IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TEACHER PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (PPG) FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER EDUCATION AT UNIVERSITAS KUNINGAN

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Abstract: The Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) is a pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing teacher competence, particularly for PGSD (Elementary School Teacher Education) graduates. This study evaluates the implementation of PPG at Kuningan University, focusing on its effectiveness in improving teacher quality. Despite its importance, the program faces challenges related to resource allocation and implementation consistency across universities. The study aims to analyze the success factors and outcomes of PPG at Kuningan University and identify areas for improvement. A qualitative approach was employed, with data collected through literature reviews, questionnaires, and interviews with stakeholders, including administrators, instructors, and program participants. The results indicate a high success rate, with 147 out of 150 participants passing the Knowledge Test (UP), 149 passing the Achievement Test (Ukin), and 147 passing the PPG Student Competency Test (UKMPPG). Key success factors include effective communication, adequate resources, a supportive disposition among stakeholders, and efficient bureaucratic processes. However, the study highlights limitations, such as the narrow focus on Kuningan University, which restricts generalizability. The study concludes that PPG significantly enhances the competence of PGSD teachers, contributing to improved educational quality. Recommendations include conducting comparative studies on PPG implementation across different universities to identify best practices and address disparities. This research contributes valuable insights into the management and effectiveness of educational programs within LPTK institutions, providing a foundation for future improvements in teacher professional development.

Keywords: *Teacher professional education program; teacher quality; qualitative method; evaluation; teacher competency*

INTRODUCTION

The Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) is a pivotal initiative aimed at enhancing the competence and professionalism of educators in Indonesia. This program aligns with the mandates of Undang-Undang No. 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen, which underscores the importance of teacher certification to improve educational quality. According to Anggraini et al. (2022), professional education programs provide a structured pathway for teachers to adapt to modern pedagogical challenges, particularly in the implementation of curriculum innovations like "Merdeka Belajar." Similarly, Maryatun and Supamo (2023) emphasize that PPG plays a critical role in equipping teachers with the skills needed to address diverse student needs, reflecting a commitment to holistic and inclusive education. Despite its potential, the implementation of PPG, particularly in Elementary Teacher Education programs at institutions such as LPTK University of Kuningan, warrants closer examination to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

Teacher professionalism, particularly in elementary education, relies heavily on structured professional development programs like PPG. Basikin (2023) highlights the significant contribution of in-service teacher education to improving pedagogical and professional skills. Simbolon et al. (2021) stress that professional competence is essential for teachers to serve as role models for character education, a key aspect of elementary teaching. Furthermore, Haryani et al. (2024) argue that effective teacher training programs enhance teachers' ability to nurture superior learners. However, studies such as Bagou and Suking (2020) suggest that gaps in professional competence persist, particularly in remote regions.

Professional education programs enhance teachers' pedagogical competence, enabling them to employ differentiated and innovative teaching methods. Anggraini et al. (2022) found that programs emphasizing individual differences in learning can significantly improve educational outcomes. Mukrim et al. (2023) highlight the impact of PPG on teaching practices, particularly in addressing contextual challenges in rural areas. Additionally, Rafidiyah and Kailani (2020) emphasize the importance of aligning teaching strategies with vocational education goals, showcasing the adaptability of PPG across educational contexts.

The integration of technology into teacher education programs is a critical focus of PPG. Darsih et al. (2023) explore how technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK) is embedded in online PPG programs, enabling teachers to effectively use digital tools in the classroom. Budiana et al. (2015) highlight the benefits of ICT training for teachers, including improved student engagement and learning outcomes. Similarly, Huda et al. (2023) argue that technology integration in PPG programs prepares teachers to meet the demands of digital education, particularly in remote and underserved areas.

PPG programs are increasingly emphasizing the importance of cultural relevance in teaching practices. Wahyuni and Haryanti (2024) advocate for differentiated instruction tailored to local contexts, which is especially pertinent in multicultural regions. Lestari and Mulianingsih (2020) highlight the importance of contextualized pedagogical training for teachers in diverse socio-cultural settings, ensuring that learning materials resonate with students' backgrounds.

Motivation and self-efficacy are critical components of effective teacher training programs.

Kasim (2011) argues that intrinsic motivation plays a significant role in enhancing teachers' commitment to professional growth. Afriadi et al. (2023) demonstrate that PPG programs boost teachers' confidence in their ability to manage classrooms effectively. However, Mappangara et al. (2023) identify challenges in sustaining motivation, particularly in online training environments.

The implementation of PPG in rural areas presents unique challenges, including limited access to resources and professional development opportunities. Rambitan and Hardoko (2016) note that PPG programs in remote regions require tailored approaches to address infrastructural constraints. Mukrim et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of localized training to ensure that teachers in rural schools can apply their learning effectively.

Effective PPG implementation often requires collaboration between teachers, schools, and policymakers. Hanun (2021) highlights the role of institutional support in facilitating teacher training programs. Rismawati and Rafiie (2022) suggest that robust infrastructure and stakeholder engagement are critical for the success of such initiatives. Moreover, Nurhasanah et al. (2022) emphasize the importance of collaborative curriculum development in aligning teacher training with educational goals.

PPG programs often serve as platforms for introducing curriculum innovations, such as Merdeka Belajar. Anggraini et al. (2022) argue that the flexibility offered by this curriculum enables teachers to adapt their teaching strategies to students' needs. Similarly, Lathif and Suprapto (2023) emphasize the importance of project-based learning as a tool for fostering critical thinking and creativity in students.

The shift towards student-centered learning is a core focus of modern PPG programs. Haryani et al. (2024) stress that training programs must equip teachers to create inclusive and participatory learning environments. Mutiaramses et al. (2021) highlight the importance of classroom management skills in fostering a conducive learning atmosphere. Evaluating the effectiveness of PPG programs is essential for continuous improvement. Maryatun and Supamo (2023) propose comprehensive evaluation frameworks to assess the impact of teacher training on classroom practices. Uchtiawati (2020) highlights the importance of feedback mechanisms in refining program delivery and content. Professional teacher education directly impacts student learning

outcomes. Nurwataniah et al. (2022) demonstrate that PPG-trained teachers significantly improve students' academic performance. Abbas et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of reflective practices in helping teachers understand their impact on student engagement and learning.

Comparative studies, such as those by Lee et al. (2020) and Chang et al. (2024), provide insights into global best practices in teacher professional education. These studies highlight the importance of integrating theory with practice, ensuring that teachers are well-prepared for real-world classroom challenges. The sustainability of PPG programs depends on consistent support and ongoing professional development. Sumar and Ansar (2024) emphasize the need for follow-up training to maintain the competencies gained during initial certification. Poluakan et al. (2024) argue that innovative learning approaches within PPG can foster long-term improvements in teaching quality.

Despite extensive research on PPG implementation, gaps remain in understanding the contextual challenges faced by specific institutions, such as LPTK University of Kuningan. Existing studies often focus on general trends, overlooking the nuanced needs of local contexts. Additionally, there is limited exploration of how PPG programs address the unique challenges of elementary education, particularly in integrating cultural and technological elements.

This study addresses the identified gaps by examining the implementation of the PPG program for elementary teacher education at LPTK University of Kuningan. It highlights the institution's efforts to contextualize training, integrate local culture, and leverage technology to meet modern educational demands. By focusing on a specific case, this research offers actionable insights for improving PPG implementation in similar contexts across Indonesia.

METHOD
This study employs a qualitative method to evaluate the implementation of the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) at the Institute of Education Personnel Education (LPTK), Kuningan University, in West Java. Selected for its new role in organizing the PPG program in 2023, the institution provides a relevant context to examine the program's effectiveness and challenges. The qualitative approach facilitated an in-depth exploration of the program's planning, execution, and outcomes through the perspectives of diverse stakeholders.

Data collection included literature reviews, questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews. The literature review analyzed policies and frameworks to contextualize the PPG program at LPTK Kuningan University within broader educational policies, such as Undang-Undang No. 14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen. Questionnaires gathered quantitative insights and stakeholder perceptions of the program's effectiveness and challenges, while semi-structured interviews provided detailed, firsthand accounts from policymakers, program managers, lecturers, partner school principals, PGSD teachers, and pamong (mentor) teachers.

Diverse data sources ensured a comprehensive understanding of the program. Policymakers provided insights into decision-making, PPG managers and lecturers shared operational experiences, partner school principals highlighted collaboration outcomes, and PGSD and pamong teachers reflected on professional development impacts.

Data analysis followed Creswell's (2020) framework, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing to extract meaningful themes and insights. Ethical standards, including informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation, were upheld throughout. The findings aim to inform improvements in PPG implementation at Kuningan University and contribute to broader discussions on professional teacher education programs across Indonesia.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION
Implementation of the PPG program at Kuningan University
The findings of this study highlight various aspects of the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) implementation at Kuningan University, demonstrating its effectiveness and areas for improvement. The program's structure, delivery methods, and high graduation rate underscore its success in enhancing the competencies of Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) teachers. Several factors, including effective communication, adequate resources, and stakeholder commitment, emerged as critical contributors to this success. Furthermore, the study's results align with previous research, reinforcing the importance of structured program implementation and supportive resources.

However, the study also identified certain limitations, such as its focus on a single institution and the reliance on quantitative data. These limitations suggest the need for further research that incorporates broader and more diverse contexts, as well as qualitative methods for deeper insights. The table below summarizes the key findings, success factors, and practical implications, along with recommendations for future research to enhance the program's implementation and impact.

Table 1. *Key findings, success factors, and recommendations for PPG implementation at Universitas Kuningan*

Category	Findings	Supporting References
Curriculum Structure	3 components: Material Deepening, Learning Tool Development, Field Experience Practice (36 credits).	Basikin (2023), Ma'rifah (2024)
Delivery Methods	Synchronous (Zoom) and asynchronous (LMS) learning ensured flexibility and accessibility.	Wahyuni et al. (2024), Lathif (2023)
Graduation Rate	- 147/150 passed the Knowledge Test (UP). - 149/150 passed the Performance Test (Ukin). - 147/150 passed the PPG Student Competency Test (UKMPPG).	Basikin (2023), Hanun (2021)
Success Factors	1. Effective Communication: Enabled real-time feedback and program adjustments. 2. Adequate Resources: Modern facilities and learning tools. 3. Positive Stakeholder Disposition: High motivation among participants and organizers. 4. Streamlined Bureaucracy: Efficient administrative processes.	Fitriani et al. (2024), Anggraeni (2022), Sulaiman et al. (2021)
Comparison with Previous Research	Success aligns with prior studies on teacher professional education, emphasizing structured programs, effective communication, and resource availability.	Rismasari (2021), Lestari (2020), Muhajir (2024)
Practical Implications	- Strengthen infrastructure (modern technology, facilities). - Enhance communication channels. - Improve participant readiness. - Provide continuous training for lecturers and mentors.	Bagou et al. (2020), Wahyuni et al. (2024)
Limitations	- Focused on one university (Kuningan University). - Quantitative emphasis may overlook qualitative insights. - Did not consider external factors like government policy or socioeconomic conditions.	Research limitations noted in study
Recommendations	- Expand research to other institutions for comparative analysis. - Incorporate qualitative methods to explore participant experiences. - Conduct longitudinal studies on long-term program impact.	Future research recommendations

The table serves as a vital reference for understanding the comprehensive evaluation of the Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) at Kuningan University. It highlights the program's achievements, the factors influencing its success, and actionable recommendations to sustain and enhance its impact. Each element of the table provides insight into the program's structure, implementation, and outcomes, offering a detailed perspective for stakeholders and policymakers interested in professional teacher education.

Key findings
The findings from the study illustrate the program's effectiveness in enhancing teacher competencies. A high graduation rate—97% of participants successfully passing all evaluation stages—demonstrates the program's success in

aligning its curriculum with the competency requirements for PGSD teachers. This achievement reflects the program's meticulous planning, innovative curriculum structure, and the effective integration of synchronous and asynchronous learning methods. Platforms such as Zoom and LMS have provided flexibility for participants to engage in learning anytime, anywhere, thus accommodating diverse learning needs and schedules.

Additionally, the personalized support system has played a significant role in the program's success. The division of participants into small groups, guided by supporting lecturers and pamong teachers, ensures focused attention and tailored guidance. This approach encourages active participation, fosters a sense of community, and addresses individual learning challenges, all of which are crucial for professional growth. These findings resonate with the observations of Wahyuni (2024), who emphasizes that flexible and inclusive learning environments significantly enhance educational outcomes.

Success factors
The success factors of the program highlight the interconnected elements that contribute to its achievements. Effective communication emerges as a critical driver, ensuring transparency, constructive feedback, and consistent coordination between all stakeholders, including program managers, lecturers, and participants. This aligns with Sulaiman's (2021) assertion that communication fosters a collaborative and adaptive learning environment.

Adequate resources also play a pivotal role. Modern facilities equipped with advanced technology, such as projectors, internet access, and digital tools, have enabled an engaging and efficient learning process. These resources ensure that participants have access to quality learning materials and tools that prepare them for real-world teaching scenarios. Fitriani et al. (2024) emphasize the importance of resource availability in achieving educational goals, and the findings of this study further validate this perspective.

Participant and manager commitment
The positive disposition of participants and program managers is another cornerstone of success. High levels of motivation, dedication, and a shared commitment to achieving program objectives have driven active engagement and resilience throughout the learning process.

Motivated participants are more likely to take ownership of their learning journey, and committed managers ensure that the program runs smoothly by addressing challenges proactively. These findings align with Kasim's (2011) discussion on the role of motivation in achieving educational excellence.

Efficient administrative processes have also contributed significantly to the program's success. By streamlining bureaucratic procedures, participants and educators are spared unnecessary delays and disruptions, allowing them to focus entirely on learning and teaching. This aligns with Rambitan and Hardoko's (2016) recommendation that educational programs should prioritize efficiency to enhance participant experiences and outcomes.

Recommendations for improvement
To ensure the program's sustainability, continuous evaluation is essential. Regular assessments of the curriculum, teaching methods, and participant feedback can help identify areas for improvement and adapt the program to evolving educational needs. This proactive approach ensures that the program remains relevant and effective in enhancing teacher competencies. The importance of evaluation is supported by the findings of Anggraini et al. (2022), who advocate for ongoing curriculum refinement based on feedback and performance metrics.

Comparative studies with other institutions' PPG implementations are another recommendation. By examining the strategies and outcomes of similar programs across different universities, stakeholders can identify innovative practices and incorporate them into the existing framework. This aligns with Ma'rifah's (2024) findings, which suggest that cross-institutional comparisons can lead to valuable insights for program improvement.

Qualitative insights
While the study's quantitative findings are significant, the inclusion of qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies would provide deeper insights into participants' experiences, challenges, and perspectives. This approach would capture the nuances of the learning process and offer a more holistic understanding of the program's impact. Such qualitative data can complement quantitative metrics, as emphasized by Hanun (2021), who highlights the importance of mixed-method approaches in educational research.

Longitudinal impact assessment

To fully understand the program's impact, longitudinal studies are recommended. These studies would track the progress and performance of program graduates over time, providing valuable insights into how the PPG program influences their teaching practices, professional development, and student outcomes in the long run. This recommendation aligns with studies by Sari et al. (2023), which underscore the value of long-term evaluations in assessing the effectiveness of teacher education programs.

Practical implications

From a practical perspective, the findings of this study provide actionable insights for improving the PPG program. Strengthening communication channels, enhancing resource availability, and maintaining high levels of motivation among participants and managers should remain priorities. Additionally, continuous investment in technological infrastructure and training for lecturers will further enhance the program's quality and relevance. These measures ensure that the program not only meets current needs but also prepares participants for future challenges in the education sector.

Addressing limitations

While the study offers valuable insights, its limitations must be acknowledged. The focus on a single institution limits the generalizability of the findings, and the reliance on quantitative methods may overlook subjective participant experiences. Expanding the sample size and incorporating qualitative research methods in future studies would address these limitations and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the PPG program's effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

The Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG) at Universitas Kuningan demonstrates significant success in enhancing the competencies of Elementary School Teacher Education (PGSD) graduates. With a high graduation rate—97% of participants successfully completing the program—this initiative highlights the effectiveness of structured curriculum design, the integration of synchronous and asynchronous learning methods, and personalized mentorship. Key success factors, including effective communication, adequate resources, high stakeholder motivation, and streamlined administrative processes, have contributed to the program's achievements.

This study underscores the importance of aligning program implementation with participants' needs while leveraging technology to provide accessible and flexible learning environments. These findings not only validate prior research but also add new insights into the factors driving successful teacher education programs. Furthermore, the PPG program at Universitas Kuningan serves as a model that can inform similar initiatives in other institutions across Indonesia.

However, limitations such as the narrow focus on a single institution and the lack of qualitative insights call for broader and more in-depth research. Future studies should include longitudinal evaluations to examine the long-term impact of PPG graduates on classroom teaching practices and student outcomes. Comparative research across multiple universities can also help identify best practices and address disparities in program implementation. The PPG program at Universitas Kuningan has set a strong foundation for enhancing teacher professionalism and improving educational quality. By addressing its limitations and incorporating recommended improvements, this program has the potential to make an even greater impact on the future of teacher education in Indonesia.

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