

Teacher Leader Competency in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum: A Case Study at SD Negeri 212 Palembang

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is to analyze the abilities of the teaching staff in order to increase student confidence in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. One of the key factors in ensuring the success of curriculum implementation is the teacher's ability to make learning more flexible, creative, and engaging for students. The method of research that is used is a qualitative approach using data collection techniques such as observation, documentation, and interviews. The study's findings indicate that a teacher's pedagogical, professional, social, and personal competencies significantly contribute to the improvement of the quality of the teaching process and the learning outcomes of the students. In addition, the active teacher in implementing the Merdeka curriculum can create innovative and flexible learning environments that meet the needs of students. This study recommends teachers increase their students' learning and development so that their skills continuously improve when learning a new curriculum.

Keywords: Educational Quality, Elementary School, Merdeka Curriculum, Teacher Leader's Competence

A. Introduction

Education is an important element in developing quality human resources. The Indonesian government continues to strive to improve the quality of education through various policies, one of which is the Merdeka Curriculum. This curriculum is expected to help build an education system that is more adaptive, relevant, and in accordance with the needs of students in the modern era (Hutahaean et al., 2024). To implement the Merdeka Curriculum, high-quality teachers are needed, especially in terms of leadership and innovation in the learning process (Kusumawati & Umam, 2025). The teacher leader is very important in this regard. Teacher leader is expected to be able to lead change in schools, especially in terms of developing the professionalism of other teachers and improving the quality of learning (Safrizal et al., 2022). Teacher leader must have many abilities, such as management skills, pedagogical skills, and a deep understanding of the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum (Pratama et al., 2024). With these abilities, teacher leader is expected to be

able to build an innovative, inclusive learning environment that focuses on the development of student potential.

However, in the field, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum still faces various challenges. One of the main challenges is the low competence of some teachers in implementing learning strategies that are in accordance with the spirit of the Merdeka Curriculum (Damayanti & Muhrroji, 2022; Hosaini et al., 2024). This limitation is also felt at State Elementary School 212 Palembang, where some teachers still have difficulty adjusting teaching methods to student needs and the demands of the new curriculum. This condition certainly affects the quality of education at the school. Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent to which the competence of teacher leader plays a role in improving the quality of education at SD Negeri 212 Palembang, especially in the context of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. This study is important to provide an overview of the effectiveness of the role of teacher leader and to provide strategic recommendations for schools and education policymakers to strengthen teacher capacity in supporting the new curriculum policy.

The world of education in various countries has experienced major developments due to advances in science and technology. The way educators think has changed significantly due to the major changes that have occurred in the world of education. Their views have changed from conventional and rigid to more contemporary. The government and education experts continue to strive to improve the current education sector by making policies that help. Currently, character development is very important in education. The Merdeka Curriculum supported by *Sekolah Penggerak* and teacher leader is the basis of educational innovation carried out by the government. The character of the Pancasila profile is the center of innovation that must be considered comprehensively. Formal elementary schools currently have a character that refers to the influence of Islamic teachings, while private Islamic elementary schools focus on instilling the values of good morals (Achadah et al., 2022).

In the future, educators will not deliver teaching materials. Every learning material has been prepared by a sophisticated computer. Every intelligent teacher must contribute to preparing educational teaching materials. Every teacher must have a strong character and have a complete vision in the present and future. Changes in student character are influenced by teachers and parents (Ritonga, 2022). If they like something fast, teachers must have strong teacher traits so that students also have strong traits. The government is still paying attention to the quality of teachers in Indonesia because the quality of teachers is still considered low (Kawuryan et al., 2021; Kurniawati, 2022). Therefore, the government is improving the quality of educators by implementing various policies. Skills, technical abilities, and the development of learning innovations need to be carried out because policies in the world of education require teachers to immediately adapt to the policies themselves (González-Salamanca et al., 2020). The ability of teachers to follow this policy greatly determines their ability to compete with technological advances. Researchers strongly agree that

teachers are expected to be able to improve their abilities so that they can more quickly follow the flow of changes in learning and are able to develop their pedagogical competence, according to the opinion (Purnasari & Sadewo, 2021).

The ability of teachers to manage learning in various aspects, including the use of appropriate learning media, classroom leadership, implementation, and evaluation, is known as pedagogical competence. By integrating aspects of art in pedagogical development, facilities and infrastructure become supporters of the implementation of technology-based learning that can be achieved through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) innovation (Patabang & Murniarti, 2021). The curriculum is an important reference in the teaching and learning process in the world of education. As we all know, it is not uncommon for the government system to change so that the curriculum of the education process planned by the government will also change. This is both as a renewal of the education system that is always changing according to the times. In fact, changes will also change the system of approaches, learning, and assessment in the classroom in ways that are not uncommon.

To improve the quality of teachers and realize independent learning, the government launched teacher leader Program. Teacher leader is teachers who are able to implement student-centered learning so that students are able to develop their abilities and have critical thinking and high creativity (Sholeh et al., 2023). According to Manizar (2017), there are five attitudes that a teacher must have as a motivator, namely: being open, helping students to maximize their potential, creating harmonious KBM interaction relationships, fostering student interest in learning, and an active attitude from the subject of learning (students). To raise enthusiasm and apply modern ideas, it seems that a teacher must explore and instill ideas in himself. A teacher must be revolutionary and change according to the changing times. No longer bound by things that are considered sacred, monotonous work, or things that don't make sense. Because history shows that times are always changing, human activities always cause progress in the times (North, 2025). The principles carried out by teachers are in line with the concept of independent learning, which states that the purpose of independent learning is to explore the potential of students to the maximum by adjusting the interests, talents, and tendencies of each student.

It is hoped that the teacher mover program will produce teachers who are nationalistic, reasoning learners, professionals, and focused on students. Teacher movers are expected to be able to change the learning paradigm to be more centered on students, change the teacher's perspective, and encourage teachers to get out of their comfort zone. Teachers who continue to develop their competencies in accordance with the nature of nature and the nature of the times. Teacher mover education is a leadership program that focuses on teacher management. After education, prospective teacher movers are expected to have the following four abilities: becoming a learning leader, developing themselves and others, *Sekolah*

Penggerak management, and *Sekolah Penggerak* development. Competence means the ability to control and make decisions. Competence can also be defined as the knowledge, skills, and abilities that a person has so that they can carry out cognitive, affective, and psychomotor behaviors as well as possible (Owan et al., 2022).

The definition of competence in this case is to view competence as a learning outcome from an educational perspective, which includes three aspects, namely knowledge, skills, and also work attitudes. As a relatively stable individual characteristic, it can be seen and measured from the behavior of the individual concerned in the workplace or in various situations. Competence is the ability to carry out a set of tasks that require the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Salman et al., 2020). According to Mulyasa (2021), a driving teacher is a teacher who is creative, innovative, and skilled in learning and energetic in serving students, able to build and develop relationships between teachers, between schools, and between learning communities, and able to become agents of change in schools and even outside of school.

Driving teachers are required to be able to lead learning and encourage happy learning that is centered on the interests of students. Driving teachers as drivers of independent learning are expected to be able to support the growth and development of students holistically, growing and developing according to the profile of Pancasila students. According to Yokoyama et al. (2023), a driving teacher is a teacher who has the competence to develop students comprehensively by implementing student-centered learning so as to provide them with opportunities to develop themselves according to the profile of Pancasila students. Based on their principles and roles, driving teachers can contribute to educational transformation by leading learning, developing themselves and others, *Sekolah Penggerak* management, and *Sekolah Penggerak* development. They can also be drivers of the educational ecosystem, both in their schools and in their regions. This is known as the competence of driving teachers.

Mustaghfiqh (2020) understands independent learning through the perspective of the progressivism philosophy, which assumes that humans have unique and extraordinary abilities and can overcome problems that threaten humans themselves. Progressivism also argues that authoritarian education that has taken place in the past and present actually hinders the development of the quality of education because it does not respect the abilities possessed by humans. Freedom means being free from all ties, standing on one's own two feet to manage all educational resources that are centered on the interests of students. Independent learning provides space for teachers and students to cultivate their feelings, cultivate their bodies, cultivate their will, cultivate their minds, and cultivate their souls freely so as to create a sense of happiness for students in developing their potential optimally. The position of teachers in independent learning is only as a guide for the growth and development of students so that they do not deviate from their nature as human beings with noble character (Hazyimara, 2024).

Independent learning allows teachers, students, and parents to work together to create the learning they want. Independent learning means that teachers must continue to learn, collaborate, and strengthen digital literacy to welcome the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. Also, independent learning means that students must be in accordance with the profile of Pancasila students: those who are faithful, pious, have noble morals, think globally, are independent, creative, and able to collaborate. The Pancasila Student Profile is very important so that the Merdeka Curriculum is further strengthened with the Pancasila Student Profile. The Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang is a strategic step to consider the role of teacher leader in improving the quality of education. This curriculum demands a change in the learning paradigm, where teachers are not only teachers but also facilitators who are able to provide learning that is fun, meaningful, and relevant to students' real lives (Latifa et al., 2023). Therefore, teacher leader must have the skills needed to implement this curriculum well.

The competencies of teacher leader, which include professional, pedagogical, social, and leadership skills, are very much needed to support the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. At SD Negeri 212 Palembang, as in many other schools, the success of the implementation of this curriculum is highly dependent on the quality of the teachers who implement it. Thus, it is important to examine the extent to which the competencies possessed by teacher leader at SD Negeri 212 Palembang can improve the quality of education and achieve the goals of the Merdeka Curriculum. This study seeks to examine the role of teacher leader competencies as an effort to improve the quality of education. Especially in the context of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. The results of this study are expected to provide a comprehensive picture of the contribution of teacher leader to improving the quality of education and become evaluation material for related parties to continue to develop teacher leader program and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the future. This study examines how teacher leader competencies impact Merdeka Curriculum implementation at SD Negeri 212 Palembang.

B. Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach, namely describing situations or events that are arranged systematically, factually, actually, and accurately regarding the facts and phenomena that are being investigated or observed. This is in accordance with Ridwan et al. (2021), who stated that the study uses a qualitative descriptive method in the form of a literature study (library research), namely collecting information or scientific papers related to literature reviews that are of a library nature. Research on the competence of teacher leader as an effort to improve the quality of education in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at State Elementary School 212 Palembang City was conducted at State Elementary School 212 Palembang City, precisely in Kemang Agung Village, Kertapati District, Palembang

City. This research was conducted from November 2024 to April 2025. This school has 5 teacher leaders as research objects. In addition, the researcher also determined the school committee, principal, driving teachers, teachers, and school supervisors as research objects. This study describes the competence of teacher leader as an effort to improve the quality of education in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at Public Elementary School 212 in Palembang City; therefore, the main data source for this study is people who are considered important to obtain clear and accurate information. The sample collection technique used was through observation, interviews, and documentation case studies. Data analysis was carried out with data reduction steps, data presentation, and conclusions or data verification. While the validity of the data includes the credibility test (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity). Data collection techniques are the most important step in a study because the main purpose of the study is to obtain data in the field.

C. Results and Discussion

For learning recovery, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology will build an independent learning curriculum as an optional educational unit. Conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic have caused many obstacles in the learning process in schools. The 2013 curriculum policy issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology stipulates a free curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum was launched by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology with the aim of providing freedom to teachers and schools in organizing their learning. In this case, the driving teacher plays a very important role as a driver of change in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The role of teacher leader is very crucial in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Aprilia & Mustika, 2024). They not only act as educators but also as leaders of educational change in Indonesian schools. With the ability to facilitate collaboration between various parties and empower students through innovative learning methods and local relevance to their own curriculum, it will have a positive impact on the quality of national education. Through this effort, it is hoped that the Indonesian education system will be increasingly adaptive to the needs of the times and be able to produce the next generation of the nation, who are of high quality both in terms of academics and social character. This is one of the basic reasons for researchers to conduct research on the competence of driving teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum to improve the quality of education at SD Negeri 212 Palembang.

Presentation of research data on the competency of driving teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum to improve the quality of education at SD Negeri 212 Palembang, as explained above, this discussion consists of the competency of driving teachers in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum at State Elementary School 212 Palembang, the role of driving teachers in the learning process in the Merdeka Curriculum in an effort to improve the quality of learning at SD Negeri 212

Palembang, and obstacles that arise in the implementation of the independent learning curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang.

The teacher leader program is an initiative designed to train teachers to become learning leaders who are able to encourage holistic student development and play an active role in their educational community. This program includes online training, workshops, and mentoring for six months for participants. There are several competencies of teacher leaders in the implementation of the independent learning curriculum, which are used as a follow-up to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology policy, namely (1) the independent learning curriculum adoption route, (2) differentiated learning, (3) webinar series, (4) independent teaching platform, (5) learning community, and (5) resource persons sharing good practices. The Merdeka Curriculum is an educational innovation that aims to provide freedom to schools and teachers in managing the learning process. In this context, the role of the teacher leader is very important to ensure that the implementation of the curriculum runs well and effectively. At SD Negeri 212 Palembang, the role of the teacher leader can be seen from various aspects that contribute to improving the quality of learning.

The teacher leader is an educator who not only teaches but also becomes an agent of change in the educational environment. They have the ability to motivate students, create a fun learning atmosphere, and innovate in learning methods. The leadership of the driving teacher at SD Negeri 212 Palembang has a big impact on building strong collaboration with various stakeholders (such as parents, the community, and external parties to the school). This collaboration greatly supports the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum through increased participation, learning innovation, and the creation of a more inclusive and responsive learning environment. The driving teacher actively establishes open communication with parents of students, the school committee, and the surrounding community. Through discussion forums or regular meetings, all parties can convey ideas and input for the progress of the school. The school committee becomes more active in acting as a bridge between the needs of students/teachers and education policies at the regional and national levels. Collaboration of the teacher leader at SD Negeri 212 Palembang with stakeholders (principal, teachers, school supervisors, and school committee) can be seen in several explanations as follows:

Collaboration with the Principal of SD Negeri 212 Palembang

The leadership of the driving teacher strengthens collaboration with the principal so that synergy is created that encourages innovation, joint decision-making, and more effective implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. The driving teacher acts as a strategic partner of the principal in formulating the vision and mission of education. This collaboration ensures that school policies are in line with student needs and developments. The driving teacher is often the driving force

for change through creative ideas. The principal supports these initiatives by providing space, facilities, and administrative support for the implementation of innovative programs. The existence of open discussions between the driving teacher and the principal makes the policy-making process more democratic. Every decision is based on input from various parties so that the results are more optimal for all school residents.

The principal facilitates training or workshops based on recommendations from the driving teacher. This improves the competence of all educators evenly. Close collaboration between the driving teacher and the principal accelerates adaptation to curriculum changes. Differentiated learning programs can run smoothly because of the full support of the school leadership. The leadership of the driving teacher has a very positive impact on building harmonious collaboration with the principal at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. The result is a conducive, innovative work environment that supports the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum for the progress of students.

Collaboration with All Teachers of SD Negeri 212 Palembang

At SD Negeri 212 Palembang, the leadership of the driving teacher encourages strong collaboration between teachers. This increases the spirit of cooperation, knowledge sharing, and innovation in learning, which supports the success of the Merdeka Curriculum. The driving teacher also becomes an inspiration who encourages their fellow teachers to work together to achieve educational goals. This collaboration creates a harmonious and mutually supportive working atmosphere. The driving teacher initiates discussion forums, training, or working groups that allow teachers to exchange experiences and learning strategies. This accelerates the spread of innovation and effective learning methods across teachers. With the leadership of the driving teacher, teachers are encouraged to try new methods, such as differentiated learning and the use of technology. This collaboration produces fresh ideas that improve the quality of learning. The driving teacher helps explain and implement the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum together. All teachers believe that they have an important role in the success of the curriculum. Teachers can provide constructive feedback to each other through the teamwork that is built. Consistently, this process improves the ability and quality of teaching. At SD Negeri 212 Palembang, effective collaboration is influenced by the leadership of the driving teacher. Progress in education is achieved through better teamwork, innovation in faster learning, and effective support for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum.

Collaboration with School Supervisors in Supporting the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

The leadership of the driving teacher strengthens the collaborative relationship with the school supervisor so that supervision becomes more constructive and supports the

implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum effectively at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. The driving teacher actively communicates with the school supervisor to convey the needs and challenges in implementing the curriculum. The supervisor provides appropriate direction and support based on real conditions in the field. This collaboration changes the role of the supervisor from merely an administrative supervisor to a professional development partner for teachers. The supervisor helps provide constructive feedback and practical solutions to improve the quality of learning. This collaboration changes the role of the supervisor from merely an administrative supervisor to a professional development partner for teachers. helps provide constructive feedback and practical solutions to improve the quality of learning. With the support of the supervisor, the driving teacher can more easily implement learning innovations according to the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. The supervisor also helps with the necessary training and mentoring. This collaboration ensures that the learning evaluation process runs openly and objectively, and the evaluation findings are used to consistently improve the implementation of the curriculum. The leadership of the driving teacher is very important to work well with the school supervisor. This has a positive impact on better supervision and better implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang.

Collaboration with the School Committee in Supporting the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang.

The leadership of the driving teacher plays an important role in building close collaboration with the school committee, thus supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum through increased participation, resource support, and strengthening the role of the committee in decision-making at SD Negeri 212 Palembang. The driving teacher invites the school committee to be actively involved in the planning and evaluation process for the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This makes the committee feel that it has a strategic role in the progress of the school. This collaboration makes it easier to raise support, whether in the form of funds, facilities, or other resources needed to support learning innovations according to the new curriculum. The driving teacher, together with the school committee, builds an open and transparent communication mechanism related to the implementation of the curriculum, thereby increasing trust and accountability in school management. This collaboration allows the school committee to provide input and participate in strategic decision-making related to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum so that the policies taken are more targeted. With an active school committee, the free curriculum can be socialized more widely to parents and the community. This results in greater support from the school community. In SD Negeri 212 Palembang, the leadership of the driving teacher is very important to build effective cooperation with the school committee. This collaboration increases the support and participation of the committee in supporting the Merdeka Curriculum, which results in a better and more sustainable learning process.

Collaboration with Parents in Supporting the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang

In the world of education, collaboration between schools and parents is one of the most crucial aspects to support the success of the learning process. Especially in the context of the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang, the active involvement of parents is a determining factor that cannot be ignored. The Merdeka Curriculum, as a learning innovation that emphasizes the freedom of teachers in designing and implementing the teaching and learning process, requires strong synergy between various parties, including schools, teachers, students, and, of course, parents. Good collaboration between schools and parents will create a conducive learning environment that supports the optimal development of students, as well as strengthen the success of the implementation of a curriculum that is oriented towards the needs and potential of students. This collaboration is important because it is more than just formal communication between teachers and parents; it is a process of active, consistent, and mutually supportive cooperation. As strategic partners of the school, parents provide moral support, inspiration, and resources needed to support learning both at school and at home. Parents can gain a better understanding of the learning objectives and approaches used in the Merdeka Curriculum with intensive involvement. This allows parents to provide appropriate support for their children. In SD Negeri 212 Palembang, this collaboration allows parents to participate in decision-making and learning evaluation. This creates a synergy that improves the educational environment.

The curriculum is a more flexible curriculum development that focuses on basic material and develops the uniqueness and abilities of students. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum has not been fully realized due to various problems that are obstacles, including at the elementary school level. At the elementary school level, there are several obstacles that come from the condition of facilities (infrastructure), the condition of teachers and educators, the condition of students, the environment, families, and several obstacles that come from government policies.

First, obstacles that come from the condition of school facilities. The Merdeka Curriculum, which has been implemented for approximately one year, still has several shortcomings or obstacles, one of which is in the aspect of facilities and infrastructure. The limited number of teachers who have laptops, capable gadgets, and also adequate internet access is one of the obstacles in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This has an impact on the limited number of teachers who can take part in online training organized by the government on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. So that these limitations result in teachers being less than optimal in taking part in training.

The second obstacle is related to the condition of human resources owned by teachers and educators. In relation to the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers

actually still feel uneasy, although several studies have shown their readiness in IKM. The condition of the readiness of teachers and educators in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum is one thing that is no less important to pay attention to, because it can have an impact on teacher performance in carrying out their duties. The solutions to these obstacles include:

1. Facilities and infrastructure aspects

In terms of facilities and infrastructure, it can be overcome by maximizing the use of government funding assistance and collaborating with parents and local agencies. The following are solutions to overcome obstacles related to facilities and infrastructure in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, especially the problem of limited laptops, gadgets, and internet access for teachers:

- a. By utilizing shared school facilities, teachers can get computer devices or laptops in turns. This allows for effective management of their use even though the number of devices is limited.
- b. Collaboration with parents and communities involve parents and communities to help procure devices or internet access through donations and fundraising.
- c. Use of simple devices and lightweight applications choose learning applications that do not require high specifications and can run on simple devices so that teachers who have limited devices can still use them.
- d. Technology training and mentoring provide training to teachers to be more efficient in using existing technology, including how to optimize the use of limited devices and the internet.
- e. Development of school internet infrastructure submitting assistance to the education office or local government to improve internet access in schools, for example, by installing shared school Wi-Fi.
- f. Setting internet and device usage schedules creating a schedule for device usage and internet access so that all teachers get a fair chance and there is no accumulation of usage.
- g. Utilization of offline and hybrid media combining online and offline learning methods, for example, by providing printed materials or learning media that can be accessed without the internet.
- h. Use of government assistance programs maximizing government assistance programs that provide devices and internet access for education and actively submitting proposals.

With these steps, obstacles to infrastructure in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum can be minimized so that the learning process continues to run effectively.

2. Aspects of human resources for teachers and educators

In terms of human resources, teachers and educators can be addressed by attending training or workshops on the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum and studying the Merdeka Curriculum material on the platform that has been provided.

Teachers are expected not only to rely on government policies but also to direct independence in overcoming various problems. The following are solutions to overcome obstacles related to the condition of human resources (teachers and educators) in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum based on existing research and practice results:

- a. Continuous Development of Teacher Competencies, Teachers need to receive training and development that is not only theoretical but also practical and adaptive to change. For example, through workshops, in-house training, seminars, group discussions, and technology-based training. This helps teachers understand the philosophy of the Merdeka Curriculum and improve appropriate teaching skills.
- b. Strengthening the paradigm and motivation of teachers, Changing the paradigm of teachers is very important so that they can act as facilitators of liberating learning. Strengthening idealism and adaptive attitudes towards social and technological dynamics must continue to be encouraged so that teachers remain motivated and ready to face new challenges.
- c. Empowerment of Digital Technology Teachers must be encouraged to master digital technology as a learning tool, including the use of online learning platforms, e-learning, and digital learning resources. Special training and assistance in using this technology are very important so that teachers do not feel overwhelmed.
- d. Strengthening Communication and Partnership Networks Schools and teachers need to build strong communication networks with various stakeholders such as school committees, the industrial world, universities, and professional communities. This can enrich learning resources and support the implementation of the curriculum more optimally.
- e. Implementation of Comprehensive Learning Assessments, Teachers need to be equipped with the ability to conduct assessments that are not only summative (final) but also formative (process) and diagnostic (initial). This holistic assessment helps teachers adjust learning according to student needs and improve the quality of learning outcomes.
- f. Assistance and Supervision from the Principal The principal plays an important role in providing support, supervision, and motivation to teachers so that the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum runs smoothly. The principal can also facilitate training and share good practices between teachers.

With these steps, the readiness and performance of teachers and educators in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum can be increased so that HR obstacles can be minimized. Regarding the obstacles that arise in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, SD Negeri 212 Palembang has been given a solution to overcome them and has implemented it well.

D. Conclusions

In the presentation of the research results on the competence of driving teachers as an effort to improve the quality of education in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at State Elementary School 212 Palembang, which was obtained by researchers through observation, interviews, and documentation, the researchers concluded that 1) the competence of driving teachers at State Elementary School 212 Palembang plays a very important role in encouraging innovation in learning methods that are in accordance with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum. Driving teachers are able to develop a more creative, flexible, and student-centered learning approach, thereby improving the quality of the teaching and learning process. This innovation not only makes learning more interesting and relevant but also helps students develop 21st-century competencies optimally. Thus, the competence of driving teachers is the key to the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at the school; 2) the leadership of driving teachers at State Elementary School 212 Palembang has a significant impact on building effective collaboration with various stakeholders, including the principal, teachers, parents, and other related parties. Through inspiring and communicative leadership, driving teachers are able to unite a shared vision and mission in supporting the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. This collaboration strengthens the synergy between parties so that the learning process becomes more integrated, innovative, and responsive to the needs of students. Thus, the leadership of the driving teacher is a key factor in creating a conducive learning environment and supporting the success of the Merdeka Curriculum at the school; 3) in the implementation of the independent learning curriculum at SD Negeri 212 Palembang, there are obstacles such as the facilities and infrastructure or school facilities and the condition of human resources owned by teachers and educators. However, the education unit has overcome obstacles by utilizing shared school facilities through the provision of computer devices or laptops in turns for teachers and Continuous Teacher Competency Development. The findings suggest teacher leader programs should prioritize leadership training and resource allocation.

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