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Teachers' Perception of Relevance and Necessity of *Guru Penggerak Program* in Upstream Area of West Kalimantan

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki persepsi guru tentang relevansi dan kebutuhan Program Guru Penggerak dalam mengatasi tantangan sekolah dan meningkatkan praktik mengajar di daerah hulu Kalimantan Barat. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan survei kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan dari 117 guru di 16 sekolah di Kapuas Hulu, Sanggau, Melawi, dan Sintang, dengan 14 di antaranya adalah peserta Guru Penggerak . Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa skor persepsi rata-rata untuk relevansi adalah 3,18, dan untuk kebutuhan adalah 3,04, yang menunjukkan persepsi yang cukup positif. Analisis lebih lanjut menggunakan uji Mann-Whitney U dan Kruskal-Wallis tidak menunjukkan perbedaan yang signifikan dalam persepsi berdasarkan jenis kelamin, mata pelajaran yang diajarkan, partisipasi dalam program, atau tingkat sekolah. Namun, perbedaan yang signifikan ditemukan di seluruh kabupaten. Guru di Melawi dan Kapuas Hulu menunjukkan persepsi yang lebih tinggi terhadap relevansi dan kebutuhan dibandingkan dengan mereka di Sanggau. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa meskipun Program Guru Penggerak secara umum dianggap relevan dan perlu, dampak implementasinya bervariasi di seluruh wilayah, yang menunjukkan perlunya kebijakan dan dukungan yang peka terhadap konteks di lingkungan pendidikan pedesaan.

Kata Kunci: *persepsi guru, Program Guru Penggerak , relevansi, kebutuhan, sekolah hulu.*

Abstract

This study aims to investigate teachers' perceptions of the relevance and necessity of the *Guru Penggerak* Program in addressing school challenges and enhancing teaching practices in upstream areas of West Kalimantan. Using a quantitative survey approach, data were collected from 117 teachers across 16 schools in Kapuas Hulu, Sanggau, Melawi, and Sintang, with 14 of them being *Guru Penggerak* participants. The findings revealed that the average perception score for relevance was 3.18, and for necessity was 3.04, indicating moderately positive perceptions. Further analysis using the Mann-Whitney U and Kruskal-Wallis tests showed no significant differences in perceptions based on gender, subject taught, participation in the program, or school level. However, significant differences were found across districts. Teachers in Melawi and Kapuas Hulu demonstrated higher perceptions of both relevance and necessity compared to those in Sanggau. The study concludes that while the *Guru Penggerak* Program is generally perceived as relevant and necessary, its implementation impact varies across regions, suggesting the need for context-sensitive policies and support in rural educational settings.

Keywords: teachers' perception, *Guru Penggerak* Program, relevance, necessity, upstream schools.

INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a cornerstone in nurturing and developing students' potential. However, the Indonesian education system continues to face persistent challenges, particularly the low quality of teacher competence (Fitria in Nur Auliah Kurniawati, 2022; cited from Manao et al 2022.). As professional educators, teachers hold three fundamental responsibilities: educating, teaching, and training (Damayanti et al., 2024). To enhance these

competencies, continuous professional development is essential. One effective approach is *Professional Learning*, which emphasizes self-reflection, collaboration, and the integration of various learning resources, including research findings (Irwan & Putra, 2021).

In response to these challenges, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (*Kemendikbudristek*) launched the *Guru Penggerak* (Teacher Mobilizer) Program. This initiative is aligned with the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum and is aimed at strengthening the quality of education through teacher leadership. According to Putri et al. (2024) the role of *Guru Penggerak* extends beyond classroom instruction, including active engagement in school development. Lubis et al. (2023) further emphasized that *Guru Penggerak* serves as a mentor for other teachers, promoting exemplary teaching practices and encouraging collaborative and student-centered learning approaches (Kementerian Pendidikan, 2022).

As of March 2024, the program has involved 26,885 participants across 319 districts/municipalities in 38 provinces, with 61,256 graduates from cohorts 1 to 8. Notably, 11,852 of these graduates have been appointed as school principals or supervisors (Menteri Pendidikan, 2024). These statistics reflect the significant impact of the *Guru Penggerak* Program on educational leadership in Indonesia.

Despite its achievements, the program is not without its challenges. Geographical isolation, limited infrastructure, and technological barriers continue to hinder implementation, particularly in rural and upstream regions. Moreover, resistance to change from educators and institutions, disparities in participant capacity, and organizational culture issues also affect program outcomes ((Agustina & Dewi, 2024; Hastuti et al., 2024) Importantly, teacher perceptions play a crucial role in determining the success of educational innovations. According to (Sherly, 2025) positive teacher perceptions are shaped by supportive infrastructure, a conducive work environment, and continuous training. (Siolimbona et al., 2024)) affirmed that *Guru Penggerak* participants have inspired and motivated their peers, promoted curriculum development, and shared best practices.

However, limited research exists that explores how teachers from different disciplines—particularly English and non-English teachers—perceive the program in rural areas like Kapuas Hulu Regency, West Kalimantan. Given that different subject areas may involve different pedagogical needs and challenges, understanding these perceptual differences is essential. Additionally, the burdensome administrative requirements, the

competitive selection process, and inconsistent school-level support pose significant barriers to teacher engagement with the program.

Therefore, this study focuses on examining teachers' perceptions of the *Guru Penggerak* Program in upstream schools in West Kalimantan, with a specific emphasis on comparing English and non-English teachers. The aim is to provide a nuanced understanding of the program's relevance and necessity in improving the teaching and learning process in rural settings. By identifying both the benefits and the challenges, this study contributes to the broader discourse on teacher empowerment and education reform in Indonesia.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative descriptive survey to measure teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of the *Guru Penggerak* Program by collecting numerical data through Likert-scale questionnaires. This approach enables researchers to objectively analyse patterns and trends using statistical tools (Irwan & Surachman, 2023). The research was conducted in schools located in upstream areas of West Kalimantan—specifically in Kapuas Hulu, Sanggau, Melawi, and Sintang—targeting both English and non-English teachers involved in the *Guru Penggerak* Program. A total of 117 teachers from 16 schools participated, including 14 teachers who had officially been designated as *Guru Penggerak*. The schools were selected based on their participation in the program and the willingness of their teachers to respond to the survey. Due to time and budget limitations, the sample was not meant for generalization but offers meaningful insights for understanding similar rural contexts.

The data were collected through an indirect communication method in the form of a structured survey, utilizing closed-ended multiple-choice questionnaires based on a Likert scale, chosen for its effectiveness in measuring levels of agreement or disagreement. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software (Pallant, 2020) through both descriptive (frequency and mean) and inferential statistics. Inferential analysis involved independent samples t-tests (Field, 2013) to compare perceptions between English and non-English teachers, assuming data normality and homogeneity. For three or more group comparisons, ANOVA was employed. When data did not meet the assumptions of normality or homogeneity, the Mann-Whitney U test (Sugiyono, 2018) was used as a nonparametric alternative. This layered analytical process ensured accuracy in identifying significant trends and differences in teacher perceptions regarding the *Guru Penggerak* Program.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Relevance and Necessity of The *Guru Penggerak* Towards Challenges Faced by school of *Guru Penggerak* Program on Upstream Area in West Kalimantan based on Subject Taught

Table 1. Tests of Normality on Teachers' Perceptions of Relevance by Subject Taught

Tests of Normality							
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	subject taugt	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Averages teachers, perception of relevance	English teaches	.212	17	.040	.833	17	.006
	Non-English teachers	.123	100	.001	.952	100	.001
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 2. Mann-Whitney U Test Results on Teachers' Perceptions of Relevance Based on Subject Taught

Test Statistics[a]	
	Averages teachers, perception of relevance
Mann-Whitney U	812.500
Wilcoxon W	5862.500
Z	-.293
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.769
a. Grouping Variable: subject taugt	

The results of the normality test showed that the data from both groups—English and non-English teachers—were not normally distributed, as indicated by a significance value below 0.05. Consequently, the analysis proceeded using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test. The results of this test revealed no significant difference in perceptions between the two groups regarding the relevance of the *Guru Penggerak* Program, with a p-value exceeding 0.05. This finding indicates that teachers across disciplines share a similar perspective on the program's importance in addressing school-related challenges and fostering professional development. These results are supported by studies from Manao et al. (2022) and Nuraini et al. (2025), which also highlighted the program's role in enhancing teacher competence across various subjects, reinforcing the notion that its benefits are widely and consistently perceived by educators regardless of their teaching background.

Table 3. Tests of Normality on Teachers' Perceptions of Necessity by Subject Taught

Tests of Normality							
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Subject taught	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Averages teachers perception of necessity	English teaches	.187	17	.116	.838	17	.007
	Non-English teachers	.188	100	.000	.912	100	.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 4. Mann-Whitney U Test Results on Teachers' Perceptions of Neecssity Based on Subject Taught

Test Statistics[a]	
	Averages teachers' perception of necessity
Mann-Whitney U	735.000
Wilcoxon W	5785.000
Z	-.916
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.360
a. Grouping Variable: subject taugt	

The results of the normality test showed that the data from both groups—English and non-English teachers—were not normally distributed. Therefore, the analysis of differences in perception between the groups was conducted using the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test. The analysis revealed no significant difference in how English and non-English teachers perceive the urgency of the *Guru Penggerak* Program, as indicated by a p-value above 0.05. These findings suggest that teachers from various subject areas share a common understanding of the program's importance. Supporting studies by Nuraini et al. (2025) and Risdianto et al. (2024) also found that the program enhanced pedagogical and professional competencies, as well as teacher motivation and creativity across disciplines, reinforcing the conclusion that the program is widely regarded as a valuable tool for professional development.

The Relevance and Necessity of The *Guru Penggerak* Towards Challenges Faced by school of *Guru Penggerak* Program on Upstream Area in West Kalimantan based on Region

Table 5: Tests of Normality on Teachers' Perceptions of Relevance by Region of Origin

Tests of Normality							
		Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Regency	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Averages teachers' perception of relevance	Sanggau	.188	20	.061	.881	20	.018
	Melawi	.169	49	.001	.924	49	.004
	Sintang	.158	30	.055	.937	30	.077
	Kapuas Hulu	.228	18	.014	.839	18	.006
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 6: Kruskal Walis Test Results on Teachers' Perceptions of Relevance Based on Region of Origin

Test Statistics[a,b]	
	Averages teachers' perception of relevance
Kruskal-Wallis H	16.945
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.001
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: Regency	

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests indicated that the data on teachers' perceptions of the relevance of the *Guru Penggerak* Program were not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$). As a result, non-parametric tests were employed for further analysis. The differences in teacher perceptions based on their teaching area are consistent with findings from previous studies. Fadila et al. (2023) observed that teachers in remote areas such as SDN 209/III Masgo Jaya struggle to master teaching skills due to limited access to training and challenging geographical conditions. Similarly, Rahayu et al. (2019) reported that teachers in Damang Batu District, Central Kalimantan, have a strong need for professional development but face obstacles in accessing MGMP forums and training due to natural barriers and transportation difficulties. These contextual limitations contribute to varying perceptions regarding the urgency and effectiveness of the *Guru Penggerak* Program between teachers in upstream regions and those in more accessible areas

Table 7: Tests of Normality on Teachers' Perceptions of Necessity by Region of Origin

Tests of Normality							
	Regency	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Averages teachers' perception of necessity	Sanggau	.196	20	.042	.854	20	.006
	Melawi	.271	49	.000	.861	49	.000
	Sintang	.188	30	.008	.922	30	.029
	Kapuas Hulu	.200	18	.055	.845	18	.007
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction							

Table 8: Kruskal Walis Test Results on Teachers' Perceptions of Necessity Based on Region of Origin

Test Statistics[a,b]	
	Averages teachers perception of necessity
Kruskal-Wallis H	10.925
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.012
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: Regency	

Based on the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, most of the data on teachers' perceptions of needs by district were not normally distributed ($p < 0.05$). As a result, the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test was applied for further analysis. The test revealed a significant difference in the perception of urgency based on region ($p = 0.012$), with teachers in Melawi (Mean Rank = 67.90) and Kapuas Hulu (64.97) showing higher urgency compared to those in Sanggau (41.58). Post hoc analysis using the Mann-Whitney U test with Bonferroni correction confirmed a significant difference only between Sanggau and Melawi ($p = 0.042$). These findings align with Wulandari et al. (2021), who noted that disparities in infrastructure, access to training, and school management contribute to regional

variations in perceived program urgency. Similarly, Fadila et al. (2023) emphasized that teachers in upstream areas face greater professional challenges due to limited access to capacity-building opportunities and geographical barriers, resulting in a heightened sense of urgency regarding the *Guru Penggerak* Program.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant role of the *Guru Penggerak* Program in addressing educational challenges in rural and upstream areas of West Kalimantan. Teachers from both English and non-English backgrounds share similar perceptions of the program's relevance and necessity, indicating its broad acceptance and potential for fostering professional development across disciplines. Statistical analysis using non-parametric tests confirmed that there are no significant differences in perceptions based on the subject taught; however, regional differences in perception were observed, suggesting that local context and school conditions influence how the program is received. While the *Guru Penggerak* Program has shown notable progress in strengthening educational leadership and teacher competence, it continues to face obstacles such as limited infrastructure, geographical isolation, and varied school support. Nonetheless, teachers generally view the program as a valuable initiative that contributes to improving teaching practices and motivating professional growth. By exploring these perceptions in rural areas, this study provides insight into the effectiveness and challenges of national education reforms and underscores the importance of continuous support and contextual adaptation to ensure inclusive and equitable teacher development across Indonesia.

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