Analysis of the Problems of Implementing *Sekolah Penggerak* Program in Improving Teacher Quality in Junior High School

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the problems in implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program located at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci in the 2024/2025 school year, with the samples used are teachers and principals. This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the challenges in implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with teachers and principals and observations of teaching activities and program implementation at school. Data analysis was done thematically to identify the main obstacles teachers face and explore strategies that can be applied to increase the program's effectiveness in improving teaching quality. The results show that although the program has great potential to improve the quality of education, various challenges arise, such as technology adaptation among senior teachers and traditional learning methods. A more intensive approach is needed to overcome these obstacles, such as more focused training, personal mentoring, and adequate resource support. This research implies the need for active involvement of all parties, including school principals and education offices, in supporting the program's success. The program requires technical and school culture changes that support innovative and collaborative learning to improve education quality sustainably.
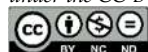
Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis permasalahan dalam pelaksanaan program sekolah penggerak yang berlokasi di SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci pada tahun ajaran 2024/2025 dengan sampel yang digunakan adalah guru dan kepala sekolah. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus untuk menganalisis tantangan dalam pelaksanaan program sekolah mengemudi. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan guru, kepala sekolah, dan observasi terhadap kegiatan belajar mengajar dan pelaksanaan program di sekolah. Analisis data dilakukan secara tematik untuk mengidentifikasi kendala utama yang dihadapi oleh guru dan mengeksplorasi strategi yang dapat diterapkan untuk meningkatkan efektivitas program dalam meningkatkan kualitas pengajaran. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun program ini memiliki potensi besar dalam meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan, berbagai tantangan muncul, seperti adaptasi teknologi di kalangan guru senior dan penggunaan metode pembelajaran tradisional. Untuk mengatasi kendala tersebut, diperlukan pendekatan yang lebih intensif, seperti pelatihan yang lebih terfokus, pendampingan secara personal, dan penyediaan dukungan sumber daya yang memadai. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah perlunya keterlibatan aktif semua pihak, termasuk kepala sekolah dan dinas pendidikan, dalam mendukung keberhasilan program. Program ini tidak hanya membutuhkan perubahan teknis, tetapi juga perubahan budaya sekolah yang mendukung pembelajaran yang inovatif dan kolaboratif untuk meningkatkan kualitas pendidikan secara berkelanjutan

A. Introduction

To improve the quality of education in Indonesia, teachers act as the main driver in the learning process and have an essential function in leading learning (Nurfadillah & Mustika, 2024). The teacher is not only a teacher but also a companion who can create a conducive learning environment and inspire and motivate students to achieve their maximum potential. Teachers play an essential role in improving the quality of education and providing an efficient learning environment (Buchari, 2018). Good teacher performance will have a positive impact on student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is essential to improve the quality of teacher performance.

Teachers are faced with various challenges in improving the quality of education and the quality of learning in particular (Fajriana & Aliyah, 2019), limited funds, lack of adequate learning facilities (Devi et al., 2023), Rapid changes in education policy and curriculum are often an obstacle that hinders teacher quality improvement (Efendi & Sholeh, 2023), have many tasks and heavy burdens (Babullah et al., 2024). In addition to teaching students, their responsibilities also include managing the curriculum, handling performance evaluations, performing administrative tasks, and participating in extracurricular activities (Wahyudin, 2020). Teachers' various challenges must be met and resolved to advance education and educate the nation's children.

To overcome these challenges, deep and sustained action is needed. The action is also not arbitrary because the stakes are Indonesian education. Thus, the Indonesian government has launched various programs designed to improve teacher competence and professionalism through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology. One of the flagship programs launched is the *Sekolah Penggerak* program (Makarim, 2021). The *Sekolah Penggerak* program aims to accelerate the transformation of education through improving the quality of schools and teachers (Sakdiah et al., 2023). To produce graduates who are characterized, competent, and highly competitive. In its implementation, the *Sekolah Penggerak* program has several problems, including limited human resources and infrastructure (Meiyanti, 2018). The primary human resources in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program are teachers. The lack of trained teachers can undoubtedly hinder achieving the program's goals. Not all teachers in schools have sufficient skills or knowledge to implement the curriculum and learning methods advocated in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program, limited access to adequate devices and infrastructure, and concerns about the effective use of technology in learning (Suryaningsih & Purnomo, 2023). Access to computers, stable internet, or other technological equipment may hinder learning, and concerns that technology is not used effectively or efficiently (Raihan & Nurzalkinah, 2024). In addition to teachers, understanding the school principal is the main factor in running the *Sekolah Penggerak* program because they will be the first to coordinate with the teachers.

The principal's lack of understanding of the leadership competency model in the *Sekolah Penggerak* is also a problem (Rahayuningsih & Rijanto, 2022). The principal has not

been able to formulate and communicate an appropriate vision and mission for their school, which is aligned with the objectives of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program (Muspawi et al., 2023), and school principals have not fully understood or mastered the concepts and leadership skills needed to implement the Sekolah penggerak program. Poor communication between the central government, local governments, and schools can lead to misunderstandings and difficulties in implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program (Masyhuda et al., 2023).

Research conducted by Muhammad Fahrurroji Tantawi at SMPN 18 Banda Aceh found that the obstacles faced by principals are not having enough book capacity, teachers being confused about the use of learning modules, and training on *Sekolah Penggerak* programs still minimal (Tantawi, 2024). Furthermore, research conducted by Nurmayani, Winanda and Bahri, Syaiful and Fathurrohman, and Irwan at SDN 163 Rejang Lebong faced obstacles that were not complete with sufficient facilities and infrastructure, there were still teachers confused about the use of teaching modules, and program training was still minimal. Research conducted by Nur Mawaddah Islamiyah in elementary schools in Bima City, NTB, revealed that the obstacles to the implementation of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program are related to the lack of budget allocated by the government to schools (Islamiyah, 2022). Research conducted by Ismail & M. Luthfi at UPT SD Negeri 211 Gresik there is a problem of not understanding the principles of assessment to how the form of learning outcome reports in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program (Marzuki & Oktarianto, 2022).

Previous research is more inclined to discuss the competence of school principals in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. Research conducted by Rahayuningsig & Rijanto Since 2021 in Nganjuk Regency, many schools have been labeled as *Sekolah Penggerak*. The problem faced by the principal of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is the lack of knowledge of the principal about the leadership competency model in the *Sekolah Penggerak* (Rahayuningsih & Rijanto, 2022), and not many studies have focused on the issue of improving the quality of teachers in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. Teachers who act as learning facilitators guide students in developing their interests, talents, and skills (Amelia, 2023). So, this research will explore the problems of improving teacher quality in *Sekolah Penggerak* programs. Almost every region has a *Sekolah Penggerak* program initiated by the Indonesian government, one of which is the Kerinci Regency. However, there has not been much in-depth research on improving teacher competence in *Sekolah Penggerak*.

Therefore, it is essential to conduct this research to improve teachers' competencies in trigger schools because the trigger school program is one of the strategic efforts designed to improve the quality of education by increasing teachers' capacity and competencies. As described by Azzaro (2022), the *Sekolah Penggerak* program will create an educational ecosystem that encourages student-centered learning and provides opportunities for teachers to continue developing their professional competencies (Patilima, 2022) and the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is also a strategy to improve the quality of education that brings collaboration between the Ministry of Education, Research and

Technology and local governments (Katman & Akadira, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to conduct follow-up research on the quality of teachers in Sekolah Penggerak.

SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung Village is also one of the schools that is part of the implementation of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program, which is expected to be an example for other schools in improving the quality of education. As a *Sekolah Penggerak*, SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung is expected to implement the program effectively, but it can face various challenges that require in-depth understanding and appropriate strategies. So, the purpose of this researcher conducting this study is to identify problems that arise in the implementation of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program and find solutions that can improve teacher competence and learning quality to support the achievement of the objectives of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program optimally. So, the purpose of this research is to analyze the challenges faced in implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program related to improving the quality of teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung and identify solution strategies that can be applied to overcome these challenges. The results of this research can make a real contribution to efforts to improve teacher quality in schools that face similar obstacles.

B. Method

This study aims to analyze the problems in implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program located at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci in the 2024/2025 school year, with the sample used being teachers and principals. This research also explores the strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges faced by the *Sekolah Penggerak*. This research used a qualitative approach with the case study method to analyze the obstacles faced in implementing this program. This approach was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' and related parties' experiences, views, and perceptions towards implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. The stages of data collection include: 1) Participatory observation technique at the research location, namely at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung. The researcher will conduct participatory observation to see firsthand the implementation of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program at school. This observation includes learning activities, teacher training, and interaction between teachers and students. 2) Interviews were conducted with the principal and teachers to obtain information about the challenges and solution strategies implemented in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program 3) Documentation study. Data was also collected through documentation studies, such as school policy documents, program implementation reports, and program evaluation records. This documentation will provide additional data supporting the findings from interviews and observations.

Data analysis was conducted through data reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing from the data obtained. Data reduction involved selecting data relevant to the issue of implementing a *Sekolah Penggerak* program at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung, which aims to improve teacher quality. Furthermore, data presentation was

conducted to provide a clear picture of the challenges and solution strategies that can be applied in this context.
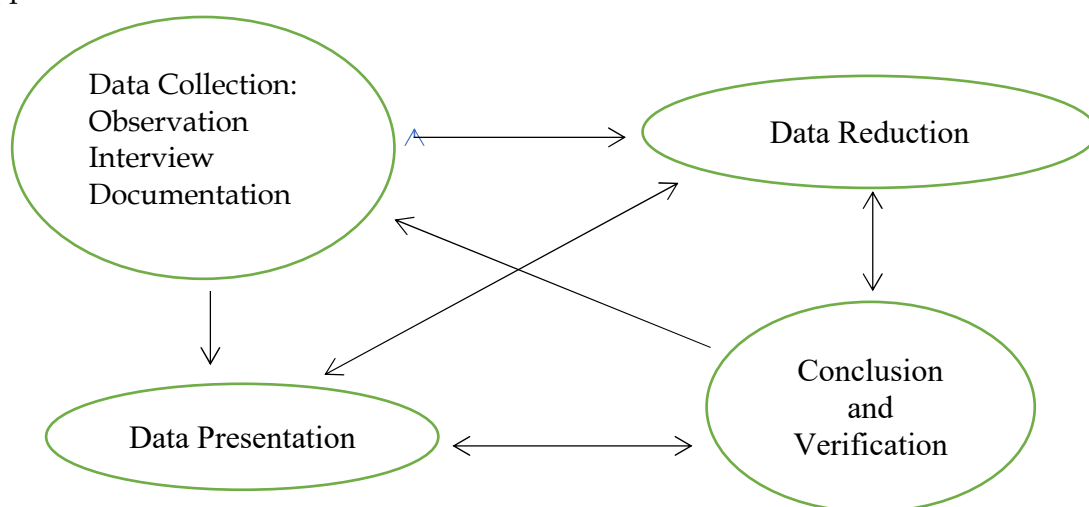

Figure 1. Research Design

C. Result and Discussion
Result

Problematics of the Implementation of *Sekolah Penggerak* Program
Principal's Understanding of the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program

The principal of SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci must understand how to apply to the *Sekolah Penggerak* program. Principals should understand the vision and goals, the selection and implementation process, the development of learning outcomes, and the understanding of how to be a principal and teacher in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program.

Based on the observations made, the principal has a complete understanding of this program. This is evidenced by the principal's ability to explain in detail the objectives and main components of the program, such as improving the quality of learning, developing teacher and student competencies, and implementing a competency-based curriculum. However, there are still obstacles in mobilizing and motivating teachers to actively participate in implementing the program because teachers have different characters; some can accept changes directly, and some cannot. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted on November 11, 2024, with Mrs. (LA). He said:

> *"Regarding understanding, I do have a full understanding, both in terms of vision and objectives, and the principal includes all school parties in preparing the vision and objectives according to school needs, but sometimes there are some practices in the field that are still not optimal. This is because the character of teachers is different, even though they have been given training."* (LA)

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> *''It is true that some teachers do not fully understand this program. Because this program is a new program implemented at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, we teachers find it difficult to accept changes, especially older teachers. They find it difficult to understand the program even though they have participated in training'. (M)*

So, based on the observations and interviews above, the principal of SMP Negeri 3 Kerinci has a complete understanding of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program, including its vision, objectives, selection process, and program implementation. However, motivating and *Guru Penggerak* to participate actively in implementing the program is a significant obstacle. This is because teachers have different characters, some of whom can accept changes immediately, and some cannot, despite the training that has been provided. The gap between principals' theoretical understanding and practice in the field suggests the need for more effective strategies to ensure teachers' more profound understanding and involvement in the program.

Principal Involvement in the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program

Principals in these schools should be involved in training and mentoring, the role of principals in supporting the strengthening of teachers' competencies, participation in the evaluation and monitoring of program implementation, and principals' efforts in ensuring the use of technology in learning.

Based on the observations, the *Sekolah Penggerak* principal at SMP Negeri 3 Kerinci has provided training and mentoring, as well as supporting the strengthening of teacher competencies. This is evidenced by the principal having a schedule of activities that are often carried out every two months. The principal also conducts evaluation and monitoring to determine the extent to which the program is achieved and ensures the use of technology in learning. However, in practice in the field, there are still obstacles, such as the utilization of technology in education and the difficulty of adapting to technological changes in the teaching process, especially among elderly teachers who are accustomed to old methods. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted on November 11, 2024, with Mrs. (LA). He said:

> *''We fully understand the importance of improving teachers' competencies for successfully implementing the Sekolah Penggerak program. Therefore, we have organized various regular trainings and mentoring for teachers. The focus includes training on the new curriculum, innovative learning strategies, and the use of technology in learning and conducting regular evaluations every two months. However, regarding technology, some teachers find it difficult to adapt because they are more accustomed to old methods, especially senior teachers''. (LA)*

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

''*The principal has indeed provided training and assistance to us, but in terms of the use of technology, I find it a little difficult sometimes. I teach in class and still often use old methods, such as lectures,' she said.*''. (M)

So, based on the observations and interviews above, the principal at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci has played an active role in strengthening teachers' competencies through regular training and mentoring. In addition, principals are also involved in evaluating and monitoring program implementation and working to ensure the use of technology in learning. However, there are still obstacles in implementing technology utilization, especially among senior teachers who have difficulty adapting to technological changes and are more accustomed to old learning methods.

Strengthening Principals and Teachers in the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program

Principals in these schools know what impact the program has on improving principals' professional competence, principals' efforts in improving teachers' pedagogical competence, and how principals' role is in encouraging teachers to become learning leaders.

Based on the observations, the principal of SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci has improved teachers' pedagogical competence through training that includes learning strategies, the use of technology, and mastery of the new curriculum. However, the results in the field are still some teachers who do not understand the technology and the new curriculum. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted on November 11, 2024, with Mrs. (LA). He said:

'' *It is true that as principal, I have provided training and tutoring to teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, but some teachers do not fully understand the use of technology and curriculum changes, especially elderly teachers, such as the learning process, some teachers still use old methods such as the lecture method*''.(LA)

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

"*It is true that some teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci still do not fully understand technology; I, sometimes, will often use old methods such as the lecture method*''. (M)

So, based on the results of the observations and interviews above, the principal has tried to improve teachers' pedagogical competence through training and tutoring, including learning strategies, use of technology, and mastery of the new curriculum. However, results in the field show that some teachers still do not fully understand the use

of technology. The main factors causing this include limited understanding of technology, especially among older teachers, and some teachers understand the new curriculum but sometimes still use the lecture method.

Impact of the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program on Teacher Quality

Based on observations made at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is very influential on teacher competence development, with special training on teacher development and competence. This is evidenced by teachers applying innovative learning methods such as project-based learning, making it easier for teachers to understand and adapt to the new curriculum. However, the results in the field are that some teachers are accustomed to traditional methods, such as lectures, so they find it challenging to adopt active learning methods, such as project-based ones. This is due to the limited time and focus of the training. Some teachers found it difficult to divide their time to attend the training. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted on November 11, 2024, with Mrs. (LA). He said:

> ''*It is true that the Sekolah Penggerak program does have a positive impact in terms of teaching skills. Many teachers who previously used conventional learning methods are now trying more active and project-based methods. Even so, the implementation still varies. Some teachers adapted quickly, but others still struggled due to a lack of training, as some teachers found it difficult to manage their time. Some teachers need time to practice the new, more interactive methods''*.

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 11, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> "*Yes, the Sekolah Penggerak program is very influential and impacts teaching skills; previously, teachers only used the lecture method. Now, teachers can apply project-based learning so that students become active during the learning process''*. (M)

So, based on the results of observations and interviews at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, the *Sekolah Penggerak* program has a positive influence on developing teacher competence. There is special training in developing teachers' competencies to understand and adapt to the new curriculum more easily. However, improving teaching skills and adopting new learning methods have not been evenly distributed among all teachers. This is due to the limited time and focus of the training, as well as some teachers' difficulties in dividing their time to attend the training.

Teacher Quality in *Sekolah Penggerak* Program
Pedagogical Competence

Based on observations, teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci have created an organized and conducive classroom environment, time management in the classroom is quite efficient, and most teachers can maintain class order well and have implemented student-centered learning methods. This can be seen from the arrangement of tables, chairs, and classroom areas that allow student and teacher interaction. However, the data in the field still shows that some teachers use traditional learning methods such as lectures so that the focus of students is on the teacher.

This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted with Ms. (LA) on November 11, 2024. She said:

> *''In general, teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci have created an orderly and conducive classroom environment, and teachers have also begun to apply student-centered learning methods. This can be seen in learning activities involving students, such as group discussions, question and answer, and the application of other innovative approaches. Although there has been progress, some teachers still use traditional learning methods, such as lectures, which focus more on delivering material from the teacher to the students.* (LA)

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> *''It is true that the teacher has created the best possible classroom environment, such as classroom arrangement, table chairs, and others because managing the class well greatly affects the learning process. We teachers have implemented learning, but some teachers still use conventional methods because they are used to it.''.* (M)

So, based on observations and interviews, SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci has succeeded in creating an organized and conducive classroom environment. Time management in the classroom is quite efficient, and most teachers can maintain class order well and have begun to apply student-centered learning methods. This can be seen in student activities, such as group discussions, question and answer, and other innovative approaches. However, data in the field shows that some teachers still use traditional learning methods, such as lectures, which make students focus more on the teacher.

Professional Competence

Teachers must first ensure that they understand the teaching material before carrying out the learning process in the classroom and outside the school, and what steps are taken so that teachers continue to develop their professional competence. Based on the observations, SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci teachers have shown a good understanding of their teaching materials. This is evidenced by the fact that teachers prepare detailed lesson plans before the learning process and use relevant reference sources to strengthen their knowledge. However, some teachers lack depth in compiling teaching materials and rely

on old materials without much adjustment or updating. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted with Ms. (LA) on November 11, 2024. She said:

> *''Some teachers have shown a fairly good understanding of their teaching materials. Before starting the learning process, teachers prepare lesson plans in sufficient detail and use relevant reference sources to strengthen their understanding of the material. However, sometimes some practices in the field are still not optimal because they lack depth in preparing teaching materials''.*(LA)

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> *''We always prepare detailed lesson plans before teaching and use relevant reference sources to ensure our understanding of the material. However, there are still some teachers who still rely on old materials without much adjustment or updating''.(M)*

Based on the observations and interviews at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, teachers clearly understand the teaching material. Teachers prepare detailed lesson plans before learning, using relevant reference sources to strengthen their knowledge. However, some teachers lack depth in compiling teaching materials and rely on old materials without making many adjustments or updates.

Personality Competence

Based on observations made by SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci teachers, teachers have shown exemplary attitudes to become examples and role models for students. Although most teachers have tried to be a good example, not all teachers can consistently apply exemplary values and integrity at all times. Factors such as work pressure, administrative burdens, or personal situations often affect their ability always to be an ideal example in front of students and colleagues. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted with Ms. (LA) on November 11, 2024. She said:

> *"We at school always remind teachers to be role models for students, both in their behavior and in the way they interact with them. We strive for all teachers to demonstrate discipline, honesty and responsibility. However, I am also aware that in the field there are several challenges that affect teachers' consistency, such as high work pressure and considerable administrative burden. This makes it difficult for them to always appear as an ideal example ".(LA)*

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> *''As teachers, we do strive to be an example for students, both in behavior and in how we manage the class".* (M)

So, based on the results of observations and interviews, teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci have tried to show exemplary attitudes and integrity as examples for students. They strive to be role models in various aspects, such as discipline, honesty, and responsibility. However, although these efforts are made with good intentions, not all teachers can consistently apply exemplary values and integrity at all times.

Social Competence

Before entering the classroom, teachers prepare effective ways to communicate with students so that they can understand the subject matter well after the learning process. In addition, teachers also establish good communication with colleagues, ensuring close cooperation between fellow teachers to understand each other and improve the quality of the learning process at school.

Based on the observation, SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci teachers consistently prepare themselves before starting the learning process by ensuring effective communication strategies with students. Teachers also understand the importance of building positive interactions so students feel heard and can clearly understand the subject matter. However, some teachers sometimes experience difficulties consistently applying planned teaching methods. This could be due to various reasons, such as sudden schedule changes, classroom management issues, or lack of resource support. This is also based on the results of an interview with the principal conducted with Ms. (LA) on November 11, 2024. She said:

> ''*We ensure that teachers prepare good communication strategies before teaching so that students feel listened to and more easily understand the material. Indeed, sometimes, it is not fully optimal. This is due to changes in lesson schedules that can interfere with the readiness and smoothness of communication between teachers and students*''. (LA)

In addition, based on an interview conducted on November 30, 2024, with Mrs. (M) as the *Guru Penggerak* at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, she said:

> ''*Sometimes, we teachers have difficulty maintaining the consistency of the application of the methods we have prepared, sometimes sudden changes in the lesson schedule, or class management problems, which make us have to adjust our teaching methods to suit our needs.* (M)

So, based on observations and interviews at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci, teachers consistently prepare themselves before starting the learning process by ensuring effective communication strategies with students. Teachers also recognize the importance of building positive interactions so students feel heard and understand the material well. However, despite these efforts, some obstacles still affect the consistency of the implementation of planned teaching methods, such as sudden changes in the lesson schedule.

Discussion

Implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* Program (PSP) aims to improve the quality of education through learning innovations and strengthening teacher competencies. However, its implementation cannot be separated from various challenges that affect its effectiveness (Islamiyah, 2022). The main challenge is the human resources available in schools, namely principals and teachers. The principal's understanding of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the program in the school. Principals are key in leading change, guiding teachers, and ensuring the program is implemented well and consistently. Principals who understand the vision, mission, and goals will be better able to direct the learning process and develop teacher competencies effectively (Nurmayani et al., 2024).

The *Sekolah Penggerak* and how it plays a strategic role in supporting the success of this program. This is also supported by previous research on how principals' understanding of the vision and objectives of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is critical to the successful implementation of the program. Principals who understand the selection process and program implementation will be better able to carry out their strategic role, which involves guiding, training, and monitoring the development of teachers and students (Islamiyah, 2022). Principals with in-depth knowledge of education programs and implementation strategies are essential in creating a conducive environment for teachers and students   (Amon & Harliansyah, 2022). The principal's understanding of the program's vision and objectives dramatically influences the success of implementation. Enormously knowledgeable Principals can translate the program into the school's strategic plan (Widodo, 2018).

Although principals understand the concept and objectives of the *Sekolah Penggerak* program well, there are still obstacles to *Guru Penggerak* to participate fully. Character differences among teachers result in a gap between the theory mastered by principals and the reality of implementation in the field. Therefore, additional strategies are needed, such as a more personalized approach, development of intrinsic motivation, and continuous support so that teachers can overcome obstacles, better understand the program's benefits, and play an active role in its implementation. The involvement of the school principal in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is a crucial aspect of ensuring the successful implementation of the program in schools. The principal acts as a change leader responsible for planning, implementing and evaluating the program to drive improvements in the quality of education (Nurjanah & Mustofa, 2024).

The principal at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci plays an active role in supporting the improvement of teachers' competencies through regular training and mentoring. In addition, principals are involved in evaluating and monitoring program implementation and trying to ensure the use of technology in the learning process. This is done by training and providing regular mentoring to ensure teachers can develop their skills and teaching methods. The principal also takes part in evaluation and monitoring to see the effectiveness of the program implementation and make improvements if needed. In

addition, special attention is paid to the utilization of technology, which is essential for creating a more modern learning process relevant to students' needs. This shows the principal's commitment to supporting the program's success and adapting learning methods to suit the times.

This is also supported by previous research on principals' role in improving teachers' competencies through structured professional development. This includes regular training, direct mentoring, and providing feedback to support teaching quality (Jemmy & Sidabutar, 2024). Principals involved in supervision and monitoring help to identify teachers' competency improvement needs more accurately and encourage the implementation of innovative teaching methods (Kuswardani, 2020). Principals involved in supervision and monitoring help to more accurately identify teachers' competence improvement needs and encourage the application of innovative teaching methods. (Saputra et al., 2023).

Strengthening the role of school principals and teachers in the *Sekolah Penggerak* program is critical for the program's success. This involves enhancing the leadership capacity of principals and developing teachers' professional competencies to implement the desired changes in learning practices and school management (Sembiring, 2023).

The principal of SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci has tried to improve teachers' pedagogical competence through regular training every two months that covers teaching strategies, the use of technology, and mastering the latest curriculum. The training is designed to improve teachers' pedagogical skills, which include understanding effective teaching strategies, utilizing technology in the teaching and learning process, and adapting and mastering the new curriculum.

This is also supported by previous research on how periodic training conducted by principals every two months is more effective in helping teachers hone their skills, especially in applying new learning methods and adapting to educational technology (Hartati & Hermansyah, 2024). Regular training on improving teachers' pedagogical competence in schools implementing the school drive program (Khotimah & Sutarman, 2023). Regular bi-monthly training focused on teaching strategies, technology integration, and mastering the latest curriculum significantly improved teachers' ability to develop innovative and technology-based lesson plans (Dewi et al., 2024).

The *Sekolah Penggerak* program significantly impacts improving teachers' quality, especially in terms of pedagogical competence, adaptation to technology, and the ability to reflect on teaching practices. The *Sekolah Penggerak* program encourages teachers to be more proactive in updating teaching methods and adopting a more student-centered approach (Sigalingging, 2021). This is also supported by previous research on teachers who attend regular training having a better understanding of interactive teaching methods and adjusting to the new curriculum more easily than teachers who do not attend training (Susianita & Riani, 2024). The specialized training helps teachers understand the framework and content of the new curriculum and facilitates the shift from traditional methods to more innovative and student-centered approaches (Joenaidy, 2021). The

Sekolah Penggerak program significantly impacts teacher professionalism, especially in developing pedagogical competencies, applying technology, and reflecting on teaching practices (Aisah et al., 2024).

The *Sekolah Penggerak* program aims to improve teacher competence and the quality of learning, emphasizing a comprehensive strategic approach to help teachers develop professionally in four key competencies (Afiah et al., 2024).

1. Pedagogical Competence

Pedagogical competence is one of the crucial aspects of the teaching profession that relates to the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate effective learning processes. It involves an in-depth understanding of learner characteristics, curriculum design, and appropriate teaching methods to facilitate meaningful learning (Baskara & Sutarni, 2024).

Teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci succeeded in establishing a structured and efficient learning environment, such as classroom order and good time management, to help maintain a smooth learning flow. The application of student-centered learning methods encourages active student engagement. Teachers at this school have begun to utilize learning strategies that allow students to play a more active role in the learning process, such as group discussions and other interactive activities. This approach increases student participation and creates a more thorough and practical learning experience.

This is also supported by previous research on effective classroom management, including efficient time management. The use of student-centered learning methods, which contributes to the creation of an environment conducive to learning and teachers who can maintain classroom order can manage time effectively, allowing students to engage in various active activities such as group discussions and question and answer (Efendi & Gustriani, 2022). The teacher applies active learning approaches, such as group discussion and question and answer, and manages the class well. Students become more motivated and actively participate in learning (Pancawati et al., 2021). A structured learning environment, effective time management, and student-centered teaching methods are essential to encourage active student engagement and create a positive classroom atmosphere (Wahyuni, 2022).

2. Professional Competence

Professional competence is an important aspect that a teacher must possess to carry out their duties optimally. This competence includes mastery of learning materials, a deep understanding of the field of knowledge taught, and the skills to update and develop knowledge continuously (Ismail, 2010).

Teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci strive to prepare lessons thoroughly by planning every step of the learning activities. Teachers also rely on relevant reference sources, such as textbooks, articles, or online materials, to enrich their knowledge and ensure that the material taught can be delivered clearly and effectively.

This is also supported by previous research on how careful preparation in the form of detailed lesson planning and the use of relevant references can improve the quality of teaching. Teachers who use appropriate references enrich their horizons and can explain concepts more clearly to students, which in turn supports student understanding (Mubarok, 2022). Teachers who prepare thorough and detailed lesson plans positively impact the quality of learning in the classroom. Carefully prepared lesson plans allow teachers to design learning strategies that align with learning objectives and student needs (Marwa et al., 2023). Lesson planning is essential for effective teaching, as it helps organize instruction, ensure learning objectives are met, and maintain smooth classroom management (Rifqi, 2023).

Although most teachers have tried to prepare the materials well, some teachers still tend to use existing teaching materials without making many updates or adjustments. They may not have fully developed the materials for curriculum developments or current student needs. This can make the materials less relevant to current conditions, which in turn can affect teaching effectiveness. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to continuously update and adjust teaching materials to keep them relevant and engaging for students so that the learning process becomes more effective.

3. *Personality Competence*

Personality competence is one of the essential pillars in the teaching profession, and it relates to teachers' character and attitude when carrying out their duties. This competency includes emotional stability, ethical attitudes, discipline, honesty, and exemplary behavior that can positively influence the school environment. Teachers with good personality competence become role models for students and create a conducive learning climate (Firnando, 2023).

Teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci strive to set a positive example through their daily behavior. They know their attitudes and actions will influence students' character development, so they strive constantly to demonstrate good values. Discipline, honesty, and responsibility are some of the values that teachers prioritize.

This is also supported by previous research on how teachers who demonstrate discipline, honesty, and responsibility in their daily lives can positively influence students. Teachers with high integrity teach moral values in theory and demonstrate these values in their behavior (Lumuan et al., 2023). Teachers who practice values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility inside and outside the classroom can instill the same character in students. The example shown by the teacher becomes a model for students, who imitate it in their daily lives (Rifki et al., 2023). The critical role of teachers as positive role models in shaping students' character and values. Teachers who consistently demonstrate integrity, responsibility, and dedication not only foster a positive learning environment but also influence the development of these traits in their students (Aviatin et al., 2023).

Although teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci strive to demonstrate exemplarity and integrity, some challenges hinder their consistency in applying these values. Factors such as work pressures, personal problems, or difficult situations in the classroom can affect their ability always to set a good example for students. Nonetheless, the good intention to instill positive values remains, and improvement efforts need to be made so that consistency in the application of these values can be better maintained.

4. Social Competence

Social competence is the ability of teachers to interact effectively with various parties in the school environment, such as students, parents, coworkers, and the surrounding community. This competency includes communication skills, collaboration, and building sound and productive relationships with related parties (Turnip & Naibaho, 2023).

Teachers at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci prepare themselves carefully before teaching, emphasizing the importance of clear and effective communication between teachers and students. In addition, teachers also try to build good relationships with students so that students feel cared for and valued, which in turn helps them more easily understand the material being taught. This demonstrates teachers' concern for students' emotional well-being and desire to create a comfortable and supportive learning atmosphere.

Previous research supports the idea that careful teacher preparation before learning, including planning good communication strategies, can improve learning effectiveness. Teachers who can communicate clearly and openly and create an atmosphere that allows students to feel heard can optimize students' understanding of the material (Lubis et al., 2020). Teachers who consistently prepare themselves by designing effective communication strategies can create a supportive environment for learning. Teachers who build positive relationships with students can explain material more clearly and encourage students to be more active in the learning process (Wahyuni, 2022). Teacher preparation and effective communication are essential in building positive teacher-student relationships and improving student understanding of learning materials (Sagita & Amaliya, 2023).

D. Conclusion

Based on the research results, adapting technology to senior teachers is the main challenge in improving teacher quality when implementing the *Sekolah Penggerak* program at SMP Negeri 13 Kerinci Sanggaran Agung. Teachers tend to rely on traditional teaching methods such as lectures, which limit innovation and active participation of students. Overcoming these challenges includes improving teacher motivation through approaches that assess individual performance and incentives and strengthening the principal's role in

building a school culture that supports innovative and collaborative learning. These strategies aim to improve the quality of education.

It is essential to have a training program that focuses on mastering technology for teachers and innovating in choosing learning methods that can generate learning motivation and student participation in learning, such as workshops, seminars, and or online-based training. Training programs will improve the quality of teachers in all fields and further support the progress of education in *Sekolah Penggerak*. School principals must play an active role in creating a school culture that promotes innovative learning.

Researchers suggest that teachers, especially seniors, should not be technology illiterate. Even though they are old, they must continue to learn to adapt technology because it will help facilitate the learning sector and advance education. Routinely attend training to add new knowledge and insights. The principal should be a role model in applying technology and innovative teaching methods and actively support and motivate teachers to innovate.

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