

# Implementation of Ruang GTK Platform in Developing Teacher Professionalism in Vocational Schools in Padang Barat District

**Indhira Syahputri<sup>1\*</sup>, Irsyad<sup>2</sup>, Rifma<sup>3</sup>, Widiawati<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1234</sup> Department of Educational Administration, Padang State University, Padang, Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the implementation of the Ruang Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan (Ruang GTK) platform in developing teacher professionalism in vocational schools in Padang Barat District. The focus of this research includes the implementation process, the benefits obtained, and the supporting and inhibiting factors. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation involving principals, vice principals, teachers, and school operators at SMKN 3 Padang and SMKN 9 Padang.

The findings indicate that the implementation of Ruang GTK is carried out through a top-down policy approach initiated by the government and followed by socialization and technical assistance at the school level. The platform contributes to improving pedagogical and professional competencies, enhancing digital literacy, and fostering independent and collaborative learning among teachers. In addition, Ruang GTK is utilized as a tool for evaluation and monitoring of teacher professional development. Supporting factors include leadership support, infrastructure availability, and teacher motivation, while inhibiting factors consist of limited time, varying levels of digital literacy, and technical constraints.

In conclusion, the Ruang GTK platform plays a significant role in supporting sustainable teacher professional development. However, improvements in system development, training distribution, and usability are necessary to optimize its implementation.

### Corresponding Author:

Indhira Syahputri

Email: [indhira.syahputri17@gmail.com](mailto:indhira.syahputri17@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed various sectors, including education, particularly in the development of teacher professionalism. In the era of the 21st century, teachers are required to continuously adapt to evolving educational demands that emphasize digital literacy, critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and innovation (Trilling & Fadel, 2021). In this context, teacher professionalism is no longer limited to pedagogical competence, but also includes the ability to integrate digital technology effectively into learning practices (Wibowo, 2023).

The Indonesian government has responded to these challenges through various educational transformation policies under the framework of Merdeka Belajar. One of the strategic initiatives is the development of digital platforms that support teacher career management and professional development. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology has introduced the Ruang Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan (Ruang GTK) platform as an integrated system for teacher learning, certification, training, and performance monitoring

(Direktorat Jenderal GTK, 2024). This platform is also part of the broader national digital transformation roadmap for education 2025–2030 (Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2025).

Ruang GTK is designed to provide teachers with flexible access to learning resources, training modules, and professional development programs that can be accessed independently. This initiative reflects a shift toward digital-based continuous professional development, where teachers are expected to engage in self-directed learning anytime and anywhere (Pusdatin Kemendikbudristek, 2024). In addition, digital platforms like Ruang GTK are expected to strengthen teacher competency in line with the demands of education in the 21st century (Sari & Gunawan, 2024).

However, despite its strategic importance, the implementation of Ruang GTK in schools is not without challenges. Research shows that the effectiveness of digital platform utilization is influenced by user readiness, digital literacy, infrastructure availability, and institutional support (Rahmawati et al., 2023; Anwar & Harahap, 2023). Some teachers actively use the platform to improve their competencies, while others face difficulties due to limited digital skills, time constraints, and technical barriers (Afifah & Tim Peneliti, 2025; Ismawanti et al., 2025).

Furthermore, variations in the effectiveness of implementation indicate that policy execution is strongly influenced by communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure, as proposed in the implementation theory of Edward III (2021). Similar perspectives are also emphasized by Grindle (2021) and Mazmanian & Sabatier (2020), who argue that successful policy implementation depends on both the content of the policy and the context of its implementation.

Previous studies have shown that digital platforms can significantly enhance teacher professionalism when supported by adequate infrastructure and training (Yusnita & Prasetyo, 2024; Suryani & Rahmawati, 2022). However, issues such as unequal access, low digital literacy, and user experience limitations remain major obstacles in optimizing digital transformation in education (Fauzan & Wicaksono, 2025; Herlina et al., 2025).

Based on these conditions, this study aims to analyze the implementation of the Ruang GTK platform in vocational schools in Padang Barat District, focusing on the implementation process, the benefits obtained, and the supporting and inhibiting factors that influence its effectiveness in developing teacher professionalism.

## **2. METHOD, DATA, ANALYSIS**

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the Ruang GTK platform. Qualitative research is considered appropriate for exploring social phenomena and understanding participants' experiences in their natural settings (Sugiyono, 2022; Miles et al., 2014). This approach allows researchers to capture the complexity of policy implementation in educational settings.

The research was conducted at SMKN 3 Padang and SMKN 9 Padang. Informants in this study included school principals, vice principals of curriculum, teachers, and school operators who are directly involved in the utilization of the Ruang GTK platform. The selection of informants was carried out using purposive sampling to ensure that the data obtained were relevant to the research focus.

Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to explore participants' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of Ruang GTK. Observations were used to examine the actual utilization of the platform in school activities, while documentation provided supporting data such as policy documents, usage reports, and institutional records (Dinas Pendidikan Kota Padang, 2024).

Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. To ensure data validity, triangulation of sources and methods was applied to enhance credibility and reliability of findings. This approach is also consistent with qualitative research standards in educational studies (Sugiyono, 2022).

## **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Result**

The findings indicate that the implementation of Ruang GTK in SMKN 3 Padang and SMKN 9 Padang has been carried out through a structured process, starting from national policy

dissemination by the Ministry of Education, followed by internal school socialization and coordination. School leaders play a central role in encouraging teachers to adopt the platform as part of their professional development activities, consistent with findings by Kurniawan & Putri (2025) regarding the importance of leadership in digital transformation in schools.

Teachers have begun to utilize Ruang GTK as a medium for independent learning, accessing training materials, and improving their competencies. This reflects the shift toward self-directed and lifelong learning, which is a key characteristic of modern teacher professionalism (Mulyasa, 2013; UNESCO, 2022).

The platform contributes significantly to improving teachers' pedagogical and professional competencies. Teachers reported gaining new insights, learning strategies, and instructional innovations that can be directly applied in classroom teaching. This aligns with studies by Arnita et al. (2025), which emphasize the role of digital platforms in enhancing teacher competence through improved digital literacy.

In addition, Ruang GTK has contributed to strengthening digital literacy among teachers. Digital literacy is a crucial competency in the era of technology-driven education, as it enables teachers to effectively utilize digital tools for learning and assessment (Sari & Gunawan, 2024; Wibowo, 2023).

Another important finding is the emergence of informal collaborative learning among teachers. Although Ruang GTK is primarily designed for individual learning, teachers often engage in discussions and share insights related to the materials they access. This phenomenon supports the development of professional learning communities within schools, which is essential for sustainable teacher development (Setiawan et al., 2025).

Furthermore, Ruang GTK is utilized as a monitoring and evaluation tool for teacher performance. School leaders use the platform to track participation in training programs and assess professional development progress. This aligns with the integrated digital management system for teachers promoted by the government (Pusdatin Kemendikbudristek, 2024).

However, several inhibiting factors were identified. Limited time remains a major challenge, as teachers must balance teaching responsibilities with professional development activities. Differences in digital literacy levels among teachers also affect platform utilization (Afifah & Tim Peneliti, 2025). In addition, technical issues such as system stability and access limitations hinder optimal implementation, which is consistent with findings by Anwar & Harahap (2023).

## **Discussion**

The findings of this study can be analyzed using Edward III's policy implementation theory, which includes four main variables: communication, resources, disposition, and bureaucratic structure (Edward III, 2021). Effective communication through socialization and technical guidance has contributed to teachers' understanding of Ruang GTK.

From the perspective of resources, infrastructure availability such as internet access and digital devices plays a significant role in determining the success of implementation. Schools with better facilities tend to demonstrate higher levels of platform utilization, supporting findings by Yusnita & Prasetyo (2024).

Teacher disposition toward the platform is generally positive. Teachers perceive Ruang GTK as beneficial for improving their competencies and supporting professional growth. This positive attitude is a key factor in sustaining long-term policy implementation success (Sugiyono, 2022).

From a broader perspective of teacher professionalism, the use of Ruang GTK contributes to the development of pedagogical, professional, and digital competencies. Teachers become more reflective and innovative in their teaching practices, which aligns with the demands of 21st-century education (Trilling & Fadel, 2021; Wibowo, 2023).

However, the presence of inhibiting factors indicates that the implementation is not yet optimal. Continuous training, improved system usability, and stronger institutional support are required to address these challenges. This is consistent with research by Fauzan & Wicaksono (2025), which highlights the importance of user experience in digital education platforms, as well as Herlina et al. (2025), who emphasize the need for system optimization to improve effectiveness.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Ruang GTK platform in vocational schools in Padang Barat District has been carried out relatively effectively and contributes positively to the development of teacher professionalism. The platform enhances teacher competencies, strengthens digital literacy, and encourages independent as well as collaborative learning.

However, several challenges still exist, including limited time, varying levels of digital literacy among teachers, and technical constraints in system usage. Therefore, continuous improvement in training programs, infrastructure support, and platform usability is necessary to optimize the effectiveness of Ruang GTK implementation in supporting sustainable teacher professional development.

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