



Enhancing Teacher Self-Management and Skills in Designing Teaching Materials through a Merdeka Curriculum Workshop at Muhammadiyah 1 Sleman Vocational High School

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ABSTRACT

This program aims to enhance teacher self-management and competence in developing teaching materials for the merdeka curriculum. The activity consists of three stages: pre-activity, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The training, which includes theoretical material, practical sessions, and relevant tests, was attended by 34 teachers from Muhammadiyah 1 Sleman Vocational High School and took place from July 8 to 9, 2024. The results indicated an improvement in teacher self-management and competence in developing teaching materials, with the average total percentage increasing from 70.17% on the Pre-Test to 80.44% on the Post-Test. For future training, it is recommended to focus more on participant motivation to enhance the effectiveness of the workshop, reduce delays, and further integrate learning and assessment in line with the merdeka curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most crucial pillars in the development of a nation (Greenland et al., 2022). In the face of rapid globalization and swift social, economic, and technological changes, education serves not only as a medium for knowledge transfer but also as a platform for shaping the character and skills of younger generations. A good education must equip students with relevant and adaptive abilities, ensuring they are prepared to face future challenges (Ng et al., 2023). Consequently, the introduction of the merdeka curriculum as a new approach is an effort to respond to the needs of modern education, which demands that young people become competent, creative, and innovative individuals. This approach emphasizes the development of 21st-century skills, including critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and innovation, alongside the cultivation of strong cultural values and character. Flexible and holistic project-based learning is also a key element of the merdeka curriculum, aimed at preparing students for the ever-changing real world (Siswanto et al., 2024).

Moreover, the merdeka curriculum integrates local wisdom and character values, which are essential foundations in shaping students' identities. In this approach, students are encouraged to be more active in the learning process, both individually and in groups, enabling them to adapt to societal changes and contribute to social development. According to Astiwi et al. (2024), one of the advantages of the merdeka curriculum is the flexibility granted to teachers in selecting teaching tools that align with the needs, potential, and interests of their students. As a result, learning is no longer a one-way process or bound to a rigid curriculum; instead, it becomes more personal and relevant to the real-life situations students face daily. This allows teachers to be more creative in delivering their lessons (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

However, Indonesia faces significant challenges in the education sector. The country has long been in a learning crisis, with many students struggling to comprehend basic reading materials or apply fundamental mathematical concepts (Siswanto & Susetyawati, 2024). This issue was exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced an abrupt transition to online learning, further widening the educational gap between regions and social groups in Indonesia. In this context, the merdeka curriculum is expected to be a solution to address the prolonged educational crisis by emphasizing more flexible, adaptive, and relevant learning methods (Prahastina et al., 2024).

One of the key aspects of the merdeka curriculum is the development of the Pancasila Student Profile. This development is not solely focused on academic aspects but also on holistic character formation that reflects moral and social values based on Pancasila. In its implementation, the merdeka curriculum is designed so that Pancasila's values are integrated into every aspect of the teaching and learning process (Putri, 2024). This applies not only to subjects that explicitly discuss Pancasila but is also implemented across various disciplines. In this way, students not only learn the theoretical concepts of Pancasila but also apply its values in their daily lives, both in interacting with their peers and in

making ethical decisions. Education that focuses on Pancasila values helps students develop their identity and character as responsible citizens.

The teaching methods employed in the merdeka curriculum are diverse, ranging from project-based learning to reflective discussions and real-life simulations. All these methods are designed to provide students with hands-on experiences in understanding and applying Pancasila values (Indriani & Saleh, 2024). Through project-based learning, students are encouraged to work collaboratively in groups, solve real-world problems, and produce solutions rooted in Pancasila values. Meanwhile, reflective discussions allow students to reflect on their actions and evaluate how Pancasila values influence their decisions in everyday life. Assessment in the merdeka curriculum has also undergone significant changes (Gurion & Nasir, 2024). Evaluations no longer focus solely on academic results measured through written exams but also assess skills, attitudes, and the application of Pancasila values in students' daily actions (Putri et al., 2024). This holistic and formative assessment approach evaluates students not only based on their final results but also on the learning process they experience. Projects, presentations, and personal reflections are part of this assessment, providing a more comprehensive view of students' ability to internalize and apply Pancasila values.

The merdeka curriculum aims to make Pancasila values an integral part of students' identities (Yumaroh & Suranto, 2024). Students are not only required to understand these values but also to adopt them as guidelines in their daily lives. Learning that integrates Pancasila values is expected to help students become ethical, responsible individuals with a strong sense of social concern. The learning process extends beyond the classroom, reaching into various aspects of students' daily lives. Thus, the merdeka curriculum prepares students to be good citizens, capable of making ethical decisions based on Pancasila values in all aspects of their lives. The success of the merdeka curriculum implementation largely depends on the role of teachers in applying the curriculum principles flexibly and adaptively to students' needs. Therefore, continuous training is necessary to enhance teachers' competencies in using appropriate teaching tools, making learning more dynamic and meaningful (Kurniawan et al., 2024).

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

The merdeka curriculum workshop was held over two days, on Monday, July 8, 2024, and Tuesday, July 9, 2024, conducted offline at the Auditorium of Muhammadiyah 1 Sleman Vocational High School, located in Triharjo, Sleman District, Sleman Regency, Special Region of Yogyakarta. The participants consisted of 34 teachers, with the aim of enhancing competencies in areas including self-management for teachers, understanding the merdeka curriculum and developing teaching materials. The stages of the training implementation included.

Pre-implementation

At this stage various preparations are carried out such as arranging the event, making and distributing flyers on social media, making a list of participant attendance, as well as preparing the room and other necessary equipment.

Implementation

The activity lasted for two days. On the first day, participants received teacher self-management material by Mr. Achmad Muhammad and training in preparing teaching tools for the merdeka curriculum by Mrs. Sulis Rahmawati. On the first day, the team gave a pre-test related to the material that participants would receive in this workshop activity.

Monitoring dan Evaluasi

At the monitoring stage, participants practice preparing teaching tools. A question and answer session is also provided to clarify things that are not yet understood. The evaluation was carried out on the second day by presenting the results of the task of making teaching tools and the team providing a post-test related to the workshop.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This activity is an merdeka curriculum workshop aimed specifically at teachers at Muhammadiyah 1 Sleman Vocational High School. This workshop aims to help improve teacher competence related to self-management and the preparation of merdeka curriculum teaching tools. The stages of implementing these activities will be explained further in the following results and discussion.

Pre-implementation

Before the activity begins, various preparations are made, such as organizing the event and making flyers. The flyer was then distributed via the team's social media. After all participants are registered, an attendance list is created for the participants. Below is the flyer that has been arranged.



Figure 1. Flyer Workshop

The next pre-activity stage is to carry out a technical meeting with the aim of providing direction and an overview to participants regarding the necessary preparations, equipment needed during the activity, as well as filling in participant biodata. Apart from that, participants were given instructions to take part in the activities seriously and prepare laptops for practice. The team

also provides pre-test and post-test via Google Form. The following is a Pre-Test and Post-Test in the form of a Google Form.

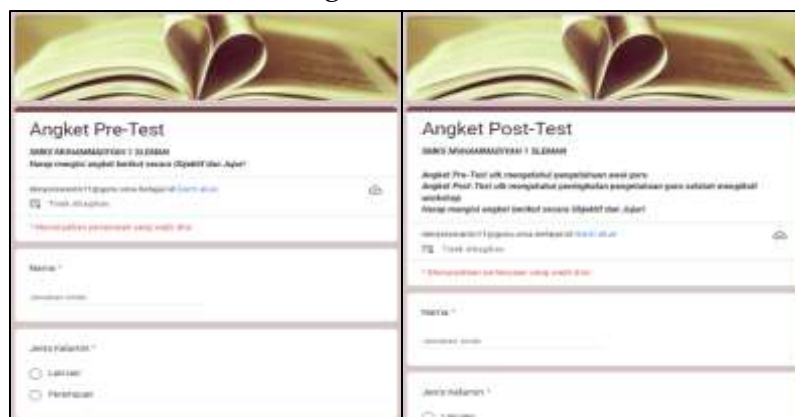


Figure 2. Pre-Test and Post-Test display in Google Form

After that, the team prepared training equipment such as arranging the room, preparing the projector and other necessary equipment. The merdeka curriculum workshop lasted for two days. On the first day, participants received material on becoming a happy and enlightening person and teacher self-management by Mr. Achmad Muhammad and training on preparing teaching tools for the independent curriculum by Mrs. Sulis Rahmawati. On the first day, the team gave a pre-test related to the material that participants would receive in this workshop activity. The first day and second day activities start at 08:00 AM to 03:00 PM.

Implementation

First Day

The merdeka curriculum workshop was conducted over two days. On the first day, participants received training on becoming happy and inspiring individuals, as well as on self-management practices. The activities began at 08:00 AM and ran until 09:30 AM for the first session, followed by a session from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, which included a working meeting for the teachers and staff of Muhammadiyah 1 Sleman Vocational High School. Before diving into the content, participants were given a pre-test by the team through Google Forms, aimed at assessing their initial abilities related to self-management and teacher competencies within the merdeka curriculum. Below are photos from the first day of the workshop.

In the first session, it was explained that being a happy and inspiring teacher is key to creating a positive and inspiring learning environment for students. Happy teachers tend to have stable emotional well-being, allowing them to face various challenges in the teaching process more wisely (Prasetyo et al., 2022). A teacher's happiness stems not only from external factors such as recognition or rewards but also from intrinsic satisfaction in fulfilling their duties. When a teacher finds meaning and purpose in their profession, they become more connected to their students, ultimately increasing their motivation and enthusiasm for teaching.

To be an inspiring teacher, it is important for educators to continuously strive for personal development and deepen their knowledge and skills (Peng et al., 2023). A teacher who is committed to ongoing learning can provide richer knowledge to their students and serves as a good role model regarding openness to change and lifelong learning. Additionally, an inspiring teacher must build good communication with students, create an inclusive classroom atmosphere, and allow students space to express themselves and participate actively (Alghiffari et al., 2024).

A teacher's happiness is closely linked to the balance between personal and professional life (Pisriwati et al., 2024). Effectively managing stress, maintaining mental and physical health, and having time for oneself are crucial aspects of sustaining happiness (Indriani & Saleh, 2024). Teachers who can maintain this balance will be more focused in their teaching and capable of giving their full attention to students. Furthermore, support from the school environment, colleagues, and professional communities can also be valuable sources of happiness for a teacher.

Finally, to be a happy and inspiring teacher, it is essential for educators to approach their profession with empathy and compassion. Teachers who understand the emotional conditions and individual needs of their students can provide appropriate and relevant guidance (Khairiyah et al., 2024). By creating positive and supportive relationships between teachers and students, the learning atmosphere becomes more enjoyable and productive. A happy teacher not only brightens their students' days but also inspires them to reach their full potential in learning and life.

Second Day

On the second day of the workshop, participants received training on developing teaching materials for the merdeka curriculum. The sessions took place on Tuesday, July 9, 2024, from 08:00 AM to 09:30 AM, followed by merdeka work guided by the facilitators from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, and concluding with presentations on the outcomes of the merdeka work related to developing teaching materials, such as formulating Learning Objectives, Learning Objectives Flow, and Teaching Modules.

The first session of the second day explained that developing teaching materials within the merdeka curriculum is a crucial step that teachers must take to ensure a structured and directed learning process. The merdeka curriculum allows teachers the freedom to design lessons that are more relevant to student needs while still adhering to national educational goals. The three main components in developing teaching materials for the merdeka curriculum are Learning Objectives, Learning Objectives Flow, and Teaching Modules. These three elements are interconnected and form the foundation for crafting effective and meaningful learning experiences.

Learning Objectives are the first element to be established in developing teaching materials. They outline what students are expected to achieve after participating in the learning process during specific phases or sessions. These objectives must be specific, measurable, and relevant to the competencies being

developed. In the merdeka curriculum, Learning Objectives are formulated based on the Pancasila Student Profile, emphasizing character development, knowledge, skills, and student creativity. Teachers must formulate Learning Objectives that focus not only on academic achievements but also on the development of attitudes and behaviors.

Once the Learning Objectives are established, the next step is to create the Learning Objectives Flow. The Learning Objectives Flow is a logical sequence of learning objectives that students need to achieve over a specified period, such as a semester or academic year. The Learning Objectives Flow assists teachers in designing systematic learning, starting from basic competencies to more complex ones. By developing an Learning Objectives Flow, teachers can ensure that each learning objective is interconnected, helping students build knowledge progressively. The Learning Objectives Flow also aids teachers in monitoring student progress, as each achievement serves as a basis for moving on to the next stage.

Teaching Modules are the final component developed based on the Learning Objectives and Learning Objectives Flow. These modules contain learning materials, methods, strategies, and assessment tools that will be used throughout the teaching and learning process. In the merdeka curriculum, Teaching Modules are designed to be more flexible, allowing teachers to utilize various learning resources, media, and approaches that align with student characteristics. The modules should also include a range of learning activities, including project-based or collaborative learning, that help students apply knowledge in real-world contexts. Through Teaching Modules, teachers can design more contextual and relevant learning experiences tailored to the needs and interests of students, while ensuring the achievement of Learning Objectives.

Overall, developing teaching materials within the merdeka curriculum aims to provide clear and structured guidance for teachers in executing the learning process (Scientia et al., 2024). By focusing on Learning Objectives, ATP, and Teaching Modules, teachers can create more meaningful and comprehensive learning experiences for students. This process also grants teachers the flexibility to adjust learning to student conditions, school environments, and contextual needs, ensuring that learning is not only theoretical but also applicable, relevant, and capable of developing various student potentials.

After completing the material, participants engaged in merdeka practice related to the development of teaching materials corresponding to each teacher's subject area (Tanikawa et al., 2024). During this activity, the facilitators provided guidance and checked each participant's progress to ensure alignment with the workshop content and the Learning Objectives pertinent to each teacher's subject.

During the practice session, participants were given the opportunity to ask the facilitators questions if anything was unclear. The facilitators explained each step in detail, including the use of AI tools to facilitate the development of teaching materials. Below are photos from the workshop activities.



Figure 3. Workshop Activities

In the final session, there is a presentation related to the results of work in the previous session where participant representatives present the results of the preparation of teaching tools that have been prepared such as learning objectives, flow of learning objectives and also teaching modules, where there is also discussion and sharing between participants and also presenters regarding the results. preparation of participants' teaching tools.

Monitoring and Evaluation

At this stage, participants reflect on the results of the workshop that has been carried out. Apart from reflection, participants were asked by the team to take a post-test related to self-management and teacher competency in the merdeka curriculum. After the implementation was completed, the team obtained results related to improving self-management and teacher competency in the merdeka curriculum. Where there are 28 statements in the form of a Google Form questionnaire with a Likert scale of 4 in line with Widoyoko (2018). The following are statements on the pre-test and post-test.

Table 1. Pre-test and Post-test Statements

Code	Statement
(1)	I have sufficient knowledge of the Kurikulum Merdeka Mandiri Berubah to support problem-solving in teaching.
(2)	I can plan the learning process by designing Learning Objectives, Learning Objectives Flow, and Teaching Modules.
(3)	I am able to describe Learning Outcomes into appropriate Learning Objectives
(4)	So that the material can be completed according to the educational calendar, I prepare a meeting plan from start to finish
(5)	I have the ability to identify and integrate literacy components in my teaching
(6)	I can plan complete and systematic teaching modules easily
(7)	I have sufficient knowledge and understanding of critical thinking concepts to implement the Merdeka Curriculum
(8)	I collaborate with fellow teachers in developing teaching practices that are in line with the Merdeka Curriculum

-
- (9) I implement pedagogical principles that are in accordance with the values, norms and curriculum objectives in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum
-
- (10) If I encounter a situation involving unethical actions or irregularities in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, I will take action such as taking corrective steps.
-
- (11) I arrange teaching modules by paying attention to student character
-
- (12) The learning process that I apply is in accordance with the teaching module
-
- (13) I use various learning methods that can increase student creativity and activeness
-
- (14) I use creative and innovative learning media
-
- (15) I design and adapt learning strategies that support the development of students' critical thinking skills, such as presenting reflective questions, facilitating discussions and providing assignments that encourage critical analysis
-
- (16) I conduct formative assessments effectively, including providing constructive feedback to students based on their performance in critical thinking, as well as using assessment data to adjust instruction to support students' development of critical thinking in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum
-
- (17) I show a high willingness to develop creativity in teaching and adapt to changes in the Merdeka Curriculum
-
- (18) In designing an assessment of the learning process, whether the learning facilities and provision of holistic information have been implemented well.
-
- (19) I identify students' learning difficulties after the learning process is complete
-
- (20) I am highly committed to ethical and moral values in education, so I plan learning based on students' initial abilities
-
- (21) I design and carry out assessments professionally and are valid and trustworthy.
-
- (22) I report student progress simply and intensively.
-
- (23) I plan and carry out assessments based on aspects of behavior, knowledge and skills
-
- (24) I use the assessment results well as material for learning reflection
-
- (25) I am able to utilize a variety of digital tools and resources, such as the Merdeka Mengajar Platform, interactive learning content, and Educational applications, to support learning differentiation and meet the diverse needs of students in the context of the Merdeka Curriculum
-
- (26) I can access digital content and services relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum without being burdened by high costs, so I can utilize digital platforms to improve the quality of teaching and learning
-
- (27) I have sufficient digital skills to integrate digital platforms in the Merdeka Curriculum learning process
-

-
- (28) I have an awareness of the benefits of digital technology, in improving teaching that is appropriate for learning objectives
-

Based on the table above, there are 28 statements used to measure improvements in teacher management and competency in the merdeka curriculum after attending this workshop. In carrying out the pre-test and post-test the results were as follows.

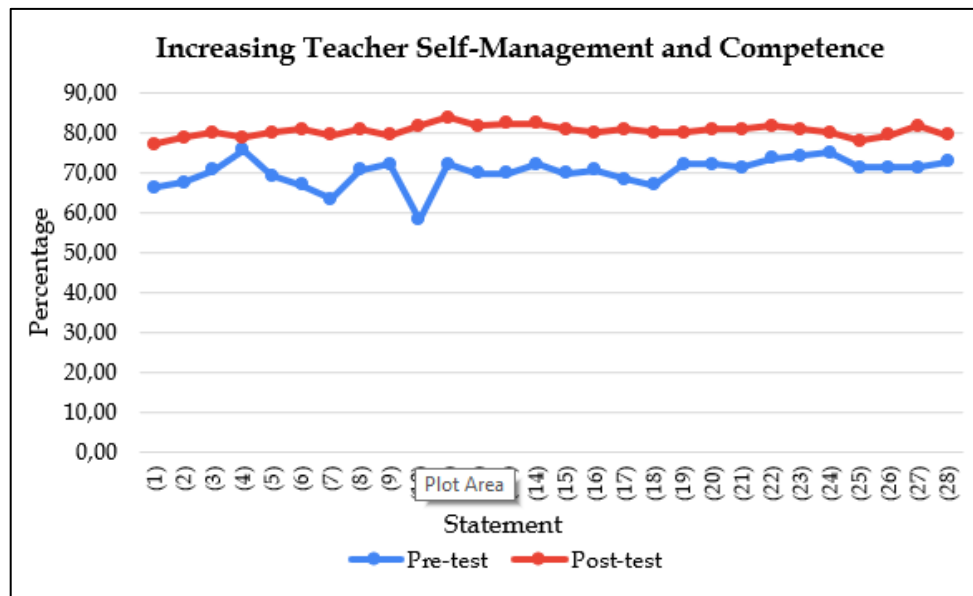


Figure 4. Improvement of Pre-test to Post-Test

In the figure above it is explained that in the pre-test participants got a total average percentage of 70.17% in the Pre-Test and 80.44% in the Post-Test. Where the highest increase is in the statement with code (10), namely "If I encounter a situation that involves unethical actions or irregularities in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, I will take action such as taking corrective steps". With a pre-test score of 58.09 and post-test reaching 81.62. This reflects the enthusiasm of the participants in participating in this activity, namely that participants will immediately take corrective steps if errors or misunderstandings occur regarding the implementation of the preparation of teaching tools in the merdeka curriculum. This is in line with the findings Pisiwati et al. (2024), Ferdaus & Novita (2023), Kuwoto et al. (2024) and Rosani & Widayatsih (2024) where participants will evaluate themselves regarding mistakes that occur when implementing the merdeka curriculum. While this workshop was running, several obstacles arose, including the inaccuracy of some participants' timing which caused delays to the event. To overcome this problem, participants who arrived on time were allowed to take the pre-test early with the team's approval, which resulted in adjustments to the schedule for delivering the next material.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This workshop was held with the aim of improving self-management and teacher competence in preparing merdeka curriculum teaching tools. From

the workshop that was held, it can be concluded that the event ran smoothly and successfully, attended by 34 participants. The results of this workshop were increased self-management and teacher competence in preparing teaching tools for the merdeka curriculum with a total average percentage of 70.17% in the Pre-Test and 80.44% in the Post-Test. Suggestions for future training include the need to understand participant motivation for improvements in carrying out workshops such as minimizing delays and carrying out workshops with learning and assessment based on the merdeka curriculum.

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