

# The Role of *Guru Penggerak* (Organizer Teacher) in *Komunitas Guru Belajar* (Teacher Learning Community)

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**Abstract**—*Komunitas Guru Belajar* (KGB) is an example of a Professional Learning Community that has shown very rapid growth since its establishment in 2015. This rapid expansion is inseparable from the role of the *Guru Penggerak* (the organizer teacher) who are responsible for organizing and driving KGB in each region. This research aims to explore the role of the *Guru Penggerak* in organizing activities in KGB Bandung. Using qualitative approach, data were collected by various techniques, such as: participant observation, documents study, and interview. The research result showed that the *Guru Penggerak* collaborate to manage the KGB together and sharing responsibilities. The collective learning process is built formally through *Temu Pendidik* (Educators' Gathering), both online and offline. Informally, the collective learning process takes place through free discussion in online channel. The learning atmosphere in KGB Bandung has been well developed. The values and principles underlying the KGB, that are: lifelong learning, empowerment, respecting differences, collaboration, and practicing best standards, have become the main attraction for many educators to be actively involved in the KGB. The members are the early adopters, while *Guru Penggerak* are the innovators who clear the way for teacher capacity building processes.

**Keywords**—*learning organization in education; professional learning community; teachers professional development*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a central role in the education system. Teachers development is essential to ensure that they continue to strengthen their practice throughout their career. There are various ways to develop teachers' capacities, one of which is through the Professional Learning Community (PLC). As a learning organization for teachers, PLC simply defined as communities of continuous inquiry and improvement, where teachers learn together to achieve educational goals [1,2]. PLC can be applied either in the smallest units, such as in schools, or in broader scopes. Some learning organizations formed by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture are *Kelompok Kerja Guru* (Teachers Working Group) or KKG and *Musyawaharah Guru Mata Pelajaran* (Subject Teachers Forum) or MGMP. KKG is a learning forum for elementary school teachers in the sub-district area. While MGMP is a forum for

subject teachers on middle schools or high schools' levels in a city or district or sub-district [3].

The main challenge for the sustainability of the PLC, or teacher development programs in general, is how to maintain the continuity. Follow-up coaching and continuous feedback had the strongest effects on teacher development. Conversely, teachers who took part in teacher development programs without follow-up coaching, would experience a decrease in their interest in getting involved in further professional development programs [4-6].

On the other hand, technology development has opened up more opportunities for teacher professional development activities. For example, the development of information and communication technology and learning science provide a variety of methods for teacher professional development, such as the application of the MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) in China [7]. Online media also can be used to expand the learning community as applied by the *Komunitas Guru Belajar* (Learning Teacher Community).

*Komunitas Guru Belajar* (KGB), as an example of a PLC, has shown very rapid growth since its establishment in 2015. Starting from 10 regions in 2015, became 43 regions in 2016, and 67 regions in 2017. Until 2018, there are 145 regions have been formed. KGB activities spreads from local and regional, to the national level. KGB organizes a lot of activities, both online and offline. They are always open to collaborating with various parties [8].

The expansion of the KGB is inseparable from the role of the *Guru Penggerak* (the organizer teacher) who are responsible for organizing and driving KGB in each region [9]. This research aims to explore the role of the *Guru Penggerak* in organizing activities in KGB Bandung.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Professional Learning Community

Professional Learning Community (PLC) derived from the concept of "learning organization" [1], which was introduced by Peter M. Senge. Senge defined learning organizations as

organizations where people expand their capacities continuously to create the results they desire. In a learning organization, new and expansive thinking patterns are grown, collective aspirations are set free [10]. People continue to learn how to learn together there. As a learning organization for teachers, PLC simply defined as communities of continuous inquiry and improvement, where teachers learn together to achieve educational goals.

The characteristics of PLC were organized into five themes or dimensions that are intertwined one another [1]:

- Supportive and shared leadership;
- Shared values and vision;
- Collective learning and application of learning;
- Supportive conditions that encourage collegial atmosphere and collective learning;
- Shared practices to support individual and community improvement.

#### B. Komunitas Guru Belajar (Teachers Learning Community)

*Komunitas Guru Belajar* (KGB) was established in November 2015 on the initiation of *Kampus Guru Cikal*, a teacher career development institution located in Jakarta. The purpose of the KGB [8] is as a forum for teachers to:

- Developing teacher's autonomy to encourage the progress of all and every teacher.
- Improving teacher competence to be able to produce optimal impact for students.
- Building teacher collaboration to broaden the benefits and impact of teacher competencies' implementations.
- Developing various roles as teachers' career path to keep on contributing to education.

As a community of educators where they can discuss and share smart teaching and education practices, KGB based on these following values [8]:

- Creating lifelong learners,
- Empowering all actors and roles,
- Respecting diversity,
- Collaborating openly,
- Practicing the best standards;

and learning principle, known as "*Merdeka Belajar* (Freedom of Learning)", as followed [11]:

- being committed to their own goals,
- being independent for meaningful learning,
- being reflective.

The members of KGB communicate intensively through various online channels, such as Facebook, WhatsApp, or

Telegram, in various forms of communication: oral, written, photo, video, etc., as well as in offline meetings.

*Guru Penggerak* (Organizer teachers) share the responsibility to manage the KGB. They organize *Temu Pendidik* (Educators' Gathering) or *Mudik*, online and offline, on regular basis, as a room for sharing and learning various smart teaching practices, and community development strategies as well [8].

#### C. Inovations and Adopter Category

Developing means dealing with new ideas, new objects, and new practices. In other words, developing means dealing with innovations. Rogers introduced the concept on how new ideas were infused into a social system, by terms innovation diffusion [12]. Diffusion is defined as the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system.

People within a social system differs on adopting innovations. Adopter categories are the classifications of members of a social system on the basis of innovativeness, which are:

- *Innovators*. Being very eager to try new ideas or new practices, the innovator plays as a gatekeeper in the diffusion process into a social system, that is introducing the new ideas by importing the innovation from outside.
- *Early adopters*. Comparing to the innovators, early adopters are a more integrated part of the local social system. Early adopter is generally sought by the innovators as change agents to be a mediator for the diffusion process. The role of the early adopter is to decrease uncertainty about a new idea by adopting it, and then conveying a subjective evaluation of the innovation to near-peers by means of interpersonal networks.
- *Early majority*. The early majority may need longer time to deliberate before completely adopting a new idea or a new practice. Their position between the very early and the relatively late to adopt makes them an important link in the diffusion process.
- *Late majority*. The late majority approached innovations with more skeptical. They do not adopt new ideas or practices until most others in their social system have done so.
- *Laggards*. For the laggards, innovations are approached with suspicion and resistance. Therefore, laggards are the last in a social system to adopt an innovation.

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research used a qualitative method [13], to explore and obtain detailed information regarding the role of *Guru Penggerak* in managing activities and their interaction in KGB Bandung. KGB Bandung is considered as one of the most active regions.

Data were collected by various techniques. As a preliminary study, literature and document studies were carried out, focused on their guide book to examine the values and learning principles underlying this organization. Participant observation was conducted on *Temu Pendidik* (Educators' Gathering), both online and offline. The interaction among the members in the WhatsApp Group was observed as well. Then, some interviews were conducted to *Guru Penggerak* as the main resource persons.

#### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collective learning process in KGB, formally, is applied through *Temu Pendidik* (Educators' Gathering) or *Mudik*, either online or offline, conducted at the national level (*Temu Pendidik Nusantara* or TPN) and regions (*Temu Pendidik Daerah* or TPD). The topics presented on *Mudik*, mostly are best practices that are shared, are based on members' learning needs that were assessed through online surveys. Implementing their values of empowerment and collaboration, resource persons were taken from KGB members, as well as moderators and reporters. Closing each activity of the *Mudik* was reflection of learning from the participants.

*Guru Penggerak* are responsible to ensure that *Mudik* is promoted, well organized, and publicized through their communication channels. They are all volunteers and have their own main jobs. Therefore, sharing leadership in KGB is a necessity. They shared responsibilities in coordinating the *Mudik* that are planned and scheduled for each semester. The coordinator for each *Mudik* has to organize the gathering, contact all the parties involved (resource person, moderator, reporter), and ensure that the gathering is carried out properly.

Generally, the members of KGB Bandung are enthusiastic to be the resource persons. However, there are cases of teachers who lack confidence to become resource persons. In such situations, *Guru Penggerak* will use personal approach. One way that is considered effective is to refer to the word "*Belajar* (Learning)" in the organization's name "*Komunitas Guru Belajar*", reminding that being a resource person does not have to be a person who knows everything. The discussion becomes a collective learning arena, because the other members will also share their knowledge and practical experience.

Informally, the collective learning process takes place through free discussion on WhatsApp Group. *Guru Penggerak* keep the learning atmosphere in the group by generating issues, posting articles or questions, to elicit the members' responses. In dealing with differences of opinion in the middle of the discussions, *Guru Penggerak* play the role as mediators. Thus, all members feel accepted and free to express their opinions. Respecting diversity is one of the values underlying this organization.

Some values and learning principles have attracted *Guru Penggerak* and many members to involve in KGB. However, not all members, even *Guru Penggerak*, hold on to the all KGB values and learning principles. In that case, they will take the stand of "agree to disagree", focus on the common ground and put aside the differences. Nevertheless, over the course of time,

people who do not feel in line with those values and principles will resign from the group.

KGB strives more on teachers who really want to learn. The members or participants in the activities organized by KGB could be categorized as early adopters, people who are open to change. As educators who are the part of the education system in their respective schools, these early adopters are expected to be the bridge to introduce new practices and invite fellow teachers to become learners. Meanwhile, *Guru Penggerak* are innovators, who seek new ideas enthusiastically and invite the early adopters. *Guru Penggerak* are the one who clear the way for the teacher capacity building process.

#### V. CONCLUSION

KGB has shown tremendous growth as a learning organization for educators. As the innovators, *Guru Penggerak* have played a major role in driving and managing the KGB. They work together and share responsibilities in implementing the values, building learning atmosphere, and applying collective learning processes through sharing good practices.

Further research is recommended to examine the role of the members of KGB, as the early adopters, to be the agents of change in their respective schools.

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