
SOCIUS:

Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Ilmu Pengetahuan Sosial

Volume 13, No 2, October 2024, pp. 77-87

P-ISSN: 2089-9661 | E-ISSN: 2089-967X

DOI: [10.20527/js.v13i2.18779](https://doi.org/10.20527/js.v13i2.18779)

Open Access: <https://ppjp.ulm.ac.id/journal/index.php/JS/index>



TEACHER READINESS IN IMPLEMENTING THE *MERDEKA* CURRICULUM: A STUDY ON BANJARMASIN PGRI HIGH SCHOOL

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 15 April 2024

Accepted 3 June 2024

Available online 27

October 2024

Kata Kunci:

Kesiapan Guru;
Kurikulum Merdeka;
SMA PGRI

Keywords:

Teacher readiness; teacher
competence; *Merdeka*
Curriculum

ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum at all levels of education which requires teachers to understand the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Based on this, the purpose of this study is to determine the readiness of PGRI High School teachers in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum in West Banjarmasin District. This research data is primary data in the form of direct observation results, and secondary data in the form of literature studies in the form of journals, and reports. The research sample consisted of 12 teaching teachers from the social science subject of PGRI High School in West Banjarmasin District who were registered as implementers of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Data were collected by distributing questionnaires to 12 social science teaching teachers. Data analysis used descriptive statistics, namely tabulation percentages to analyse the level of teacher readiness for the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum at PGRI High Schools in West Banjarmasin District. The *Merdeka* curriculum is a policy issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture Research and Technology which aims to optimise learning with the previous curriculum. Teacher readiness in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum varies regardless of the competencies possessed by the teacher. A teacher's competence is a set of mastery of abilities that must exist in order to realise performance which includes pedagogic competence, professional competence, personality competence, and social competence. The results showed that the readiness of teachers in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum at PGRI High School in West Banjarmasin District was in the ready category, which was at 19.5%. The readiness of the teachers in implementing the *Merdeka* curriculum is by attending IHT trainings as well as seminars to improve the quality of a teacher.

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PRELIMINARY

The school is a facility that functions as a place where learning activities take place. The expected learning outcomes are changes in student behavior in other words, through the learning process at school, students are expected to be able to construct knowledge through learning activities (Jannah dkk., 2022). The achievement of academic goals in schools is related to the background of students because students are one of the main components in the teaching and learning process. Each student has a different background that affects how a teacher can adapt to learning activities. This is one of the factors for the curriculum to develop and give birth to a new curriculum that is appropriate at present (Jumriani, Rahayu, Abbas, dkk., 2021).

The independent curriculum is a form of development effort from the previous curriculum in facing the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 with efforts to master new literacies, namely data literacy, technological literacy, and human literacy by prioritizing character building. The independent curriculum implements diverse learning and focuses on essential content so that learners have enough time to deepen concepts and strengthen competencies. (Gunanto, 2022). The independent curriculum is adjusted in line with changes in national standards which are a reference in curriculum development in Government Regulation No. 4 of 2022. Education will always move forward and be updated, always dynamic and can adjust itself to keep up with the changes that occur, with the development of science can be a provision for students in life and the future. The implementation of the independent curriculum began to be gradually implemented at all levels of primary and secondary education in the 2021/2022 school year after the policy of implementing the independent curriculum was officially launched by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Indonesia in February 2022 (Kemendikbud RI, 2022). The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes learning that is comfortable, independent, active, has character, meaningfulness, independence, and others. The learning structure of the independent curriculum is divided into intracurricular learning which refers to the learning outcomes that must be achieved by students in each subject, and the project of strengthening the profile of Pancasila students which refers to the graduate competency standards that must be possessed by students (Ministry of Education and Culture RI No. 56 / 2022).

The independent curriculum is still relatively new to the world of education, including teachers, so the implementation of the independent curriculum in schools must be balanced with the readiness of the teachers. Readiness is a competence, so someone who has competence means that someone has sufficient readiness to do something. This readiness starts from the teacher's understanding, mentality, and abilities that come from within the teacher. As

professional educators, the main task of teachers is to educate, train, direct, guide, assess and evaluate students to prepare the next generation who will face new challenges in the 21st century (Abbas, Jumriani, Handy, dkk., 2021). Teachers realize that they do not have enough experience in using learning tools in the teaching and learning process, this is actually a form of preparing and improving the professionalism of a teacher in gaining experience in order to update their professional competencies and skills (Rahayu et al., 2022). The competencies that a teacher must possess according to Law no. 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers article 10 paragraph (1) include pedagogical competence, social competence, personality competence, and professional competence.

So that the problems in the current independent curriculum in Indonesia are still not effective and need to be reviewed by educational researchers, learning is now time to be returned to independence in getting education. So that students have sovereignty in creating interesting learning. Strengthening the implementation of this independent curriculum focuses on the use of technology and learning communities to share practices, both between teachers, students, and academics. This is the basis for the research conducted (Ariga, 2022; Sulistyosari et al., 2022). Based on the Decree of the Ministry of Research and Technology No. 034/H/KR/2022 concerning Education Units Implementing the Independent Curriculum in the 2022/2023 school year, 90% of high school level schools in Banjarmasin City, South Kalimantan Province, have implemented the independent curriculum following the policy direction of the Ministry of Research and Technology. PGRI Private High School in West Banjarmasin District, which is one of the sub-districts in Banjarmasin City, participated in the implementation of the independent curriculum.

In the implementation of the independent curriculum, several obstacles were found, especially in the readiness of the teaching staff. The results of researchers' observations at PGRI high school in West Banjarmasin sub-district found obstacles that there are educators who teach not according to their field of expertise and facilities and infrastructure that are still lacking, making it difficult for teachers to carry out teaching and learning activities. Based on these results, the researcher wants to know how "Teacher readiness in implementing the independent curriculum at PGRI High School in West Banjarmasin sub-district, namely PGRI 2 High School and PGRI 6 High School in Banjarmasin".

RESEARCH METHODS

Researchers used a quantitative research type with a descriptive approach. The population in this study were 12 social science teaching teachers at PGRI High School, West

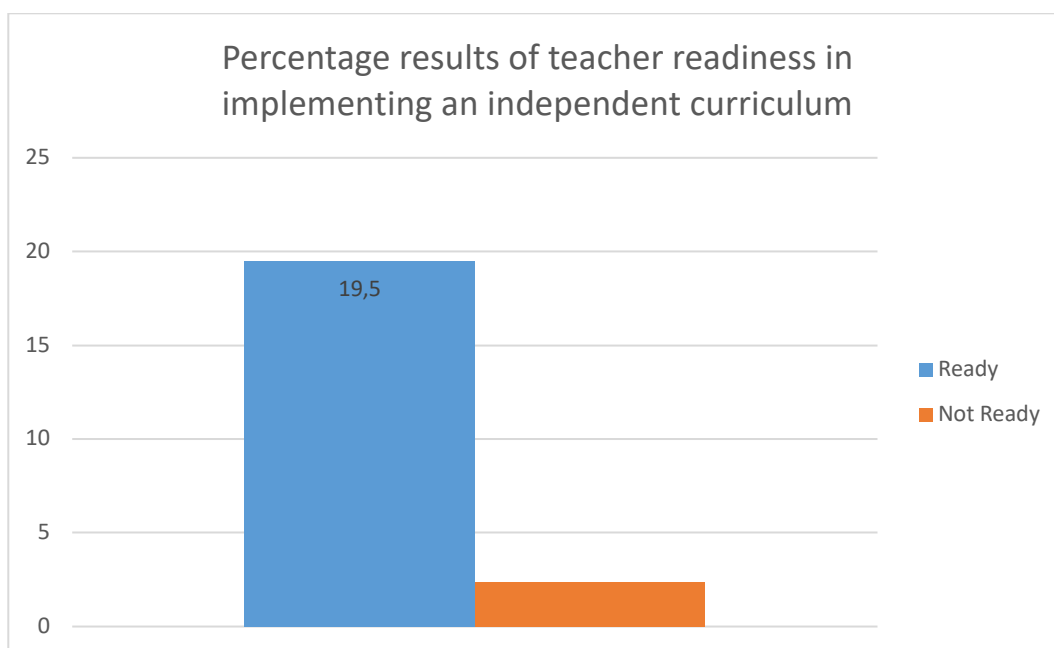
Banjarmasin District. Sampling using the saturated sampling technique, which is taking all the research population. Respondents' answers were analyzed using the percentage formula. The variables of this study are as follows:

Variable	Sub Variable	Indicator	Sub Indicator
Teacher Competency	Pedagogics	Ability to manage student learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Understand the characteristics of each learner from physical, social, and intellectual aspects. b. Mastering learning theories and learning principles in the independent curriculum. c. Determine the flow of learning objectives taught following the curriculum d. Facilitate the development of students' potential to actualize their various potentials. e. Conduct assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes (CP). f. Determine the teaching module / RPP by the learning that is taught. g. Conduct reflective action to improve the quality of learning.
	Personality	Steady personality, noble character, and being a role model for students.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Act in accordance with religious, legal, social norms. b. Displaying oneself as an honest person, noble character, and a role model for students. c. Demonstrate work ethic, high responsibility, a sense of pride in being a

Variable	Sub Variable	Indicator	Sub Indicator
			teacher, and self-confidence.
	Professional	Ability to master subject matter broadly and deeply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mastering the material, structure, concepts, and scientific mindset that support the subjects taught. b. Mastering the standard competencies of the subjects and learning objectives taught. c. Develop professionalism sustainably by taking reflective action. d. Utilization of information and communication technology to communicate and develop themselves.
	Social	Teachers' ability to communicate and interact effectively and efficiently with students and fellow educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Communicate empathetically and politely with fellow educators, b. Communicate with one's professional community and other professions orally and in writing or other forms.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of data analysis show that to determine the level of teacher readiness in implementing an independent curriculum by calculating the results of respondents' answers with the percentage formula, then the results of the questionnaire/questionnaire answers per respondent are entered into category criteria, namely the ready category with a value of 15 - 30, and the unprepared category with a value of 0 - 14. Teacher readiness in implementing the independent curriculum at PGRI High School in West Banjarmasin District is categorized as ready, with a percentage of 19.5%.



The results of field research based on 4 indicators of teacher competence, namely pedagogical competence, personality competence, professional competence, and social competence towards teacher readiness in implementing an independent curriculum are described as follows:

- a. Pedagogic competence is the ability to manage student learning. The results of the questionnaire related to understanding students show that the answers of 12 respondents with a percentage of 100% teachers have understood the character of each student which includes physical, social and intellectual characters with the most reasons mentioned by observing the condition of students based on learning outcomes. Learner characteristics are individual aspects consisting of their interests, attitudes, learning motivation, learning styles, thinking abilities, and initial abilities (Magdalena, 2020). Understanding the characteristics of students is one of the competencies that must be possessed by an educator, so that mastering the characteristics of students is an indicator of whether or not an educator is professional. The learning objectives that are planned with the concept of learning in accordance with the independent curriculum are obtained as many as 12 respondents answered that they had carried out learning in accordance with the learning concept of the independent curriculum with the percentage of the reason that the most 16.7% made the determination of objectives adjusted to the content in the material / teaching modules used. This is according to Hamzah (2019) that learning objectives are behaviors to be achieved or that can be done by students in conditions at certain competency levels. Teachers must understand three main things in formulating learning objectives, namely; (1) teachers must study the curriculum because the material to be

taught and the general objectives of the material are in the curriculum, (2) Understand the types of learning outcomes because learning objectives are essentially the learning outcomes that students are expected to master, (3) learning objectives must be clear in content and can be achieved by students after students receive the learning. Based on the results of the questionnaire in assessing the level of understanding of students in independent curriculum learning, different answers were obtained with the highest percentage of 72.7% with the opinion that the independent curriculum uses non-academic assessment while previously using structured academic assessment. Meanwhile, 8.3% of respondents who answered did not think that the assessment system with the independent curriculum was not much different from the previous curriculum. The way teachers know the level of understanding of students is as many as 33.3% of teachers think that giving assignments to students and assessing the results of assignments so that it is known how the ability of students through the answers given. Giving a pre-test before learning and a post-test after learning as well as giving a self-assessment questionnaire to students after learning.

- b. Professional competence is the ability to master learning materials broadly and deeply. The results of the respondent's questionnaire answers show that mastery of the concept of implementing an independent curriculum obtained different answers with the highest percentage of 66.7% of respondents saying that it emphasizes students as active learning objectives with a flexible and easy-to-understand learning system. The difference in mastery of the concept of learning their curriculum with the previous curriculum obtained 12 answers with the highest percentage of 41.6% that independent curriculum learning focuses on learning outcomes and the flow of learning objectives. The results of the research on mastery of various learning methods obtained 12 different answers. Most teachers have mastered various learning methods with a percentage of 75% with the opinion that a teacher must master various learning methods. This is according to Nurhasanah (2019) and (Rosidah et al., 2021) teachers must have an understanding of the nature, and characteristics of students and their development, teachers must understand several educational concepts that are useful for helping students, master several teaching methods that are by subject matter and student development, master an appropriate and good evaluation system. Meanwhile, some teachers have not been able to master various learning methods because the teacher still adjusting to the school situation and the ability of students. As many as 25% of respondents who answered did not master various learning methods because they were still in the process of learning to understand learning methods

that were appropriate to the teaching class situation, understanding learning methods took a long time to understand. This is according to Nurhasanah, (2019) and (Marsela Yulianti et al., 2022) a teacher must master the methods they will use in the process of learning activities and prepare learning tools and media completely so that the process of learning activities becomes more enjoyable. The right learning method will help students develop their ability to communicate, socialize, and solve problems with a group of friends.

- c. Personality competence is a competency related to the development of personality as a teacher which includes the ability to behave by norms, rules, and religious value systems. Being democratic and able to respect and appreciate religious communities. The results of data analysis show that behavior by religious, legal, and social norms obtained 12 different answers with the highest percentage of 83.3% of teachers saying it is a necessity and obedience that we need to apply as a good example. As many as 16.7% of teachers said it is a good reflection if we can behave according to religious, social, and legal norms. The responsibility of an educator obtained different answers with the highest percentage of 33.3% because it has the responsibility of carrying out teaching to students as the duty of a teacher to educate, teach, and guide students, and as many as 16.7% of teachers said to create a great generation.
- d. Social competence is the ability of teachers to interact and communicate effectively and efficiently. the results of data analysis show that as many as 100% of the answers from 12 respondents have utilized information technology by following the times by studying various sources, with the reason that as many as 50% make it easier to exchange information via wa and telegram and other communication tools with the aim that the information conveyed is connected in the field of education. Interacting regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum implementation with fellow educators obtained different answers with the highest percentage of 66.7% because it is very important to get information from fellow educators to find out developments in the implementation of the independent curriculum. Joining a community of fellow educators obtained a different answer with the highest percentage of 41.7% because it made it easier for teachers to develop an understanding of the implementation of the independent curriculum. The results of research on honest and firm behavior of an educator obtained different answers with the highest percentage of 58.3% to be an example and a good example for students. 41.7% of teachers answered that it was part of the obligations of an educator. This is according to (Agus Wibowo, 2018) and (Arviansyah & Shagena, 2022). Communication and interaction are indispensable in the learning process, considering that

teachers always interact with students, coworkers, as well as school and community members. Through communication, the process of exchanging information can be carried out properly for that, in carrying out social competence, a teacher must have a communicative attitude both in writing and orally.

Strengthening the implementation of this independent curriculum focuses on the use of technology and learning communities to share practices, both between teachers, students, and academics itself were making the power on Kurikulum Merdeka. After that, the various advantages of the independent learning curriculum are: (1) The learning process becomes simpler but remains meaningful because the curriculum focuses on essential materials and develops the potential of students in their respective phases (2) Students can be more creative and free in learning according to their respective interests and talents because students can choose courses or subjects according to what they want (3) The learning process in this independent curriculum is more interactive and relevant to today's life, because it uses projects (Project Based Learning), so that later when students are involved in the world of work, they will be more accustomed to facing real problems. Become a strength that can be added by teachers in classroom learning, teachers, apart from being facilitators, also play a very important role in any situation, so that there is continuity that must also be evaluated in the provision of adequate school facilities and infrastructure itself (Putri et al., 2023; Yunita et al., 2023).

CONCLUSION

The results showed that by distributing questionnaires to respondents which were then calculated using the percentage technique calculation (%) the level of teacher readiness in implementing the independent curriculum at PGRI High School in West Banjarmasin District, namely PGRI 2 High School and PGRI 6 High School in terms of 4 indicators of teacher competence, namely pedagogical, professional, personality, and social, was included in the ready category in implementing the independent curriculum with a percentage of 19.5% of the total 12 teacher respondents from the social science subject. This is reinforced by the mastery of competencies possessed by teachers in terms of professional teachers have been able to become instructors to respond and practice attitude skills and mindsets in carrying out their duties and responsibilities as an educator.

Learning objectives are planned by the current independent curriculum by adjusting the short duration, focusing on Basic Competencies and essential material. The learning media most widely applied by teaching teachers are short videos, books, PowerPoint,

pictures/illustrations, and maps. The way the teacher does it is by making the material interesting and easy for students to understand by adjusting the needs and development level of students. The ability to train creative thinking and critical thinking is constrained due to limited learning time, so many cannot be conveyed. The ability to train learners to communicate is not considered to be much of an obstacle. Suggestions for further research can be included to provide information on the shortcomings of the research that has been carried out.

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