



Analysis of The Implementation of The Role of *Guru Penggerak* in The Educational Environment of Mandailing Natal

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Abstract

This paper discusses the analysis of the implementation of the role of the driving teacher in the education environment in Mandailing Natal. The findings indicate that through the driving teacher, creative, adaptive, and innovative learning processes, especially in the field of technology, have begun to develop. Through the implementation of the driving teacher program, teachers experience a learning system that focuses on students, thus developing individual student achievement rather than learning material. Furthermore, in the implementation of learning, driving teachers will be more innovative in more engaging learning methods and media in the classroom and adapt more and develop skills in the field of technology. In addition to the focus of driving teachers on self-development, they also focus on providing change and movement to non-driving teachers. However, these efforts often encounter obstacles because many non-driving teachers are still reluctant to change from habits that have been implemented in the learning experience. The findings also obtained most of the suggestions put forward by informants for the sustainability of the driving teacher program even though the minister has changed and the ideas are also different.

Kata kunci:

Profesionalisme;
Guru Penggerak;
Implementasi; Peran

Abstrak

Tulisan ini membahas hasil analisis Implementasi peran guru penggerak di lingkungan Pendidikan di Mandailing Natal. Hasil temuan menunjukkan bahwa melalui guru penggerak proses pembelajaran yang kreatif, adaptif, dan inovatif terutama dibidang teknologi sudah mulai berkembang. Melalui implementasi program guru penggerak, guru merasakan sistem pembelajaran yang berfokus terhadap siswa, sehingga lebih mengembangkan pencapaian individu siswa daripada pencapaian materi pembelajaran. Selain itu juga dalam pelaksanaan pembelajaran, guru penggerak akan lebih berinovasi terhadap metode dan media pembelajaran yang lebih menarik diruang kelas dan lebih banyak beradaptasi dan mengembangkan keterampilan dibidang teknologi. Selain dari kefokuskan guru penggerak terhadap pengembangan diri sendiri, mereka juga fokus untuk memberikan perubahan dan pergerakan terhadap guru-guru yang non penggerak. Akan tetapi usaha itu sering menjadi kendala karena masih banyak guru yang non penggerak enggan untuk diajak berubah dari kebiasaan yang selama ini dilaksanakan dalam pengalaman pembelajaran. Hasil temuan juga mendapatkan kebanyakan saran yang diajukan oleh informan untuk keberlanjutan program guru penggerak walaupun menterinya sudah berbeda dan gagasannya juga berbeda.

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INTRODUCTION

The Guru Penggerak program is a form of teacher professionalism development initiated through the Merdeka Belajar (Freedom to Learn) policy and the Pancasila Student Profile within the Merdeka Curriculum, launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in 2020 (Giyanto et al., 2023). The program was subsequently formalized under Ministerial Regulation No. 26 of 2022 on Guru Penggerak Education, signed by Nadiem Anwar Makarim on June 13, 2022, in Jakarta. This program quickly gained attention and became a significant phenomenon in the educational sector at the time (Rita Wahdini, Siti Habibah, 2024). The shift from traditional education to technology-based learning presented substantial challenges for Indonesia's education system, particularly for teachers. Although not easy to implement, it is evident that many teachers were interested and met the requirements to become Guru Penggerak across various regions, including Mandailing Natal (Abd. Qadir Muslim & Tamim Mulloh, 2022). According to information from one of the Guru Penggerak teachers in Mandailing Natal, there are approximately 180 certified Guru Penggerak distributed across schools throughout the region.

A Guru Penggerak, as stated in Ministerial Regulation No. 26 of 2022 (Article 1, Point 2), is a teacher who has obtained Guru Penggerak certification. Teachers are defined as professional educators whose primary tasks include educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating learners in early childhood education, primary, and secondary education. This aligns with the mandate of Indonesian Law No. 14 of 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers, which states that professional teachers are responsible for carrying out these duties within formal education at all levels.

Meanwhile, the Sekolah Penggerak (Driving Schools) program aims to transform educational institutions to achieve holistic student learning outcomes aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile. The Pancasila Student Profile is one of the core goals of the Merdeka Curriculum, emphasizing the integration of learning materials with students' daily life experiences, reflecting the values of the Pancasila principles. As leaders of change, Guru Penggerak are expected not only to possess the desire and ability to lead, innovate, and drive educational transformation but also to undergo a rigorous selection process, including administrative and substantive assessments. Those who pass and receive the Guru Penggerak certificate are considered to have met the standards of professionalism required to carry out this role effectively (Ferry Andika Eminarni, Windah Lestari, Eni Prasetyaningrum³, 2023).

The primary purpose of the Guru Penggerak program is to serve as an agent of change in education by supporting teachers in becoming more qualified and professional in fulfilling their duties as educators (Abd. Qadir Muslim & Tamim Mulloh, 2022) (Aziz et al., 2024). Participants receive training in leadership, collaboration, and reflective practices to help them design creative, adaptive, and innovative learning plans. They are also expected to become motivators and inspirators for other teachers, making the program an essential approach for building a responsive educational system capable of addressing current challenges (Suharyanto, 2021).

One of the strategic avenues for improving teacher professionalism is through ongoing education and training, and this aligns with the objectives of the Guru Penggerak program (Ardana et al., 2025). The program is expected to reduce the financial burden of teacher training while extending its reach, as Guru Penggerak themselves serve as facilitators within their local

educational environments (Laili et al., 2023). This means that Guru Penggerak are not only responsible for developing themselves as educators but must also guide, inspire, and empower their colleagues who are not part of the program. They are required to serve as agents of educational transformation within their surroundings (Yuspiani, 2022). The role of Guru Penggerak involves initiating change in schools through small-scale innovations and creative practices in the classroom, responding to the dynamic challenges of educational development (Muslim & Mulloh, 2022).

In practice, the Guru Penggerak program is highly strategic in enhancing teaching competencies by promoting creative, adaptive, and innovative learning processes. It is expected to improve teachers' expertise while empowering them to inspire, motivate, train, and support colleagues who are not part of the program. Nevertheless, several Guru Penggerak have reported difficulties in field implementation, leading to the perception that the program has stalled or that its impact is not visible within their educational environment. These challenges stem from various factors that hinder the program's visibility and effectiveness in schools.

METHOD

To collect data and formulate conclusions, the author employed a qualitative research design (Lim, 2024). The data were gathered through field observations and interviews conducted via a Google Form survey distributed in the Guru Penggerak WhatsApp group across Mandailing Natal. The questions focused on the implementation of the Guru Penggerak program, particularly regarding its impact on improving teachers' professionalism, both for Guru Penggerak themselves and for other teachers within the district's educational environment (Cole, 2024).

Qualitative methods are used to obtain in-depth data containing meaningful insights, which represent actual conditions (Sugiyono, 2017). In this study, the author selected online interview data collection via Google Forms due to its flexibility and ability to reach respondents across the geographically challenging areas of Mandailing Natal (DEWI, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents an integrated analysis of the research findings and their discussion regarding the role of Guru Penggerak (Mobilizing Teachers) in driving educational transformation in Mandailing Natal District. The discussion is organized into three major subheadings to ensure analytical depth, coherence, and clarity: (1) the strategic roles and programs of Guru Penggerak, (2) the impacts of Guru Penggerak on school culture, teacher professionalism, and student learning, and (3) the challenges, constraints, and adaptive strategies in program implementation. To enrich the presentation of findings, this section also includes tables and graphical descriptions that synthesize qualitative data derived from interviews, observations, and document analysis.

Strategic Roles and Program Implementation of Guru Penggerak

The findings indicate that the role of Guru Penggerak extends beyond conventional teaching responsibilities. While fundamentally sharing the same core duties as non-mobilizing teachers such as lesson planning, classroom instruction, and learning evaluation Guru Penggerak assume additional strategic roles as catalysts of educational change (Nurrahmasari

& Setiawan, 2025). These roles position them as key actors in promoting adaptive, innovative, and student-centered learning practices within schools and across educational communities (Retnowati et al., 2024).

Based on interview data, Guru Penggerak in Mandailing Natal actively implement a range of programs aligned with national education policies, particularly those related to the Merdeka Belajar initiative and the Merdeka Curriculum. Their programs are not only instructional in nature but also cultural and managerial, aiming to foster discipline, collaboration, innovation, and continuous professional development among teachers.

Table 1. Main Programs Implemented by Guru Penggerak in Mandailing Natal District

No.	Program Area	Description of Activities	Primary Objectives
1	Policy Implementation	Executing Ministry of Education programs and directives	Ensuring policy alignment and adaptability
2	School Culture Development	Instilling discipline and positive behavior	Building a conducive learning environment
3	Learning Communities	Forming intra- and extra-school learning groups	Strengthening collaboration and knowledge sharing
4	ICT Competency	Enhancing teachers' IT skills	Increasing efficiency and digital independence
5	Professional Development	Conducting training, webinars, and workshops	Improving teacher professionalism
6	Teacher Facilitation	Acting as facilitators for non-mobilizing teachers	Encouraging innovation and creativity
7	Innovative Pedagogy	Applying creative and adaptive teaching methods	Improving student engagement
8	Literacy Culture	Promoting reading and literacy activities	Enhancing students' literacy skills
9	Leadership Development	Guiding prospective Guru Penggerak	Ensuring program sustainability
10	Mentoring and Coaching	Providing guidance and mentoring for colleagues	Strengthening instructional quality

The table illustrates that the programs carried out by Guru Penggerak are multidimensional, addressing not only classroom instruction but also broader aspects of school governance, professional culture, and leadership regeneration. This finding supports the conceptual framework that positions Guru Penggerak as change agents who mobilize educational stakeholders toward continuous improvement (Umar & Tasrim, 2025).

From a strategic perspective, the formation of learning communities both formal and informal emerges as one of the most impactful initiatives. The use of digital platforms such as WhatsApp groups enables rapid dissemination of information, peer support, and collaborative problem-solving. This aligns with contemporary theories of professional learning communities, which emphasize collective inquiry, shared practice, and reflective dialogue as drivers of school improvement.

Impacts on School Culture, Teacher Professionalism, and Student Learning

The implementation of the Guru Penggerak program has produced significant and multidimensional impacts across school culture, teacher professionalism, and student learning experiences. The findings indicate that the presence of Guru Penggerak contributes to a gradual yet meaningful transformation of the educational environment, shifting schools toward more positive, disciplined, and innovation-oriented practices (Norman et al., 2025). Rather than generating immediate structural change, the program operates through sustained leadership, modeling, and collaboration, allowing reform to be internalized by teachers and students alike.

One of the most visible impacts of the Guru Penggerak program is the transformation of school culture. Schools involved in the program demonstrate a noticeable strengthening of discipline, openness to change, and collaborative professional practices (Sahroni & Subroto, 2022). Guru Penggerak play a pivotal role in shaping this cultural shift by consistently modeling ethical behavior, professional responsibility, and commitment to continuous improvement. Their daily actions such as punctuality, preparedness, and reflective practice serve as implicit messages that influence both colleagues and students. Over time, these behaviors contribute to the normalization of higher professional standards within the school environment.

The conceptual graph illustrating school culture improvement after the intervention of Guru Penggerak reflects a steady upward trend in indicators such as discipline, collaboration, and pedagogical innovation. This gradual improvement suggests that cultural change in educational institutions is not instantaneous but cumulative, requiring consistency and shared commitment. The findings emphasize that sustainable cultural transformation emerges when leadership is practiced collectively rather than imposed hierarchically. Guru Penggerak function as cultural mediators who bridge policy expectations with everyday school practices, enabling reforms to be accepted and sustained at the grassroots level.

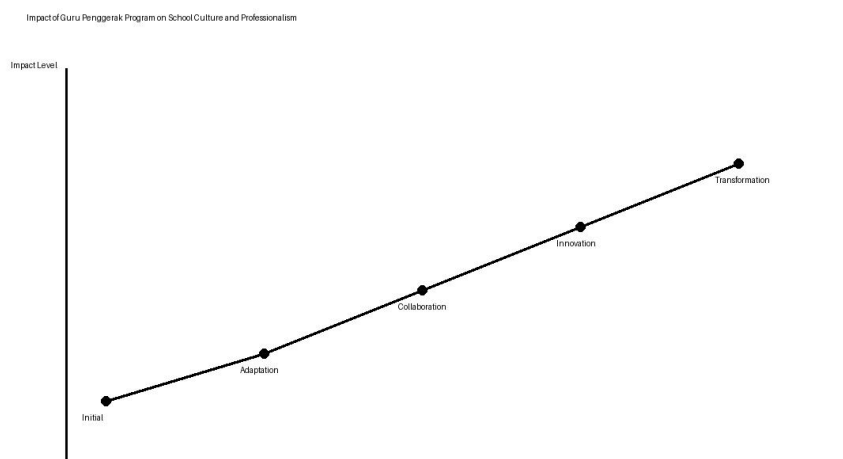


Figure 1. Improvement of School Culture After the Implementation of the Guru Penggerak Program

Beyond cultural transformation, the program has a substantial impact on enhancing teacher professionalism. Guru Penggerak are widely perceived by their peers as educators who are more creative, adaptive, and innovative in responding to changing educational demands. Their active engagement in continuous professional development activities – such as training programs, seminars, webinars, and learning community discussions – strengthens their pedagogical knowledge and professional confidence. This continuous exposure to new ideas

and reflective dialogue allows Guru Penggerak to remain responsive to curriculum reforms, particularly those associated with the Merdeka Curriculum and student-centered learning paradigms.

Importantly, the benefits of enhanced professionalism extend beyond the Guru Penggerak themselves. Interview findings reveal that non-mobilizing teachers experience indirect professional growth through mentoring, coaching, and collaborative exchanges facilitated by Guru Penggerak. Acting as resource persons, Guru Penggerak provide practical support in areas such as classroom management, instructional planning, assessment strategies, and the integration of digital technologies. This peer-based support system makes professional learning more contextual and relevant to classroom realities, thereby increasing its effectiveness and sustainability. The comparison between Guru Penggerak and non-mobilizing teachers highlights clear differences in attitudes toward change, use of technology, curriculum understanding, and leadership orientation, underscoring the program's role in cultivating teacher leadership and professional agency (Salim et al., 2024).

At the student level, the influence of Guru Penggerak is reflected in more engaging learning experiences and stronger character development. The application of creative and innovative teaching methods encourages active student participation, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. Learning activities are designed to be more interactive and meaningful, allowing students to connect academic content with real-life contexts (Zulfikar, 2018). As a result, students are not merely passive recipients of information but active participants in the learning process.

Furthermore, the emphasis on literacy culture introduced by Guru Penggerak has contributed to improved reading habits and comprehension among students. Daily reading activities, reflective reporting, and discussions about reading materials help cultivate a habit of critical engagement with texts. This focus on literacy is particularly significant in addressing longstanding concerns about low reading interest and comprehension levels. By integrating literacy practices into routine classroom activities, Guru Penggerak help normalize reading as an essential component of learning rather than an additional task (Zakaria & Rosmiati, 2025).

These improvements in student learning and character development are closely aligned with the objectives of the Pancasila Student Profile, which emphasizes holistic development encompassing cognitive, social, moral, and emotional dimensions. Through student-centered approaches, Guru Penggerak translate abstract policy ideals into concrete classroom practices that prioritize students' needs, interests, and potentials. The findings suggest that when teachers are empowered as leaders and innovators, policy reforms are more likely to be realized in meaningful and contextually appropriate ways.

Overall, the impacts observed across school culture, teacher professionalism, and student learning demonstrate that the Guru Penggerak program functions as a catalyst for systemic change. While the transformation process is gradual, its sustainability lies in the program's emphasis on collaboration, reflective practice, and professional empowerment. These findings reinforce the strategic importance of Guru Penggerak in fostering an education system that is adaptive, inclusive, and responsive to contemporary challenges.

Challenges, Constraints, and Adaptive Strategies in Program Implementation

Despite the various positive impacts generated by the implementation of the Guru Penggerak program, the findings clearly indicate that the program is accompanied by a number of structural, cultural, and personal challenges that affect both its consistency and overall effectiveness. These challenges are not merely technical obstacles but are deeply embedded in the complex realities of school environments, teacher workloads, and long-standing professional cultures. Understanding these constraints is essential to contextualize the effectiveness of the program and to evaluate its sustainability as a model of educational transformation.

One of the most prominent internal challenges faced by Guru Penggerak relates to fluctuations in motivation and personal consistency. The findings reveal that Guru Penggerak are often required to perform multiple roles simultaneously, functioning not only as classroom teachers but also as mentors, facilitators, and agents of change within their schools (Hanifa & Ibrahim, 2025). This accumulation of responsibilities, combined with routine teaching demands, frequently leads to emotional fatigue and a sense of being overwhelmed. Moreover, the persistence of low student motivation in certain contexts further exacerbates this condition, as teachers may feel that their efforts do not always produce immediate or visible outcomes. These conditions highlight the psychological and emotional dimensions of educational leadership, where sustaining motivation becomes as critical as possessing pedagogical competence. Without adequate emotional support and institutional recognition, even highly committed Guru Penggerak may experience a decline in enthusiasm, which can ultimately affect program continuity (Ahmad Hafiz Pratama et al., 2024).

In addition to internal challenges, external constraints play a significant role in shaping the implementation process. Time limitation emerges as one of the most dominant external challenges. Guru Penggerak are required to balance teaching duties, administrative responsibilities, mentoring activities, and participation in professional development programs. These overlapping demands often result in limited opportunities to focus intensively on mobilization activities. As a consequence, some program initiatives are implemented in a fragmented or less-than-optimal manner. This finding reflects a broader structural issue within the education system, where innovative programs are introduced without a proportional adjustment in workload distribution. The effectiveness of the Guru Penggerak program, therefore, is closely tied to institutional policies that recognize and accommodate the additional responsibilities borne by these teachers (Noviani et al., 2024).

Another major external challenge identified in this study is resistance to change among non-mobilizing teachers. Many teachers have developed long-standing habits and instructional routines that they perceive as effective and sufficient. This sense of comfort with established practices often leads to reluctance or even rejection of new pedagogical approaches, particularly those involving technology integration. The findings suggest that resistance is not necessarily rooted in opposition to improvement but rather in fear of inadequacy, lack of confidence, or limited digital literacy. This condition underscores the complexity of educational change, which extends beyond the introduction of new methods or policies and requires a fundamental shift in mindset, professional identity, and willingness to engage in continuous learning.

In response to these internal and external challenges, Guru Penggerak have developed various adaptive strategies to maintain program effectiveness and sustainability. One of the most effective strategies identified is the establishment of regular learning community meetings with flexible scheduling. By organizing monthly learning communities, Guru Penggerak create structured yet manageable spaces for professional dialogue, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving (Awiria et al., 2025). These forums allow teachers to share experiences, discuss classroom challenges, and gradually familiarize themselves with new approaches without feeling pressured or overwhelmed. Importantly, this strategy helps integrate professional development into teachers' routine activities rather than positioning it as an additional burden.

Furthermore, Guru Penggerak tend to adopt a persuasive and exemplary leadership approach rather than a directive or authoritative one. Instead of forcing change, they model innovative teaching practices and demonstrate tangible benefits, such as improved student engagement or more efficient use of technology. This modeling approach has proven effective in reducing resistance, as colleagues are more likely to adopt new practices when they witness successful implementation by peers they trust. This leadership style aligns closely with transformational leadership theory, which emphasizes inspiration, role modeling, trust-building, and the articulation of a shared vision as key mechanisms for sustainable change. Through this approach, Guru Penggerak gradually foster a culture of openness, experimentation, and professional growth within their schools.

Overall, the findings suggest that while structural and cultural challenges remain significant, the adaptive capacity of Guru Penggerak plays a crucial role in sustaining educational transformation. Their ability to navigate emotional pressures, manage time constraints, and respond constructively to resistance reflects a high level of professional resilience and leadership maturity. These qualities enable the program to function not merely as a policy initiative but as a living process of continuous improvement within schools.

In summary, the results and discussion demonstrate that Guru Penggerak serve as pivotal agents of change who significantly influence school culture, teacher professionalism, and student learning. Through strategic program implementation, collaborative leadership, and adaptive problem-solving, they contribute to the development of a more innovative, student-centered, and resilient education system in Mandailing Natal District. The challenges they face do not diminish the value of the program; rather, they highlight the importance of sustained institutional support and systemic alignment to ensure the long-term success of educational transformation initiatives.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Guru Penggerak program plays a significant role in promoting educational transformation at the school level in Mandailing Natal District. The findings show that Guru Penggerak act as agents of change who positively influence school culture, enhance teacher professionalism, and improve student learning experiences. Through consistent leadership and collaborative practices, the program contributes to the development of a more disciplined, innovative, and student-centered educational environment. The study also highlights the program's effectiveness in strengthening teacher professionalism through continuous learning, mentoring, and professional learning communities, with positive spillover

effects for non-mobilizing teachers. At the student level, the application of innovative pedagogy and the promotion of literacy culture support holistic development in line with the Pancasila Student Profile.

Despite these benefits, the implementation of the Guru Penggerak program faces challenges, including workload pressures, time constraints, and resistance to change. However, the adaptive strategies employed by Guru Penggerak demonstrate strong professional resilience and contribute to program sustainability. Overall, the findings suggest that the long-term success of the Guru Penggerak program depends on adequate institutional support, collaborative school cultures, and systemic alignment. Future research is recommended to examine the program's long-term impact, explore diverse educational contexts, and employ mixed-method approaches to strengthen empirical evidence.

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