

Teacher Self-Efficacy as a Determinant of Performance: An Empirical Study of Private Vocational High School Teachers in Bogor Regency

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This study analyzes the influence of teacher self-efficacy on teacher performance and the mediating role of organizational trust among teachers at Private Vocational High Schools (SMK) in Bogor Regency, Indonesia. **Method:** This quantitative study used path analysis on a sample of 175 permanent foundation teachers at Private Vocational High Schools in Bogor Regency. Data were collected using measured instruments to assess self-efficacy (24 items), teacher performance (36 items), and trust (20 items) on a 5-point Likert scale. Path analysis and the Sobel test were used to analyze both direct and indirect effects. **Results:** The study found a significant positive direct effect of self-efficacy on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.151$, $p < 0.05$). In addition, self-efficacy positively influenced organizational trust ($\beta = 0.190$, $p < 0.05$), which in turn affected teacher performance ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.05$). An indirect effect of self-efficacy on teacher performance through trust was also found ($\beta = 0.062$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that trust serves as an important mediating mechanism. **Novelty:** This study expands understanding of the psychological factors influencing teacher performance in the context of vocational education in Indonesia by demonstrating the mediating role of organizational trust in the relationship between self-efficacy and performance outcomes. The findings provide practical implications for school leaders in developing teacher competencies through strategies that enhance self-efficacy and foster organizational trust.

INTRODUCTION

Teacher performance is a crucial factor in determining the quality of education in Indonesia. In the context of national education, optimal teacher performance is a primary prerequisite for improving graduate quality and achieving educational goals. Although various efforts have been made to enhance teacher performance through teacher competency assessments, ongoing education and training, teacher certification, and principal supervision, empirical data show that teacher performance in Indonesia still does not meet the expected standards (Lailatussaadah, 2015). This is indicated by the results of the Programmed for International Student Assessment (PISA), which show that Indonesia's position still lags behind other ASEAN countries in terms of student achievement.

In the context of vocational education, vocational high school (SMK) teachers face more complex challenges (Yusuf & Mukhadis, 2018). SMK teachers are not only required to master theoretical learning material but must also be able to integrate practical learning relevant to the ever-evolving needs of the industry. SMK teachers are responsible for preparing students with practical skills that meet industry standards, understanding the dynamics of technological change, and creating meaningful learning experiences. This complex role requires teachers to have a strong belief in their ability to effectively perform challenging teaching tasks (Ulum et al., 2024a).

The concept of self-efficacy is an important psychological factor related to teachers' perceptions of their ability to effectively accomplish teaching tasks (Abdillah et al., 2025). According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is an individual's belief in

their ability to organize and execute actions required to achieve desired outcomes (Fatimah et al., 2021). Teachers with high self-efficacy tend to demonstrate a stronger commitment to teaching tasks, use more innovative learning strategies, show greater persistence in the face of teaching challenges, and maintain higher expectations for student success. Previous research has shown that teachers' self-efficacy is positively correlated with various aspects of teacher performance, including lesson planning, instructional implementation, and evaluation of learning outcomes (Pratikayanti & Putra, 2021).

Nevertheless, the mechanism by which self-efficacy influences teacher performance is still not fully understood, especially in the context of Indonesian vocational high schools (SMK). Organizational trust, defined as the positive expectation that organizational leaders will provide fair treatment, support, and ongoing career development opportunities, is predicted to play an important mediating role in the relationship between self-efficacy and employee performance. Teachers with high self-efficacy who also trust their principals will find it easier to access the resources and support needed to enhance their performance and achieve their goals (Saifullah et al., 2024). Trust creates a psychologically safe and supportive environment in which teachers feel valued and recognized, which, in turn, increases their motivation and commitment to improving performance.

Previous studies have demonstrated a relationship between self-efficacy and teacher performance in the context of primary and secondary education. Purwanto (2022) found that self-efficacy significantly influences teacher performance in elementary schools (Purwanto, 2022). Kartiko et al. (2024) indicated that transformational leadership partially affects teacher performance through organizational commitment (Haeronih, 2025). However, research specifically examining the indirect effect of self-efficacy on teacher performance through trust in Indonesian vocational high schools (SMK) remains limited. This study aims to fill this gap by focusing on private vocational high school teachers in Bogor Regency.

This study aims to: (1) analyze the direct influence of self-efficacy on the performance of private vocational school teachers; (2) analyze the direct influence of self-efficacy on teachers' trust in the principal; (3) analyze the indirect influence of self-efficacy on teachers' performance through trust; and (4) provide strategic recommendations to enhance teachers' self-efficacy to improve the performance of private vocational school teachers in Bogor Regency..

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with path analysis (Ghodang, 2020). The research was conducted in Bogor Regency, Indonesia, from July to November 2024, and covered 40 private vocational high schools (SMK). The study population consisted of permanent foundation teachers at private vocational high schools in Bogor Regency ($N = 5,097$). The sample was determined using stratified random sampling with the Slovin formula (5% margin of error, 95% confidence level), resulting in 175 participants. Sample characteristics: age $M = 42.5$ years ($SD = 8.3$), teaching experience $M = 15.8$ years ($SD = 9.2$), education level 78% bachelor's and 22% master's degree.

The study involved three variables: (1) Self-Efficacy (X) - measured with 24 Likert 5-point items, encompassing the dimensions of self-confidence, motivation, and perseverance ($\alpha = 0.873$); (2) Teacher Performance (Y) - measured with 36 Likert 5-point

items, covering quality, quantity, effectiveness, efficiency, and working relationships ($\alpha = 0.892$); and (3) Trust (X5) – measured with 20 Likert 5-point items assessing trust in the principal ($\alpha = 0.856$). The instruments were validated using Pearson's correlation (all items valid with $r = 0.341-0.782$) and Cronbach's alpha reliability (all $\alpha > 0.85$). Data were collected through direct questionnaires with an average completion time of 25 min. The analysis included: (1) descriptive statistics; (2) prerequisite tests (Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality, Bartlett's homogeneity, F-test linearity); and (3) path analysis with the Sobel test for the significance of indirect effects. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26.0.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the research variables are presented in Table 1. The self-efficacy scores ranged from 48 to 120 ($M = 97.42$, $SD = 11.28$), teacher performance scores ranged from 99 to 156 ($M = 125.79$, $SD = 12.33$), and trust scores ranged from 42 to 100 ($M = 78.34$, $SD = 10.15$). All variables showed data distributions close to normal, with acceptable skewness and kurtosis values.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Self-Efficacy	97.42	11.28	48	120
Teacher Performance	125.79	12.33	99	156
Trust	78.34	10.15	42	100

Prerequisite Test Analysis

The normality test using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test showed that all variables were normally distributed ($p > 0.05$). The Bartlett homogeneity test indicated homogenous variances for all comparisons ($p > 0.05$). The linearity test (F-test) demonstrated a linear relationship between all variable pairs ($p < 0.05$). Thus, all prerequisites for the path analysis were met.

Path Analysis Results

The results of the path analyses are presented in Table 2. Self-efficacy had a significant direct positive effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.151$, $t = 2.847$, $p < 0.05$). Self-efficacy also had a direct positive effect on trust ($\beta = 0.190$, $t = 2.858$, $p < 0.05$). Trust had a direct positive effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that trust was a stronger predictor of performance than self-efficacy.

Table 2. Path Analysis Results

Path	Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Significance
Self-Efficacy → Performance	0.151	2.847	0.005	Significant
Self-Efficacy → Trust	0.190	2.858	0.005	Significant
Trust → Performance	0.325	4.921	0.000	Significant

** $p < 0.05$

Indirect Influence Test

The Sobel test showed that self-efficacy had a significant indirect effect on teacher performance through trust ($\beta = 0.062$, $z = 2.156$, $p < 0.05$). The total effect of self-efficacy

on teacher performance (direct + indirect effect) was 0.213. Table 3. Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects.

Table 3. Direct, Indirect, and Total Influence of Self-Efficacy on Performance

Pathway	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
Self-Efficacy → Performance	0.151	-	0.151
Self-Efficacy → Trust → Performance	-	0.062	0.062
Total Effect of Self-Efficacy	-	-	0.213

The coefficient of Determination The (R^2) for the research model was 0.387, indicating that self-efficacy and trust together explained 38.7% of the variance in teacher performance. The remaining 61.3% was influenced by other factors not included in this research model.

Discussion

Direct Influence of Self-Efficacy on Teacher Performance

The research findings indicate that self-efficacy has a significant direct positive effect on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.151$, $p < 0.05$), in line with Bandura's social cognitive theory. Teachers with high self-efficacy demonstrate a stronger commitment to teaching, use more innovative learning strategies, and persist in facing instructional challenges. In the context of vocational high schools, self-efficacy motivates teachers to continually develop teaching methods relevant to industrial developments and students' needs for practical skill acquisition (Ulum et al., 2024b). These findings are consistent with those of Purwanto (2022), who found that self-efficacy significantly predicts teacher performance in elementary schools, suggesting that these results can be generalized to the vocational education context (Purwanto, 2022).

The Influence of Self-Efficacy on Trust

Teacher self-efficacy positively affected trust ($\beta = 0.190$, $p < 0.05$). Teachers with high self-efficacy have greater self-confidence, which enables them to communicate more authentically and openly with the principal. They tend to accept feedback as constructive input for personal development rather than as personal criticism. Teachers with high self-efficacy also exhibit a stronger internal locus of control, making them less likely to blame their superiors for challenges they face; instead, they see the principal as a partner in achieving goals (Simanungkalit & Turnip, 2024). This creates a foundation for developing stronger organizational trust.

The Role of Trust as a Mediator

Trust demonstrates a stronger influence on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.325$) than direct self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.151$). Trust creates a psychologically safe environment in which teachers feel valued, recognized, and supported by school leadership. In an environment full of trust, teachers are more willing to take risks in learning, acknowledge their limitations, and seek help or self-development without fear of negative judgment (Yudiyanto et al., 2024). The Sobel test confirmed the significance of the indirect path self-efficacy → trust → performance ($\beta = 0.062$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that trust is an important mechanism that transforms self-efficacy into improved performance.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

This study provides empirical evidence that, in the context of Indonesian vocational high schools (SMK), improving teacher performance requires a holistic approach that

considers both psychological (self-efficacy) and organizational (trust) factors. For school principals, these findings highlight the importance of investing in the development of teachers' self-efficacy through training programs that offer mastery experiences, positive feedback, and recognition of their achievements. Simultaneously, principals need to build trust by demonstrating consistency between words and actions, transparency in decision-making, and genuine commitment to teachers' career development. For educational authorities, this study suggests that teacher development programs should include components of self-efficacy and promote school leadership that fosters organizational trust as a crucial condition for sustainably enhancing teacher performance.

CONCLUSION

Main Findings: This study found that teachers' self-efficacy significantly affects the performance of private vocational high school (SMK) teachers in Bogor Regency, both directly ($\beta = 0.151$, $p < 0.05$) and indirectly through organizational trust ($\beta = 0.062$, $p < 0.05$). Organizational trust exhibited a stronger influence on teacher performance ($\beta = 0.325$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that a trusting work environment is a key condition for transforming self-efficacy into higher performance. Overall, self-efficacy contributed 21.3% to the improvement in teacher performance, both directly and via trust.

Implications: For principals, this research shows that investing in developing teachers' self-efficacy through training programs, mentoring, and recognizing achievements will effectively boost performance. Simultaneously, principals must proactively build organizational trust by demonstrating consistency, transparency, fairness, and commitment to teachers' career development. For the education department, the findings suggest that policies for teacher development should integrate self-efficacy components and encourage leadership styles among principals that foster trust as a sustainable strategy to improve vocational teachers' performance in the long run. **Limitations:** This study is limited to private vocational high schools in Bogor Regency and uses a cross-sectional design; thus, it cannot determine the causal direction or the pattern of self-efficacy development over time. The study has yet to explore other moderator or mediator variables that may affect the relationship between self-efficacy and performance. Self-reported data are also potentially subject to social desirability bias. **Recommendations for Further Research:** Future studies should use longitudinal designs to observe the development of self-efficacy and its impact on teacher performance over time. **Future research** should also explore other factors, such as work motivation, job satisfaction, or school climate, as mediators or moderators. Comparative studies between public and private vocational schools, as well as qualitative studies to understand the process of self-efficacy development in schools, will provide deeper insights.

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