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The Role of Technical Guidance in Improving Teachers' Capacity in Implementing Merdeka Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the crucial role of Technical Guidance (Bimtek) in enhancing teachers' capacity to support the implementation of the Independent Curriculum (KM), which serves as a critical solution to the learning crisis by being able to analyze students' needs. Therefore, Technical Guidance (Bimtek) needs to be conducted in a structured manner and should be capable of strengthening educators' competencies for the recovery of national education and resilience in the future. This research uses the Literature Review method aimed at analyzing the definition of Technical Guidance (Bimtek), the concept of teacher capacity, and the basic principles of the Merdeka Curriculum based on literature and articles. The main findings of this research indicate that Bimtek significantly contributes to the improvement of teachers' pedagogical, professional, personal, and social competencies, all of which are essential for adapting to the flexible and learner-centered KM learning paradigm and are a vital investment for the success of educational transformation in Indonesia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The education system in Indonesia continues to undergo dynamic evolution to respond to the challenges of the times and the needs of future generations. In this context, teachers play a central role because the quality of teachers is a determining factor in the quality of a country's education. If Indonesia has quality teachers, national education will also be of high quality. (Indartiningsih, 2023) Therefore, continuous improvement in the quality and capabilities of teachers is a must. Curriculum change is one of the main instruments in efforts to improve the quality of education. According to Aslan & Wahyudin (2020), the curriculum has undergone changes due to increasingly difficult challenges, and to achieve these goals, it has become increasingly difficult, so that the curriculum has been updated. Over time, the Indonesian curriculum has undergone approximately 12 updates, namely the 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, 2013, emergency/prototype, and Merdeka curriculum, which began in 2022. This shows that curriculum reform is a recurring feature of the national education environment. In response to the long-standing learning crisis exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi (Kemendikbudristek) launched the Merdeka Curriculum. Hendrik Dewantara (2024) stated that “The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to bring freshness to a more flexible learning system that focuses on developing student competencies.” The Merdeka Curriculum is designed as an effort to restore learning, serving as a strategic intervention given to education units as an additional option to overcome the learning crisis during 2022–2024 (Nugraha, 2022). This curriculum provides greater flexibility for teachers to choose teaching tools that suit the needs and characteristics of their students, while also emphasizing character development through interdisciplinary project-based learning aligned with the Pancasila Student Profile (Sukarni, 2023).

The Merdeka Curriculum is a curriculum that provides freedom and flexibility to educational units and teachers in designing learning according to the needs, characteristics, and potential of

students. Furthermore, the independent curriculum is a curriculum that focuses on strengthening the competencies and character of students, emphasizing in-depth learning, and providing space for teachers to innovate, as well as prioritizing the strengthening of the Pancasila student profile as the goal of shaping student character. The implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum brings significant changes to the teaching paradigm for teachers. This curriculum emphasizes the independence of schools in designing curricula that meet local needs and contexts, and positions teachers as the central decision-makers when determining how, when, and how to assess student progress. According to Moh. Nasir (2023), by granting schools the flexibility to manage resources and educational programs, local potential can be maximized. Previous research conducted by (Akbar, Mulya, 2025) emphasizes that the MGMP for Productive Teachers plays a strategic role as a platform for professional collaboration that supports the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in productive subjects. It was emphasized by Intan Sari Rufiana in her research that the follow-up BIMTEK activities from AKMI are beneficial for strengthening the pedagogical competencies of Madrasah teachers, especially in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum. This means that teachers must be more flexible, adaptive, innovative, and student-centered in their teaching practices. This new role requires an enhancement of teachers' capacities that goes beyond mastery of traditional subject matter. Emphasized by Mesta Limbong (2022), training is mentioned as one of the alternatives that can be undertaken to improve the quality of teachers. If teachers are not adequately prepared for this change, the transformative potential of KM will be limited. It was emphasized by Syafaruddin et al. (2024) that training can be conducted to develop talents and interests, as well as to enhance the competencies of professionals and career workers. Therefore, Technical Guidance (Bimtek) emerges as a crucial mechanism for professional development. Bimtek is defined as a training activity aimed at enhancing competence, skills, and work professionalism.

The Merdeka Curriculum becomes a critical solution to the learning crisis that can analyze the needs of students, so Technical Guidance (Bimtek) needs to be conducted in a structured manner and capable of strengthening educators' competencies for the recovery of national education and resilience in the future. Investment in effective technical guidance (Bimtek) is not merely an expense, but rather an important investment in addressing the systemic crisis in education. This research was conducted in areas with limited infrastructure access, particularly the 3 T regions, where empirical studies on the role of technical guidance in enhancing teachers' capacity to implement the independent curriculum are still very rare. Most of the focus is on urban areas. Therefore, research using the literature review method is very suitable to fill that knowledge gap. By using a literature review approach, this research can deeply explore teachers' competencies in implementing the independent curriculum, as well as understand the conditions of the regions where they carry out their duties. The urgency of this research aims to identify and analyze in depth the role of technical guidance in enhancing teachers' capacity in the implementation of the independent curriculum in 3T areas, which still face serious issues. This situation indicates that the main factors related to the problems of improving teacher competence and implementing a curriculum that meets the needs of students and widening the quality gap in education between regions. Thus, this article is important to fill the research gap, while also providing empirical evidence regarding the role of technical guidance in enhancing teachers' capacity in the implementation of the independent curriculum. The results of this writing are expected to serve as a basis for policy recommendations and improvements for educational providers that are effective and sustainable in order to enhance the quality or standard in educational units.

2. METHODS

This research uses the Literature Review method, which is a study focused on a specific and interesting topic for deeper analysis of the examined texts (Wahyuni 2022). The research process involves reviewing and critiquing existing literature sources. The research from this literature review aims to understand and describe the conditions and state of the latest research in the field related to the previously studied topic. The researchers hope that this study will contribute new knowledge, identify gaps in previous research, and design a strong theoretical foundation for the research conducted on the studied topic. The Literature Review method used is a traditional review. This research presents the results of a search for articles related to the topic of educational curriculum. The criteria for the articles used are those published in the last 5 years, from 2020 to articles published in 2025. The search for sources focused on articles discussing the curriculum of educational units, accessed thru Google Scholar, and the researchers successfully reviewed 37 articles that were truly related to the discussed topic. Then, from the obtained articles, the researchers analyzed, examined in detail, and concluded, resulting in a summary discussed using the descriptive method. The researcher used this method to align with the literature review method.

3. RESULTS

3.1. The Role of Technical Guidance in Improving Teacher Capacity for the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

Technical Guidance plays a multifaceted role in improving teacher capacity, which directly supports the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. As stated by Rini & Sari (2020), technical guidance is an activity carried out consciously and systematically by an institution/agency in order to improve the knowledge, skills, and behavior of tutors in carrying out their professional duties. This role includes the development of various dimensions of teacher competence and adaptation to new learning approaches.

Table 1. The Role of Technical Guidance in Teacher Competence

No	Competency Dimensions	Development Focus	Examples of Activities/Outputs
1	Pedagogical	Differentiated instruction, curriculum planning	In-On-In model training, lesson plan development
2	Professional	Mastery of subject matter, teaching innovation, research	CPD, selection of essential materials, creative strategies
3	Personal	Integrity, noble character, setting a good example	Strengthening teachers' character values
4	Social	Communication, collaboration, mutual support	Peer mentoring, parent involvement

First, Improving Teachers' Pedagogical Competence. Technical guidance significantly improves teachers' pedagogical competence, which is at the core of effective teaching practices encompassing the ability to manage learning, design and implement instruction, evaluate learning outcomes, develop student potential, and understand student characteristics (Baihaqi & Utama, 2024). One key area is differentiated learning, where technical guidance equips teachers with the understanding and skills to adapt teaching materials, methods, and assessments based on the diverse learning needs and interests of students. In addition, technical guidance also improves teachers' abilities in curriculum development and lesson planning. Teachers are trained to develop syllabi and lesson plans in accordance with regulations and needs. Case studies show that the online In-On-In model of technical guidance has successfully improved teachers' competence in developing effective,

efficient, and student-oriented distance learning lesson plans, with a significant increase in average scores. The improvement of pedagogical competence through technical training is not merely a transfer of knowledge, but a catalyst for pedagogical transformation. Technical training actively changes the way teachers teach, shifting practices from teacher-centered to student-centered, from rigid to flexible. This transformation is very important because the core of Merdeka curriculum is about adapting to the needs of students, not just delivering content. Therefore, the success of technical guidance must be measured not only by the increase in teachers' knowledge, but also by observable changes in classroom practices and student engagement, which reflect a genuine shift in the pedagogical paradigm. This requires technical guidance programs that are highly practical, experience-based, and provide opportunities for application and feedback.

Second, Developing Teachers' Professional Competence. Technical guidance also develops teachers' professional competence, ensuring mastery of subject matter and innovation skills. With a deeper understanding of the Merdeka Curriculum structure, teachers can improve their teaching and innovation skills, helping them select essential material and develop original and creative teaching strategies. Self-development and motivation to conduct research are also encouraged through technical guidance. As part of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), technical guidance facilitates teachers in achieving established competency standards, as CPD is defined as competency development for teachers carried out according to needs, gradually, and continuously throughout their careers, with the goal of improving teachers' knowledge, skills, and professional attitudes in carrying out their duties as educators (Wahyuni & Supendi, 2023). Finally, Shaping Teachers' Personal and Social Competencies. In addition to technical competencies, technical guidance also plays a role in shaping teachers' personal and social competencies. Technical guidance can reinforce the importance of teachers as individuals who are honest, have noble character, and are role models for students and the community, in line with the demands of personality competency. In the social aspect, technical guidance encourages effective communication and collaboration between teachers, school staff, parents, and the wider community. The principle of "Gotong Royong" (mutual cooperation) in the Merdeka Curriculum underlines this collaborative need, as its implementation through the Pancasila Student Profile has proven effective in building collaboration, care, and a spirit of sharing among members of the school community (Arpianti et al., 2023). Improving teacher capacity through technical guidance has a multiplier effect on the school ecosystem. Improvements in lesson plans and differentiated instruction directly benefit students. In addition, the emphasis on collaboration and the “Independent Sharing” category indicates that trained teachers can become mentors or facilitators for their colleagues, spreading best practices. Positive responses from school principals also indicate broader institutional support. Therefore, technical guidance programs must strategically integrate peer learning and mentorship components to maximize reach and create a culture of continuous professional development within schools, thereby accelerating the adoption of Merdeka Curriculum throughout the education ecosystem.

3.2. Challenges and Supporting Factors in the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum requires a shift in mindset from traditional structured teaching methods to a more flexible, active, and project-based approach. technical guidance assists teachers in this transition. To encourage flexibility in differentiated learning, the achievements that were originally set per year were changed to learning achievements based on phases set according to the developmental stages of students (Aroka et al., 2023). The technical guidance program provides guidance on the implementation of project-based learning for the Pancasila Student Profile (P5), including project design, management, and assessment. This helps teachers connect the material to real-world contexts, making learning more meaningful and memorable for students. Nevertheless, the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in Indonesia faces various complex challenges, but

it is also supported by several key factors. The key to successful planning is cooperation from organizers in managing and implementing policy implementation support (Damayanti et al., 2024). Technical guidance plays an important role in overcoming these obstacles and strengthening supporting factors. One of the main challenges is the low readiness of teachers to implement Merdeka Curriculum, including adapting to flexible, learner-centered, and project-based methodologies. Many teachers are unfamiliar with technology, which makes it difficult for them to apply more modern learning methods (Farah Fadhilah Rosadi et al., 2025; Yudiana et al., 2023). Many teachers are still accustomed to a more structured, traditional approach. Merdeka Curriculum also requires a fundamental change in mindset, where teachers must shift from conventional teaching habits to become more flexible and adaptive, acting as mentors and facilitators who diagnose students' potential and provide tailored learning. In addition, there are still limitations in teachers' understanding of the *Merdeka Mengajar Platform* (PMM) and its performance management features. Several misconceptions have also arisen, such as the assumption that teachers must create video evidence of their work to be uploaded to PMM or fulfill minimum competency development points with certificates. The lack of adequate training activities to improve teachers' understanding of Merdeka Curriculum is also a significant obstacle. Limited facilities and infrastructure, including learning media and textbooks, are obstacles to the implementation of Merdeka Curriculum. These limitations include a lack of internet access, technological devices, and teaching materials that are in line with the Merdeka Curriculum approach (Yudiana et al., 2023). In addition, minimal efforts to socialize the Merdeka Curriculum concept comprehensively, especially in madrasahs compared to public schools, have created gaps in information and training.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1. Teacher Capacity Levels After Technical Guidance

An increase in teacher competence is highly expected after participating in technical guidance, which can be measured by the level of teacher capacity based on three indicators. Competence is defined as the knowledge, skills, and attitude manifested in a set of intelligent and responsible actions possessed by a person to carry out their duties as a professional teacher (Jamin, 2018). Accordingly, knowledge, skills, and attitude serve as the three core indicators for measuring teacher capacity, as teacher competence development cannot be separated from aspects of knowledge, ability, skills, attitude, and professional habits in carrying out their duties (Rahimah, 2021). Although teacher competence cannot be measured with certainty in this study in terms of quantity and quality, the active role and motivation of teachers in learning and understanding the Merdeka Curriculum give hope that there is enthusiasm to improve the three aspects above. The increase in teachers' knowledge competency will be seen in their ability to understand new material, their creativity in utilizing technology-based learning media, and their ability to use more innovative learning methods. Meanwhile, the field of skills can be seen from the ability to apply knowledge in teaching students, compiling learning administration, good classroom management, and being skilled in using digital devices. Furthermore, attitude competency manifests itself in initiative and motivation, a professional style in carrying out tasks, and the ability to collaborate with other teachers in enhancing their role as educators who support one another. The government continues to strive to improve teacher competency because it influences how teachers carry out and take responsibility for their profession (Nafisa et al., 2023). The researchers observed that the teachers' participation in the technical guidance sessions showed high enthusiasm, resulting in good interaction during the question-and-answer sessions. This shows that teachers have a great interest in exploring the application of the independent curriculum, which allows them to increase their knowledge and understanding and implement it in developing teaching modules that suit the needs of their educational units.

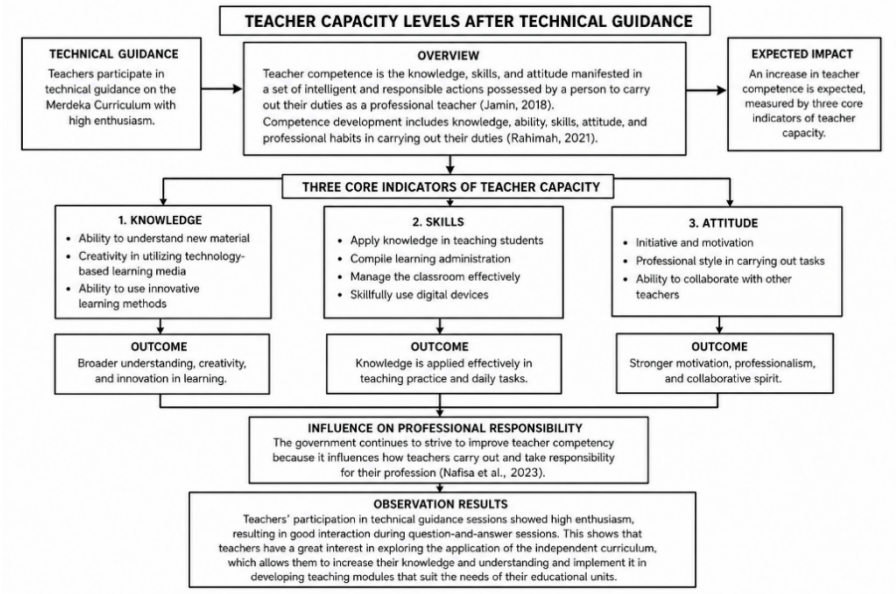

Figure 1. Teacher Capacity Levels

4.2. Analysis of the Relationship between Technical Guidance and Teacher Capacity

Technical guidance and teacher capacity have a very close relationship, which can be measured from various perspectives, such as effectiveness, teacher perceptions, constraints, and opportunities. According to (Suprianto, 2016), teachers are given the opportunity to conduct comparative studies with more advanced schools of the same type, attend advanced lectures or educational adjustment lectures, and participate in various coaching and training programs to improve their competence. Effectiveness can be seen in the extent to which the material presented is able to improve teacher competence in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Teachers' understanding of technical guidance can be measured by relevant material, interesting delivery, and efficient use of time. However, teachers experience various obstacles, such as lack of time, lack of adequate facilities, and information that is not in line with teachers' needs. Furthermore, the researchers found that technical guidance provides opportunities for teachers to continuously develop their competencies, share information about good practices with other teachers, adapt to curriculum requirements, and master the use of digital technology. Understanding these changes, the implementation of technical guidance in the future will be designed appropriately and can have a significant impact on teacher capacity building.

4.3. Factors Supporting Successful Implementation

The researchers found several factors that support the successful implementation of Merdeka Curriculum: First, Guideline Support, there is strong support from the government and relevant ministries, including the allocation of appropriate resources, professional development for teachers, and continuous monitoring and assessment, which are important supporting factors (Indarta et al., 2022; Tuerah & Tuerah, 2023); Second, Teacher Motivation and Ability, teachers with the knowledge, skills, and attitude to follow the Merdeka Curriculum approach are a key factor. The emphasis is on teacher creativity, innovation, and morality (Rofi'ah et al., 2024); Third, Collaboration and Communication, good cooperation and communication between school principals, supervisors, and teachers are essential for the success of technical guidance. Collaboration between educators, administrators, parents, and the community also creates a positive learning environment (Khotimah & Noor, 2024; Yunus & Putra, 2024); Fourth, Utilization of Digital Platforms: Platforms such as *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform can help teachers in teaching, learning, and working, as well as creating a collaborative learning ecosystem (Reski et al., 2024).

4.4. Technical Guidance Strategies in Responding to Challenges

Well-designed technical guidance is a vital strategy in overcoming the challenges of Merdeka Curriculum implementation. This is due to several factors: First, Structured Training Programs, technical guidance models such as In-On-In provide structured guidance. The "In" session delivers conceptual material, the 'On' session involves completing independent assignments with online guidance, and the "In2" session is for product presentation and assessment (Chamidi et al., 2022). Second, Focus on Practical Application, technical guidance must emphasize practical application, such as developing lesson plans for distance learning or implementing differentiated learning (Kurniawan et al., 2024); Third, Improving Digital Literacy: Technical guidance is very important to improve teachers' digital literacy, which has been identified as a weakness during distance learning (Silvester et al., 2024); and fourth, Continuous Assistance, teachers need continuous training and assistance because KM is different from the previous curriculum. This can take the form of workshops, in-house training, focus group discussions (FGD), seminars, and sharing of good practices(Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). Challenges such as limited resources and uneven socialization are external, while low teacher readiness, lack of understanding, and resistance to changing mindsets are internal. technical guidance, while providing external training and resources, also needs to foster internal motivation and a proactive attitude. The success of technical guidance in improving lesson plans is also related to increasing teacher enthusiasm and motivation. In line with the theory of Adult Learning (Andragogy), Yahya et al. (2024) found that the application of andragogy principles significantly increases learner engagement, with participants showing high motivation to improve skills relevant to the professional world, through teaching methods that focus on independence, life experience, and material relevance. This shows that effective technical guidance not only fills knowledge gaps; it also triggers a desire for change and continuous improvement among teachers. Technical guidance programs must integrate components of motivation and reflection, encourage self-evaluation, and foster a sense of ownership of professional development. This holistic approach addresses the "able to do" (competence) and "willing to do" (motivation) aspects of teacher capacity. Therefore, policymakers and technical guidance organizers must conduct more detailed needs assessments to identify specific gaps in madrasahs and other underserved educational environments. This may require differentiated technical guidance strategies or greater resource allocation to ensure equitable Merdeka Curriculum implementation across all types of educational institutions.

5. CONCLUSION

Technical Guidance (*Bimbingan Teknis*) plays a crucial and multifaceted role in building teacher capacity across the four core competency dimensions—pedagogical, professional, personal, and social—which are foundational to the successful implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Through structured programs such as the In-On-In model, Technical Guidance effectively bridges the gap between policy mandates and classroom practice by equipping teachers with the skills to design differentiated instruction, develop contextually relevant lesson plans, and adopt student-centered learning approaches. While challenges such as varying levels of teacher readiness, limited technological infrastructure, and insufficient socialization in certain educational settings remain significant, these obstacles can be systematically addressed through targeted, context-sensitive Technical Guidance strategies. Supporting factors including government policy commitment, teacher motivation, institutional collaboration, and the utilization of digital platforms such as the *Merdeka Mengajar* Platform further reinforce the effectiveness of these programs. Beyond technical skill transfer, Technical Guidance must also nurture internal motivation, reflective practice, and a culture of continuous professional development within schools. Grounded in andragogical principles, future

Technical Guidance programs should be adaptive, collaborative, and needs-based to ensure equitable implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum across all types of educational institutions in Indonesia. Ultimately, sustained investment in well-designed Technical Guidance is indispensable for realizing the transformative goals of Indonesia's national education reform.

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