

# Teacher Readiness Factors that Influence the Implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in Elementary Schools

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Received: July 27, 2024

Accepted: October 17, 2024

Online Published: November 8, 2024

doi:10.5430/jct.v13n5p168

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v13n5p168>

## Abstract

The *Merdeka* (Independent) Curriculum is a crucial element for the sustainability of education in Indonesia. Teachers need to have significant readiness to ensure implementation runs optimally. However, many teachers still require clarification and help to understand and need help integrating the *Merdeka* Curriculum with existing conditions. The objective of this study is to examine the key elements that affect teacher preparedness and how they impact the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in elementary schools. This research employs a quantitative methodology with an ex post facto design. Purposive sampling was used to choose a population and sample of elementary school teachers in Jakarta, Indonesia. The sample size consisted of 122 teachers. Data collection uses a questionnaire to obtain data related to the variables in this research. The data analysis employed structural equation modeling (SEM) with the SMART-PLS 3.0 software tools. The research findings indicate that a significance value of 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ) suggests that teacher preparedness characteristics play a crucial role in positively and significantly impacting the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in Elementary Schools. This study emphasizes the significance of teacher preparedness in multiple dimensions, such as a profound comprehension of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, the capacity to incorporate it with current circumstances, and sufficient backing from the school environment and community.

**Keywords:** readiness, teacher, *Merdeka* curriculum, elementary schools

## 1. Introduction

The *Merdeka* Curriculum is an educational program implemented by the Indonesian government with the aim of significantly improving the quality of education. Its objective is to develop students and graduates who demonstrate exceptional abilities in addressing intricate future difficulties. The principle of *Freedom to Learn* aims to grant students and teachers the liberty to engage in independent thinking. This strategy promotes the development of a self-reliant and autonomous mindset, allowing teachers and students to freely and joyfully explore knowledge, attitudes, and abilities within their surroundings (Kurdiati, 2022). The presence of *Merdeka Belajar* is highly pertinent to the requirements of students and the expectations of education in the 21st century. The *Merdeka* Curriculum enables teachers and schools to independently and freely interpret the fundamental skills outlined in the curriculum and incorporate them into teacher-made assessments (Muhammad Rafi Zidan & Zaitun Qamariah, 2023). A *Merdeka* Curriculum policy enables educators to customize teaching approaches based on each students' distinct requirements and capacities, hence fostering a more vibrant and all-encompassing educational setting (Wardani et al., 2023).

*Merdeka Belajar* seeks to establish a congenial educational environment for instructors, students, and parents. Teachers and students who have the freedom to learn are anticipated to possess the ability to think autonomously, hence fostering innovation in teaching and learning methodologies (Ndari et al., 2023). According to Syofyan et al. (2022), students are provided with increased opportunities to create and enhance their creativity in the learning

process. Furthermore, Merdeka Belajar promotes students' autonomy in learning, fosters their personal growth, and cultivates a compassionate disposition towards their educational surroundings. Additionally, it enhances students' self-assurance and proficiency, hence facilitating their adjustment to the community setting.

The *Merdeka* Curriculum, often referred to as the Prototype Curriculum, is a component of the government's initiatives aimed at cultivating a more proficient next generation across diverse domains (Hadi et al., 2023). Teachers can provide valuable and cooperative contributions to the development of the school curriculum by working together and effectively compiling materials, textbooks, and learning content (Lestari, 2023). The *Merdeka* Curriculum framework comprises of supplementary activities, initiatives aimed at enhancing the *Pancasila* student profile, and additional extracurricular programs. The curriculum structure specifies the distribution of lesson hours for a one-year period, along with recommendations for the regular or weekly distribution of lesson hours (Kamila & Agus, 2023). The entire duration of the lessons remains unchanged, as stated on the website of the Ministry of Education and Culture. The learning activities encompass extracurricular learning, and a project designed to enhance the profile of *Pancasila* students, with the objective of enhancing the character and competency of students within the framework of *Pancasila* values.

Minimum Completeness Criteria no longer measure the completeness of learning outcomes in the *Merdeka* Curriculum through quantitative scores. Formative assessments are used to identify the achievement of learning objectives (Fauzan et al., 2023). Teachers are free to determine criteria for achieving learning objectives per the characteristics of their competencies and learning activities (Rachmadtullah et al., 2020). Students can continue to the next class based on the achievement of learning objectives. As central educational figures, teachers need readiness to master the subject matter and play an essential role in implementing the Independent Learning policy (Kasman & Lubis, 2022; Rohmah et al., 2023). They could collectively contribute to the development of the school curriculum by compiling materials, textbooks, and learning content (Prakoso et al., 2023). Teacher participation in the curriculum creation process is crucial to ensure that the curriculum content is in line with the requirements of students in the classroom. Teachers also understand student psychology, know learning methods and strategies, and act as evaluators in assessing learning outcomes.

Introducing the *Merdeka* Curriculum in Elementary Schools is a progressive measure towards revolutionizing education in Indonesia (Syofyan H. & Rachmadtullah, 2019). This curriculum provides teachers with the flexibility to compile and adjust learning materials based on the unique features and needs of their pupils (Sari et al., 2023). However, the *Merdeka* Curriculum's successful implementation depends on more than just national policy. Still, it is also greatly influenced by the readiness and ability of teachers as the leading agents in the education process. Teacher readiness is an integral part of realizing successful learning implementation (Zuri Pamuji & Kholid Mawardi, 2023). A teacher's readiness is characterized by his ability to provide responses and answers through a learning approach that is part of the implementation of his profession. As agents of change in the implementation of education, teachers need comprehensive readiness to implement the *Merdeka* Curriculum policy in schools (Asmahasanah et al., 2023; Yoto et al., 2024).

Teachers must have a deep understanding of the ideas and objectives of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, as well as the capacity to adapt teaching methods to meet the specific needs and characteristics of their students (Damayanti & Muhroji, 2022; Witraguna et al., 2024). Adequate educational facilities, training access, and ongoing professional development must also support teachers. Support from the school environment and community also plays a vital role in ensuring teachers can implement the *Merdeka* Curriculum effectively (Halil et al., 2024; Yunaini et al., 2022). Without adequate preparation, efforts to adopt this new curriculum may experience significant obstacles, affecting the quality of education students receive.

Rakhman & Surur (2024) it has been indicated that the issue of teacher preparedness to administer the *Merdeka* Curriculum still must be addressed. A significant number of educators require further clarification regarding the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum throughout all educational tiers. Abdullah & Hendrayanto (2024), however, argued that the *Merdeka* Curriculum has not yet achieved its full potential due to certain teachers lacking a comprehensive understanding of its core principles and the restricted availability of resources. This study highlights the need of teacher preparedness in effectively implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum in primary schools to successfully accomplish national educational objectives. The big problem faced in Indonesia is the frequent changes in the curriculum every time there is a change in government officials, which can affect the consistency and sustainability of curriculum implementation in the field.

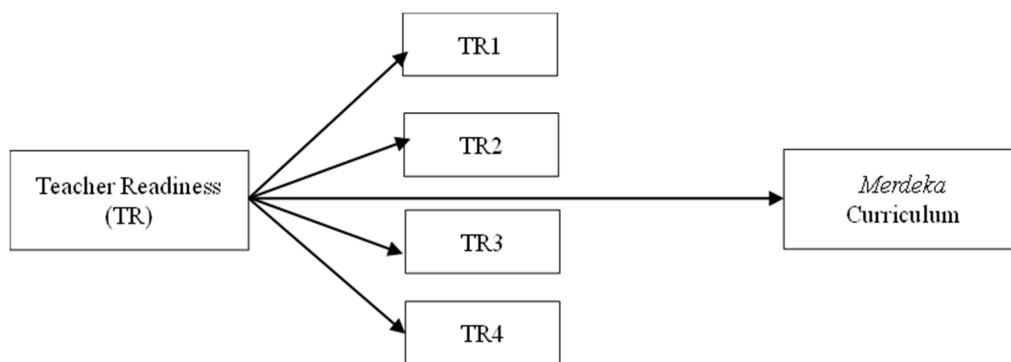
This research aims to analyze teacher readiness factors that influence the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in Elementary Schools. Although the factors are very complex because each factor significantly impacts the

implementation process, this research emphasizes four main aspects that are an integral part of teacher readiness. These aspects include understanding the concept of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, availability of adequate educational facilities, relevant teacher professional training and development, and support from the school environment and community. The selection of these four components is based on their critical need for teachers to acquire mastery to ensure the smooth and optimal implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, consequently facilitating the effective attainment of national education objectives.

## 2. Research Methods

### 2.1 Design Research

This study employs a quantitative methodology with an ex post facto design to examine variables that can forecast outcomes using structural equation modeling (SEM) (Al-Emran et al., 2019; Stockemer, 2019). This research framework explains the relationship between exogenous variables (teacher readiness) equipped with indicators of understanding the concept of the *Merdeka* Curriculum (TR1), availability of adequate educational facilities (TR2), relevant teacher professional training and development (TR3), as well as support from the school environment and community (TR4) and endogenous variables (independent curriculum). The preparedness of teachers to execute the *Merdeka* Curriculum is essential for enhancing the educational standards in Indonesia. Teachers must possess a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental principles, goals, and instructional approaches encompassed in the *Merdeka* Curriculum.



**Figure 1.** Research Model Framework

This research hypothesizes that (1) The preparedness of teachers, as measured by four characteristics (TR1-TR4), has a favourable and significant impact on the successful implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum in elementary schools. (2) teacher readiness, together with four aspects (TR1-TR4), directly influences the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum in elementary schools.

### 2.2 Population and Sample Determination

The population participating in this study consisted of elementary school teachers in Jakarta, Indonesia. The sample used amounted to 174 teachers; the sample was selected through a survey method using the purposive sampling technique, where the respondents' specific characteristics were selected per the research objectives to provide comprehensive answers to the research problems posed. Data collection follows through questionnaires distributed to respondents in a representative manner. The population and sample of elementary school teachers are research subjects because of the importance of understanding and monitoring teacher readiness which can directly influence the implementation of the *Merdeka* curriculum in elementary schools. Further details regarding the sample used are visible in Table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Total Students Participating

School Name*	Gender		N
	Male	Female	
SDN WK 02 Pagi	5	7	12
SDN TDS 01 Pagi	11	14	25
SDN JP 05 Pagi	4	8	12
SDN TS 03 Pagi	4	7	11
SDN MB 15 Pagi	6	13	19
SDN KL 05 Pagi	3	11	14
SDN DK 16 Pagi	3	11	14
SDN KG 03	4	10	14
Total	41	81	122

\*Note: SDN (State Elementary School. WK-Wijaya Kusuma 02 Pagi; TDS-Tanjung Duren Selatan 01 Pagi; JP-Jatipulo 05 Pagi; TS-Tamansari 03 Pagi; MB-Mangga Besar 15 Pagi; KL-Kamal 05 Pagi; DK-Duri Kepa 16 Pagi; KG-Keagungan 03).

### 2.3 Instruments and Data Collection Tools

The data in this study were collected using instruments related to Teacher Readiness (TR) and *Merdeka* Curriculum (MC) in elementary schools—data collected with a five-point Likert scale questionnaire adapted from previous research (Angelina et al., 2024; Muarifin, 2022). The development of this questionnaire was established on prior research that included two separate questionnaires: one for Teacher Readiness (TR) and another for the *Merdeka* Curriculum (MC) of Elementary Schools. The instrument consists of 18 statements that elementary school teachers can easily understand. Each statement is organized with appropriate language and information so teachers can answer appropriately and accurately. This questionnaire is distributed to students online via Google Form to facilitate filling, with help from parents, facilitators, or peers who understand the content, thus ensuring more accurate and representative results.

The survey instrument employed in this study is a five-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to express their degree of agreement with the provided assertions. This scale comprises five response options: "strongly agree" assigned a value of 5, "agree" assigned a value of 4, "somewhat agree" assigned a value of 3, "disagree" assigned a value of 2, and "strongly disagree" assigned a value of 1. This instrument is utilized to gain a deeper understanding of Teacher Readiness (TR) and *Merdeka* Curriculum (MC) in primary schools.

### 2.4 Research Data Analysis

This study utilizes the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to investigate the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables, considering measurement error. The SmartPLS 3.0 tool is utilized for data analysis, specifically designed for the purpose of evaluating research ideas. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) is a statistical method used to examine the relationships between variables by considering latent variables (often referred to as constructs) and their associated indicators. This model produces path parameter estimates that maximize the explanation of endogenous variables by exogenous variables through a structural model (Wong, 2019).

The outer model (measurement model) in PLS-SEM measures the construct (latent variable), represented by measurable indicators. With this approach, this research obtains a deeper understanding of the relationships between variables in the context studied, considering accurate measurements. Outer model testing is conducted to assess the accuracy and consistency of the questionnaire indicators and to effectively measure the construct. The evaluation criteria consist of loading factor parameters, which ought to exceed 0.7, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which should be higher than 0.5. The research used the p-value threshold for hypothesis testing. The hypothesis is deemed statistically significant if the p-value is less than 0.05 and deemed not statistically significant if the p-value is more than 0.05. Hypothesis testing is conducted within an internal model, which involves a thorough analysis of the interactions and influences between variables. This research can significantly enhance our comprehension of the dynamics of interactions between variables in relevant contexts by employing this approach.

### 3. Results

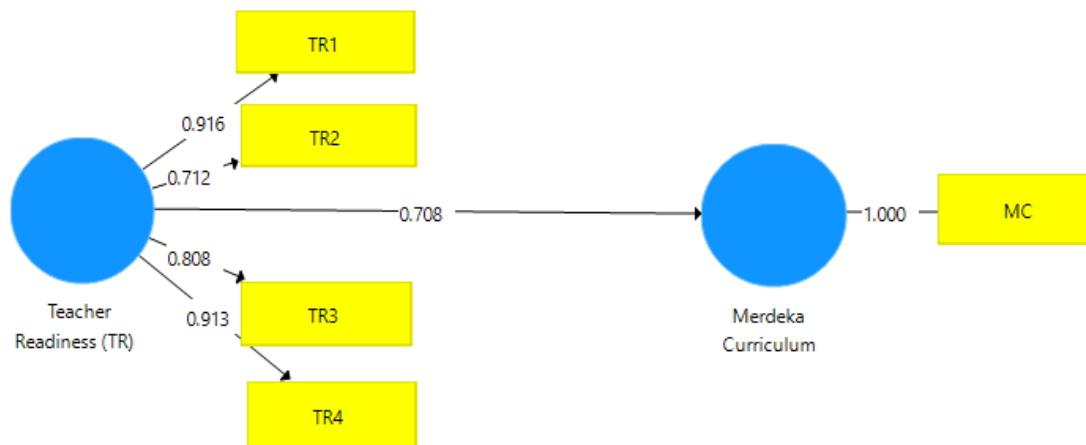
#### 3.1 Validity and Reliability Test Analysis Results

The purpose of conducting validity and reliability tests on the questionnaire for each variable is to assure the dependability and accuracy of the study data. The analysis results indicate that the model has successfully met the validity criteria, including both convergent and discriminant validity, as well as the reliability standards. PLS-SEM was used to analyze the results of the validity and reliability tests of the questionnaire on elementary school students, with a focus on Teacher Readiness (TR) equipped with indicators of understanding the concept of *Merdeka* Curriculum, availability of adequate educational facilities, relevant teacher training and professional development, and support from the school environment and community and *Merdeka* Curriculum (MC) in elementary schools, as seen from the outer model. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is utilized to calculate Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values that satisfy the specified criteria. The loading value of each latent variable factor in the outer model exceeds 0.7, suggesting that the instruments employed in the study possess strong validity and reliability. The comprehensive outcomes of the validity and reliability assessments are presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Results of Validity and Reliability Test Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
<i>Merdeka</i> Curriculum	1.000	0.992	1.000
Teacher Readiness (TR)	0.857	0.906	0.708

The analysis results from Table 2 show that the Composite Reliability (CR) value for each variable construction ranges from 0.992 to 1.000, while Cronbach's Alpha value ranges from 0.858 to 0.906. These figures show that the CR and Cronbach's Alpha values are satisfactory and acceptable, indicating high reliability and strong internal consistency for all formative constructs (Bajpai & Bajpai, 2014). Composite Reliability (CR) exceeding 0.7 (Heale & Twycross, 2015) indicates that all constructs in the model are reliable, answering the research question about overall construct reliability. The recapitulation results of this research's construction path model are visible in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2.** Path Diagram of Validity and Reliability Test Results

Figure 2 shows that each variable is declared valid and reliable because the value obtained for each variable is adequate. This value indicates that the measurement instruments used in this research have a high level of consistency and accuracy by accepted standards in statistical analysis. Thus, the results obtained from these variables can be relied on to support research conclusions and recommendations.

### 3.2 Hypothesis Analysis Results Using SEM

This research uses the path coefficient test to analyze the hypothesis. Before entering the hypothesis testing stage, it is essential to analyze the suitability of the research data model using the goodness of fit test. The results of the normed fit index (NFI) and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) values were used to assess the model's suitability with the help of the SMARTPLS-SEM program. The model considers fit if the NFI value is more than 0.8 and the SRMR value is less than 0.10. This research's model fit test results show that the NFI is 0.809 and the SRMR is 0.094, indicating that the variable model in this research is suitable. Research hypothesis analysis follows through using the bootstrapping test method in SMART PLS 3.0 (Memon et al., 2021). This method aims to test hypotheses, obtain estimates of population parameters based on existing samples, and test the significance of each proposed hypothesis. The findings of the hypothesis analysis conducted using the bootstrapping test method are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3.** HTMT Value

Variable	Merdeka Curriculum	Teacher Readiness (TR)
Merdeka Curriculum	0.841	
Teacher Readiness (TR)	0.764	0.832

The analysis results presented in Table 3 demonstrate that the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations) is used to assess discriminant validity. According to Table 3, the HTMT value must be  $<0.85$  to indicate adequate discriminant validity. The findings reveal that all HTMT values are below the 0.81 threshold, confirming the absence of discriminant validity issues. The model fit test results further indicate that the research model is appropriate, with a Normed Fit Index (NFI) of 0.801 and a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.089. The research hypotheses were evaluated using the bootstrapping procedure in SMARTPLS 3.0, which assesses hypotheses and generates population parameter estimates based on the sample data. Moreover, the procedure determines the statistical significance of each hypothesis. Table 4 presents the hypothesis testing results obtained through the bootstrapping method.

**Table 4.** Hypothesis Analysis Test Results Using SEM

Variable	Original Sample (O)	T-Statistics	P-Values
Teacher Readiness (TR) -> Merdeka Curriculum	0.708	22.086	0.000
Teacher Readiness (TR) -> Merdeka Curriculum	0.808	22.086	0.003

The output results of Table 4 explain that the direct effect of this research hypothesis is 1) The parameter coefficient for Teacher Readiness (TR) on Merdeka Curriculum (MC) learning is 0.708, while the P-value value is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , which means Teacher readiness (TR) has a positive influence on the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum (MC) by 70.8%. The indirect influence of the research is visible from the total indirect effect analysis, which explains that the parameter coefficient value obtained from all variables is 0.124 and the P-value obtained is  $0.000 < 0.05$ , which means the higher the teacher readiness (TR) value, the higher the value of implementing the Merdeka curriculum. (MC) will further increase by 12.4%. The overall direct influence of this research is visible from the total effect, which explains that the R-Square coefficient value of Teacher Readiness (TR) and Merdeka Curriculum (MC) is 0.501. The p-value of 0.003 indicates that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between Teacher Readiness (TR) and the application of the Merdeka Curriculum (MC) in schools. Specifically, the implementation of MC increases by 50.1% when TR improves. Therefore, we accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). The summary findings of the research hypothesis can be observed in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3 depicts the results of the hypothesis test analysis, highlighting statistically significant values. These findings indicate that the level of readiness among teachers has a favorable and substantial influence on the execution of the Merdeka Curriculum. Teacher preparedness, in this sense, refers to the understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum, availability of adequate educational resources, suitable teacher training and development, and support from the school environment and community. The optimal cultivation of these four attributes by educators is essential for the effective execution of the Merdeka Curriculum.

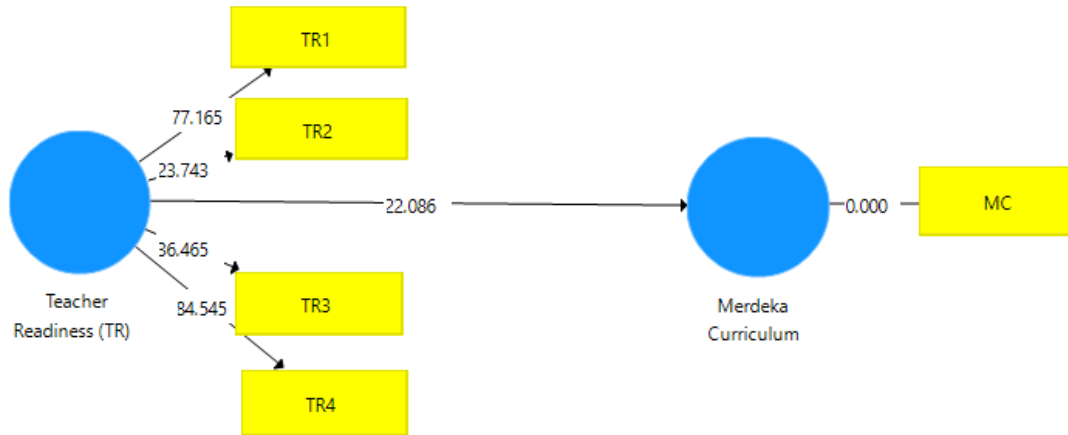


Figure 3. Results of Hypothesis Testing Analysis

#### 4. Discussion

The *Merdeka* curriculum has the "Freedom to Learn (*merdeka belajar*)" Program, which represents a significant innovation in education that aims to produce human power with superior quality (Puspitasari & Utami, 2023). This program creates fundamental changes in how learning follows through between teachers and students, with a learning system that is no longer limited to the classroom but also includes outing class experiences (Maipita et al., 2021; Nadya et al., 2023). This approach to learning outside the classroom creates a more comfortable and enjoyable environment for students, allowing them to interact more with the teacher (Fauziah et al., 2023). This curriculum adjustment will take place from 2022 to 2024 (Agustin et al., 2023; Putri Lestari et al., 2023). Schools that are not prepared to implement the *Merdeka* Curriculum are permitted by the Ministry of Education and Culture to retain the use of the prior curriculum. In addition, the Emergency Curriculum is accessible to educational institutions. (Arum & Fathoni, 2023).

The *Merdeka* Curriculum at the basic education level brings several changes compared to the 2013 Curriculum. One of these changes is the merger of science and social studies subjects into a subject called *IPAS* (Natural and Social Sciences) (Purwanti et al., 2024). The aim of this change is so that students at the elementary school level can see the close relationship between various aspects of the natural and social environment and manage them well as a unit (Herlina et al., 2023). Another change is eliminating skills assessment in each subject because the skills assessment aspect connects to the Arts and Culture subject (Mamuaja et al., 2023). This approach can give students a more holistic and integrative understanding and reduce the burden of separate assessments for each skill (Prahani et al., 2020; Pratikno et al., 2022).

Implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum in elementary schools depends on teacher readiness (Ben Gurion & Nasir, 2024). Teacher readiness is crucial in implementing this curriculum because it influences how it can be implemented effectively in the classroom (Gunarso et al., 2023). Teacher readiness has certain factors covering various aspects, including understanding the concept of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, availability of adequate educational facilities, relevant teacher professional training and development, and support from the school environment and community (Marzoan, 2024). With adequate preparation, the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum can run optimally, which impacts the quality of learning, and the results achieved by students (Firdaus et al., 2024; Zulinto et al., 2024).

The first factor in teacher readiness regarding understanding the *Merdeka* Curriculum Concept is an essential basis for teachers (Fadli et al., 2024). Teachers who understand the *Merdeka* Curriculum's goals, principles, and strategies can design and implement learning that is in accordance with the curriculum (Yuliana et al., 2023). This understanding covers various aspects, from a more flexible learning approach and emphasis on student competence to relevant evaluation methods (Fatimah et al., 2024; Murtaqiatusholihat et al., 2023). Teachers with a strong understanding of the *Merdeka* Curriculum tend to be more confident and able to overcome challenges during implementation.

The second factor is teacher readiness. The availability of adequate educational facilities, including comfortable classrooms, technological equipment, complete teaching materials, and a conducive learning environment, dramatically supports the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Adequate facilities enable teachers to apply various creative and innovative learning methods (Prabawati et al., 2023). Good facilities also support the continuity

of an effective and efficient learning process. When teachers have access to the necessary resources, they can focus more on developing quality learning.

The third factor is teacher readiness: Relevant teacher training and professional development are essential to increasing teacher competence in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum (Fadli et al., 2022). Ongoing training programs help teachers understand curriculum changes, develop new skills, and implement effective learning strategies (Jasiah et al., 2024). This training also allows teachers to share experiences and learn from each other. Continuous professional development ensures that teachers are always up to date with the latest developments in education and ready to face existing challenges.

The fourth factor is teacher readiness, support from the school environment and community plays a role in successfully implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum. Support from school management, colleagues, and parents can increase teacher motivation and self-confidence (Astuti et al., 2024). Collaboration between schools and communities can also create an environment that supports innovative and inclusive learning. Teachers feel more motivated and appreciated when all parties are involved and provide support in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum.

Previous research (Deltania & Rosyid, 2023; Fitri et al., 2023; Jamilah et al., 2023) shows that the implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in elementary schools requires teacher readiness so that its implementation can achieve maximum and optimal results. Even though many challenges must be faced, teacher readiness plays a crucial role in overcoming these various obstacles. This readiness includes a deep understanding of the curriculum, the ability to design appropriate learning, and a readiness to adapt to change. Without adequate preparation, challenges such as limited facilities, training needs, and support from the school environment can become significant obstacles to successful implementation (Ditya et al., 2023; Mardika & Putri Utami, 2024). Thus, this study highlights the need of enhancing teacher preparedness as a crucial measure to support the efficient implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum and its positive influence on the learning process in primary schools.

The effective execution of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in primary schools relies on the preparedness of teachers (Sanjaya et al., 2022; Setyaningsih et al., 2024). Factors such as comprehending the notion of an autonomous curriculum, access to sufficient educational resources, appropriate training and professional growth, and backing from the school environment and community are crucial in guaranteeing this preparedness. To enhance the effectiveness of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, it is essential to focus on and enhance four key factors: comprehension of curriculum concepts, educational infrastructure, professional development, and environmental support. Enhancements in these domains will ensure that the curriculum can be implemented to its fullest potential and have a substantial influence on the quality of education in Indonesia. Efficient and thorough initiatives in teacher preparation will aid in the attainment of the objectives of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, specifically in generating improved and more pertinent educational encounters for pupils nationwide.

## 6. Conclusion

Teacher readiness in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum requires several essential factors to ensure its implementation runs optimally. This research reveals that teacher readiness factors significantly influence the successful implementation of the *Merdeka* Curriculum in elementary schools. These factors include understanding the concept of the *Merdeka* Curriculum, availability of adequate educational facilities, relevant training and professional development for teachers, and support from the school environment and community. Although these factors provide a different understanding, many challenges must be faced, such as teacher confusion, inadequate understanding, lack of facilities, and materials and teaching materials that need more depth. However, this challenge can be overcome over time because implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum requires in-depth adaptation by teachers and schools. With continued efforts to improve understanding, facilities, training, and support, the Independent Curriculum can be implemented effectively and positively impact education in Indonesia.

The implications of this research provide a comprehensive understanding for teachers and the government that changes in the curriculum must be constructed on time. Before changing the curriculum, it is necessary to carry out comprehensive outreach and in-depth evaluation to ensure the policy can run optimally and align with national education goals. A planned and comprehensive approach will help to achieve the desired results and improve the quality of education in Indonesia. Future research needs to expand the sampling area to focus on more than just certain regions in Indonesia. This is important to provide broader representation and align with the diversity of educational contexts nationwide. The research results can provide a more comprehensive picture of teacher readiness



in implementing the *Merdeka* Curriculum by involving various regions, including those with different characteristics and challenges.

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### Acknowledgments

The authors would like to express their deepest gratitude to Universitas Esa Unggul through the Institute for Research and Community Service (LPPM), which has provided full support so that this research can be carried out properly. This support is very meaningful in the success of the research. The authors also express appreciation and gratitude to elementary schools in Jakarta that have been willing to be sampled in this study. The good participation and cooperation from the school are very helpful in collecting the data needed for this study. Thank you for the contribution and support given.

**Authors contributions**

HS: Conceptualization, design, analysis, writing. AAY and AR: Concept and design, data acquisition, technical or material support. MRF: Data analysis, interpretation, drafting manuscript, critical revision of manuscript, statistical analysis, securing funding, admin, supervision, final approval.

**Funding**

This research did not receive any funding from anywhere.

**Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no financial conflicts of interest that could have influenced the results of this study. They affirm that there are no affiliations or financial support from third parties that could bias the interpretation and presentation of the data.

**Informed consent**

Obtained.

**Ethics approval**

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

**Provenance and peer review**

Not commissioned, externally double-blind peer reviewed.

**Data availability statement**

The data supporting the findings of this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy restrictions and ethical considerations that protect the confidentiality of respondents' information. For interested parties, access to the data may be granted after considering compliance with relevant privacy policies and ethical approvals.

**Data sharing statement**

No additional data are available.

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