



## Competency Evaluation and Performance Training against Merdeka Belajar Curriculum among Kindergarten Teachers

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### Abstract

After the pandemic, there have been various controversies in the world of education, namely that there are institutions that are ready or not for the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. These considerations range from skill preparation and teacher training, to teacher performance. Teacher training activities are still few, and teaching skills are not paid attention to, so teacher performance is less than optimal. So it is very necessary for educational institutions to first evaluate the human resources of teachers, before taking the curriculum policy initiated by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Especially for Kindergarten institutions, which are a necessary basis for children's education. It is so important to study more deeply, so this study aims to determine the evaluation of teacher competence and performance training on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta. The research method used is quantitative, with 12 kindergarten teachers as participants. While the data collection techniques with questionnaires, observation sheets, interviews, and documentation. The data analysis technique used quantitative descriptive analysis, namely collecting data, processing data, and describing the percentage of questionnaire answers from participants. The results showed that the Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers, from the aspect of competence (78%), and performance (77%) were ready for the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, but not yet ready for the training aspect (68%), and the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum (72%). So that the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta must be reconsidered because teacher training is not yet mature.

**Keywords:** *Evaluation; Competence; Training; Kindergarten; Curriculum.*

### Introduction

Learning during the pandemic has had its own impact on the world of Early Childhood Education (Kindergarten), both positive and negative on children's development. Positive aspects of learning during the pandemic include: activation of the acceleration of educational transformation, the emergence of more e-learning applications, the increase in free online courses, the emergence of manifestations of unlimited creativity, collaboration of parents and teachers, application of knowledge. In the family, teachers become closer and familiar with technology, the internet is an active source of information, and students can be directly supervised by parents (Rismauli, 2021). The negative aspects of learning during the pandemic include: reluctance to use online learning, boredom, children not knowing and playing for real,

operational costs for institutions and teachers. Difficulty conditioning children's learning (Munafi'ah, 2021).

The polemic above triggered the government's policy to implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum program in educational institutions. A Merdeka Belajar Curriculum that focuses on the competence and character of all students (Yogi Anggraena, dkk., 2022). According to Anindito Aditomo as the Head of Kemendikburistik BSKAP, in the socialization process he explained that the prototype program was an additional measure. For teaching units, which still apply the 2013 curriculum as is, please. Schools that are already using the emergency program are also welcome to choose whether to continue the emergency program or prototype. This statement refers to the results of an assessment conducted by the Ministry of Education and Technology's BSKAP, which found that schools using the emergency program were four to five months more advanced than schools using the 2013 curriculum.

With reference to the current post-pandemic, policies must be able to provide interactive learning to develop students' creativity and critical thinking. Especially students at the Kindergarten level who need to be considered. Because in essence learning in Kindergarten aims to introduce active learning through hands-on activities in small groups, individuals or large groups. This type of support is important to encourage a connection between the experience or knowledge the child already has and what he or she is learning (Suryana, 2017). So that the implementation of education in schools involves teachers as educators, manifested by teaching and learning interactions (Haingu, 2018).

Before implementing an Merdeka Belajar Curriculum, educational institutions must be more careful in optimizing the competence or skills of teachers. Because in learning activities, teachers must have skills or abilities in the form of knowledge accompanied by actions to achieve the goals to be achieved (Darmiatun, 2019). The measurement of teacher competence arises from the results of their performance. The achievement of a teacher can be understood as success in carrying out his educational duties, in accordance with his responsibilities and authorities based on performance standards that have been set within a certain period of time to achieve educational goals. Teacher performance can be seen and measured based on the competency specifications that each teacher must possess (Bermawi, 2012). In this view, teacher performance is seen as the result of a person's work over a certain period of time against various possibilities, such as standards, goals or objectives, or predetermined criteria (Andriani, 2018). In addition, performance is related to work results, ability to achieve or the drive to do work (Haingu, 2018).

In accordance with Permendikbud Number 146 of 2014 concerning Education Standards and Education Personnel, it is stated that early childhood educators are professionals who are tasked with planning, implementing learning, and assessing learning outcomes, as well as providing guidance, training, care and protection. Early childhood educators consist of Kindergarten teachers, accompanying teachers, and youth assistant teachers. Thus, to create competent teachers, the government through various programs creates an effort to provide guidance to teachers in order to create professional teachers (Arifin, 2013).

But in fact, based on research results Gunawan (2016), shows that the professional competence of teachers who already have educator certification and have received teacher certification allowances are not in accordance with what is expected by the government. Further research results Asep (2010), shows that mastery of teacher pedagogic competence has not been productive in Kindergarten due to lack of awareness and mastery of student development materials, learning theories, curriculum development, evaluation techniques, mastery of learning models and methods. This shows that teachers who participate in the training program still do not meet the government's capacity expectations, then what about teachers who do not participate in the training program at all? Thus, it is necessary to evaluate teacher performance on competence and training.

Evaluation is a planned activity to find out the state of an object using instruments and the results are compared with benchmarks to obtain conclusions. According to Edwind and Gerald W. Brown in their book Sulistryorini that evaluation is an action or a process to determine the value of something (Sulisryorini, 2009). Assessment or evaluation of teacher performance is a process that determines whether the goals of early childhood education have been met or not. Teachers are judged on their ability to implement educational goals. Support staff members are assessed on their ability to perform their jobs in a way that complements the educational function. In most educational settings, all staff members are evaluated at least once a year. Teachers will often receive and benefit from more frequent reviews. In a small school, the director may evaluate all employees. Staff and directors develop procedures cooperatively, and directors execute them. In larger schools, directors may work in more complex organizations to evaluate employee performance. Staff members at different levels may be accountable to those under their direct authority, eg principals are responsible for the performance of their teachers (Phyllis, 2008).

Educators in Kindergarten institutions play a very important role for the growth and development of early childhood (Yusutria, 2019). Because he is a professional who plays a role in educating early childhood to reach the stage of development. Therefore, Kindergarten teachers are required to be professional. Professional teachers are people who have special abilities and expertise in the field of teaching so that they are able to carry out their duties and functions as teachers with maximum abilities. Professional teachers are people who are well educated and trained, and have rich experience in their fields (Kunandar, 2014). Therefore, professional teachers are teachers who can carry out their duties professionally and have the desire to continue to improve their profession by learning a lot to increase knowledge related to their profession.

Based on the observations that researchers found in Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta, various literatures related to competence and teacher performance training, as well as the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at the Kindergarten education level are still not optimally mature. Researchers found that there are still teachers who have not mastered the learning material to the maximum, it is known that when the learning process the teacher is not able to explain well and when the child asks the teacher cannot give the right answer, and the teacher has not shown maximum performance in carrying out his duties and functions, the

teacher carries out learning not in accordance with the lesson plans made and the teacher does not make daily assessments for all children. Given the importance of the performance of Kindergarten educators to produce a quality generation, the authors can formulate a research problem, namely how to evaluate competence and training on Kindergarten teacher performance on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta?

### **Literature Review**

Changes in the curriculum system have become a dilemma in the world of education, especially since the previously implemented curriculum has not been effective. But now, the Ministry of Education and Culture continues to change, the agenda has changed. Following up on the results of research conducted by Angga (2022), every time the program is implemented, there are advantages and disadvantages that show that the 2013 program has a good concept in the educational process. However, the actual implementation did not go as expected. While the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in several schools was implemented quite well in the first year, it has since been rolled out in many schools this year. Thus, the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum after being analyzed is better and in accordance with Indonesian educational culture compared to the 2013 program which was forced to be implemented in the education sector.

The results of previous research conducted by Riza Yonisa Kurniawan (2016), There are four points of educational problems, namely equity, quality, efficiency and relevance of education. The solutions offered to improve the quality and professionalism of teachers include: (1) strict selection of prospective student educators; (2) Developing educator skills through training courses; (3) improvement of the curriculum with materials adapted to local content in the region; (4) development of facilities and infrastructure that can create a comfortable learning atmosphere; (5) improve school management to achieve budget efficiency; (6) Organizations to maintain the quality of education providers must be formed with the support of organizations authorized to guarantee quality, including education quality assurance organizations, the National Accreditation Board for Schools (BANSM) and independent organizations. This is a reference to the problem that education must prioritize the quality of human resources for educators, rather than various curriculum policies that keep changing. However, it does not have a positive impact on improving the human resources of educators.

Similar research conducted by Misra (2021), that the capacity of Kindergarten teachers as role models for the formation of children's personalities is very important. In the application of TK IT Allatif Beureunuen effectively meets competency standards, namely pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence and professional competence. The formation of personality is carried out through the internalization of the teacher and the perception of his professionalism as a teacher in attitudes and behavior. However, by assessing the performance of Kindergarten teachers in detail, this will be known not only based on observations but also data. As the results research of Intan Dewi (2020), the results of teacher evaluations based on data from Kindergarten Al Azhar Bukit Tinggi showed the ability to do additional assignments 37%, the ability to assess learning outcomes 47%, the ability to teach

and train students 63%, the ability to implement learning 79%, the ability to plan lessons 89%. So that the achievement of Kindergarten educators in carrying out additional tasks is still weak. With the literature review above, this research focuses more on Competency Evaluation and Training on Kindergarten Teacher Performance on the Readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta.

## Methods

This study uses quantitative methods, namely positivistic-based research (concrete data), research data in the form of numbers to be measured using statistics as a calculation test tool, related to the problem under study to conclude (Sugiono, 2018). The data that researchers use in this study is primary data, namely data obtained from a questionnaire scale that researchers distributed to respondents regarding the competence, training, and performance of Kindergarten teachers.

The reason for using the quantitative method is because the researcher intends to describe as is about the analysis of competency evaluation and performance training of Kindergarten teachers on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. This research was conducted in Kindergarten As-Sa'adah Yogyakarta City which has program services, namely Preschool and Kindergarten, carried out from April to June 2022. The population in this study were all educators who teach at Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta City (Preschool and Kindergarten) as many as 12 people so they did not use a sample, because all of the population were used as research respondents. Collecting data using observation sheets, questionnaires, interviews and documentation. Analysis of the data used in this study is descriptive analysis using quantitative techniques with the percentage of respondents' questionnaire answers. The formula used to calculate the percentage is:

$$X\% = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

Information :

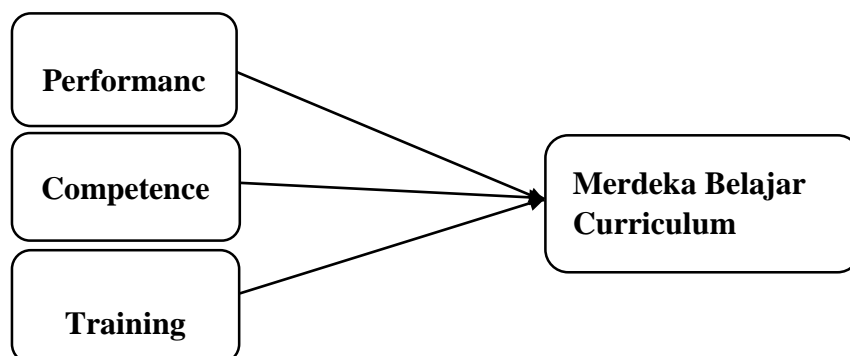
- X % = Percentage achieved
- n = Total score score
- N = Maximum number of ideal scores

The percentage results are then consulted with the following benchmarks according to Arikunto, (1998):

**Table 1. Benchmark Category Percentage Assessment of Questionnaire Results**

Percentage	Interpretation
76% - 100%	Good
56% - 75%	Enough
50% - 55%	Not good
<50%	Bad

The conceptual framework that explains the analysis of competence and training on the performance of Kindergarten teachers on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum in this study is as follows:



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

The explanation of the picture above shows the conceptual framework used in the study by looking at the results of teacher performance, teacher competence, and teacher training, which are independent variables or those that affect curriculum readiness as the dependent variable or those that are influenced. so that it will be known what percentage of curriculum readiness will be applied by schools, by looking at the results of performance, competence, and training from teachers.

## Result and Discussion

The results of the research regarding competency evaluation and training on the performance of Kindergarten teachers on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum at Kindergarten As Sa'adah, were obtained from research instruments that included, among others:

**Table 2. Evaluation of Competence, Training, Performance, and Readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum for Kindergarten As Sa'adah Teachers in Yogyakarta**

Performance Indicator	Evaluation result				Amount (person)
	Good		Enough		
	N	%	N	%	
Plan	9	75	3	25	12
Implementation	10	83	2	17	12
Evaluation	7	58	5	42	12
Guidance	12	100	0	0	12
Additional Tasks	9	75	3	25	12
Competency Indicator	Evaluation result				Amount (person)
	Good		Enough		
	N	%	N	%	
Pedagogic	8	67	4	33	12

Personality	10	83	2	17	12
Social	10	83	2	17	12
Professional	9	75	3	25	12
Training Indicator	Evaluation result				Amount (person)
	Good		Enough		
	N	%	N	%	
Ability to choose and master teaching materials	8	67	4	33	12
Ability to plan and develop teaching programs	9	75	3	25	12
Ability to actualize productive PBM	10	83	2	17	12
Ability to understand and use learning principles	7	58	5	42	12
Ability to assess student learning processes and outcomes	7	58	5	42	12
Indicators of Readiness in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum	Evaluation result				Amount (person)
	Good		Enough		
	N	%	N	%	
Improved learning quality	8	67	4	33	12
Improved quality	10	83	2	17	12
Improved quality of institutional governance	8	67	4	33	12

### ***Teacher Performance***

The results of the performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers include the ability to plan lessons, implement lessons, assess learning outcomes, guide and train students, and carry out additional assignments. The highest result of teacher performance in the aspects of student guidance and training is (100%), all teachers are active in guiding and training children. While the lowest results of teacher performance are in the assessment aspect of (58%), only 7 out of 12 teachers assess student learning outcomes well. Overall, the results obtained by the average teacher performance of (78%) in the good category, and by (22%) in the sufficient category, so that it can be interpreted that the teacher's performance is running well.

### ***Teacher Competence***

The results of the competence of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers include pedagogic, personal, social, and professional abilities. The highest result of teacher competence in personality and social aspects is (83%), most of the teachers have good personality and social skills in children. Especially the personality that reflects a steady, stable, mature, wise, and authoritative personality towards children. as well as social teachers to communicate and get along effectively with children, with fellow teachers, with parents or guardians of students, and the surrounding community. While the lowest result of teacher competence is in the pedagogic

aspect (67%), only 8 out of 12 teachers have an understanding of students, design and implementation of learning, evaluation of learning outcomes, and student development to actualize their various potentials. Overall, the results obtained by the average teacher competence of (77%) in the good category, and by (23%) in the sufficient category, so that it can be interpreted that the teacher has good competence.

### ***Teacher Training***

The results of the training for Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers include the ability to choose and master teaching materials, the ability to plan and develop teaching programs, the ability to actualize productive PBM, the ability to understand and use learning principles, the ability to assess student learning processes and outcomes. The highest result of teacher training in the aspect of the ability to actualize productive PBM is (83%), most teachers can carry out the teaching and learning process well and are accepted by children. While the lowest results of teacher training are in the aspect of the ability to understand and use learning principles, as well as the ability to assess student learning processes and outcomes (58%), only 7 out of 12 teachers have the ability to understand and use learning principles, as well as the ability to assess process and student learning outcomes. Overall, the average teacher training results were (68%) in the good category, and 32% in the sufficient category, so that it can be interpreted that teacher training is sufficient.

### ***Readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum***

The results of the readiness of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum include increasing learning quality, increasing teacher quality, increasing institutional governance quality. The highest result of teacher readiness in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is in the aspect of improving the quality of educators (83%), most of the quality of teacher human resources has increased. While the lowest results in the aspects of learning and institutional governance were (67%), only 8 out of 12 teachers were ready to implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Overall, the average result of teacher readiness in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is (72%) in the good category, and (28%) in the sufficient category, so that it can be interpreted that the readiness of teachers in the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is sufficient.

From the above results, it can be concluded as a whole that the results of the competence and performance aspects of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers are good and ready for the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. However, from the aspect of teacher training, it is still sufficient and not ready. Thus, various considerations are needed for institutions to apply the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Then prioritize a careful evaluation of aspects of competence, training and performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers so that they are ready for the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

From the above results, it can be explained that the performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah teachers in teaching has not been optimal as a whole. This is in line with Sugiyono in (Suwarno, 2002) which states that the work ability of teachers is influenced by several factors, such as basic potential, educator qualifications, education/training, and teaching experience. Based on this explanation, the As Sa'adah educational institution is trying to do better in



improving the performance of Kindergarten teachers. As for how to improve teacher performance in teaching, namely by optimizing teaching planning, implementation when teaching, things being taught, guiding students, and giving additional assignments to students.

Meanwhile, the competence of Kindergarten As Sa'adah teachers is good. However, overall these competencies have not been maximized in accordance with the National Education Standards. As explained Competence of Kindergarten educators In government regulation no. 19 of 2005: National Education Standards Chapter VI include: pedagogical competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence (Sujiono, 2009). Among the four competencies, only two competencies have been maximized by Kindergarten As Sa'adah teachers, namely competence and social competence, while pedagogic competence and professional competence still need to be maximized. In maximizing pedagogic competence, the teacher should: (1) understand the characteristics, needs and development of students, (2) master the concepts and principles of education, (3) master the concepts, principles and procedures of curriculum development, (4) master the theory, and learning strategies, (5) creating interactive, fun, challenging learning situations, motivating students to participate actively, and providing sufficient space for initiative, creativity and independence, and (6) mastering concepts, principles, procedures, and guidance strategies learner's learning (Sujiono, 2009). Meanwhile, to maximize the field of professional competence, what teachers should do are: (1) mastering aspects of child development, (2) mastering concepts and theories of child development that cover development areas, (3) emphasizing various developments, (4) associated with development of fields with everyday life, and (5) utilizing information and communication technology for self and professional development (Sujiono, 2009).

Likewise, the results of the training for Kindergarten As Sa'adah teachers, although they are good, are not optimal. This can be seen from several aspects of teacher competency training, namely: the ability to select and master teaching materials, the ability to plan and develop program teaching, the ability to actualize productive PBM, the ability to understand and use learning principles, and the ability to assess student learning processes and outcomes. From this aspect, the teacher has not maximized his abilities practically during learning. In accordance with the objectives of the training, namely the education section which involves the learning process to acquire and improve skills outside the education system that applies in a relatively short time and with methods that prioritize practice over theory (Ardana, 2012).

With the results of various descriptions, overall that the competence and performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers are good and ready to implement the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. However, from the aspect of teacher training, it is still sufficient and not ready. Thus, various considerations are needed for institutions to apply the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum. Then prioritize a thorough evaluation of the aspects of competence, training and performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers so that they are ready for the implementation of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum.

## Discussion

Merdeka Belajar Curriculum will be optimal, if the readiness of teacher human resources in each Kindergarten institution is good. In particular, educational institutions prepare more for the competencies possessed by teachers, by holding various training activities. This is done so that the performance of each teacher will be optimal, and have a good impact on students as recipients of knowledge transfer. Due to the maturity of the education curriculum system, it is actually to fix the human resources of teachers, not just as an interest. Because it tends to be of interest in the form of certification applied to teachers, it is not optimal, according to research results of Gunawan (2016), shows that the professional competence of teachers who already have educator certification and have received teacher certification allowances are not in accordance with what is expected by the government.

However the curriculum is applied, if it does not have an impact on educators, it will be in vain. Especially with Indonesian education which is closely related to social culture in the form of values. In line with the research conducted Angga (2022), every time the program is implemented, there are advantages and disadvantages that show that the 2013 Merdeka Belajar Curriculum learning curriculum will be optimal, if it is appropriate and focuses on the competence and character of all students (Yogi Anggraena, dkk., 2022).

## Conclusion

The conclusion from the competency evaluation and training on the performance of Kindergarten As Sa'adah Yogyakarta teachers on the readiness of the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is not yet fully prepared. It is shown that 78% of teacher performance and 77% of teacher competence are optimal. However, 68% of teacher training and 72% of Merdeka Belajar Curriculum readiness have not been optimal. So that there are still many improvements to the human resources of teachers, before the Merdeka Belajar Curriculum is implemented. The implication of this research is to provide input to educational institutions, especially Kindergarten to evaluate the competence, training and performance of teachers first, before setting the Merdeks Belajar Curriculum. The limitations of this study are an important aspect, hopefully in the future research will be even better. Thanks to all those who have helped.

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