The Benefits Of Merdeka Mengajar Platform To Improve Teacher Competence Elementary School

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ABSTRACT

The Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) is a technology to make it easier for teachers to teach, assess students and provide training to improve competence and develop their own creativity. In an all-digital era that brings many challenges to various aspects of human life, technological advances have changed the field of education. Teachers must always improve their competence, because increasing teacher competence can help improve the quality of education and learning. This research aims to find out how to use the Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) to improve the competency of elementary school teachers. The research method used is a qualitative descriptive research with a library research approach by examining various journals and books related to the topics discussed. The results found in this study explain that the use of PMM as a means of increasing teacher competency in elementary schools is very important to support the learning process. Through PMM, teachers can improve their competencies which include pedagogical, personality, social and professional competencies as well as mastery of information technology to broaden their insight and find various creative ideas through the available features.

Keywords: Independent Curriculum, The Merdeka Mengajar Platform, Teacher Competency

1. INTRODUCTION

Education has an important role for the Indonesian nation, because education is a means of achieving one of the state's goals stated in the preamble to the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, namely to make the nation's life more intelligent. To achieve this goal, the curriculum has an important role. The learning process is currently experiencing changing times and teachers are required to adopt new perspectives and teaching strategies that utilize digital technology. Teachers are important because they have the power to make the learning process successful or unsuccessful [16]. Without the teacher's ability, everything loses its meaning and becomes difficult to achieve [5][9]. This is regardless of how good the educational curriculum is, how complete the facilities and infrastructure are, and how passionate the students are. Therefore, in order to be able to apply various approaches, tactics, methods and learning processes that are instructive, imaginative and fun, teacher competence must always be improved [23].

In the Law on Teachers and Lecturers No. 14 of 2005 Chapter I Article 1 it is stated that teachers are professional educators whose main responsibility is to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess and evaluate students. Pedagogic competence, personal competence, professional competence and social competence are the four basic competencies that teachers must have to carry out this responsibility [5][9][17]. To become a qualified teacher, these four competencies must be developed optimally.

The Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makarim, at the 2019 National Teachers' Day (HGN) event launched the Freedom to Learn program. The Free Learning Policy, the Independent Campus which has been proclaimed by the government gives freedom and autonomy to educational institutions so that these educational institutions are free from bureaucratization (Yamin & Syahrir, 2020). This causes changes in the curriculum in the Indonesian education system, every time there is a change in the curriculum there will be pros and cons to this policy. Responding to the pros and cons of changing the curriculum, the teacher as an important figure in curriculum implementation must react wisely (Helmina, 2022)

Currently, the competence of teachers in Indonesia is still low, so they are unable to produce quality human resources. This situation causes a learning crisis which

results in low quality of education. Related to this, the government developed a policy by making changes to the curriculum, namely by declaring an independent curriculum [7]. An independent curriculum is a curriculum that focuses on student needs and provides opportunities for students to develop their talents and interests [14]. An independent curriculum also gives freedom to teachers to determine their own teaching tools that suit the conditions of their students. In implementing the independent curriculum, it must be supported by the provision of training for teachers,

In an era that is completely digital and brings many challenges to various aspects of human life, technological advances have changed the field of education. The Ministry of Education and Culture said that increasing teacher competency in the education sector is the best way to address concerns about the decline in the quality of human resources as digitalization accelerates. Therefore, a special forum was created for teachers to develop their potential and skills, because the main aim of PMM is to increase competence and inspire other teachers. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is an important component in implementing the independent curriculum [8]. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform (PMM) is one of the platforms provided by the government for school principals and teachers to facilitate the implementation of the independent curriculum.

The learning feature in the Merdeka Mengajar Platform provides various independent training facilities to obtain various high-quality training materials [8]. Another learning feature is inspirational videos. With this feature, teachers get various inspiring videos with unlimited access to accelerate growth. It is hoped that teachers can develop the quality of their competence in carrying out learning with these learning features. PMM is presented in web-based or Android-based form, so users can access it via smartphone or computer [22].

The Merdeka Mengajar Platform provides teachers with more than 2000 reference materials that can be used to improve their teaching methods in accordance with the Independent Curriculum. In the education section there is a function of teaching materials that teachers can use for their further development (RI, 2022). This research related to the Merdeka Mengajar Platform has been carried out by several previous researchers, including [4][8][12][14] [19][22]. However, no one has yet discussed the use of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform to improve the competence of elementary school teachers. Most research was conducted in secondary schools. Therefore, researchers will study and analyze the use of

there are no longer specialization programs, students determine the subjects they are interested in, according to their talents and aspirations. Teachers in teaching activities can carry out teaching according to the assessment of the level of achievement and development of students. For schools in implementing the independent

the Merdeka Mengajar Platform to improve the competency of elementary school teachers.

2. METHOD

This research is a qualitative descriptive research with an approach that uses library research by examining various journals and books related to the use of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform to improve teacher competency as a reference source. The steps for research using a literature study approach are 1) Develop a focus plan for the discussion to be examined; 2) Read various literary sources related to content studies; 3) Selecting study materials from various appropriate literature sources; 4) Process study data and use it as a language and writing guide; 5) The data obtained from the study is processed and used as a reference for discussion and drawing conclusions.

3. RESULT

Research findings using literature study provide basic information and description of the independent teaching platform as a place for teachers to improve their competence, especially in practicing the independent curriculum.

3.1 Independent Curriculum

The independent curriculum is designed to catch up in literacy and numeracy. An independent curriculum that will provide solutions for improving the curriculum, this can be implemented in stages according to the readiness of each school. In accordance with the Independent Curriculum, there are three decision options that can be taken by educational units regarding the implementation of the independent learning curriculum in the 2022/2023 academic year. First, the application of some of the principles of the Independent Curriculum without completely erasing the old ones. Second, namely the implementation of the Independent Curriculum using prepared teaching media. Third, namely the implementation of an independent curriculum with the independent development of various teaching tools (Putri, 2022).

The Independent Curriculum has several advantages, namely a simpler and more in-depth curriculum. In the Independent Curriculum, learning focuses on essential knowledge and the development of students' abilities according to their phase. Deeper, more meaningful, less rushed and more enjoyable learning. The second advantage is more independence. As at high school level

curriculum, they are given authority in the development and management of curriculum and teaching and learning processes that are adapted to the character of the education unit and students. The advantage is that it is more relevant and interactive. In this case learning is mostly done through project work and students are given

the freedom to actively explore, explore and describe actual issues such as environmental issues, circular economy, environmental sanitation and others to foster critical thinking, careness and complex abilities. problem solving as a form of character and competency development for the Pancasila Student Profile [22].

In its implementation, the Independent Curriculum must be supported by the provision of training, the provision of teacher learning materials and innovative teaching tools, supported by the school principal and the local office. The Education Unit in providing the teaching tools in question is in the form of textbooks, supporting teaching materials, for example the design and scheme of learning objectives, school operational curricula, teaching modules and projects to strengthen the Pancasila Student Profile which are available on a digital platform for teachers.

3.2 The Merdeka Mengajar Platform

The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is a technology platform provided to become a driving partner for teachers and principals in teaching, learning and creating. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform was developed to support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum so that it can assist teachers in getting references, inspiration and understanding as well as skills in implementing the Independent Curriculum with a spirit of collaboration and sharing [2][14]. On this platform there are several features or menus that can help develop teacher competence and support teaching and learning activities, namely: independent curriculum, student assessment, teaching tools, independent training, community, videos, inspiration and proof of work (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

Table 1. Merdeka Mengajar Platform Features

Feature Name	Explanation
Independent curriculum	This feature explains complete information and guidance about the independent curriculum, starting from an introduction to the basic ideas and concepts of the independent curriculum, a new student-centered learning paradigm, learning and assessment guides, Learning Achievement (CP) documents and Learning Goal Flow (ATP), as well as documents achievements, dimensions, and the Strengthening Project Pancasila Student Profile.
Student Assessment	This feature contains a number of diagnostic assessment question packages based on certain stages and topics that teachers can use to find out more about the progress and learning outcomes of their students as well as a tool for carry out an initial analysis of literacy and numeracy learning.
Teaching Toolkit	This feature contains references to teaching tools according to certain subjects and phases to help the teacher's learning process, including resources learning, teaching modules, and project modules.
Independent Training	This feature contains various training topics that are created briefly, so that teachers can carry out training independently, anytime and anywhere related to the independent curriculum.
Community	This feature contains various kinds of learning communities that teachers can use to share good practices from all over Indonesia as well as as a forum or means study and discussion with other teachers.
Inspirational Videos	This feature contains various collections of curated inspirational videos made by the Ministry of Education and Culture and experts and can be used as material. references to improve teacher competence as educators.
Proof of Work	This feature is a menu that functions as a place to document portfolios of teacher and school principal work to describe performance, competencies and achievements achieved while carrying out the profession, so that they can be shared to fellow educators.

To access the features/menus in the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. Users need to log in with a learning account (belajar.id). The Merdeka Mengajar Platform can be accessed in 2 ways, namely through the Independent Teaching application which can be via the website http://guru.kemdikbud.go.id/ which can be opened on a laptop, computer or cellphone browser.

3.3 Teacher Competency

The ability of a teacher to carry out his responsibilities and duties. ethically and responsibly is called teacher competence. Teacher competence also means a set of knowledge, skills, and behaviors that teachers must possess, internalize, and master in carrying out their profession [13]. The success of a student is thought to be influenced by the competence of the teacher as well [17]. This is because increasing the competence and professionalism of teachers can improve the quality of education [15].

Therefore, it can be said that teacher competence is a collection of knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that appear as wise and responsible behavior carried out by teachers in carrying out their obligations as professional educators.

Based on Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers (President of the Republic of Indonesia, 2005), teachers are professional educators who have the main responsibility to educate, teach, guide, direct, train, assess and evaluate students starting from education. early childhood through formal education, basic education, and secondary education (Ministry of Law and Human Rights, 2012). The position of a teacher must be seen in the context of the competencies that help him practice his vocation. As well as Republic of Indonesia Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Education Standards Article 28 (Government of Indonesia, 2005), teacher competence includes pedagogical, personality, social and professional competence. The following is a description of each of these competencies:

3.3.1 Pedagogical Competence

Planning, implementing the teaching-learning process, and conducting assessments are the first three basic competencies that teachers must have to manage learning [13][17]. The teacher's ability to manage students and understand their growth in depth from various aspects, including moral, emotional and intellectual, in order to carry out the learning and education process is called pedagogical competence. Pedagogic competence is a core competency that must be possessed by teachers.

The elements of pedagogical competence are how teachers understand the education system, develop or analyze students' learning abilities and characteristics, understand interactions in the world of education, have innovations in the education system, use ICT in learning, and understand the concepts and theories learned during the teaching and learning process [15]. Thus, the pedagogical competencies that teachers must have are at least 1) understanding the insights and foundations of education, 2) understanding student development and potential, 3) developing a curriculum or syllabus in accordance with student conditions and school capabilities, 4) preparing plans and designing strategies learning, 5) implementing educational learning, 6) utilizing technology in learning, 7) evaluating student learning outcomes,

3.3.2 Personality Competence

Personal competence refers to the ability of a teacher who is solid, mature, intelligent and authoritative as well as having a noble character and being an example for his students so that they can carry out their responsibilities in full [20]. Personality competence also refers to how a teacher behaves according to social, legal, religious and cultural norms in Indonesia. A person's personality can be understood by observing his appearance, actions and speech when he is having a hard time [5]. Personality is abstract and difficult to distinguish concretely. Given that students look up to and imitate their teachers, a teacher needs to have a positive personality.

3.3.3 Social Competence

Social competence is the ability of teachers as part of society to communicate and socialize effectively and efficiently with students, fellow educators, education staff, parents/guardians of students, and the surrounding community [1]. Teacher social competence includes the ability to adapt to work demands and the surrounding environment when carrying out their duties as a teacher as well as the ability to establish good social communication with students, fellow teachers, school principals, administrative employees, even with community members in the school environment or the environment where he lives.

3.3.4 Professional Competency

Professional competence refers to the ability of a teacher to understand thoroughly and broadly the subject matter he teaches. This includes understanding the information covered in the school subject curriculum, relevant scientific material, as well as scientific processes and structures. The teacher's ability to carry out his role as an educator, including mastery of pedagogy, knowledge, methodology, management and other skills which are reflected in his performance in the educational environment, is known as teacher professional competence [6]. Five factors can be used to assess a teacher's professional competence, namely: (1) mastery of content, structure, concept, and a scientific mindset that supports the subjects taught; (2) mastery of competency standards and basic skills of the subjects taught; (3) development of creative teaching materials and methods; (4) continuous professional development; and (5) use of ICT for self-development (Bagou & Suking, 2020). Therefore, the professional competence of a teacher is a set of skills that must be possessed in order to successfully carry out his teaching duties.

The four teacher competencies that have been described are holistic and integrative. These competencies must always be improved so that there can be renewal in learning. Increasing teacher competence can be done in various ways, including through teacher academic qualifications, education and training, certification tests, providing opportunities for improving

learning, and so on. This article will discuss increasing teacher competence through independent education and training using the Merdeka Teaching Platform.

4. DISCUSSION

The Ministry of Research and Technology created the Merdeka Mengajar Platform as a technology platform to help education units carry out the learning process and build the capacity of teachers and education staff. Teachers in all education units under the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology, the Office of Education, and the Ministry of Religion who log into their Learning Accounts have the right to use this platform. However, teachers using other curricula can still benefit from the platform's content. The aim is to follow up on Indonesia's efforts to transform digital-based education and assist teachers in teaching, learning, and creating [14].

There are still many teachers who are less competent in carrying out their duties [3]. Four basic teacher competencies which include pedagogical, personality, social and professional competencies. So teachers need to improve their competence at all times so they are able to teach students according to their time.

Regarding the implementation of the independent curriculum, one of the important competencies that must be mastered by teachers is mastery of digital technology. For this reason, teachers need to learn a lot so that they can take advantage of digital technology in assisting the learning process, one of which is studying independently through a platform that has been prepared by the government. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is an application that can support teachers in implementing an independent curriculum. The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is a platform for teachers who will develop into a platform whose content and materials are not only sourced from the ministry of education, but become a platform that is truly owned by the teacher, the content is developed by the teacher to share inspiration [2].

Accelerating the implementation of the independent curriculum is largely possible through the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. The success of socialization and consistency of all parties in implementing the independent teaching program greatly determines the success of implementing the independent curriculum. If the implementation is inconsistent, even a well-structured independent curriculum will not be implemented optimally. Therefore, teachers must work hard to understand and master the independent curriculum and have the ability to develop a variety of materials, sources, media and learning tools. Teachers must really be able to use the independent teaching platform because it is in line with the demands of an independent curriculum and technological developments.

The Merdeka Mengajar Platform as a technology platform to help educational units carry out the learning process and build the capacity of teachers and education staff. Teachers in all educational units under the Ministry of Education and Culture, Research and Technology, the Education Service and the Ministry of Religion who log in to their learning account have the right to use the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. The aim is to help teachers develop their competencies and implement the independent curriculum. However, teachers who have not used the independent curriculum can still benefit from the content of the Merdeka Mengajar Platform. This is a follow-up to the government's efforts to transform digital-based education and help teachers in teaching, learning and being creative [13][14].

5. CONCLUSION

Teachers play an important role in determining the advancement of education, so teachers must have competence in the form of knowledge, skills and professional attitudes in carrying out their duties. Teachers must have four basic competencies, namely pedagogical, personality, social, and professional competencies. The competence of the teacher will show the actual quality of the teacher. Teachers must be able to manage learning optimally, be sensitive in reading the signs of the times, have broad and forward-thinking insights, have personality and noble character, care for others, master technology and always update their knowledge.

The Merdeka Mengajar Platform is the right place to increase the competence, innovation and creativity of elementary school teachers in particular. Because, in Merdeka Mengajar Platform, various features have been provided that can assist teachers in getting references, inspiration, and understanding of the independent curriculum. Where the more teachers study it, the more knowledge and skills they get. Therefore, improving the quality of teachers in primary schools can be done by maximizing the use of independent teaching platforms.

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