

Teachers' Literacy Motivation as A Learning Support in Merdeka Curriculum

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Abstract: Teachers are role models for students, including in literacy activities. Teachers' literacy habits are among the supports for student literacy. This condition requires teachers to carry out literacy activities to support the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum. Based on this, the study aims to describe teachers' motivation for literacy at SMPN 5 Probolinggo in relation to the Merdeka Curriculum. This study uses a narrative inquiry approach, with data collected through in-depth interviews. The subject of the study is an Indonesian language teacher at SMPN 5 Probolinggo. Purposive sampling was used to select the research subjects. The results of the study show that literacy motivation is supported by teachers' competence, particularly in personality, pedagogical, and professional competence. Literacy activities support teachers' roles as role models, in learning preparation, and in professional development for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. However, social competence has not been explicitly identified in the participants' narratives, so literacy motivation is better understood as a matter of personal responsibility and learning. On the other hand, factors that inhibit teachers' motivation to develop literacy are administrative burden, age, and health conditions. These findings indicate that the motivation for teacher literacy at SMPN 5 Probolinggo is implemented through the development of teachers' competence in personal, pedagogical, and professional domains. However, it still needs to be optimized by addressing social aspects, reducing administrative burdens, and improving physical conditions.

Keywords: Literacy; Merdeka Curriculum; Motivation; Teachers' Competence.

Abstrak: Guru merupakan teladan bagi siswa, termasuk dalam kegiatan literasi. Kebiasaan literasi guru merupakan salah satu faktor pendukung literasi siswa. Kondisi tersebut menuntut guru untuk melakukan kegiatan literasi guna mendukung implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Berdasarkan hal tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan motivasi guru dalam literasi di SMPN 5 Probolinggo terhadap Kurikulum Merdeka. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode narrative inquiry dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam. Subjek penelitian adalah guru bahasa Indonesia di SMPN 5 Probolinggo. Subjek penelitian dipilih menggunakan teknik *purposive sampling*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa motivasi literasi didukung oleh kompetensi guru, khususnya kompetensi kepribadian, pedagogik, dan profesional. Aktivitas literasi mendukung peran guru sebagai teladan, persiapan pembelajaran, serta pengembangan profesional dalam implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka. Meskipun demikian, kompetensi sosial belum ditemukan secara eksplisit dalam narasi partisipan, sehingga motivasi literasi lebih dipahami sebagai tanggung jawab pribadi dan sebagai pembelajaran. Di sisi lain, faktor penghambat motivasi literasi guru adalah beban administrasi, usia, dan kondisi kesehatan. Temuan ini mengindikasikan bahwa motivasi berliterasi guru di SMPN 5 Probolinggo diterapkan dengan melibatkan kompetensi guru secara personal, pedagogis, dan profesional; namun masih perlu dioptimalkan dengan melibatkan aspek sosial, penyesuaian beban administrasi, serta pengkondisian aspek fisik.

Kata Kunci: Literasi; Kurikulum Merdeka; Motivasi; Kompetensi Guru.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's international literacy assessment shows that students in Indonesia are still at a lower level. Based on the 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) assessment, Indonesia ranked 72nd out of 77 countries in reading and mathematics (Tan, 2019). In line with the results of the PISA study, literacy skills can be analyzed using the 2011 PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) assessment, which found that reading ability in Indonesia remains below the PIRLS average of 500. Moreover, Indonesia ranks 42nd out of 45 countries, with an average score of 428 (IEA, 2018). So, Indonesia has a low literacy level and requires special handling from the government and all citizens.

This low literacy in Indonesia is a result of several factors. One can be analyzed through the School Literacy Movement (*Gerakan Literasi Sekolah*), which outlines three stages: learning, development, and habituation. At the learning stage, obstacles were found in teachers' difficulties in applying literacy movements. In addition to the learning stage, there are developmental stages whose obstacles include problems in the teacher's roles as executor, provider, and facilitator supporting the literacy movement, as well as constraints in managing the time for implementing the literacy movement. Furthermore, the obstacle at the habituation stage is the difficulty in determining the literacy movement model to be applied (Azriansyah et al., 2021; Jariah & Marjani, 2019; Setiawan et al., 2019; Wandasari, 2017; Wiratsiwi, 2020). From the obstacles found in implementing the GLS, it can be concluded that teachers play the most crucial role in implementing the literacy movement in Indonesia. It can be confirmed that the excellent potential for developing school literacy lies in the teacher.

The main objective of the School Literacy Movement is to encourage students to love reading and to improve their skills and abilities (Hastuti & Lestari, 2018). This goal can be associated with the constraints in literacy conditions. Indirectly, the achievement of the main objectives of the School Literacy Movement is not only aimed at students but also at teachers. As several studies have explained, a teacher is the main character in literacy activities, an ideal subject for research in literacy in schools, and a role model for students in literacy (Amilia, 2017). A teacher is a model that students will emulate. Likewise, in literacy, the literacy movement for students will be successful when the teacher has first successfully carried out personal literacy.

In particular, there are no regulations regarding the implementation of literacy training for teachers. However, the current government has launched a free learning program. This program also publishes the Merdeka Curriculum in educational units. That way, as a teacher, you must carry out more literacy activities to understand and apply the Merdeka Curriculum at school. The Merdeka Curriculum allows teachers to develop learning based on the conditions of their respective students and schools (Anis & Anwar, 2020). The Merdeka Curriculum is a national education policy, but its implementation is adjusted to the conditions of students and school materials (Widyastuti, 2020).

SMPN 5 Probolinggo applies the Merdeka Curriculum independently in the 2022-2023 academic year. Based on observations and initial interviews at SMPN 5, it was found that literacy activities have been implemented from the previous curriculum to the current Merdeka Curriculum. Literacy activities at school run



smoothly and are supported by the school librarian. However, these literacy activities focus more on the students. From the teacher's perspective, it is still not going smoothly. Some teachers still find it challenging to implement literacy activities at school due to several factors that affect their motivation.

Several previous studies are relevant to this research, including research focusing on literacy motivation at school. Previous research has examined literacy motivation among students in the study titled "Student Learning Motivation in Literacy at Kebonsari Kulon 6 State Elementary School, Probolinggo City," conducted by Yuni Susilowati and Arti Prihatini in 2023. The research undertaken by Susilowati and Prihatini aims to describe students' motivation to learn literacy. The research results show that students' motivation is high. It has been shown that students are enthusiastic about engaging in literacy activities at school (Susilowati & Prihatini, 2023). In addition, previous research discussed the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in schools, titled "Image of the New Curriculum: Teacher Readiness in Implementing the Merdeka Curriculum." This research showed that some teachers were still not ready to implement the Merdeka Curriculum in schools. It is caused by teachers' lack of knowledge and experience in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in schools (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2022a). Therefore, it is necessary to have a teacher. In line with the previous research, relevant research was found titled "Teachers' Role in the Literacy Movement in Elementary Schools." Research conducted by Dasor et al. (2021) found that teachers are role models, motivators, facilitators, creators, providers of facilities and infrastructure, and providers of rewards and punishments in literacy movements in school. Meanwhile, another study shows that the Independent Curriculum provides a broader space for teachers to develop literacy in context and adaptively, in response to students' needs (Anis & Anwar, 2020; Widyastuti, 2020).

Prior studies on literacy in Indonesian schools have predominantly focused on student-centered dimensions. Research has found that students' literacy motivation is shaped by intrinsic factors such as curiosity and pleasure, and extrinsic factors including teacher motivation and institutional support (Dasor et al., 2021; Susilowati & Prihatini, 2023). Almost all studies have made students the main subject of research on motivation and literacy (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2022a). However, teachers' roles are more often studied as facilitators, motivators, infrastructure providers, and role models that shape students' literacy habits (Dasor et al., 2021; Wandasari, 2017; Wiratsiwi, 2020). Further research shows that the Merdeka Curriculum requires teachers not only to deliver content but also to manage literacy-integrated learning that is adaptive to their students' contexts independently (Anis & Anwar, 2020; Widyastuti, 2020)

Despite the growing research on this topic, significant gaps remain. In previous research, teachers primarily facilitated students' literacy development, paying less attention to their own role in developing literacy motivation (Jarlah & Marjani, 2019; Amilia, 2017). The motivational dynamics that drive or inhibit teachers' personal literacy engagement—both intrinsic and extrinsic—have received limited empirical attention, particularly in secondary school settings and in the context of the adoption of the Merdeka Curriculum (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2022a; Dasor et al., 2021). This represents a substantive gap in the literature, as empirical evidence consistently suggests that teachers' personal engagement with literacy is a prerequisite for authentic role modeling and for the meaningful advancement of the goals of Gerakan



Literasi Sekolah (Amilia, 2017; Hastuti & Lestari, 2018). Teachers also need to motivate and develop their own literacy to effectively motivate and support students' literacy (Amilia, 2017; Dasor et al., 2021). Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining teachers' literacy motivation within the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum at SMPN 5 Probolinggo, thereby contributing a perspective that has been underrepresented in Indonesian literacy research.

RESEARCH METHOD

Based on this background, this study aims to describe teachers' motivation for literacy at SMPN 5 Probolinggo under the Merdeka Curriculum. A qualitative research method was employed to conduct an in-depth exploration of the phenomenon as experienced and interpreted by the participants within their natural context (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). This research is anchored in the narrative inquiry approach, which positions participants' experiences and personal stories as the primary unit of analysis (Clandinin, 2019). The experiences and conditions of Indonesian junior high school teachers who independently implemented the Merdeka Curriculum in the 2022-2023 school year are recounted. The stories conveyed can be useful as literacy-identification materials for teachers when implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. As Barkhuizen et al. (2025) affirm, narrative inquiry in applied linguistics is particularly appropriate for identifying language learning experiences, language biographies, and teachers' professional lives, as it brings together storytelling and research by using stories as data and modes of analytical presentation.

The subjects chosen in this study were four Indonesian language teachers at SMPN 5 Probolinggo. The research subjects were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: a bachelor's degree or higher, at least 3 years of teaching experience, and teaching Indonesian. They are willing to share their experiences in this study. The participant demographic data is presented as follows:

Table 1. Demographic Data

No.	Initials	Gender	Age	Educational Background	Teaching Experience (Years)
1.	ER	Female	55	Master's Degree (S2)	25
2.	SP	Female	60	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	32
3.	BC	Female	53	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	23
4.	EN	Female	27	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	4

Indonesian teachers are always closely related to literacy in schools. In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, it is hoped that they can share their literacy experiences. Moreover, it can be used as evaluation material in teacher literacy to implement the Merdeka Curriculum in the future.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, a method well-established in narrative inquiry for generating in-depth, participant-driven accounts of lived experience (Barkhuizen et al., 2025; Ghanbar et al., 2024). The interview instrument was organized around six indicators of teacher literacy motivation adapted from Pintrich et al. (2015). The interview indicators encompass motivational and self-regulatory dimensions applicable to teachers' literacy engagement in the Merdeka Curriculum, as follows.



Table 2. Interview Indicators

No	Interview Indicators
1	Intrinsic orientation objectives
2	Extrinsic orientation objectives
3	Values
4	Belief control for learning
5	Self-confidence
6	Anxiety level

Source: Adapted from (Pintrich et al., 2015)

The interviews in this study were conducted twice, namely at the beginning and middle of the semester, to determine the teachers' preparation and condition in literacy. The first interview was conducted to determine the teacher's preparation for literacy in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Then, the second interview was conducted to explore the teachers' literacy experiences during the continuation of the Merdeka Curriculum, including the conditions and obstacles faced, and the factors that influenced the problem. This interview aimed to obtain in-depth information regarding the teacher's preparation and experience implementing the Merdeka Curriculum.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face and in turn so that things could run smoothly, and the answers given by each teacher varied, none of which became a benchmark. Each participant can submit their answer in full. During the interview, he was equipped with a voice recorder. Then, the results of the recorded interviews will be transcribed in chronological order. The transcription results will be used as material for analysis in this study.

Several steps were taken to analyze the data, namely: (1) listening to the recorded interview playback, (2) writing sentences on the recording or transcribing the interview recordings, (3) noting the findings as essential points, (4) interpreting the findings, and validating the findings that will be discussed. Narrative analysis is not only about retelling the stories conveyed by participants; it is also necessary to present narrative coherence in non-narrative data so that researchers can focus on highlighting research problems (Benson, 2014). Therefore, the strength of narrative analysis studies can be demonstrated through data analysis that involves readers in interpreting the stories presented in the results and findings of more conventional research methods (Benson et al., 2013). Based on this narrative inquiry, the meaning of participants' or teachers' narratives in the interview activities was derived from the analysis of the interview results.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results are presented coherently to explain the preparation and motivation of literacy teachers for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. The research findings are presented chronologically, based on two interview sessions, to reveal the teacher's experience implementing literacy in the Merdeka Curriculum. Thus, several sub-chapters are the focus of research, namely: 1) If teachers are not literate, then how can teachers convey material to students?, 2) Teachers are required to carry out much updating literacy activities in the Merdeka Curriculum, 3) Literacy takes time, while teacher administration has taken up much time, 4) Literacy



motivation in the Merdeka Curriculum has decreased due to the teacher's age factor. The following are the results and discussion of this study:

Teachers' Literacy Practices and Their Role in Learning Activities

Literacy activities in schools have been implemented for a long time. This activity is carried out to increase literacy and instill literacy habits. In general, literacy activities are aimed at all school members, including students and teachers. The following is an excerpt from an interview with a teacher about implementing literacy activities in schools under the Merdeka Curriculum.

"A teacher's responsibility towards students is to provide knowledge and information. Essentially, a teacher will be looked after and imitated by his students. I really like doing literacy. So, if at school more or less students will see me doing literacy, and that will later create a special attraction for students" (EN, Interview).

In this quote, EN conveys that a teacher serves as a role model and an object of imitation for students. The teacher has a responsibility to become an example or role model for students. An exemplary teacher is a teacher with personality competence. As the saying goes, a teacher is someone who is admired and emulated. Likewise, the teacher's literacy activities can lead students to imitate the teacher. In line with this response, SM confirmed through the following interview.

"Teachers need to do much literacy so they don't lose out on updates with students. So that later it can provide broader insights, and it can also inspire students to love literacy" (SM, Interview).

SM's statement focuses on the pace of change, which poses a challenge for teachers to adapt to the latest technology. Literacy activities continue to evolve alongside technological development in the 21st century. Teachers must always be able to adapt to current technological sophistication. These activities can be linked to a teacher's professional competence, enabling them to balance literacy development. ER confirmed SM's opinion as follows.

"Literacy is very crucial, especially for teachers. As a teacher, you must be literate first in preparation for learning. What will I convey to students if I don't have much knowledge and don't do literacy? Therefore, literacy is very important." (ER, Interview).

The sentence ER expressed focused on explaining that the teacher must carry out literacy before learning in the classroom. One of them is preparing and teaching materials for learning activities. Moreover, a teacher is indeed a distributor of information to students; it is necessary to prepare advanced materials that are appropriately conveyed and well-received by students. Preparing the necessary materials can be done through literacy activities. Thus, the quote is included in the pedagogical competencies that a teacher needs to possess. From the quote above, SP gave a different response as follows:

"Being a teacher does require literacy, but what I feel right now, there are many obstacles that I feel as a teacher to do literacy. On the other hand, literacy is indeed a guide for a teacher" (SP, Interview).



SP's statement in this section indicates that not all teachers can easily implement literacy activities. He conveyed that teachers still faced obstacles in carrying out literacy activities. However, SP also agreed that one of the things a teacher should hold on to is literacy activities. From this quote, teacher literacy activities can relate to a teacher's fundamental competencies.

Teachers' Demands for Literacy Renewal in the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum

The Merdeka Curriculum has been implemented in recent years. The Merdeka Curriculum is still implemented in several selected schools and in schools that implement it independently. It is a change for teachers. The reform felt by the teacher is the latest demand for implementing the Merdeka Curriculum in schools. Therefore, the following is the teacher's expression of demands for reform in the Merdeka Curriculum:

"The Merdeka Curriculum focuses on objectives with the application of morals and renewal in teaching and learning activities. A teacher needs to learn a lot more about the packaging of the material to be delivered. If you don't learn to update, the teacher could later lose interest in updating with students. Teachers also make the latest innovations in teaching related to Pancasila students. That is what makes teachers have to make updates" (EN, Interview)

The presentation delivered by EN stated that the Merdeka Curriculum has a goal: to include material different from before. The difference lies in the latest innovation activities relating to Pancasila student points. It is the first demand in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. ER strengthens the statement from EN as follows.

"I feel the challenge lies in the various teaching tools and needs to be included in the application of technology. So, a teacher needs to be familiar with this technological teaching media. This update in the Merdeka Curriculum also continues to develop skills and create interesting innovations to be channeled to students in learning. Especially in Indonesian subjects" (ER, Interview).

As a teacher who feels the demands of implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, ER revealed the difficulty of adapting to technology. The Merdeka Curriculum is related to technological updates. As a teacher who has just implemented the Merdeka Curriculum, he finds it challenging to adapt teaching media to the latest technology. It can be said that there are still adjustments to the updates in the Merdeka Curriculum. SP expressed his complaints regarding the perceived renewal in the Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, as follows:

"As a teacher who is almost retired, I feel that the demands regarding technology applied to learning in the Merdeka Curriculum are genuine and very burdensome. I'm sure other teachers and friends feel the same way. The teacher's age factor greatly influences this update in the Merdeka Curriculum." (SP, Interview).

The results of the interviews revealed by SP are not very different from those in the previous quotation. However, an expression states that the teacher's age influences the demand for technology in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. In



his words, SP felt sure that the teacher's age factor was one of the obstacles to implementing technological demands in learning.

Teachers' Literacy Motivation and Age Challenges in the Merdeka Curriculum

The age factor in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum is not only an obstacle to the development of technology-based learning, but also one of the reasons for the decrease in teachers' motivation in literacy. It is corroborated by several interview excerpts as follows:

"Literacy is like a soul mate already attached—every moment I don't miss doing literacy. Reading novels and writing literature are addictions for me at 27. Moreover, in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, I have made only a few changes to the literacy theme I have chosen. More focus on literacy related to the Merdeka Curriculum. This is still not too heavy for me" (EN, Interview).

Anyone can do literacy. EN is one example of a relatively young age with high motivation in literacy activities. Literacy remains an unforgettable part of daily life. In implementing the Merdeka Curriculum, he felt there had been a slight change in the selection of themes for his reading. So, implementing the Merdeka Curriculum does not lead to significant changes in the 27-year-old teacher's literacy activities. SM expresses his literacy situation as follows.

"The motivation to be literate is still there, but there has been a downward change. However, my physical health and the demands of being a teacher and a mother at home were the causes of my decline in literacy activities. Now that I am 53, I feel burdened to share my time with literacy, especially in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum."

SM, who is 53 years old, reports a slight decline in his motivation to read compared to before. This age factor involves a body condition that does not fully support it. The body's health status due to age is one factor that decreases motivation to read in the Merdeka Curriculum. Thus, literacy activities will be less than optimal. SP confirms SM's statement as follows.

"This year coincides with my 60th year of age; I feel that my literacy activities are different from those of young teachers. Now, the theme I have chosen is only about health to accompany me when I retire later. Moreover, it also can't last long because the eyes get tired easily, and the head finds it difficult to concentrate. Likewise, the literacy that I must do in this Merdeka Curriculum makes it hard to understand."

From the results of these interviews, it can be inferred that age-related health conditions contribute to the decline in teachers' motivation to engage in literacy. This 60-year-old teacher feels that she can no longer carry out literacy instruction in implementing the Merdeka Curriculum. Meanwhile, literacy activities are used to increase understanding, which is no longer related to learning, but rather to carry out literacy activities on health topics. It is considered an option for a teacher who is at retirement age.

Teachers' Struggles to Balance Literacy Activities and Administrative Tasks

Teacher administration under the Merdeka Curriculum differs from that of the previous curriculum. In the Merdeka Curriculum, teachers are assigned various



administrative tasks. The following are the results of interviews regarding teacher administration associated with the duration of literacy activities. As follows:

"As a teacher who implements the Merdeka Curriculum, it certainly take more time than before. It can be seen from the general administration of the teacher in the Merdeka Curriculum, which must be prepared and completed by the teacher and consists of self-administration (for personal needs), class administration, and school administration. That way, literacy time shifts slowly and disappears a bit." (ER, Interview)

From the results of these quotations, it is stated that a teacher in the Merdeka Curriculum has a more solid time than in the previous curriculum. The Merdeka Curriculum generally provides various kinds of administration that a teacher must carry out: self-administration, class administration, and school administration. It takes up much of the teacher's time, reducing the time available for literacy activities. EN and SM reinforce field conditions as follows.

"The administration carried out by the teacher is very diverse, and that is where the teacher's time is consumed. A teacher must run in parallel with administrative and teaching activities. I feel like I'm not maximizing both of them. I'm so half impressed. It often happens to me that I am faced with a deadline from the school administration, while it is also mandatory to complete teaching activities with students who cannot leave. Under these conditions, there is no more time to do literacy quietly." (EN, Interview)

"I think the time for literacy in schools issued by the Minister of Education and Culture has impressed me enough to do literacy. However, it would be even better if the time provided were used to optimal effect. That way, students and teachers can maximally do literacy in 15 minutes before teaching it. Doing literacy to the fullest can be implemented if the administration that the teacher bears does not take up too much time." (SM, Interview)

From EN's presentation, the teacher's administration took up a lot of time, especially under the same conditions, such as conducting class learning with strict administrative completion deadlines, resulting in less-than-optimal quality. Given these conditions, teachers lack the time to carry out literacy activities. Meanwhile, regarding the quote, it can be explained that government policies can run smoothly if activities are carried out effectively, such as literacy programs in schools. These literacy activities can run smoothly if they do maximum literacy. It may relate to administrative demands in the Merdeka Curriculum that have been slightly reduced.

Based on the results, teachers' literacy motivation has supporting and inhibiting factors. Supporting factors are related to teacher competence and include teacher administration and personal conditions. This study examines the teacher's responsibilities and role in teacher literacy at SMPN 5 Probolinggo. These findings relate to Law Number 14 of 2005 concerning teachers and lecturers' article 10 paragraph (1), namely pedagogical competence, personal competence, social competence, and professional competence (Mulyani, 2021). This study obtained results that align with other research showing that a teacher who meets competency qualifications can support the development of quality in students. Qualified teachers will produce quality students, and competent teachers will produce potential students



(Hafsah & Fatonah, 2023). Therefore, educators' literacy motivation is crucial to creating a learning environment that enhances learners' competence.

Teacher literacy motivation in this study encompasses three teacher competencies: personal, pedagogical, and professional. The first competence that underpins teachers' literacy is personality competence. A teacher who must prepare to carry out their role shows the findings in this personality competency. Good teacher personality competence is a teacher's responsibility that students can emulate (Huda, 2018). In the context of this research, a teacher realizes that their literacy can serve as an example for students in carrying out literacy at school. Teachers can implement an action as part of their responsibilities. So, the action can serve as an example for students to emulate. It is corroborated by previous research, which states that a teacher's personality competence must be such that they can be an influential figure in carrying out their functions and responsibilities as a teacher. For this reason, the teacher must develop themselves and become a healthy, intelligent, and humane person (Alfath et al., 2022). So that students will more easily implement the teacher's directions and motivation in literacy if the teacher also carries out these activities

Teacher literacy is also closely related to pedagogical competence. The findings on pedagogic competence show that a teacher must have a high level of literacy to implement the Merdeka Curriculum. The literacy that teachers in the Merdeka Curriculum must carry out serves as preparation for teachers to plan, implement, evaluate, and follow up on learning, which can be realized through materials, student worksheets, teaching modules, and various learning models. In this regard, pedagogical competence within the Merdeka Curriculum needs to be improved to enhance teachers' understanding of constructivist learning theory (Hamdi et al., 2022). Literacy can be continued in multiliteracy learning to achieve freedom of learning. This aligns with the pedagogical competence of teachers who understand learning concepts (Prihatini et al., 2022). It can be understood by doing literacy. Therefore, previous studies confirm that teachers must focus on their ability to process learning and manage classes effectively, including understanding students, designing and implementing learning activities, evaluating learning outcomes, and developing students (Alfath et al., 2022). Based on the results, an educator needs to enhance pedagogical skills through teacher literacy to teach in accordance with standards, so that learning aligns with student development.

The research findings also show that teacher literacy is related to professional competence, as a teacher must be able to identify and apply the latest innovations while considering school conditions. Based on their scientific fields, Indonesian language subject teachers need to play a more active role in implementing literacy activities at school. The teacher's professional personality is related to the teacher's mastery of the material being taught. In this context, previous research also proves teacher mastery of the material and technology used in learning. So, a teacher is required to master their knowledge (Alfath et al., 2022). Literacy can be applied to Indonesian language learning with a variety of benefits. One helps develop language skills, including reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The application of multiliteracy can also be implemented at the level of mastery of the language system (Linguistic competence) and the level of linguistic practice (development of both receptive and productive language skills) (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2020). The benefits of multiliteracy can be applied to models, teaching materials, learning tools, media,



and learning methods (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2021). This can be implemented in all subjects at various levels of education in Indonesia. Therefore, an Indonesian teacher needs to pay attention to their mastery of literacy. With the development of instructional tools, they can be integrated across all subjects at every level of education. Therefore, a teacher of the Indonesian language subject must ensure professional competence by focusing on literacy skills as a foundation for the teaching and learning process.

In this study, the teacher did not apply social competence. Teachers' social competence in literacy needs to be considered so that the attention used can improve teachers' communication and social relations in literacy and help them perform well. A teacher is a social creature whose life requires others. That way, it can be strengthened by prior research indicating that teachers serve as figures, role models, coaches, officers, and agents of social change (Alfath et al., 2022). However, this study has not found evidence that teachers have social relations for communicating with students, colleagues, or parents regarding literacy activities. It can be related to the condition of teachers accustomed to handling administrative tasks under the Merdeka Curriculum. Thus, literacy motivation can indirectly affect teachers' social competence, enabling them to collaborate in evaluating learning and to exchange input, thereby facilitating more efficient and innovative learning.

The four competencies that teachers need can support teachers in literacy. Personality competence is the foundation of the teacher, who can later provide examples such as pedagogical competence as a foundation for learning and professional competence as teacher expertise in their field. Meanwhile, teachers should also possess social competence in literacy to communicate literacy activities. Thus, there is a need for training or workshops to increase teachers' motivation to build literacy to support social competence. This social competence is essential for a teacher because it is an efficient means of communication with students. The teacher competencies found are the basis for innovating in teacher literacy. As a teacher, you can support development through training activities based on more specific literacy models, such as scientific, digital, and informational literacy (Prihatini & Sugiarti, 2022b). Thus, a teacher develops provisions that can be used as innovations to improve teacher competencies gained during development activities, serving as materials to enhance the quality of school learning.

As for implementing teacher literacy activities, several inhibiting factors were identified, including tight time constraints for completing administrative tasks under the Merdeka curriculum and teachers' personal factors related to age and health conditions. The research results above indicate that the administrative tasks teachers must perform under the Merdeka curriculum take a lot of time. The condition of Indonesian language teachers at SMPN 5 Probolinggo relates to the time wasted on administrative tasks. Teachers find it difficult to teach in class while also completing self-administration and school administration. This is also related to literacy activities. Due to the many teacher activities in completing teacher administration, teacher literacy activities cannot be carried out optimally. So, this becomes an inhibiting factor in teacher literacy activities. In this way, it can be used as a consideration in the future to reduce the administrative demands on teachers, thereby increasing teacher literacy. In line with previous research that explains teacher competency, a teacher plays the most prominent role in education. Therefore, qualified teachers who fulfill the four essential teacher competencies are needed.



Skilled teachers will produce quality students, and if teacher competence is not implemented, it will diminish the quality of education (Nur & Fatolah, 2022). Therefore, the school can establish a management system that upholds the quality and competence of educators, ensuring learning runs smoothly and does not burden students or teachers.

The inhibiting factors for teachers in implementing literacy at SMPN 5 Probolinggo are also related to teachers' age and health. This study found that teachers with near-full-time experience struggle to implement literacy. It is supported by the teacher's declining health, such as eye conditions that have weakened the ability to read. Thus, age is a factor in the decrease in motivation to read in the Merdeka Curriculum.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study's findings, it can be concluded that Indonesian teachers at SMPN 5 Probolinggo have motivation in literacy related to teacher competence. The three teacher competencies are personal, pedagogical, and professional. However, social competence has not been found in this study. Personality competence is a foundation for teachers. Pedagogical competence is a foundation for learning and professional competence as a teacher, with expertise in their field. In conducting literacy activities, teachers identify factors that inhibit literacy motivation. The factor identified in this study concerns the number of teacher administrations required in the Merdeka Curriculum. Across many administrations, there is a lack of time for teachers to engage in literacy. In addition to administration, factors related to teachers' age and health condition were also found. So, it reduces motivation for teacher literacy in the Merdeka Curriculum. The results of this study contribute to the development of cognitive awareness that literacy activities need to start with the teacher's personality. So, it can be used to evaluate policies implemented in the Merdeka Curriculum. Thus, further research is expected to be conducted with a broader range to determine the condition of teacher literacy.

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