

EXAMINING TEACHERS' READINESS TO IMPLEMENT THE KURIKULUM MERDEKA IN THE MADRASAH IBTIDAIYAH CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

The Indonesian government continues improving teachers' readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. Teacher readiness plays an important role in supporting the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. This study aims to examine teachers' readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. This study used a descriptive quantitative approach. Data was mainly collected by distributing online questionnaires through the Whatsapp chat application. The questionnaire was used to collect data on teacher readiness in (1) understanding of The Kurikulum Merdeka policies, (2) understanding of curriculum structure, (3) understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), (4) readiness to develop lesson plans, (5) readiness to deliver instruction, and (6) readiness to conduct instructional assessments. Forty Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) teachers were involved as respondents. They were in-service teachers who were students of the Teacher Professional Education Study Program (PPG). They came from the provinces of East Java, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara, Southeast Sulawesi, West Java, South Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara, and Bali. The data were analyzed using the quantitative descriptive method. The results showed that measuring the six key aspects of the Kurikulum Merdeka showed that teacher readiness was in the high category. However, some respondents still get a medium score in learning and assessment. So, the research respondents are sufficiently ready to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka but still need to improve their readiness for learning and assessment.

Keywords: elementary school; independent learning; teacher competence

INTRODUCTION

Through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, the Indonesian government continues to improve education units' readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. The implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka aims to fill the weaknesses of the previous curriculum and improve Indonesia's education ranking on international measurements.¹ The 2013 curriculum has several areas for improvement, such as a need for teacher understanding and preparation, limitations in developing character education, and difficulties in consistent implementation in the classroom. The Kurikulum Merdeka is expected to overcome these weaknesses by offering project-based

¹ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, "Latar Belakang Kurikulum Merdeka," Government, *Merdeka Mengajar* (blog), 2022, <https://pusatinformasi.guru.kemdikbud.go.id>.



learning, developing soft skills and student character, and a flexible curriculum structure. The Kurikulum Merdeka also incorporates literacy, knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the use of technology.²

There are six forms of support from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology to encourage education units to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. First, the Merdeka Mengajar platform can be provided for teachers and principals to learn the components of the Kurikulum Merdeka. They were second, forming a learning community. Teachers can share their experiences and understanding of the Kurikulum Merdeka through this community. Third, competent resource persons should be allowed to share their good practices in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. They were fourth, presenting the Kurikulum Merdeka webinar series. Fifth, there are development partners. The Ministry of Education and Culture embraces communities who care about education to partner in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. The sixth support is in the form of providing a helpdesk or assistance center that is ready to provide information about the Merdeka Curriculum to education units.³ This support shows the urgency of education units', including teachers', readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka.

Teacher readiness in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka is important; They must do the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.⁴ Research on teacher readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka shows various findings. When the policy was first launched, many teachers needed more preparation time. For example, teachers at SDN 2 Cempaga stated they needed more time to implement it.⁵ Teachers still need help in carrying out authentic assessments.⁶ In addition, many teachers must be

² Gumung Gumilar et al., "Urgensi Penggantian Kurikulum 2013 Menjadi Kurikulum Merdeka," *Jurnal Papeda: Jurnal Publikasi Pendidikan Dasar* 5, no. 2 (2023): 148–55.

³ Direktorat Sekolah Dasar, "6 Dukungan Kemendikbudristek untuk Mendorong Satuan Pendidikan Terapkan Kurikulum Merdeka," Government, *Direktorat Sekolah Dasar, Direktorat Jenderal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Pendidikan Menengah* (blog), February 6, 2023, <https://ditpsd.kemdikbud.go.id/artikel/detail/6-dukungan-kemendikbudristek-untuk-mendorong-satuan-pendidikan-terapkan-kurikulum-merdeka>.

⁴ Peronika Purba, Ayu Rahayu, and Murniningsih Murniningsih, "Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Pada Pembelajaran IPAS Kelas IV Di SD Negeri Tahunan Yogyakarta," *Bulletin of Educational Management and Innovation* 1, no. 2 (2023): 136–52.

⁵ Ni Kadek Candra Purani and I. Ketut Dedi Agung Susanto Putra, "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Dalam Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Di SDN 2 Cempaga," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Rare Pustaka* 4, no. 2 (2022): 8–12.

⁶ Cholifah Tur Rosidah, Pana Pramulia, and Wahyu Susiloningsih, "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Mengimplementasikan Asesmen Autentik Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar* 12, no. 01 (2021): 87–103.

technology literate and eager to keep up with curriculum changes.⁷

In the last two years, research on the Kurikulum Merdeka has shown findings different from previous studies. The case study conducted in SD Negeri 47 Penanjung Sekadau shows that teacher readiness was in the excellent category. As many as 86.7% of teachers who were research informants stated that they understood the structure of the Kurikulum Merdeka.⁸ Research on teachers in UPT SDN 9 Makale Selatan showed the same finding. The teachers at this school were ready to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka.⁹ Likewise, elementary school teachers in Cirebon City have understood the essence of the Kurikulum Merdeka policy. They have formulated learning objectives and applied the 21st-century learning paradigm.¹⁰ The research results have also shown good readiness in planning, implementing, and evaluating learning in the context of natural and social science teachers.¹¹

Based on the guidelines published by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, Technology, and Higher Education, the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka requires understanding the policy, the curriculum structure, formulating Learning Objectives (TP), teaching module readiness, implementing learning, identifying students, and assessment readiness.¹² The previous studies above have yet to comprehensively explore teacher readiness in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, including all aspects. Most of them still focus on teacher readiness in managing learning. This study aims to complement the gap of previous research by profiling teacher readiness on the key components of the Kurikulum Merdeka, which are more comprehensive, including the standards on which the Kurikulum Merdeka is based, the structure of the

⁷ Ridania Ekawati and Dini Susanti, "Analisis Persiapan Guru Dalam Melaksanakan Sistem Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Di SD IV Muhammadiyah Kota Padang," *MEDIA ILMU* 1, no. 1 (2022), <https://www.jurnal.umsb.ac.id/index.php/mediailmu/article/view/3936>.

⁸ Jamjemah Jamjemah et al., "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Dalam Melaksanakan Pembelajaran Kurikulum Merdeka Di Sdn. 47 Penanjung Sekadau," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Perkhasa: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Dasar* 8, no. 2 (2022): 119–27.

⁹ Kristina Lai Tandiarang, Hotmaulina Sihotang, and Lisa Gracia, "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Dalam Mengimplementasikan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Di UPT SDN 9 Makale Selatan Tana Toraja," *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan* 8, no. 2 (2023): 1205–11.

¹⁰ Andang Heryahya et al., "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Sekolah Dasar Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka," *Journal of Education and Instruction (JOEAI)* 5, no. 2 (2022): 548–62.

¹¹ Nur Balqis Mutia and Harsi Admawati, "Teachers' Readiness to Implement The Kurikulum Merdeka in The Natural and Social Science Learning," *Al-Bidayah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam* 15, no. 2 (2023): 225–46.

¹² Windy Hastasasi et al., *Panduan Pengembangan Kurikulum Operasional Satuan Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Kepala Badan Standar, Kurikulum, dan Asesmen Pendidikan, 2022).

Kurikulum Merdeka, the Profile of Pancasila Students, and the learning components in the Kurikulum Merdeka.

Readiness is explored about teachers' confidence in implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka, including understanding standards or regulations, curriculum structure, learning planning, learning implementation, Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project, and learning assessment. We argue that the result can provide essential insights into (a) differences among teachers' perceptions of readiness so that institutions and governments can provide more targeted support, (b) some key determinants to predict teachers' perceptions of Merdeka Curriculum and to begin personalizing support, and (c) a strong empirical basis for further investigation of teachers' perceptions of The Kurikulum Merdeka to develop better policies for quality education.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a descriptive quantitative approach. Forty Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) teachers were involved as respondents. They were in-service teachers who were students of the Teacher Professional Education Study Program (PPG). They came from the provinces of East Java, South Sulawesi, West Nusa Tenggara, Southeast Sulawesi, South Kalimantan, East Nusa Tenggara, and Bali. As can be seen in Figure 1, The majority of the respondents were teachers from East Java Province (65%), and in second place were from West Nusa Tenggara Province (10%).

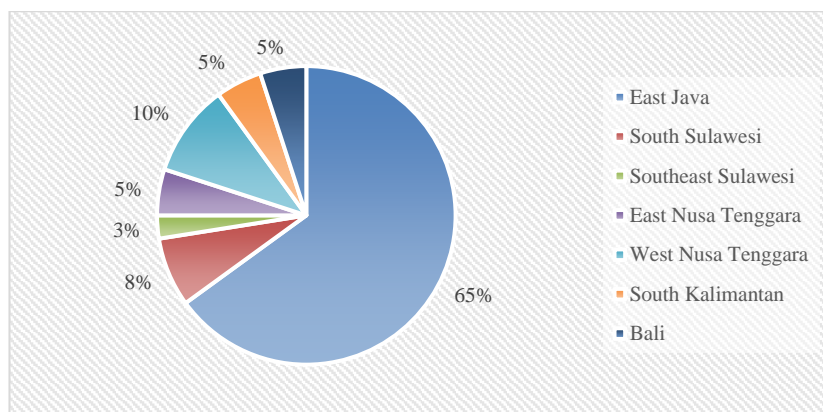


Figure 1
Distribution of Respondents by Areas
Source: Personal Document

Respondents were teachers of various subjects. As shown in Figure 2, the subjects they taught were Mathematics, Natural and Social Sciences, Bahasa Indonesia, Pancasila

and Civic Education (PPKn), cultural arts and Crafts (SBdP), Akidah Akhlak, Al-Qur'an Hadith, Local Content, and Other. The majority of respondents were teachers of Bahasa Indonesia (30%), Mathematics (18%), and other subjects not mentioned in the questionnaire (35%).

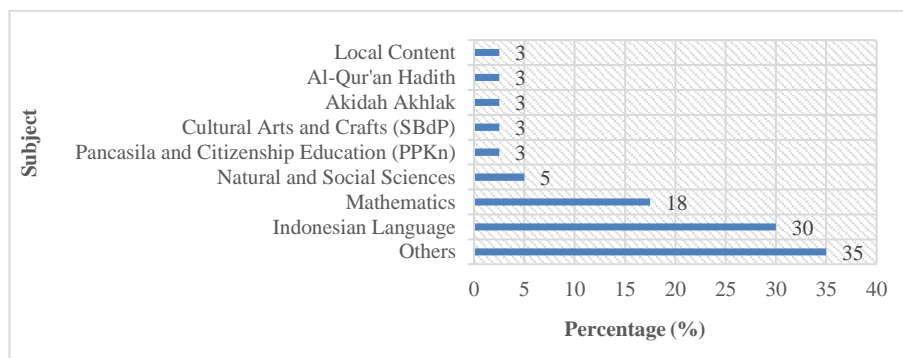


Figure 2
Distribution of Respondents by Subject
Source: Personal Document

Data were collected by distributing questionnaires online via the WhatsApp chat application. Twenty positive closed-ended statements were used to explore teacher readiness. The statement items were adapted from previous research.¹³ The questionnaire consisted of Likert-scale items comprising five options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" to measure teacher readiness. Respondents were asked to rate each statement related to the readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. The weighted scores for the responses can be seen in the following table:

Table 1
Item Scoring Scale

Score	Description
1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neutral
4	Agree
5	Strongly Agree

Source: Personal Document

Calculation of the score on each item used the following formula:

$$Item\ Score = T \times Pn$$

Formula Description:

T: Number of respondents who chose the answer

¹³ Heryahya et al., "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Sekolah Dasar Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka"; Purani and Putra, "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Dalam Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Di SDN 2 Cempaga."

Pn: Choice of Likert score numbers

Furthermore, to obtain the score interpretation, the following formula is used:

$$\text{Interpretation Score} = \frac{\text{Item Score}}{\text{Maximum Score}} \times 100$$

Data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative methods to determine the level of readiness. The results of the analysis conclude that MI teachers are ready to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. The interpretation is based on the following criteria.

Table 2
Level of Readiness

Level	Skor	Category
5	85-100	Very High
4	69-84	High
3	53-68	Medium
2	37-52	Low
1	≤36	Very Low

Source: Personal Document

There are six aspects of teacher readiness used in this study, namely (1) understanding of The Kurikulum Merdeka policies, (2) understanding of curriculum structure, (3) Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), (4) Readiness to develop lesson plans, (5) Readiness to deliver instruction, and (6) Readiness to conduct instructional assessments (Table 3).

Table 3
Indicators of Teacher Readiness

No.	Aspects	Indicators
1	Understanding of The Kurikulum Merdeka policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards, and assessment standards - Understanding of learning outcomes - Understanding of guidelines
2	Understanding of the curriculum structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of curriculum structure and lesson hour allocation
3	Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile - selection of Pancasila Student Profile dimensions for project activities - Selection of learning strategies and methods for the project - Designing project learning activities

No.	Aspects	Indicators
4	Readiness to develop lesson plans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of learning principles - Understanding of the learning cycle - Ability to formulate objectives and flow of learning objectives - Ability to determine the type of material - Ability to determine learning strategies - Ability to determine the type of assessment
5	Readiness to deliver instruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ability to apply learning approaches, strategies, and methods - Ability to apply differentiated learning
6	Readiness to conduct instructional assessments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of assessment principles - Ability to implement assessment - Ability to process assessment results - Ability to follow up on assessment results

Source: Personal Document

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum changes in Indonesia are carried out in an uncertain time frame. For example, the 2004 Competency-based Curriculum (KBK) was implemented for approximately three years and replaced by the Education Unit Level Curriculum (KTSP) in 2006. KTSP lasted approximately seven years and was replaced by the 2013 curriculum mid-2013. In 2020, KTSP was replaced by the Kurikulum Merdeka.¹⁴ Curriculum changes not only have an impact on learning in schools but also on teachers, students, and other aspects of education. Curriculum changes require thorough preparation for teachers, who have an important role in implementing the curriculum.¹⁵

Various problems arise related to teacher readiness for implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka. Teachers still experience multiple difficulties.¹⁶ These difficulties include arranging learning tools, using technology, and determining appropriate learning methods. Various obstacles, such as lack of experience related to the Kurikulum Merdeka learning concept, limited reference sources and teaching materials, and poor mastery of

¹⁴ Aryo Putranto Saptohutomo, "Sejarah Pergantian Kurikulum di Indonesia," *KOMPAS.com*, February 13, 2022, <https://nasional.kompas.com/read/2022/02/13/10180071/sejarah-pergantian-kurikulum-di-indonesia?page=1>.

¹⁵ Agung Hartoyo, Rima Melati, and Martono Martono, "Dampak Perubahan Kurikulum Merdeka Dan Kesiapan Tenaga Pendidik Terhadap Penyesuaian Pembelajaran Di Sekolah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Perkhasa: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Dasar* 9, no. 2 (2023): 412–28.

¹⁶ Sumarmi Sumarmi, "Problematika Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," *Social Science Academic* 1, no. 1 (2023): 94–103.

information technology, still need to be addressed by some teachers.¹⁷ These difficulties show the need for teacher readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka.¹⁸ One component of this readiness is pedagogical knowledge readiness. Mastery of pedagogical knowledge plays an important role in teacher performance.¹⁹

Understanding of The Kurikulum Merdeka Policies

The first aspect of readiness explored in this research is understanding The Kurikulum Merdeka policies. The Kurikulum Merdeka policies examined in this study are educational standards policies (competence, content, process, and assessment), learning outcomes, and guidelines for implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka published by the government. This aspect is described into three components, namely (1) understanding of graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards, and assessment standards; (2) understanding of learning outcomes; and (3) understanding of guidelines. The data shows that most respondents understand this aspect well (Table 3). The scores obtained on the three indicators ranged from 73-77. The scores show that readiness in this aspect falls into the high category.

Table 4
Teachers' Understanding of The Kurikulum Merdeka Policies

No.	Indicator	Skor
1	Understanding of graduate competency standards, content standards, process standards, and assessment standards	73
2	Understanding of learning outcomes	77
3	Understanding of guidelines	76

Source: Personal Document

Based on Table 4, teachers have understood the standards that are the basis for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Standards are the minimum criteria for implementing education in Indonesia. The purpose of standards is to guarantee the quality of education.²⁰ Standards are the basic guidelines for implementing education. Process

¹⁷ Heni Herlina et al., "Kendala Dan Kebutuhan Guru Sekolah Dasar Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka Bagi Peserta Didik Berkebutuhan Khusus Di Lampung," *Jurnal Basicedu* 7, no. 5 (2023): 2928–41.

¹⁸ Sofyan Iskandar et al., "Problematika Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Di Sekolah Dasar," *Innovative: Journal Of Social Science Research* 3, no. 2 (2023): 1594–1602.

¹⁹ Joshua M. Rosenberg and Matthew J. Koehler, "Context and Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK): A Systematic Review," *Journal of Research on Technology in Education* 47, no. 3 (July 3, 2015): 186–210, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15391523.2015.1052663>.

²⁰ Miftahul Ulum, "Kebijakan Standar Nasional Pendidikan," *Syaikhuna: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pranata Islam* 11, no. 1 (2020): 105–16.

standards ensure that learning is effective and efficient in achieving goals. Process standards include planning, implementation, and assessment of learning.²¹ Therefore, teachers need to understand the applicable educational standards.

Teachers must also understand educational standards, Learning Outcomes, and the Ministry of Education and Culture guidelines.²² Teachers are active drivers who encourage change and improve the quality of education. They design and implement the curriculum and serve as a link between the curriculum and student interests. Teachers and students are the subjects of learning.²³ Understanding learning outcomes can help teachers design effective and meaningful learning.²⁴ The data in Table 3 shows that respondents understand the learning outcomes in the Kurikulum Merdeka.

Understanding the Structure of the Kurikulum Merdeka

The second aspect of readiness is understanding the structure of the Kurikulum Merdeka. The structure of the Kurikulum Merdeka includes intra-curricular and co-curricular activities. In addition to intra-curricular and co-curricular activities, the curriculum structure can include extracurricular activities that follow the characteristics of the education unit. Intra-curricular activities include competencies, learning content, and learning load. Competencies are formulated as Learning Outcomes.²⁵ Figure 3 shows that most respondents understand the structure and allocation of lesson hours in the Kurikulum Merdeka (23% and 35%). Meanwhile, 38% of respondents have a medium understanding, and 5% have a low knowledge. Understanding the curriculum structure and lesson hour allocation can help teachers design effective and efficient lessons.²⁶

²¹ Halimatu Sakdiah and Syahrani Syahrani, "Pengembangan Standar Isi Dan Standar Proses Dalam Pendidikan Guna Meningkatkan Mutu Pembelajaran Di Sekolah," *Cross-Border* 5, no. 1 (2022): 622–32.

²² Heryahya et al., "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Sekolah Dasar Dalam Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka."

²³ Agustinus Tanggu Daga, "Penguatan Peran Guru Dalam Implementasi Kebijakan Merdeka Belajar Di Sekolah Dasar," *ELSE (Elementary School Education Journal): Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pembelajaran Sekolah Dasar* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1–24.

²⁴ Emma Kostianen et al., "Meaningful Learning in Teacher Education," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 71 (2018): 66–77.

²⁵ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, "Peraturan Menteri Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia Nomor 12 Tahun 2024 tentang Kurikulum pada Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Jenjang Pendidikan Dasar, dan Jenjang Pendidikan Menengah," Pub. L. No. 12 (2024).

²⁶ Bettina Vogt, "Supportive Assessment Strategies as Curriculum Events in a Performance-Oriented Classroom Context," *European Educational Research Journal* 21, no. 6 (November 2022): 1023–40, <https://doi.org/10.1177/147490412111030387>.

Understanding curriculum structure can help teachers ensure constructive alignment in their instruction.

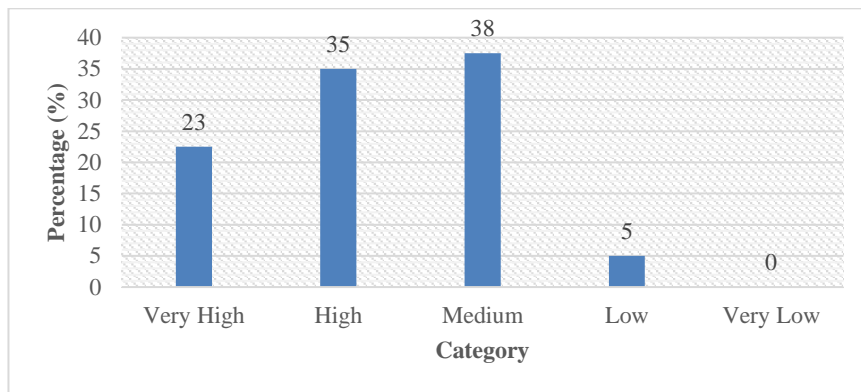


Figure 3

Teacher's Understanding the Structure and Allocation of Class Hours

Source: Personal Document

The Kurikulum Merdeka is divided into two main learning activities: regular or routine learning, an extracurricular activity, and the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). Purani Putra's investigation shows that even though teachers understand the structure of the curriculum, they still need clarification on how to implement it.²⁷

Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

The next aspect is related to the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5). The Pancasila Learner Profile is formulated in one comprehensive statement: "Indonesian students are competent lifelong learners, have character, and behave according to the values of Pancasila. Six characters/competencies are formulated as critical dimensions: 1) faith, devotion to God Almighty, and noble character; 2) global diversity; 3) cooperation; 4) independence; 5) critical thinking; and 6) creativity. These six dimensions show that the Pancasila Learner Profile focuses on cognitive abilities, attitudes, and behaviors by who we are as Indonesians and citizens of the world."²⁸

This aspect is described into four indicators, namely (1) understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile; (2) selection of Pancasila Student Profile dimensions for project activities; (3) selection of learning strategies and methods for the project; and (4)

²⁷ Purani and Putra, "Analisis Kesiapan Guru Dalam Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Di SDN 2 Cempaga."

²⁸ Yogi Anggraena et al., *Kajian Pengembangan Profil Pelajar Pancasila*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan dan Perbukuan Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2020).

designing project learning activities. Table 5 shows that teacher readiness in this aspect is also high. This data is indicated by the scores obtained on the indicators ranging from 72-79 (high category).

Table 5
Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5)

No.	Indicator	Skor
1	Understanding of the Pancasila Student Profile	79
2	Selection of Pancasila Student Profile dimensions for project activities	70
3	Selection of learning strategies and methods for the project	73
4	Designing project learning activities	72

Source: Personal Document

P5 is one of the critical components of the Kurikulum Merdeka.²⁹ Teachers must also design learning activities that utilize technology and provide role models so that students can achieve the six dimensions in P5.³⁰ P5 is an endeavor by the Indonesian government to strengthen character education at the school level. Character education can take various forms, one of which is through school programs, such as co-curricular activities. These activities help students understand, love, and practice character values.

By applying the six dimensions of the Pancasila student profile, namely faith, and devotion to God Almighty, global diversity, independence, cooperation, critical thinking, and creativity, it is hoped that the Indonesian people will become people of intelligence and character who can face the challenges of the 21st century and instill the values the value of Pancasila as the state philosophy consistently. This strategy is integrated into formal academic activities through intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities to develop the Pancasila student profile. This strategy is packaged in project activities to strengthen the profile of Pancasila students. It is hoped that this Pancasila student profile policy will build the character of the Indonesian nation, which is superior and able to compete globally.³¹

Readiness to Develop Lesson Plans

²⁹ Petronela Ntimuk, Mokhammad Yaurizqika Hadi, and Imron Arifin, "Analisis Kebijakan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dalam Dunia Pendidikan," *Semnas Manajemen Strategik Pengembangan Profil Pelajar Pancasila Pada PAUD Dan Pendidikan Dasar* 1, no. 1 (2022).

³⁰ Warsono Warsono, "Pendidikan Karakter dan Profil Pelajar Pancasila," *Proceeding UM Surabaya* 1, no. 1 (2022).

³¹ Dini Irawati et al., "Profil Pelajar Pancasila Sebagai Upaya Mewujudkan Karakter Bangsa," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022): 1224–38.

The next aspect measured in this study is readiness to develop lesson plans. The lesson plans in the Kurikulum Merdeka are called teaching modules. A teaching module contains learning objectives, steps, media, and assessments needed in one unit/topic based on the Flow of Learning Objectives (ATP).³² This aspect is described in two indicators: understanding principles and the learning cycle. The Kurikulum Merdeka includes three activities: intra-curricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular. These three types of learning are carried out through a cycle consisting of three stages: diagnostic assessment, planning, and learning implementation.³³

Table 6
Readiness to develop lesson plans

No.	Indicator	Skor
1	Understanding of learning principles	73
2	Understanding of the learning cycle	69
3	Ability to formulate objectives and flow of learning objectives	76
4	Ability to determine the type of material	72
5	Ability to determine learning strategy	74
6	Ability to determine the type of assessment	75

Source: Personal Document

Table 6 shows that respondents are generally highly prepared to prepare lesson plans. This is evidenced by the average score of each item, which ranges from 69 to 76. The indicator of the ability to formulate objectives and flow of learning objectives obtained the highest score (76). Meanwhile, understanding the learning cycle received the lowest score (69). Thus, understanding the learning cycle is important for improvement.

Understanding the learning cycle is important for teachers because learning in the Kurikulum Merdeka emphasizes meeting students' needs and adjusting to their unique characteristics. Therefore, at the beginning of the learning year, teachers are advised to provide diagnostic assessments to students to understand their needs, learning styles, characteristics, developmental stages, and learning achievements. Teachers can use the data from the diagnostic assessment as a basis for planning learning.

Readiness to Deliver Instruction

The next aspect is readiness to deliver instruction. Instruction in the Kurikulum

³² Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, "Apa Itu Perangkat Ajar?," Government, *Merdeka Mengajar* (blog), accessed June 3, 2024, <https://pusatinformasi.guru.kemdikbud.go.id/hc/id/articles/7211744742425-Apa-Itu-Perangkat-Ajar>.

³³ Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, "Latar Belakang Kurikulum Merdeka."

Merdeka is carried out by providing learning materials that vary according to students' understanding. This differentiation allows each child to achieve the expected learning objectives.³⁴ This aspect is described in two indicators: the ability to apply instructional approaches, strategies, and methods and the ability to implement differentiated learning. As Figure 3 shows, in the first indicator, most respondents have high readiness (23% very high and 30% high). Respondents in the medium category were 33%. Meanwhile, respondents in the low readiness category reached 15%.

In the second indicator, most respondents had medium readiness (40%). Meanwhile, the number of respondents with low readiness increased to 23%, plus a deficient category of 3%. Meanwhile, respondents with readiness in the high and very high categories ranked second with the same percentage (18%). The data on this aspect is different from expectations. The percentage of teachers needing more time to be ready to implement learning is still relatively large. Many factors influence readiness in this aspect. Previous research findings show that several factors affect teachers' readiness to implement differentiated learning, including insufficient training, limited time to plan and design learning activities, differences in student's readiness to learn, and the large number of students in each class.³⁵

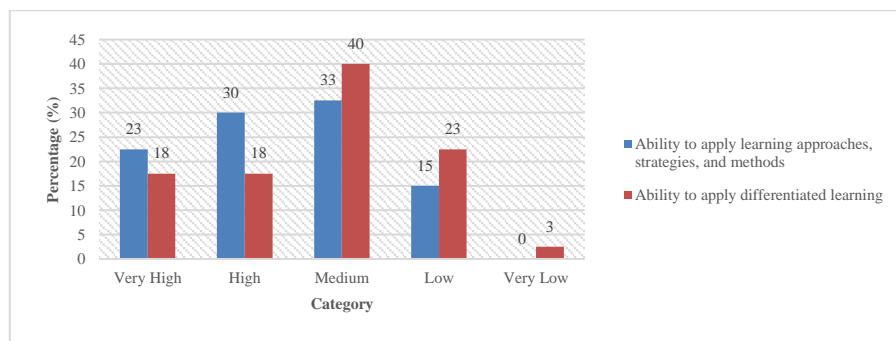


Figure 4
Readiness to deliver instruction
Source: Personal Document

The differentiated learning paradigm recognizes that each student has unique characteristics and provides the support students need. Different inputs are why students are raised in different environments and cultures. As a result, differences in students must

³⁴ Yogi Anggraena et al., *Panduan Pembelajaran dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Menengah* (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2022).

³⁵ Nina Sofiana et al., "The Implementation of Differentiated Learning in ELT: Indonesian Teachers' Readiness," in *Forum for Linguistic Studies*, vol. 6, 2024, <https://journals.bilpubgroup.com/index.php/fls/article/view/6570>.

be taken into account. Various approaches are used in learning to understand students' interests and talents.³⁶ Differentiated learning is an approach to learning in which teachers use a variety of instructional strategies to meet each student's unique needs.³⁷ Differentiated learning activities meet students' learning needs based on their interests or learning profiles. Differentiated learning indirectly encourages student creativity, and the differentiated learning process can also provide ample space for students to show what they have learned. In addition, because creativity will continue to develop, the differential learning approach is highly recommended for application in learning to help achieve learning goals.³⁸

Readiness to Conduct Instructional Assessments

The final aspect is readiness to conduct instructional assessments. Assessment is an activity that is integral to the learning process. Assessment is carried out to find evidence or a basis for consideration of the achievement of learning objectives. There are two types of assessment: formative and summative. A formative assessment is an assessment that aims to provide information or feedback for educators and students to improve the learning process. Summative assessment is carried out to ensure the achievement of all learning objectives and is carried out at the end of learning. Summative assessment results become part of the assessment calculation at the end of the semester, the end of the school year, and the end of the level.³⁹

This aspect has four indicators: understanding the principles of learning assessment, applying assessment techniques, processing assessment results, and following up on assessment results. As shown in Table 6, the three indicators in this aspect received an average score in the medium category. The average score obtained in the first indicator is 68. This data shows that most respondents' understanding of the principles of assessment in the Kurikulum Merdeka is in the moderate category.

The second and third indicators get the same average score of 67. This condition

³⁶ Aiman Faiz, Anis Pratama, and Imas Kurniawaty, "Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi Dalam Program Guru Penggerak Pada Modul 2.1," *Jurnal Basicedu* 6, no. 2 (2022): 2846–53.

³⁷ Ahmad Teguh Purnawanto, "Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi," *Jurnal Pedagogy* 16, no. 1 (2023): 34–54.

³⁸ Wiwin Herwina, "Optimalisasi Kebutuhan Murid Dan Hasil Belajar Dengan Pembelajaran Berdiferensiasi," *Perspektif Ilmu Pendidikan* 35, no. 2 (2021): 175–82.

³⁹ Anggraena et al., *Panduan Pembelajaran dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Menengah*.

also shows that the respondents' ability to conduct assessments and process the results is in the medium category. In the last indicator, the ability to follow up on the assessment results received an average score of 72, which is in the high category. The findings in this category indicate that teachers' readiness to carry out assessments still needs to be improved, even though they stated that they could follow up on the results.

Table 7
Readiness to conduct instructional assessments

No.	Indicator	Skor
1	Understanding the principles of learning assessment	68
2	Ability to apply assessment techniques	67
3	Ability to process assessment results	67
4	Ability to follow up on assessment results	72

Source: Personal Document

Assessment in the Kurikulum Merdeka is an integrated part of learning. It provides holistic information about student achievement. In addition, assessment provides feedback for teachers, students, and parents to guide them in determining the next learning strategy. Teachers are given the flexibility to choose the technique and time of assessment implementation to achieve learning objectives effectively.⁴⁰ Assessments should be designed with fair, proportional, valid, and reliable principles in mind to explain learning progress, determine decisions about the next steps, and as a basis for developing appropriate learning programs.⁴¹

Assessment results are used by learners, educators, education personnel, and parents/guardians as reflection materials to improve the quality of learning.⁴² Learning progress and learner achievement reports are simple and informative. They provide helpful information about the character and competencies achieved and follow-up strategies. Educators compile learning progress reports concisely, prioritizing the most important information to be understood by learners and parents. They also provide regular feedback to learners and discuss follow-up with parents.⁴³

⁴⁰ Anggraena et al.

⁴¹ Kasman Kasman and Siti Khadijah Lubis, "Teachers' Performance Evaluation Instrument Designs in the Implementation of the New Learning Paradigm of the Merdeka Curriculum," *Jurnal Kependidikan: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran* 8, no. 3 (2022): 760–75.

⁴² Abdul Hadi et al., "New Paradigm of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Schools," *Al-Ishlah: Jurnal Pendidikan* 15, no. 2 (2023): 1497–1510.

⁴³ Anggraena et al., *Panduan Pembelajaran dan Asesmen Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, Pendidikan Dasar, dan Menengah*.

The present study's findings show that in some aspects, teachers' readiness to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka still needs to be improved. Teachers' understanding of the curriculum is related to the four core competencies of teachers as regulated in Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers. The four core competencies are pedagogical competence, professional competence, personality competence, and social competence. Two competencies that are directly related to understanding the curriculum are pedagogical competency and professional competency. Pedagogical competence is related to the teacher's ability to manage learning, while professional competence is related to the teacher's understanding of learning material.⁴⁴ Therefore, teachers must master Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) well. PCK is the capacity to integrate good pedagogical and methodological practices that promote meaningful learning with content knowledge in a particular domain or subject area.⁴⁵

Competency is closely related to and influences teacher performance.⁴⁶ Thus, the higher the teacher's competence, the more optimal and better his performance.⁴⁷ Implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka requires good and optimal teacher performance. Teachers play a role in the Kurikulum Merdeka as teaching staff, mentors, facilitators, or coaches in project-based learning activities.⁴⁸ Meanwhile, in the context of character development through the Project for Strengthening the Pancasila Student Profile (P5) and the *Rahmatan Lil Alamin* Student Profile (PPRA), teachers not only act as planners, implementers, and reporters of the project but also act as role models and practice good character development.⁴⁹ Therefore, teachers must be highly prepared to implement the curriculum.

⁴⁴ Hafsah M. Nur and Nurul Fatonah, "Paradigma Kompetensi Guru," *Jurnal PGSD Uniga* 1, no. 1 (2022): 12–16.

⁴⁵ Joyce West, "Utilizing Bloom's Taxonomy and Authentic Learning Principles to Promote Preservice Teachers' Pedagogical Content Knowledge," *Social Sciences & Humanities Open* 8, no. 1 (January 1, 2023): 100620, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssaho.2023.100620>.

⁴⁶ Rabukit Damanik, "Hubungan Kompetensi Guru Dengan Kinerja Guru," *Jurnal Serunai Administrasi Pendidikan* 8, no. 2 (2019), <http://ejournal.stkipbudidaya.ac.id/index.php/jc/article/view/170>; Hendri Rohman, "Pengaruh Kompetensi Guru Terhadap Kinerja Guru," *JURNAL MADINASIKA Manajemen Pendidikan Dan Keguruan* 1, no. 2 (2020): 92–102.

⁴⁷ Sigrid Blömeke et al., "Opening up the Black Box: Teacher Competence, Instructional Quality, and Students' Learning Progress," *Learning and Instruction* 79 (2022): 101600.

⁴⁸ Marsela Yulianti et al., "Peran Guru Dalam Mengembangkan Kurikulum Merdeka," *Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Dan Sosial* 1, no. 3 (2022): 290–98.

⁴⁹ Suci Setyaningsih and Wiryanto Wiryanto, "Peran Guru Sebagai Aplikator Profil Pelajar Pancasila Dalam Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar," *Jurnal Ilmiah Mandala Education* 8, no. 4 (2022), <https://ejournal.mandalanursa.org/index.php/JIME/article/view/4095>.

This study revealed that teachers' ability to implement learning by the Kurikulum Merdeka still needs to be improved. While some teachers have demonstrated a good understanding of the key concepts in the curriculum, many still need help translating theory into effective practice in the classroom. The data collected shows that 15% of teachers have yet to be able to apply learning approaches, strategies, and methods by the Kurikulum Merdeka. In teaching practice, 23% of teachers also stated that they could not implement differentiated learning. These findings suggest a gap between teachers' theoretical knowledge and their ability to apply it in actual teaching situations. As highlighted in a previous study, ongoing training, and appropriate support are essential to ensure teachers can adopt and implement curriculum innovations effectively.⁵⁰

This research also shows that teachers' ability to conduct effective assessments still needs to be revised to the expected standard. The average score obtained on the instrument indicator shows that teachers' readiness to carry out assessments is still in the medium category. These findings indicate that teachers must fully understand or feel comfortable with a more comprehensive and sustainable assessment approach. Effective assessment is key to supporting student learning, and to achieve this, teachers need a deep understanding of various assessment techniques and how to use them to support student-centered learning.⁵¹

The findings of this study have significant implications for education policy, particularly in the context of teacher professional development and new curriculum implementation. First, there is an urgent need to improve teacher training programs that focus on the practical application of the new curriculum in the classroom. This training should enhance teachers' theoretical understanding of the curriculum and develop practical skills in designing and implementing effective lessons and assessments. Thus, continuous practice-based training is key to ensuring the success of education reform.⁵² Therefore, education policy should support sustainable, hands-on, practice-based training

⁵⁰ Linda Darling-Hammond, "Response to How Teacher Education Matters," *Journal of Teacher Education* 74, no. 2 (March 2023): 157–59, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00224871231160378>.

⁵¹ Alastair Irons and Sam Elkington, *Enhancing Learning through Formative Assessment and Feedback* (Routledge, 2021), <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/mono/10.4324/9781138610514/enhancing-learning-formative-assessment-feedback-alastair-irons-sam-elkington>.

⁵² Anca Greere, "Training for Quality Assurance in Higher Education: Practical Insights for Effective Design and Successful Delivery," *Quality in Higher Education* 29, no. 2 (May 4, 2023): 165–91, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13538322.2021.2020978>.

programs. In addition, it is important to integrate technology into teacher training to strengthen teachers' ability to use digital tools and online resources as part of their learning strategies.⁵³

Furthermore, education policies should include ongoing support mechanisms for teachers, such as mentoring, supervision, and the development of professional learning communities. This support not only assists teachers in overcoming their challenges but also encourages collaboration and sharing of best practices among teachers.⁵⁴ Previous studies show that professional collaboration among teachers can improve teaching quality and student learning outcomes.⁵⁵ Therefore, policies that encourage forming professional learning communities at the school and district levels are critical to successfully implementing the new curriculum.

Overall, the findings suggest that concerted efforts are needed in policy and teaching practice to support the successful implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. By strengthening teacher training programs, providing ongoing support, and integrating technology into education, we can ensure that teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka effectively. Further research is needed to develop more innovative and effective strategies to support teachers in this transition process and ensure that the Kurikulum Merdeka can be implemented successfully and positively impact student learning outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Teachers have a critical role in the implementation of the Kurikulum Merdeka. Therefore, teachers must have adequate readiness. With teachers' readiness, implementing the Kurikulum Merdeka can run well. Overall, the results of this study show that MI teachers are ready to implement the Kurikulum Merdeka. The six aspects measured in this study show that the readiness of MI teachers is in the high category. Four aspects need serious attention because many MI teachers said they were unprepared—

⁵³ Oksana Ovcharuk et al., "The Use of Digital Learning Tools in the Teachers' Professional Activities to Ensure Sustainable Development and Democratization of Education in European Countries," 2020, <https://elibrary.kdpu.edu.ua/handle/123456789/3773>.

⁵⁴ Luka Boeskens, Deborah Nusche, and Makito Yurita, "Policies to Support Teachers' Continuing Professional Learning: A Conceptual Framework and Mapping of OECD Data," 2020, https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/education/policies-to-support-teachers-continuing-professional-learning_247b7c4d-en.

⁵⁵ Raziye Sancar, Deniz Atal, and Deniz Deryakulu, "A New Framework for Teachers' Professional Development," *Teaching and Teacher Education* 101 (2021): 103305.

first, the aspect of understanding the structure of the curriculum and the allocation of lesson hours. There are still teachers who have moderate and low readiness. Second is the aspect of lesson planning. In the indicator of understanding the learning cycle, the score is in the medium category. Third, in the aspect of learning implementation, many teachers still need to be able to apply the approaches, strategies, and learning methods used by the Kurikulum Merdeka. In addition, many teachers have yet to be able to implement differentiated learning. Finally, the aspect of learning assessment. The readiness score in this aspect is in the medium category. These findings indicate the importance of improving teacher readiness regarding policies and teaching practices by strengthening teacher training programs, providing continuous support, and integrating technology into education. Further research is needed to develop more innovative and effective strategies to support teachers in this transition process and ensure that the Kurikulum Merdeka can be implemented successfully and positively impact student learning outcomes.

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We declare that this research and the article-writing processes were conducted objectively and do not contain potential research, authorship, or publication conflicts.

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