

particularly their pedagogical ICT competence, have been identified as the most crucial determinants of successful technology integration in schools (Law, 2010). The development of 21st century skills, such as collaborative problem-solving and lifelong learning, has also necessitated the incorporation of ICT into teaching and learning practices. (Law, 2010)

Research suggests that the effective use of ICT can enhance teaching and learning among pre-service teachers. However, the adoption of technology in classrooms has faced several challenges, many of which are related to the traditional perspectives of learning. (Fidalgo et al., 2016) To address these challenges, teachers need to acquire new technological skills and competencies that go beyond just the knowledge and skills in ICT use (Nabahany & Juma, 2019).

One approach to enhancing teachers' ICT skills is through the establishment of learning communities within schools. Learning is a social process, and the communal aspect of knowledge and learning is beginning to be rediscovered. Collaborative work and the formation of quality circles have been observed in various sectors, including education. Therefore, the development of new ICT-enhanced competences for teachers can be facilitated through the creation of learning communities in schools.

Learning communities can provide a supportive environment for teachers to share their experiences, learn from one another, and collectively explore the integration of ICT into their teaching practices (Farrukh & Singh, 2014). By fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, these communities can help teachers overcome the traditional perspectives of learning and embrace the

potential of technology to enhance teaching and learning.

Additionally, ongoing professional development must be provided for teachers to model the new pedagogies and tools for learning, with the aim of enhancing the teaching-learning process.

In conclusion, the integration of ICT into teacher training programs and the establishment of learning communities in schools can be effective strategies to enhance the ICT skills of teachers. These approaches can ultimately contribute to the development of twenty-first century skills among students and the transformation of educational processes (Law, 2010) (Sánchez-Cruzado et al., 2021) (Edu et al., 2012) (Fidalgo et al., 2016).

Below are the form of activities that have been organized within learning communities at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang to achieve the goal:

#### 1. Peer-led Workshops

**Peer-led workshops** are collaborative training sessions where individuals within a group share their expertise to help others improve their skills. In the context of enhancing teachers' ICT competence, peer-led workshops are typically organized by educators who have advanced knowledge or experience with technology tools and teaching methods. These workshops are informal yet structured, emphasizing hands-on learning and mutual support.

Key Characteristics:

##### 1. Facilitated by Peers:

- Led by teachers with ICT expertise, ensuring relatability and relevance.
- The facilitator acts as a guide rather than a lecturer, promoting active participation.

##### 2. Interactive and Practical:

- Focus on real-world applications,

such as creating lesson materials or using specific tools like Google Classroom, Canva, or Kahoot.

- Hands-on activities allow participants to practice immediately during the session.

##### 3. Collaborative Learning Environment:

- Encourages sharing experiences, challenges, and successes.
- Participants can learn from one another, fostering a sense of community.

##### 4. Flexible and Needs-Based:

- Topics are chosen based on the group's interests or identified gaps in ICT skills.

- Sessions can be tailored to address specific issues or tools.

##### 5. Cost-Effective:

- No external trainers are required, making it budget-friendly.
- Utilizes the existing talent pool within the learning community.

Peer-led Workshop Activities:

- Tool Demonstrations: A teacher demonstrates using an ICT tool, such as a learning management system or an interactive whiteboard.
- Task-Based Learning: Participants complete tasks like creating a digital quiz or setting up an online class.
- Problem-Solving Sessions: Group discussions focus on addressing specific ICT challenges faced by participants.
- Sharing Best Practices: Facilitators share tips, shortcuts, or strategies for effective ICT integration in the classroom.

Peer-led Workshop Materials:

- Microsoft Powerpoint
- Canva
- Microsoft Excel

Benefits:

- Builds a supportive culture of

continuous learning.

- Strengthens relationships among teachers through collaboration.
- Enhances confidence in using technology by learning in a safe, familiar environment.
- Provides immediate feedback and troubleshooting.

Peer-led workshops are an effective way to empower teachers while leveraging the strengths of the community, ensuring sustainable professional development.

A research have conducted by Mitchell and Sickney (2019) in Canada shows that learning communities in schools have a positive impact compared to schools that do not have learning communities. Learning communities strengthen thinking skills, communication, and respect for the learning process. As stated by Sekar & Kamarubiani. (2020) in their research, learning communities not only function as a place where students are actively and collaboratively involved in academic learning activities, but also as a place for students to develop themselves.

The results of the study were obtained based on the results of interviews revealed by Ervina, S.Pd. as one of the members of learning communities.

"The Learning community is one of the *workstreams* that is a strategy that enhancing teachers' competence. Peer-led workshops are an effective approach to enhancing teachers' ICT competence because they provide a collaborative and hands-on learning environment tailored to the participants' specific needs. These workshops are conducted by fellow teachers who share their expertise, making the learning process relatable and accessible.

One significant benefit is the practical application of ICT tools in real-

time. Teachers engage in activities like creating presentation using Microsoft Powerpoint, designing worksheet using Canva, or exploring classroom management using Microsoft Excel, which allows them to immediately see the relevance of what they are learning. This hands-on experience builds confidence in using new technologies."

Another positive results of learning community also revealed by Ratna Intan, S.Pd. As one of the members of learning community, she revealed the experienced she had during the workshops.

"Joining the ICT workshop managed by BELSA DUMANG learning community was a really helpful experience for me as a teacher. The sessions were easy to follow, and the trainers were friendly and explained everything clearly. Even though I'm not super familiar with technology, they made it simple and showed us step by step how to use different tools.

One of the best parts was learning about apps and programs that can make teaching more fun and efficient. It wasn't just theory—we got to practice on our own laptops, which made it easier to understand.

I also enjoyed meeting and sharing ideas with my peers. It was nice to hear how they plan to use what we learned in their classrooms. We were able to discuss our challenges and figure out solutions together.

By the end of the workshop, I felt more confident about using technology in my teaching. I'm excited to try out some of the things we learned and see how my students respond. It made me realize that learning new skills, even ones outside my comfort zone, can be really rewarding."

The head of the learning community, Ina Sari, S.Pd.SD., Gr, explained about the prospect of the

learning community's objectives at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang as the main program to improve teachers' professional development.

"The prospect of achieving the learning community's objectives looks highly promising. As the head of the learning community, I am deeply optimistic about the impact we can create, especially in enhancing teachers' ICT skills and overall professional development.

Our primary goal is to empower educators with practical knowledge and tools they can integrate into their teaching. By fostering a culture of collaboration and continuous learning, we're not just improving individual skill sets but also contributing to the broader goal of modernizing education at SDN 02 Gumawang.

The learning community's focus on workshops and peer sharing provides a strong foundation for sustainable growth. These activities encourage teachers to exchange ideas, solve problems together, and stay updated on the latest educational technologies. The energy and commitment I've seen in our members suggests that we are on the right track.

Looking ahead, our prospects are bright. As we consistently build on these efforts and measure our progress, I am confident we'll not only meet but exceed our objectives. Our success will directly benefit the students, creating a more engaging and effective learning environment. With dedication and teamwork, this community can become a model for others."

The results of this study highlight the importance of collaboration and cooperation between teachers in learning communities as a source of learning and professional development. By actively participating in learning

communities, teachers have the opportunity to continuously improve their professional development particularly their ICT competence, keep abreast of the latest developments in technology for education and face new challenges with better approaches. Therefore, the results of this study provide encouragement for teachers and educational institutions to encourage participation and support the formation of active and sustainable learning communities. Through collaboration and knowledge sharing, teachers can continuously improve themselves, enhance their professional skills and provide a better learning experience for their students.

#### **Documentation of Peer-led Workshops held by Belsa Dumang Learning Community in Improving Teachers' ICT Competence at SD Negeri 02 Gumawang**





Picture 1. Opening remarks by the Head of SD Negeri 02 Gumawang

Picture 2. Hand-on activities by the teachers in a peer-led ICT workshop

## Conclusions

The study concludes that the learning community at SDN 02 Gumawang plays a significant role in improving teachers' ICT competence. Through collaborative workshops, peer discussions, and hands-on training, the community provides a supportive environment that encourages continuous learning and skill development.

Teachers reported increased confidence in using digital tools for teaching, better understanding of ICT applications, and improved ability to integrate technology into their classrooms. The community's emphasis on shared experiences and practical training proved effective in addressing individual challenges and fostering a sense of collaboration.

Overall, the learning community serves as a vital platform for professional growth, bridging the gap between traditional teaching methods and the



demands of a technology-driven educational landscape. Its success highlights the potential of such initiatives in driving meaningful change in schools.

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