

# The Implementation of Teacher Performance Assessment Using PMM/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan

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## ABSTRACT

This study explores the implementation of teacher performance assessment using the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM)/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan. Given the pivotal role of teachers in improving the quality of education, performance assessment is essential to ensure professional accountability and instructional effectiveness. The study adopts a qualitative case study approach to examine how the platform has been utilized to support teachers' reflective practices, competency development, and documentation of performance evidence. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and document analysis involving key informants, including school principals, vice principals, supervisors, and senior teachers. Findings reveal that since its implementation in 2024, the PMM/Ruang GTK system has gradually been integrated into the school's performance evaluation processes. The platform is appreciated for its transparency, accessibility, and alignment with national digital governance policies. However, challenges persist, such as limited digital literacy among teachers, inadequate internet infrastructure, and time constraints in technical mentoring. The study emphasizes the active role of school leadership and peer collaboration in facilitating the transition from conventional to digital evaluation practices. Overall, the PMM/Ruang GTK platform presents a promising tool for promoting professional reflection and performance management in schools. Its successful implementation, however, requires consistent support, capacity-building programs, and evaluation mechanisms to ensure its effectiveness in enhancing educational quality. The study contributes to the academic discourse on the integration of digital platforms in teacher performance evaluation, recommending ongoing mentoring and infrastructure enhancement to maximize the platform's impact on teacher performance and learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Teacher Performance Assessment, PMM, Ruang GTK

## INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a strategic role in improving the quality of education; therefore, teacher performance evaluation becomes a crucial aspect in effective educational management. Teacher performance greatly influences student learning outcomes and the overall quality of education in a region. Hence, an objective, systematic, and continuous evaluation system is required to ensure that teachers can perform their duties optimally. The aim of teacher performance evaluation is to assess the effectiveness of the learning process and provide constructive feedback for teacher competency improvement [1]. In the context of educational transformation in Indonesia, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (MoECRT) has developed the *Merdeka Mengajar Platform* (PMM) as a tool for evaluating and enhancing teacher performance. PMM offers more practical and relevant features, including performance management integrated with the National Civil Service Agency's e-Kinerja system [2]. The platform is intended to support the improvement of teaching quality through formative assessment, teaching tools, and teacher competency

development. Subsequently, PMM evolved into *Ruang Guru dan Tenaga Kependidikan* (GTK) to expand access and enhance the effectiveness of the teacher evaluation system. Teacher performance appraisal through PMM or Ruang GTK covers key components such as competency reflection, performance management, and data-driven assessment. This system has been integrated with e-Kinerja, managed by the National Civil Service Agency (BKN), enabling more transparent and accountable monitoring. This policy aligns with Presidential Regulation No. 95 of 2018 on the Electronic-Based Government System, which provides a legal basis for digital education evaluation and the management of civil servant performance in the education sector [3].

At SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan, the implementation of teacher performance evaluation through PMM/Ruang GTK began in 2024. Teachers and school principals have utilized the platform's features to conduct performance reflection and access professional development training. The main goal of this evaluation is to improve teaching effectiveness and teacher professionalism in accordance with MoECRT policy directions. However, the implementation of this system is not without challenges. Teachers face several obstacles, including limited understanding of digital platforms, inadequate technological infrastructure, and resistance to transitioning from conventional to digital evaluation methods. This situation underscores the need for intensive mentoring and capacity building to ensure optimal implementation of PMM/Ruang GTK. Furthermore, the platform's effectiveness in improving educational quality still requires in-depth investigation. Whether PMM/Ruang GTK can positively impact teacher performance and student learning outcomes remains a critical question that must be addressed through scientific studies. Therefore, ongoing evaluation and empirical research are needed to determine how far this system supports the goals of national education. The platform is expected to facilitate teachers in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning in a self-directed and sustainable manner. Additionally, the system holds potential as a structured means of professional competency development.

Although PMM and Ruang GTK have been designed as comprehensive digital solutions for teacher performance evaluation and management, a gap still exists between policy idealism and field-level implementation. Ideally, this system should help teachers in formulating work targets, delivering quality instruction, and receiving feedback for professional development. However, initial observations show that many teachers struggle to operate the platform, feel burdened by digital administrative tasks, and have not experienced direct benefits in terms of career development or classroom learning. Few studies have specifically examined the effectiveness of PMM/Ruang GTK in junior secondary schools in rural areas such as SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan, making this study significant in addressing this research gap. This research is crucial as it investigates how digital evaluation systems, such as PMM/Ruang GTK, are adapted in rural schools with limited technological access. It highlights challenges faced by teachers in these contexts, which may differ from those in urban settings, thus providing valuable insights into the unique needs of rural schools in Indonesia. Initial observations at the school indicate that some teachers perceive this policy as adding to their workload and hindering their core teaching responsibilities. This perception is due to unprepared infrastructure and low levels of digital literacy. Therefore, this research aims to examine the implementation of teacher performance evaluation using PMM/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan. The main focus is to analyze the system's effectiveness in improving teacher performance and

identify various implementation challenges. It is hoped that the results of this study will provide valuable input for schools and local governments in optimizing the use of this platform to enhance educational quality.

Teacher performance appraisal is a key element in the education system that aims to assess and evaluate a teacher's performance in fulfilling their role as educators. According to Suyanto [4], teacher performance evaluation is the process of assessing and reassessing the outcomes achieved by teachers in their teaching roles and responsibilities at school. This evaluation encompasses not only student learning outcomes but also the teaching methods and processes applied by teachers [5]. The primary objective is to enhance teaching quality and promote continuous professional development. Essentially, teacher performance appraisal serves as a tool to measure the extent to which teachers can implement the required teaching competencies. Teacher performance assessment includes evaluations of lesson planning, classroom management, and interactions with students in ways that support their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. The results serve as a reflective tool for teachers to improve their teaching quality. Moreover, it helps identify a teacher's strengths and weaknesses in carrying out their duties. Hidayati [6] stated that comprehensive evaluations enable schools to pinpoint areas that need improvement and design relevant development programs. In this context, performance appraisal not only measures outcomes but also serves as a tool for providing constructive feedback to teachers.

Rucky, as cited in Ambarita, et al [7], explained that performance is influenced by three main factors: the individual, the job, and the goals. Robbins, as cited in Ambarita et al [7], suggested that performance results from the interaction between ability, motivation, and opportunity. Madjid [8] stated that competency significantly affects performance, as competent teachers are capable of planning, implementing, and evaluating learning effectively. Teacher performance also involves the responsibility of optimally transferring knowledge to students. Teachers act as facilitators, motivators, and educators who influence students' cognitive development. Rorimpandey [9] emphasized the need for support from school principals and a conducive learning environment to enhance teacher performance. This is reinforced by Devitha et al [10], who asserted that good teacher performance can enhance learning quality and student achievement. Performance evaluations are also essential for continuous professional development. Robbins and Judge [11] stated that such evaluations are useful for promotions, career development, and identifying training needs. According to MoECRT, teacher performance indicators include lesson planning, implementation, assessment, and student mentoring. Widodo [12] argued that teacher performance evaluations are not only meant to assess teaching success but also to support the continuous development of professional competencies. Appropriate assessment implementation helps identify areas for improvement [13], and sustained evaluation promotes a culture of reflection among teachers, ultimately enhancing educational quality [14]. Recent international studies have also shown the importance of digital platforms in evaluating and improving teacher performance. A study by Johnson & Nelson [15] in the "Journal of Educational Technology" highlights the growing role of technology-based teacher assessments in enhancing instructional quality and accountability. Similarly, Smith et al [16] in "Education Policy Analysis Archives"

emphasized that digital tools such as PMM/Ruang GTK can streamline the feedback process, but they must be adapted to local contexts for optimal impact.

Teacher performance evaluation involves measuring work output and behavior, including planning and implementing lessons, assessing student learning, and mentoring students. For teachers serving as school principals, the evaluation also covers managerial tasks, supervision, and educational entrepreneurship development [17]. Several studies suggest that teacher performance assessment should include cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of teaching [18]. A holistic evaluation provides a clearer picture of a teacher's potential and skills in fulfilling their educational role [19]. Thus, performance appraisal should not only focus on final teaching outcomes but also consider the learning process in the classroom [20]. Arifin [21] noted that performance appraisal should cover lesson planning, instructional delivery, and learning evaluation as the basis for ongoing improvements in education. MoECRT outlines that the objectives of teacher performance appraisal include evaluating competencies, ensuring task professionalism, determining credit scores, and serving as a basis for professional development. Performance management aims to enhance the roles of teachers and principals in supporting educational transformation [22]. Structured and systematic evaluations provide a solid foundation for planning career development programs. Kurniawan & Ramadhan [23] emphasized that performance-based evaluations should generate data that can be used to design more targeted training and development programs. The primary goal of teacher performance evaluation is to ensure that all competency aspects are well measured and to provide feedback for improving education quality [24]. Nugroho [25] added that such evaluations also serve to motivate teachers to continuously develop and learn in line with the evolving demands of education.

The *Merdeka Mengajar Platform* (PMM) is a technological innovation by MoECRT as part of reforming teacher performance evaluation. The program emphasizes the importance of competency-based career development, incentives, and simplification of the evaluation process [26]. One of PMM's key features is its integration with BKN's e-Kinerja system, which facilitates structured and digital reporting and assessment. Sari [27] stated that PMM provides a more transparent and efficient system for managing teacher performance by simplifying evaluation and reporting processes and improving teacher access to career development opportunities. The platform offers a more effective and efficient way to monitor and evaluate performance [28]. Astuti [29] also noted that PMM holds significant potential for enhancing teacher performance management due to its ability to connect various stakeholders in the education ecosystem more efficiently and transparently. *Ruang GTK* was developed as an extension of PMM to support teachers, principals, and supervisors in designing work targets and career development plans based on school needs and data. Its performance management features refer to several regulations, including Director General of GTK Decree No. 4242/B.B1/HK.03.01/2024 and the 2023 Joint Circular of BKN and MoECRT. Wulandari (2021) noted that Ruang GTK serves as a tool that facilitates supervision and mentoring for teachers in their performance improvement efforts. The technology used in the platform allows for better integration among teachers, principals, and supervisors, thus strengthening collaboration toward effective education. Ruang GTK also enables quicker and more accurate feedback from supervisors to teachers, supporting continuous improvement in teaching quality [30].

According to Charles O. Jones, as cited in Siagian et al [2], policy implementation involves translating policy into concrete actions through three main stages: organization, interpretation, and application. Edwards III (1980) and Triana [31] emphasized that implementation may fail if implementers lack understanding or capacity to apply the policy effectively. In PMM, the performance evaluation process begins with planning work outcomes based on education report cards, followed by lesson delivery, assessment, and reflection. Hermanto [32] argued that the success of PMM implementation depends not only on technological readiness but also on the comprehensive understanding of how to use the system among all school stakeholders. Fitria [33] stated that the key factors for successful implementation include intensive training and consistent technical support for teachers and school leaders. Meanwhile, in Ruang GTK, the evaluation process follows a more systematic annual cycle. This model is expected to enhance the effectiveness of performance evaluation implementation and directly impact educational quality. Rini [34] found that the annual cycle in Ruang GTK supports more organized and structured performance management. This provides teachers with benefits in terms of planning and reflecting on their performance, which in turn improves classroom learning quality. The implementation of this structured evaluation supports overall improvements in education quality, as confirmed by Wibowo [13], who stated that technology-based evaluations yield more precise and accurate results.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study method. This approach was selected because the primary aim was to explore in depth the implementation of teacher performance appraisal through the *Merdeka Mengajar Platform* (PMM)/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan. The case study method allows the researcher to comprehensively understand phenomena occurring in a specific setting by taking into account the contextual dimensions of place and time. According to Moleong [35], qualitative research is a type of study that utilizes natural settings, aims to interpret occurring phenomena, and involves various data collection methods such as interviews, observations, and documentation. Therefore, this method is suitable for exploring the dynamics and challenges encountered in the field implementation of PMM.

The research was conducted at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan, located in Rembang Regency, Central Java. Data collection activities were carried out between February and March 2025. The steps undertaken in this study included: (1) Problem identification: Establishing the research focus and problem formulation; (2) Research planning: Designing the methodology, data collection techniques, and analytical strategies; (3) Data collection: Gathering relevant data through valid and reliable techniques; (4) Data analysis: Applying thematic analysis to identify patterns and meanings; (5) Data interpretation: Relating findings to theoretical frameworks and practical implications; and (6) Report writing: Compiling a systematic report encompassing the findings and conclusions.

### **Instrument**

The instruments used in this research included: (1) Interview guidelines: Designed to explore the experiences of teachers, principals, and supervisors regarding the use of PMM;

(2) Observation sheets: Used to record the process of completing the *Rencana Hasil Kerja* (Work Result Plan/RHK) and teachers' interactions with the platform; (3) Documentation: Employed to collect relevant policies, school reports, and performance-related documents.

### Procedures

Data were gathered using three main techniques: (1) In-depth interviews: Conducted with key informants, including the principal, teachers, vice-principal, and supervisors to obtain rich, subjective information on the practices and challenges of PMM implementation; (2) Participatory observation: The researcher directly observed the use of PMM/Ruang GTK by teachers, particularly during the preparation of RHKs and the uploading of performance documents; (3) Document analysis: Involved reviewing formal documents such as PMM policies, technical regulations, performance evaluation results, and school-generated data.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis as developed by Braun and Clarke, following these steps: (1) Data reduction: Filtering information based on key themes such as implementation, challenges, and impact; (2) Data presentation: Organizing the findings into narratives according to the established themes; (3) Drawing conclusions: Interpreting emerging patterns and relating them to relevant theories and contextual factors [33]. Manual coding and thematic mapping were applied to extract and synthesize major themes. Initially, the data was manually coded by identifying key segments of text from interviews, observations, and documents, such as teachers' feedback or descriptions of their experiences with the platform. These segments were labeled with codes like "Digital Literacy Issues" and "Teacher Engagement." Subsequently, related codes were grouped together into broader themes, such as "Challenges in Implementing PMM" and "Teacher Engagement." Thematic mapping was used to visualize the relationships between these themes. The validity of the data was reinforced through triangulation of techniques and sources, by comparing data obtained from interviews, observations, and document analysis to enhance the credibility of the findings. Furthermore, credibility was ensured through prolonged engagement and persistent observation to gain an in-depth understanding of the context. Dependability was addressed by maintaining a clear and consistent methodological framework, with detailed documentation of the research process to allow replication or verification of findings. The results of the data analysis are presented in [Table 1](#).

**Table 1.** Data Analysis through Interviews, Observations, and Documentation

Research Fokus	Data Source	Key Finding	Analysis	Barriers/Success Factors
Implementation of PMM/Ruang GTK	Interview	The implementation began with socialization and support from the principal and vice-principal. Most teachers adapted, although there were technical challenges	Continuous training and support are needed to ensure teachers can use PMM effectively.	Limited digital literacy, unstable internet connection, and limited support time.
Challenges Faced	Observations	Initially, teachers faced difficulties with the steps for using PMM and uploading large documents, but with	An active and collaborative learning process is needed to improve the	Limited access to technology and digital literacy among teachers

Research Fokus	Data Source	Key Finding	Analysis	Barriers/Success Factors
Impact of PMM/Ruang GTK	Documentation	guidance, most teachers were able to adapt. PMM increased transparency, efficiency, and documentation of teacher performance. The principal used the performance results for teacher reflection and evaluation.	effectiveness of the implementation PMM functions as a tool for more objective and data-driven teacher performance reflection, but its use needs to be more optimized	Leadership of the principal, teacher collaboration, and support from school supervisors.
Research Fokus	Data Source	Key Finding	Analysis	Barriers/Success Factors
Success of Implementation	Interviews & Observations	Teachers stated that PMM simplified performance management, although there were technical issues, and school supervisors supported PMM implementation at the school.	The success of implementation is highly influenced by the principal's leadership and the collaboration among teachers	Resistance to change and technical challenges, such as unstable internet connections.
Recommendations for Optimization	Documentation & Interviews	There is a need to enhance understanding of PMM among teachers and school principals through continuous training, and improve technological infrastructure.	Intensive training for teachers, strengthening digital literacy, and improving infrastructure in schools need to be prioritized for smooth implementation.	More intensive support and simplification of complex PMM features.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This study aims to describe the implementation of teacher performance appraisal using the *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform (PMM)/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan. A qualitative approach with a case study method was employed. This approach was chosen as it enables the researcher to explore phenomena in depth within their natural and temporal contexts. This is in line with Moleong [35], who states that qualitative research is conducted in a natural setting, aims to interpret phenomena as they occur, and involves various methods such as interviews, observations, and documentation. The case study method was utilized to illustrate the ongoing processes or events at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan and to analyze them in order to generate solutions. The initial stage of the study began with the formulation of interview questions based on the research focus namely, the implementation of teacher performance appraisal using PMM/Ruang GTK with key informants consisting of the school supervisor, principal, vice principals, and one teacher. Interviews were conducted in stages throughout March 2025. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews and non-participant observations in the field, which were subsequently analyzed by the researcher. To ensure objectivity and data accuracy, the researcher also included additional supporting informants relevant to the research focus. The findings are presented in three parts: research results, research findings, and discussion.

The research results begin with an overview of the study site. SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan is a school established in 1990 and accredited with an 'A' rating (score: 92). The school is located in Kepohagung Village, Pamotan Subdistrict, Rembang Regency. Its vision is: "To produce graduates who are faithful, noble in character, accomplished, and

environmentally conscious in accordance with the *Pancasila Student Profile*," which is elaborated through missions to enhance faith and devotion, develop character, advance science and technology, and foster an environmentally conscious culture. The main informants in this study include Retno Kusumo Dewi, S.S., M.Pd., a school supervisor with several district-level achievements; Parman, S.Pd., the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan; Bactiar Siskawatiningsih, S.Pd., and Setyo Murniati, S.Pd., vice principals; and Didik Murdianto, S.Pd., a senior science teacher. Based on interviews, observations, and documentation, it was found that the implementation of teacher performance appraisal through PMM/Ruang GTK has been carried out gradually since 2024. The process began with socialization efforts by the school principal, followed by technical assistance from the vice principal in charge of curriculum. Teachers who were less familiar with technology were guided in preparing their *Rencana Hasil Kerja* (Work Result Plan/RHK) and uploading supporting documents. Although initially apprehensive, teachers were eventually able to adapt to the PMM system through support from school management and peer collaboration. The school supervisor actively monitored the implementation and remarked that SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan was among the schools that responded proactively to PMM policies, although some teachers had not yet maximized their use of the platform.

Identified obstacles included low levels of digital literacy among some teachers, limited internet access, and insufficient time for mentoring. One of the main challenges cited by teachers was difficulty uploading large files due to unstable internet connections. Nevertheless, informants expressed a positive attitude toward using PMM in teacher performance assessment. The platform was considered to be more transparent, efficient, and well-documented. The principal even utilized the appraisal results as material for reflection and evaluation during routine meetings and individual teacher assessments. Factors supporting the successful implementation of PMM at the school include the principal's open and active leadership, teacher collaboration, support from the vice principal, and supervision from the school supervisor. Meanwhile, the challenges encountered include limited digital literacy, technical constraints related to internet connectivity, and restricted time for mentoring. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the implementation of PMM at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan has proceeded fairly well and has contributed to the enhancement of both teacher and principal professionalism. The system serves as a promising tool for managing teacher performance in a more objective, structured, and technology-based manner.

The implementation of teacher performance appraisal using the *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform (PMM)/Ruang GTK at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan has proceeded well, despite encountering several challenges. Based on the research findings, the implementation process was carried out in stages and involved multiple stakeholders, including the principal, vice principals, teachers, and the school supervisor. This approach demonstrated synergy among school elements in ensuring that the appraisal process ran smoothly and aligned with its intended objectives. Hadi [18] (2021) asserts that transformational school leadership significantly influences the successful implementation of educational technology, such as PMM. At SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan, the principal not only performed administrative duties but also served as the primary driver in facilitating the implementation of PMM/Ruang GTK. This proactive leadership was crucial, given the principal's role as a facilitator for all school elements, including teachers, vice principals, and supervisors. Setyawan [36] also states that leaders who prioritize collaboration and



openness in managing technological changes can improve the effectiveness of newly implemented systems in schools.

Observations indicated that the principal of SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan successfully led the implementation of the PMM platform in an inclusive manner, engaging all parties in the process. This aligns with Sari [27], who emphasizes the importance of inter-teacher collaboration in accelerating adaptation to digital-based appraisal systems. Without strong cooperation, technological transitions are more difficult to accept, particularly for teachers unfamiliar with digital platforms for performance evaluation. During the initial implementation stage, teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan encountered various technical difficulties in using PMM, particularly in completing performance indicators via digital media. Nevertheless, the majority of teachers demonstrated adaptive and positive attitudes toward the platform, indicating a willingness to learn and adjust to changes. The technical challenges they faced such as difficulties in data input or understanding the performance indicators are common in transitions from conventional to digital-based appraisal systems.

Prasetyo [20] reveals that intensive training can enhance teachers' confidence in using technology for assessments. Training sessions provided by the principal and peers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan were key to accelerating teachers' adaptation to PMM. Teachers lacking confidence in using technology received direct support through training and guidance, enabling them to overcome technical challenges. This reflects Fitria's [33] (2020) principle that collaborative, teacher-led learning facilitates faster understanding and adaptation to new technologies. Moreover, teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan appreciated the convenience offered by the PMM platform in managing their performance assessments. The platform allowed teachers to directly monitor appraisal outcomes and simplified data management. This aligns with Yuliana [37], who states that teacher performance appraisal should not only serve administrative purposes but also function as a tool for continuous professional development. This research, however, has some limitations. The sample size of the study, which includes only a small number of teachers and school leaders from one school in a rural area, restricts the generalizability of the findings. However, despite the advantages of using PMM, research findings also show that utilizing appraisal results as a foundation for teacher competence development remains suboptimal. Teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan felt that performance results had not been fully leveraged for systematic and continuous professional reflection. This indicates that while PMM provides ease in assessment, further efforts are needed to promote teacher competence development through post-assessment discussions and constructive feedback.

Martono [38] argues that professional reflection is a vital element in enhancing teacher competence and must be conducted continuously. Therefore, even though appraisal results are digitally recorded, schools still need to foster a stronger culture of reflection among teachers, wherein performance data serve as a foundation for self-improvement. The Ministry of Education and Culture's *Merdeka Belajar* policy also highlights the importance of making performance appraisal a component of continuous learning, enabling teachers to self-evaluate and develop their competencies in a targeted manner. The role of supervisors in implementing the PMM-based performance appraisal system is also crucial. Supervisors at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan not only functioned as monitors but also as mentors who ensured the accountability and quality of the system's

implementation. They conducted evaluations of PMM implementation and provided useful feedback to principals and teachers. This aligns with Wijayanti [39], who states that supervisors play an essential role in maintaining the quality of educational technology implementation through ongoing mentoring. While supervisors had provided guidance, the research also revealed gaps in the completeness and validity of uploaded performance evidence. This presents a challenge in ensuring that data generated via the PMM platform accurately reflects actual teacher performance. Zainuddin [40] stresses that systematic evaluation by supervisors is crucial for ensuring the accuracy and quality of data produced. Therefore, supervisors at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan must strengthen their role in verifying that all uploaded data adhere to established standards and objectively reflect teacher performance.

As part of the external supervisory system, supervisors also facilitated discussions and collaboration between teachers and the principal, which contributed to improving the quality of education at the school. This is in line with Alfiansyah [41], who contends that supervisors should not only serve as monitors but also act as partners assisting schools in maintaining educational quality. The key success factors in implementing PMM at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan include the principal's transformational leadership, inter-teacher collaboration, and technical support from vice principals. The principal's transformational leadership proved effective in driving positive change within the school. Setyawan [36] states that transformational leadership, which emphasizes openness and collaborative learning, is highly effective in overcoming the barriers of educational technology implementation. The principal at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan succeeded in creating an open and collaborative work climate, which facilitated better implementation of PMM. Additionally, teacher collaboration was another critical success factor in implementing PMM. Teachers who worked together were able to share experiences and solutions to the challenges faced when using the PMM platform. Fahmi [42] reveals that collaborative learning among teachers can accelerate understanding of digital-based assessment systems. The spirit of *gotong royong* (mutual cooperation) demonstrated by teachers at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan proved effective in speeding up adaptation to the digital appraisal system.

Nonetheless, although PMM implementation at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan has been generally successful, there remains room for further improvement. The success of this platform does not solely depend on technological sophistication, but also on the commitment of all school stakeholders to cultivate a professional and reflective work culture. Haryono [43] argues that enhancing teachers' digital literacy is crucial for optimizing the use of technology in education. Therefore, the school must strengthen digital literacy training programs for teachers and ensure that technology is used wisely to improve the quality of education. Considering these findings, it can be concluded that the implementation of PMM at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan has progressed significantly and has been relatively successful. However, to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of this digital-based performance appraisal system, the school must continue to enhance technical mentoring, optimize the use of appraisal results for teacher competence development, and promote digital literacy. The success of this system depends on the strong commitment of all school components to build a culture of reflection and sustainable professionalism.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings on the implementation of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) in managing teacher performance at SMP Negeri 2 Pamotan, it can be concluded that the implementation of the teacher performance appraisal system through PMM has followed existing regulations. The process was conducted gradually, involving the principal, vice principals, teachers, and school supervisors. While most teachers and school leaders have understood the platform's basic principles, further assistance, particularly regarding technical aspects, is still necessary. Challenges encountered in using PMM include limited technological infrastructure, varying levels of digital literacy among teachers, and difficulties in completing performance indicators via digital media. An unstable internet connection was identified as a significant barrier to implementation. Despite these challenges, PMM and Ruang GTK have proven effective in enhancing transparency, accountability, and reducing the administrative burden on teachers, thereby supporting their professionalism.

The findings highlight the need for enhanced digital literacy initiatives as a critical component in teacher professional development programs in rural settings. Although some teachers expressed concerns about potential delays in promotion due to technical issues within the appraisal system, the success of PMM's implementation is largely influenced by support from the Education Office, adequate training and mentoring, and the readiness of technological infrastructure. Resistance to change, limited digital skills, and lack of internet access in some areas remain inhibiting factors that need to be addressed. Theoretically, this study contributes to the understanding of digital tools in enhancing teacher performance management systems. Practically, it underscores the importance of continuous training and infrastructure improvement to ensure successful technology adoption in schools, particularly in rural areas.

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