

The role of self-efficacy in mediating the effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul

Irpan Amin¹, Hasrudy Tanjung²

^{1,2}Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

Email: aminirpan98@gmail.com

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis peran self-efficacy dalam memediasi pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional dan kompetensi guru terhadap kinerja guru di SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan desain cross-sectional. Seluruh populasi yang terdiri dari 65 guru dijadikan responden melalui teknik sampling jenuh. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner skala Likert lima poin dan dianalisis menggunakan Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) dengan SmartPLS 4.0. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kepemimpinan transformasional dan kompetensi guru berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap self-efficacy dan kinerja guru. Self-efficacy juga berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap kinerja guru. Pengujian mediasi menunjukkan bahwa self-efficacy secara parsial memediasi pengaruh kepemimpinan transformasional dan kompetensi guru terhadap kinerja guru, dengan koefisien efek tidak langsung masing-masing sebesar 0,143 dan 0,136. Model penelitian mampu menjelaskan 61,2 persen variasi self-efficacy dan 71,4 persen variasi kinerja guru. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya penguatan kepemimpinan transformasional, kompetensi profesional, dan keyakinan guru terhadap kemampuannya dalam mendukung peningkatan kinerja guru.

Kata Kunci: kepemimpinan transformasional; kompetensi guru; self-efficacy; kinerja guru; SEM-PLS

ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of self-efficacy in mediating the effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. A quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design was employed, involving the entire population of 65 teachers through saturated sampling. Data were collected using a five-point Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results demonstrate that transformational leadership and teacher competence have positive and significant effects on both self-efficacy and teacher performance. Self-efficacy also has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. The mediation analysis indicates that self-efficacy partially mediates the effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance, with indirect effect coefficients of 0.143 and 0.136, respectively. The research model explains 61.2 percent of the variance in self-efficacy and 71.4 percent of the variance in teacher performance. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening transformational leadership, professional competence, and teachers' confidence in their capabilities as complementary mechanisms for improving teacher performance.

Keywords: transformational leadership; teacher competence; self-efficacy; teacher performance; SEM-PLS

Corresponding Author:

Irpan Amin,
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara,
Jl. Denai No. 217, Medan, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia
Email: aminirpan98@gmail.com



1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays a fundamental role in the development of high-quality human resources, and teachers occupy a strategic position as the main actors in the learning process. The quality of teacher performance is therefore an important component in achieving educational objectives. Teacher performance is not determined solely by intellectual ability, but is also influenced by various organizational and psychological factors that interact with one another. Among these factors, school leadership is particularly important because principals play a central role in shaping organizational direction, motivating teachers, and creating conditions that support professional performance. In this regard, transformational leadership has received considerable attention as a leadership approach that can encourage positive changes in teacher attitudes and performance.

Transformational leadership is characterized by the ability of leaders to inspire, motivate, intellectually stimulate, and provide individualized consideration to followers (Bass & Avolio, 2004). In educational organizations, transformational principals are expected not only to coordinate administrative responsibilities, but also to encourage teachers to develop their professional capabilities, adopt innovative teaching practices, and strengthen confidence in their ability to perform their duties effectively. Previous studies have shown that transformational leadership is positively associated with teacher and employee performance (Andriani et al., 2018; Asad et al., 2022; Bakker et al., 2023). These findings suggest that leadership may contribute to performance not only through direct managerial influence, but also by shaping teachers' psychological responses to their work.

In addition to leadership, teacher competence represents another important determinant of performance. Teacher competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors required to carry out teaching responsibilities effectively, as reflected in the Indonesian regulatory framework on teachers and lecturers (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen). Competent teachers are expected to demonstrate adequate pedagogical, professional, social, and personal capabilities in planning lessons, managing classrooms, conducting assessments, and responding to changes in educational demands. Competence therefore provides teachers with the professional resources needed to perform their responsibilities effectively. Previous studies have also indicated that competence is positively related to employee and teacher performance (Iriani et al., 2023; Sutaguna et al., 2023).

However, the relationships between transformational leadership, competence, and teacher performance may not operate solely through direct effects. Self-efficacy may serve as an important psychological mechanism through which organizational and personal resources are translated into stronger work performance. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capability to organize and execute the actions required to achieve particular outcomes. Within the educational context, teacher self-efficacy reflects teachers' confidence in their ability to manage classrooms, deliver instruction effectively, overcome teaching challenges, and support student learning.

The role of self-efficacy can be explained through Social Cognitive Theory, which emphasizes reciprocal interactions among personal factors, behavior, and the environment (Bandura, 1986). From this perspective, transformational leadership represents an environmental influence that can provide encouragement, verbal persuasion, and supportive conditions, while competence represents a personal capability that can generate mastery experiences. Both factors may strengthen teachers' self-efficacy, which in turn can influence how persistently and effectively teachers perform their professional responsibilities. Teachers with stronger self-efficacy are generally more likely to set challenging goals, sustain effort when facing difficulties, and remain persistent in demanding situations (Bandura, 1997).

Empirical evidence supports the relevance of these relationships. Muliati et al. (2022) found that transformational leadership, competence, and self-efficacy are closely related to teacher performance, indicating that self-efficacy may serve as an important mechanism connecting organizational and personal factors with performance outcomes. Other studies have also shown that transformational leadership and teacher-related organizational conditions contribute to performance (Andriani et al., 2018; Sudibjo & Nasution, 2020; Vitria et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the evidence remains context-dependent, and the specific mechanism through which transformational leadership and competence operate through self-efficacy has not been sufficiently examined across different school settings. In particular, empirical evidence from public junior high schools in local Indonesian contexts remains limited. This creates a contextual and empirical gap regarding whether the relationships identified in previous studies are also evident among teachers working within the organizational and professional conditions of SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul.

The relevance of this issue is reinforced by the conditions observed at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. Preliminary observations indicated that some teachers were still inconsistent in preparing instructional materials, learning evaluation practices had not been fully standardized, and independent professional development remained limited. These conditions suggest that teacher performance may still require improvement and may be associated with both organizational support from school leadership and teachers'

professional and psychological resources. Transformational leadership may influence the extent to which teachers feel supported and motivated to improve, while competence provides the professional capacity needed to carry out teaching responsibilities. At the same time, self-efficacy may determine how confidently teachers apply their knowledge and respond to instructional challenges.

Based on these theoretical, empirical, and contextual considerations, this study examines the role of self-efficacy in mediating the relationships between transformational leadership, teacher competence, and teacher performance at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. The contribution of this study lies in providing additional empirical evidence on how transformational leadership and competence are associated with teacher performance through self-efficacy within a specific public-school context. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the direct effects of transformational leadership and competence on self-efficacy and teacher performance, the effect of self-efficacy on teacher performance, and the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationships between transformational leadership, competence, and teacher performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Grand Theory: Social Cognitive Theory

This study is grounded in Social Cognitive Theory proposed by Bandura (1986). The theory explains that human behavior results from reciprocal interactions among personal factors, behavior, and environmental influences. In the context of this study, transformational leadership represents an environmental factor that may shape teachers' motivation, perceptions, and professional behavior, while competence represents a personal resource reflecting teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities. Self-efficacy serves as an important cognitive mechanism that influences how teachers interpret these resources and translate them into performance. Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities affect their choices, effort, persistence, and achievement. Therefore, the theory provides an appropriate foundation for explaining how transformational leadership and competence may influence teacher performance both directly and indirectly through self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

B. Teacher Performance

Teacher performance refers to the quality and quantity of work achieved by teachers in carrying out their duties and responsibilities (Mangkunegara, 2017). In the Indonesian educational context, teacher performance is reflected in teachers' responsibilities in planning learning activities, implementing the learning process, and assessing learning outcomes, which are consistent with the process standards stipulated in Permendiknas No. 41 of 2007 (Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2007). Teachers with high performance are characterized by their ability to design structured learning activities, implement interactive learning, conduct comprehensive assessments, and continuously improve the quality of their professional practices. Teacher performance is therefore not limited to classroom teaching activities but represents the overall effectiveness with which teachers fulfill their professional responsibilities. Previous research has also demonstrated that teacher performance can be influenced by organizational and individual factors, including leadership, motivation, work environment, competence, and psychological resources (Andriani et al., 2018; Sudibjo & Nasution, 2020).

C. Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership was initially conceptualized by Burns (1978) and subsequently developed by Bass and Avolio (2004). It refers to a leadership approach that encourages followers to achieve higher levels of motivation and performance through inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support. Bass and Avolio (2004) identify four principal dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Through these dimensions, transformational leaders encourage followers to move beyond individual interests and contribute toward broader organizational objectives.

In educational organizations, transformational leadership is particularly relevant because school principals are expected not only to manage administrative activities but also to motivate and develop teachers. Transformational leadership can provide teachers with professional encouragement, opportunities to develop new capabilities, and confidence in addressing instructional challenges. Empirical studies have demonstrated positive relationships between transformational leadership and individual performance in educational and organizational settings (Andriani et al., 2018; Asad et al., 2022; Bakker et al., 2023).

D. Teacher Competence

Teacher competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that teachers are required to possess, internalize, and master in carrying out their professional duties (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen). Teacher competence encompasses four principal dimensions: pedagogical competence, which concerns the ability to manage student learning; personal competence, which reflects a stable and exemplary personality; social competence, which concerns effective communication and interaction with others; and professional competence, which reflects comprehensive mastery of subject matter.

Competence represents an important personal resource because teachers require adequate knowledge and skills to effectively translate educational objectives into learning practices. Spencer and Spencer (2008) conceptualize competence as underlying individual characteristics associated with superior performance. Accordingly, higher teacher competence should provide teachers with stronger professional capabilities to address teaching responsibilities and challenges. Empirical research also supports the contribution of competence to individual performance (Iriani et al., 2023; Muliati et al., 2022; Sutaguna et al., 2023).

E. Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is a central concept in Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory and refers to individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to organize and execute actions required to achieve particular outcomes (Bandura, 1997). In the educational context, teacher self-efficacy reflects teachers' confidence in their ability to perform instructional responsibilities, manage classrooms, address teaching challenges, and facilitate student learning.

Bandura (1997) identifies four major sources of self-efficacy: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and emotional states. Mastery experiences strengthen efficacy beliefs through previous successful performance, while vicarious experiences allow individuals to develop confidence by observing others. Verbal persuasion can strengthen individuals' beliefs in their capabilities through encouragement and constructive feedback, whereas physiological and emotional conditions may influence how individuals evaluate their ability to cope with particular tasks. Teachers with stronger self-efficacy are therefore expected to demonstrate greater confidence, persistence, and effort when performing professional responsibilities and confronting instructional challenges.

F. Hypothesis Development

According to Social Cognitive Theory, environmental influences can shape individuals' cognitive beliefs and subsequent behavior (Bandura, 1986). Transformational leadership may strengthen teacher self-efficacy by providing inspiration, individualized support, intellectual stimulation, and encouragement. Such leadership practices can function as forms of verbal persuasion and provide opportunities for teachers to develop successful professional experiences. Empirical evidence also indicates that transformational leadership is associated with stronger individual psychological and performance outcomes (Bakker et al., 2023; Muliati et al., 2022). Therefore:

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher self-efficacy.

Competence reflects teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities in performing their responsibilities. Teachers with stronger competence are more likely to experience successful task accomplishment, which can strengthen their confidence in handling subsequent professional challenges. From the Social Cognitive Theory perspective, these mastery experiences represent one of the strongest sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Muliati et al. (2022) also demonstrated the relevance of competence and self-efficacy in explaining teacher performance. Therefore:

H2: Teacher competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher self-efficacy.

Transformational leadership may also directly contribute to teacher performance. Principals who articulate a compelling vision, motivate teachers, encourage innovative thinking, and provide individualized support can create organizational conditions that encourage teachers to perform beyond routine expectations. Previous empirical studies have reported positive relationships between transformational leadership and teacher performance (Andriani et al., 2018; Muliati et al., 2022). More recent evidence also demonstrates that transformational leadership can serve as a source of inspiration for follower performance (Bakker et al., 2023). Therefore:

H3: Transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.

Teacher competence provides the professional capabilities required to plan, implement, and evaluate learning activities effectively. Teachers with stronger pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competence are expected to perform their responsibilities more effectively because they possess the knowledge and skills required to address various instructional demands. Previous studies have also demonstrated a positive association between competence and individual performance (Iriani et al., 2023; Muliati et al., 2022; Sutaguna et al., 2023). Therefore:

H4: Teacher competence has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.

Self-efficacy influences how individuals approach tasks, determine the effort they expend, and persist when encountering difficulties. According to Bandura (1997), individuals with strong self-efficacy are more likely to establish challenging goals and maintain effort in difficult situations. In the teaching context, stronger self-efficacy can encourage teachers to remain persistent in addressing instructional challenges and to apply their professional capabilities more confidently. Empirical evidence from Muliati et al. (2022) further supports the relationship between self-efficacy and teacher performance. Therefore:

H5: Self-efficacy has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance.

Social Cognitive Theory further suggests that environmental factors may influence behavior through personal cognitive mechanisms (Bandura, 1986). Transformational leadership represents an environmental influence that can strengthen teachers' confidence through motivation, encouragement, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Stronger self-efficacy may subsequently encourage teachers to invest greater effort and persistence in fulfilling their responsibilities. Thus, self-efficacy provides a theoretically plausible mechanism through which transformational leadership contributes to teacher performance. This mechanism is also consistent with the empirical relationships reported by Muliati et al. (2022). Therefore:

H6: Self-efficacy mediates the effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance.

Finally, competence may influence teacher performance not only directly through professional knowledge and skills but also indirectly through teachers' beliefs in their ability to apply those capabilities successfully. Competence can generate mastery experiences that strengthen self-efficacy, while stronger self-efficacy encourages individuals to use their capabilities more persistently and confidently (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, teachers possessing adequate competence combined with stronger beliefs in their professional capabilities are expected to demonstrate better performance. Based on this theoretical mechanism and previous empirical evidence (Muliati et al., 2022), the final hypothesis is formulated as follows:

H7: Self-efficacy mediates the effect of teacher competence on teacher performance.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

A. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional research design to examine the relationships among transformational leadership, teacher competence, self-efficacy, and teacher performance. The quantitative approach was selected because the study aimed to empirically test the hypothesized relationships among the research constructs (Sugiyono, 2019). Transformational leadership and teacher competence were specified as exogenous variables, teacher performance as the endogenous outcome variable, and self-efficacy as a mediating variable. Data were collected at a single point in time through a structured questionnaire. Given the cross-sectional nature of the study, the relationships identified in the model are interpreted within the observed research context rather than as definitive evidence of temporal causality.

B. Population and Sample

The population consisted of all active teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul, Serdang Bedagai Regency. Based on the school's administrative records, the population comprised 65 active teachers. Because the population was relatively small and entirely accessible, a saturated sampling or census technique was employed, in which all members of the population were included as respondents (Sugiyono, 2019). Accordingly, the final sample consisted of 65 teachers.

C. Research Instrument

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Transformational leadership was measured using five indicators adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Bass and Avolio (2004), reflecting the principal characteristics of transformational leadership. Teacher competence was measured using four indicators representing pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence, consistent with the competency framework for Indonesian teachers as stipulated in Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. Self-efficacy was measured using five indicators developed with reference to Bandura's (1997) conceptualization of efficacy beliefs in performing professional tasks. Teacher performance was measured using four indicators covering lesson planning, implementation of the learning process, assessment of learning outcomes, and professional development. The measurement of teacher performance was developed with reference to teachers' professional responsibilities and the learning process standards stipulated in Permendiknas No. 41 of 2007 (Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia, 2007).

Prior to the main data collection, the questionnaire was reported to have been pilot-tested on 30 respondents outside the main research sample to assess the appropriateness of the instrument. The measurement properties of the constructs in the main sample were subsequently evaluated through the PLS-SEM measurement model by examining indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

D. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. PLS-SEM was employed because the research model incorporates multiple relationships involving a mediating construct and because the method is suitable for prediction-oriented models and relatively small samples (Hair et al., 2019).

The analysis was conducted in two stages. First, the measurement model (outer model) was evaluated to assess the reliability and validity of the constructs. Indicator reliability was examined using outer loadings,

while internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), whereas discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT).

Second, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated to examine the hypothesized relationships among the constructs. The explanatory power of the model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2), while the significance of the direct and indirect path coefficients was evaluated through a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. The mediating role of self-efficacy was determined based on the significance of the specific indirect effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance through self-efficacy.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Respondent Profile

A total of 65 respondents participated in this study, representing the entire population of active teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	28	43.1
	Female	37	56.9
Age	< 30 years	12	18.5
	30–40 years	29	44.6
	41–50 years	18	27.7
	> 50 years	6	9.2
Education	Bachelor's degree (S1)	55	84.6
	Master's degree (S2)	10	15.4
Years of service	< 5 years	10	15.4
	5–10 years	22	33.8
	11–20 years	24	36.9
	> 20 years	9	13.8
Employment status	Civil servant (PNS)	42	64.6
	Non-civil servant (Non-PNS)	23	35.4

As shown in Table 1, the majority of respondents were female (56.9%), while 43.1% were male. Most respondents were between 30 and 40 years old (44.6%), followed by those aged 41–50 years (27.7%). In terms of educational background, 84.6% held a bachelor's degree, while 15.4% held a master's degree. Regarding work experience, the largest proportion of respondents had 11–20 years of service (36.9%), followed by 5–10 years (33.8%). Furthermore, 64.6% of the respondents were civil servants. Overall, the respondent profile indicates that the sample was predominantly composed of teachers with substantial teaching experience and appropriate academic qualifications.

B. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to provide an overview of respondents' perceptions of transformational leadership, teacher competence, self-efficacy, and teacher performance. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev.	Category
Transformational Leadership (TL)	65	2.80	5.00	3.94	0.512	Good
Teacher Competence (TC)	65	2.75	5.00	4.02	0.488	Good
Self-Efficacy (SE)	65	2.60	5.00	3.87	0.531	Good
Teacher Performance (TP)	65	2.80	5.00	3.91	0.496	Good

All research variables were categorized as good, with mean scores ranging from 3.87 to 4.02. Teacher competence had the highest mean score ($M = 4.02$), followed by transformational leadership ($M = 3.94$), teacher performance ($M = 3.91$), and self-efficacy ($M = 3.87$). These findings indicate generally positive perceptions across all constructs. Nevertheless, self-efficacy had the lowest mean score among the four variables, suggesting comparatively greater room for strengthening teachers' confidence in their professional capabilities.

C. Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was evaluated to assess convergent validity, internal consistency reliability, and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was examined using indicator loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while internal consistency reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha.

Table 3. Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Indicator	Loading	AVE	CR	Cronbach's α
Transformational Leadership	TL1	0.812	0.641	0.897	0.861
	TL2	0.834			
	TL3	0.798			
	TL4	0.756			
	TL5	0.782			
Teacher Competence	TC1	0.841	0.658	0.905	0.873
	TC2	0.809			
	TC3	0.798			
	TC4	0.821			
Self-Efficacy	SE1	0.823	0.629	0.893	0.857
	SE2	0.798			
	SE3	0.812			
	SE4	0.756			
	SE5	0.779			
Teacher Performance	TP1	0.836	0.647	0.899	0.865
	TP2	0.811			
	TP3	0.794			
	TP4	0.798			

As presented in Table 3, all indicators had outer loading values above 0.70, ranging from 0.756 to 0.841, indicating satisfactory indicator reliability. The AVE values ranged from 0.629 to 0.658, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50. Furthermore, Composite Reliability values ranged from 0.893 to 0.905, while Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.857 to 0.873. These results indicate satisfactory convergent validity and internal consistency reliability across all constructs in the measurement model (Hair et al., 2019).

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). The results showed that the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with the other constructs, while all HTMT values were below the threshold of 0.85. Therefore, the constructs demonstrated satisfactory discriminant validity.

D. Structural Model Assessment

The structural model was evaluated by examining the coefficient of determination (R^2) for the endogenous constructs and the significance of the hypothesized relationships. The R^2 value for self-efficacy was 0.612, indicating that transformational leadership and teacher competence jointly explained 61.2% of the variance in teachers' self-efficacy. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for teacher performance was 0.714, indicating that transformational leadership, teacher competence, and self-efficacy jointly explained 71.4% of the variance in teacher performance.

These results demonstrate that the proposed model has substantial explanatory capability for the endogenous constructs, particularly teacher performance. The remaining variance may be associated with other individual and organizational factors outside the scope of the present model.

The structural relationships among transformational leadership, teacher competence, self-efficacy, and teacher performance are illustrated in Figure 1. The model presents the estimated direct effects among the constructs, the explained variance of the endogenous constructs, and the indirect effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance through self-efficacy.

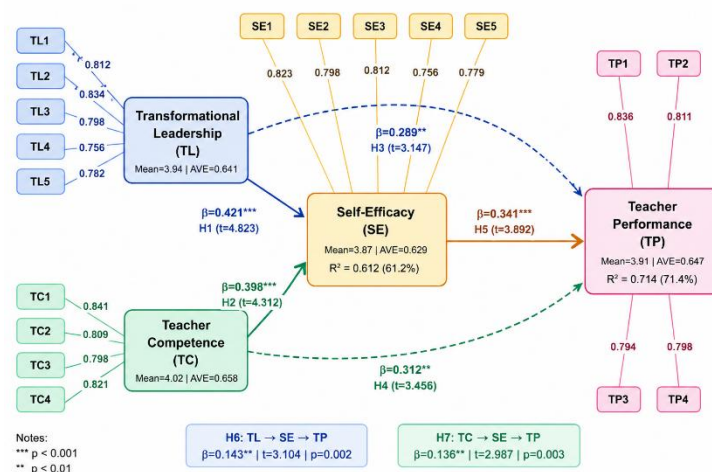


Figure 1. Structural Model of the Relationships among Transformational Leadership, Teacher Competence, Self-Efficacy, and Teacher Performance

E. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples at a significance level of 5%. The results of the direct and indirect effect tests are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	TL → SE	0.421	4.823	<0.001	Supported
H2	TC → SE	0.398	4.312	<0.001	Supported
H3	TL → TP	0.289	3.147	0.002	Supported
H4	TC → TP	0.312	3.456	0.001	Supported
H5	SE → TP	0.341	3.892	<0.001	Supported
H6	TL → SE → TP	0.143	3.104	0.002	Supported
H7	TC → SE → TP	0.136	2.987	0.003	Supported

The results show that all seven hypotheses were supported. Transformational leadership had a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.421$, $t = 4.823$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. Teacher competence also had a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.398$, $t = 4.312$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2.

Regarding teacher performance, transformational leadership had a positive and significant direct effect ($\beta = 0.289$, $t = 3.147$, $p = 0.002$), while teacher competence also had a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 3.456$, $p = 0.001$). Self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.341$, $t = 3.892$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H3, H4, and H5 were supported.

The mediation analysis further showed that the indirect effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance through self-efficacy was positive and significant ($\beta = 0.143$, $t = 3.104$, $p = 0.002$), supporting H6. Similarly, teacher competence had a positive and significant indirect effect on teacher performance through self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.136$, $t = 2.987$, $p = 0.003$), supporting H7. Because the corresponding direct effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance remained significant, self-efficacy can be interpreted as a partial mediator in both relationships.

F. Discussion

1) Transformational Leadership and Self-Efficacy

The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on teachers' self-efficacy. This suggests that stronger transformational leadership practices by school principals are associated with greater confidence among teachers in their ability to perform professional responsibilities. The finding is consistent with Mulati et al. (2022) and can also be understood in relation to the motivational role of transformational leadership discussed by Bakker et al. (2023).

From the perspective of Social Cognitive Theory, the relationship can be explained through the interaction between environmental influences and personal cognitive factors (Bandura, 1986). Transformational leaders who provide encouragement, communicate meaningful goals, stimulate teachers intellectually, and recognize individual needs can create an environment that strengthens teachers' beliefs in their professional capabilities. Such leadership practices may particularly contribute to verbal persuasion and opportunities for mastery experiences, both of which are important sources of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Therefore, transformational leadership appears to contribute not only to organizational processes but also to the psychological resources teachers bring to their work.

2) Teacher Competence and Self-Efficacy

Teacher competence also had a positive and significant effect on self-efficacy. This finding indicates that teachers with stronger pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies tend to report greater confidence in their capacity to manage teaching responsibilities and address classroom challenges.

This relationship is consistent with Bandura's (1997) explanation that mastery experiences constitute one of the most influential sources of self-efficacy. Teachers who possess adequate knowledge and skills are more likely to experience successful performance in planning instruction, managing classrooms, delivering learning materials, and assessing student outcomes. Repeated successful experiences can subsequently strengthen beliefs about their own professional capabilities. In this respect, competence provides not only the technical capacity required for effective teaching but also an experiential foundation from which stronger self-efficacy can develop.

3) Transformational Leadership and Teacher Performance

Transformational leadership had a positive and significant direct effect on teacher performance. The result supports previous evidence reported by Andriani et al. (2018) and is consistent with the broader role of transformational leadership in organizational and educational settings discussed by Asad et al. (2022).

Principals who articulate clear goals, provide inspirational motivation, encourage intellectual stimulation, and demonstrate individualized consideration can create working conditions that encourage teachers to improve their professional performance. Intellectual stimulation may encourage teachers to explore

alternative teaching strategies and respond more creatively to instructional challenges, while individualized consideration can provide the personal and professional support necessary for continuous improvement.

Importantly, the direct effect of transformational leadership on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.289$) was greater than its indirect effect through self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.143$). This indicates that although self-efficacy represents a meaningful psychological mechanism through which transformational leadership contributes to teacher performance, a substantial part of its contribution occurs directly.

4) Teacher Competence and Teacher Performance

Teacher competence had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance. This finding is consistent with Muliati et al. (2022) and is broadly supported by studies emphasizing competence as an important determinant of employee performance, including Sutaguna et al. (2023) and Iriani et al. (2023).

For teachers, competence represents the professional capacity required to translate knowledge into effective instructional practices. Teachers with stronger competence are better positioned to plan learning activities, select appropriate teaching strategies, manage classroom interactions, conduct assessment, and adapt their practices to students' learning needs. Consequently, improving teacher competence should be viewed not merely as fulfilling professional qualification requirements but as an important pathway toward improving actual teaching performance.

5) Self-Efficacy and Teacher Performance

Self-efficacy had a positive and significant effect on teacher performance and showed the largest direct path coefficient toward teacher performance among the three predictors in the model ($\beta = 0.341$). This finding highlights the importance of teachers' beliefs about their own capabilities in translating professional resources into effective performance.

According to Social Cognitive Theory, individuals with stronger self-efficacy are more likely to establish challenging goals, invest greater effort, persist when encountering obstacles, and recover more effectively from difficulties (Bandura, 1986, 1997). In an educational context, teachers with stronger self-efficacy may consequently demonstrate greater persistence in managing classroom difficulties, experimenting with instructional approaches, and maintaining their professional responsibilities when confronted with teaching challenges.

The finding therefore suggests that improving teacher performance requires attention not only to external organizational conditions and professional competence but also to teachers' internal beliefs regarding their capacity to perform successfully.

6) The Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

The mediation analysis demonstrated that self-efficacy significantly mediated both the relationship between transformational leadership and teacher performance and the relationship between teacher competence and teacher performance. However, because both transformational leadership and teacher competence continued to have significant direct effects on teacher performance, the mediation observed in both relationships was partial.

For transformational leadership, the indirect effect through self-efficacy was 0.143, while the direct effect on teacher performance was 0.289. This pattern indicates that transformational leadership contributes to performance through at least two pathways: directly through leadership practices that shape teachers' work experiences and indirectly by strengthening teachers' beliefs in their own professional capabilities.

A similar pattern emerged for teacher competence. Teacher competence had a direct effect of 0.312 on teacher performance and an indirect effect of 0.136 through self-efficacy. Thus, competence contributes directly to teachers' ability to perform their professional tasks while simultaneously strengthening the confidence with which those competencies are applied.

These mediation findings provide important support for the Social Cognitive Theory perspective adopted in this study. Teacher performance appears to emerge from the interaction between environmental influences, personal capabilities, and cognitive beliefs rather than from a single organizational factor. Transformational leadership represents an important environmental influence, competence reflects teachers' professional capabilities, and self-efficacy functions as a cognitive mechanism through which these resources can be translated into stronger performance.

From a practical perspective, these findings suggest that school improvement initiatives should not focus exclusively on either leadership or teacher competence. School principals should strengthen transformational leadership practices by providing clear direction, professional encouragement, intellectual stimulation, and individualized support. At the same time, professional development activities should continuously strengthen teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies. Opportunities for successful teaching experiences, peer learning, mentoring, constructive feedback, and recognition of professional achievement may further reinforce teachers' self-efficacy. Through these complementary mechanisms, schools can develop both the professional capacity and psychological confidence required to sustain stronger teacher performance.

5. CONCLUSION

This study examined the role of self-efficacy in mediating the effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance at SMP Negeri 2 Dolok Masihul. The findings demonstrate that transformational leadership and teacher competence have positive and significant effects on both self-efficacy and teacher performance. Self-efficacy also has a positive and significant effect on teacher performance and partially mediates the effects of transformational leadership and teacher competence on teacher performance. These findings support the perspective of Social Cognitive Theory by demonstrating that teacher performance is associated not only with environmental and professional factors but also with teachers' beliefs in their own capabilities. The model explained 61.2% of the variance in self-efficacy and 71.4% of the variance in teacher performance, indicating substantial explanatory power within the context examined in this study.

The findings have practical implications for school management. School principals should strengthen transformational leadership practices, particularly by providing inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized support, and opportunities that encourage teachers to develop confidence in their professional capabilities. Teacher competence should also be continuously strengthened through professional development programs, training, seminars, teacher professional education, and participation in professional learning communities such as MGMP. In addition, schools can support the development of teacher self-efficacy by providing opportunities for successful teaching experiences, peer coaching, constructive feedback, reflective teaching practices, and professional knowledge sharing. These initiatives are important because the findings indicate that self-efficacy serves as a meaningful psychological mechanism through which leadership and competence contribute to teacher performance.

This study nevertheless has several limitations. The research employed a cross-sectional design and collected data from 65 teachers within a single school, which limits the extent to which the findings can be generalized to broader educational settings. The use of self-reported questionnaire data may also reflect respondents' subjective perceptions. Future studies are therefore encouraged to employ longitudinal designs, involve larger samples from multiple schools or educational regions, and incorporate additional organizational and psychological variables, such as work motivation, organizational culture, job satisfaction, or perceived organizational support. Future research may also examine alternative mediating or moderating mechanisms to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors contributing to teacher performance.

REFERENCES

- Andriani, S., Kesumawati, N., & Kristiawan, M. (2018). The influence of the transformational leadership and work motivation on teachers performance. *International Journal of Scientific & Technology Research*, 7(7), 19–29.
- Asad, M. M., Rind, A. A., & Abdulmuhsin, A. A. (2022). Impact of transformational leadership on educational institutes culture: A quantitative study in the context of Pakistan. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*, 30(5), 1235–1250. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-12-2020-2561>
- Bakker, A. B., Hetland, J., Olsen, O. K., & Espevik, R. (2023). Daily transformational leadership: A source of inspiration for follower performance? *European Management Journal*, 41(5), 700–708. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2022.04.004>
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. Macmillan.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio, B. J. (2004). *Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire: MLQ; manual and sampler set*. Mind Garden.
- Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership*. Harper & Row.
- Hair, J. F., Risher, J. J., Sarstedt, M., & Ringle, C. M. (2019). When to use and how to report the results of PLS-SEM. *European Business Review*, 31(1), 2–24. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EBR-11-2018-0203>
- Iriani, N. I., Suyitno, S., Sasongko, T., Rifai, M., Indrihastuti, P., & Yanti, D. A. W. (2023). Leadership style, compensation and competence influence on employee performance through job satisfaction. *Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 5(1), 38–49. <https://doi.org/10.32996/jbms.2023.5.1.5>
- Kementerian Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia. (2007). *Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan Nasional Republik Indonesia Nomor 41 Tahun 2007 tentang Standar Proses untuk Satuan Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah*.
- Mangkunegara, A. P. (2017). *Manajemen sumber daya manusia perusahaan* (14th ed.). PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Muliati, L., Asbari, M., Nadeak, M., Novitasari, D., & Purwanto, A. (2022). Elementary school teachers performance: How the role of transformational leadership, competency, and self-efficacy. *International Journal of Social and Management Studies*, 3(1), 158–166. <https://doi.org/10.5555/ijosmas.v3i1.97>
- Spencer, L. M., & Spencer, P. S. M. (2008). *Competence at work: Models for superior performance*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Sudibjo, N., & Nasution, R. A. (2020). Work environment, work motivation and organizational culture in influencing teachers' performance. *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran*, 53(3), 276–286. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jpp.v53i3.28533>
- Sugiyono. (2019). *Metode penelitian kuantitatif, kualitatif, dan R&D* (2nd ed.). Alfabeta.

- Sutaguna, I. N. T., Yusuf, M., Ardianto, R., & Wartono, P. (2023). The effect of competence, work experience, work environment, and work discipline on employee performance. *Asian Journal of Management, Entrepreneurship and Social Science*, 3(1), 367–381. <https://doi.org/10.63922/ajmesec.v3i01.263>
- Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia Nomor 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen. (2005). *Lembaran Negara Republik Indonesia Tahun 2005 Nomor 157*.
- Vitria, V., Sulaiman, S., Rizalie, A. M., & Suhaimi, S. (2021). *The relationship between principal transformational leadership, work environment and job satisfaction with teacher performance in public elementary schools in Mataraman District, Banjar Regency*. Repository Universitas Lambung Mangkurat.