The Utilization of Independent Teaching Platform to Improve Teachers' Competencies

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Abstract: The Independent Teaching Platform is a digital media that provides various learning resources, training, and connections between teachers. Through this platform, teachers can access the latest learning content, collaborate with fellow teachers, and take professional training without space and time limits. With easy and quick access, teachers have the opportunity to continuously develop their knowledge and skills. This article discusses the concrete benefits of utilizing Independent Teaching Platform, such as improved understanding of the latest teaching methods, implementation of technology in learning, and improved creativity in delivering material. In addition, this platform also creates a collaborative space among teachers, enabling the exchange of ideas and experiences that can improve the quality of teaching collectively. The method in writing this article uses a systematic literature review in order to get the sources the researcher wants in detail. The results of the review of this article are that teachers get many benefits that are used to improve competencies in teaching and managing learning in the classroom more actively, innovatively and creatively. However, there are constraints in some remote or outermost areas/regions such as: limited access to qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and geographical isolation.

Keywords: Independent teaching platform, Teachers' competencies, Digital media, Edicational technology

Introduction

One of the changes or innovations in the education system in Indonesia is implementation of the independent curriculum which began in 2022. This curriculum reform is designed to provide flexibility to schools and local governments in implementing learning programs in each school. In the process of updating the curriculum, it takes a long time and process. The transition period from the 2013 curriculum and the emergency curriculum to the independent curriculum certainly makes teachers as educational practitioners feel the impact (Maisyaroh et al., 2023). Teachers must learn and understand the implementation guidelines well so that learning in the classroom goes well and students are equipped with the abilities referred to in the curriculum with the abilities referred to in the national education goals (Bafadal et al., 2019; Reisoğlu, 2022). Implementation of independent curriculum can't just run without the role of the teacher as a dynamist and facilitator for students. In its implementation, teachers' readiness in implementing learning is the main thing. Teachers are expected to be able to improve their four competencies, namely pedagogic competence, personality competence, social competence, and professional competence (Arnes et al., 2023; Ulfatin, 2017; Gunawan et al., 2017). School principals as leaders in educational institutions must also always guide teachers so that they can improve their competencies in accordance with learning objectives. Through this guidance, teachers can understand the needs of students (Bafadal, Nurabadi, et al., 2019; Anita et al., 2022; Alimmudin, 2022; Rizkie, 2022).

Teachers' digital competences are important for nowadays because in learning platforms have improved since the pandemic, especially in utilizing the online media and platform. Teachers use learning management system

to facilitate learning. Educators' digital competency including technology literacy, knowledge deepening, presentation skills, and professional skills (Softić, 2022; Hizam et al., 2021; Rahmawati et al., 2024; Rasdiana, Wiyono, et al., 2024). The ability of instructors to use technology effectively is essential for developing productive learning environments. It emphasises how important it is for teachers to use technology to improve in-depth learning. The ability of instructors to use technology effectively is essential for developing productive learning environments. It emphasises how important it is for teachers to use technology to improve in-depth learning opportunities (Tsymbal, 2020; Yondler & Blau, 2023). The majority of educators exhibit excellent levels of ICT literacy and self-assurance while utilising internet resources. This demonstrates that teachers are highly proficient in using a variety of useful instructional tools (Labuguen & Cabrillas, 2024; Rasdiana et al., 2024). According to the study's findings, the upskilling training program effectively increased instructors' digital competency, which is where they build their knowledge and abilities. Teachers have a favourable attitude about utilising technology, which promotes learning, cooperation, and productivity. As a result, they are becoming more proficient in digital skills. Consequently, this will also help students build their digital abilities, which will enable them to overcome obstacles in this evolving environment, particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 epidemic, where technology is used extensively (Afriliandhi et al., 2022; Prayoonpun et al., 2024; Park & Yoon, 2023).

The government, through the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology has developed a media (platform) where teachers and principals can access it to obtain references for teaching practices in order to implement the independent curriculum. The platform is the independent teaching platform which has several features provided, namely learning, teaching, working, and various other features that are very helpful for teachers in developing themselves to implement the independent curriculum. which greatly helps teachers in developing themselves to carry out learning process in a more innovative and interactive way (SIMPKB, 2023; ElSayary, 2023; Gameil & Al-Abdullatif, 2023). Education is the main pillar in the development of a nation, and the role of teachers is crucial in providing quality education. Improving teacher competence is an urgent need to face the demands of the times and technology. This article discusses the utilization of independent teaching platform as an innovative solution to improve teacher competence (Kusumaningrum et al., 2019; Sunandar et al., 2023).

Based on this explanation, there is still a mismatch between reality and expectations. In the process of implementing this independent curriculum, the parties concerned complained that the socialization of the independent curriculum was not massive enough so that many teachers were still confused about implementing the concept of independent learning in accordance with the government. However, there are also many teachers who have not utilized the independent teaching platform. The main problem teachers and principals is the unpreparedness of the institution in accessing the application and using the features in it (Hasmawaty et al., 2023). In fact, if utilized optimally, this platform will be very helpful for teachers in obtaining references and models that are suitable for each institution. There are several other problems that prevent teachers from utilizing the platform: (1) limitations of teachers' abilities in technology; (2) unreliable network access; (3) limitations in teacher skills; (4) not all devices can install the platform application; and (5) not all devices can access the platform (Lukum et al, 2023). Based on the importance of the problems previously described, the researchers took the title "The Utilization of Independent Teaching Platform to Improve Teachers' Competencies", where the researchers want to know how teachers use the platform to find references in carrying out innovative and creative learning.

Method

The study employs a qualitative research design to investigate issues pertaining to teachers' use of autonomous learning platforms. When researchers obtain data indirectly—that is, through second- or third-hand sources—they analyze it secondary. It is clear that secondary data is information that is obtained from other sources and serves as support (Ulfatin, 2015; Mukhtar, 2013). Using the Publish or Perish 8 version application, a Google Scholar search was used as the data collection method. Next, the researcher used the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) model to analyze or screen any articles or reference sources that could be studied and were related to the topic of technology use in education. Independent curriculum, independent teaching, teaching platform, and teachers' competencies are some of the keywords used by researchers. Because these keywords are pertinent to the research context, they are used. In order to provide more thorough and impartial information, the systematic literature review (SLR) model synthesizes a variety of pertinent research findings (Ridwan, 2022; Handayani, 2017; Qurotianti, 2024).

The results obtained were 100 articles, then the researcher screened them using the PRISMA method. A total of 100 selected article titles were selected with a publication year of 2023 so as to get 74 article titles. After that, several things must be considered in determining which articles are appropriate for analysis so that the final results of the articles analyzed by researchers are 9 article titles with several criteria. The following are the things that are considered/criteria in the article screening process.

a. The context of the research was carried out within the scope of discussing the utilization of the independent teaching platform.
b. The research was conducted in a formal school
c. The research results are published in journals, not books or other reference sources
d. Using Indonesian or English
e. Article/Journal has open access

Results and Discussion

The following are the results of the analysis using the PRISMA method.

Table 1. The analysis result of using PRISMA method

No.	Writer	Title	Publisher
1	Wasliman et al (2023)	"The Positive Impact of the Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) for Teachers in Implementing the Independent Curriculum"	History of Medicine
2	Erni et al (2023)	"Training on the Use of the Independent Teaching Platform for Elementary School Teachers"	IPMAS Journal
3	Hidayat & Muharizal, (2023)	"The Role of the Teacher in Improving the Quality of Learning Through the Teaching Freedom Platform"	Journal of Engineering Education and Pedagogy
4	Alamsyah & Gandana (2023)	"Teacher's Knowledges in Teaching Speaking through Merdeka Mengajar Platform: Challenges	English Education Journal
5	Wibowo et al. (2023)	Pelatihan Desain Grafis" "Menggunakan Aplikasi Canva untuk Meningkatkan Kreativitas Guru dalam Memanfaatkan PMM (Platfom Merdeka Mengajar)"	Jurnal Pengabdian Harapan Bangsa
6	Marisana et al. (2023)	"Penggunaan Platform Merdeka Mengajar untuk Meningkatkan Kompetensi Guru di Sekolah Dasar"	Basicedu Journal
7	Budianti & Setiawan (2023)	"Platform Merdeka Mengajar dalam Meningkatkan Kompetensi Guru di Daerah 3T"	Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai
8	Sariman & Mujahidin (2023)	"Analisis Pemanfaatan Platform Merdeka Mengajar untuk Peningkatan Kompetensi Guru di Sekolah Menengah Atas Al Muhammad Cepu"	Al Fattah Ejournal SMA Al Muhammad
9	Soedjono (2023)	"The Effectiveness of The Independent Teaching Platform (PMM) in Increasing The Competency of Primary and Secondary Education Teachers"	International Journal of Research in Education

Wasliman et al (2023) explained that the curriculum and independent teaching platform encourage an active, adaptive and transformative attitude in the face of change, restore learning productivity, and improve appropriate learning methods for teachers. The platform provides self-training, collaboration, increased teacher competence, a fun learning atmosphere, and implementation. The platform inspires and motivates teachers to store files online. In line with that, Erni et al (2023) also explained that the platform makes it easier for internal teachers to teach, learn and be creative. Teachers gain reference, inspiration and understanding in implementing the curriculum. Teachers understand and recognize the benefits of using it and benefit from the project to strengthen the profile of Pancasila learners. This finding is in accordance with the description from SIMPKB (2023) that the platform is the independent teaching platform which has several features provided, namely learning, teaching, working, and various other features that are very helpful for teachers in developing themselves to implement the independent curriculum. which greatly helps teachers in developing themselves to carry out learning process in a more innovative and interactive way.

Products for teacher quality development include Proof of My Work, Self-Training, and Inspirational Videos. The growth of teacher competency, creativity, and innovation is enhanced by the usage of independent teaching platforms. Teachers can improve their teaching abilities more easily thanks to the platform (Hidayat & Muharizal, 2023). Teacher challenges can be divided into three categories: (1) linguistic (students' limited vocabulary in English, difficulty memorising vocabulary and materials, and incorrect pronunciation of vocabulary); (2) physiological (students' lack of confidence and motivation to speak English); and (3) external (lack of learning support facilities, particularly projectors, and time constraints for using student-centered methods). Research by Alamsyah & Gandana (2023) produced a number of beneficial effects, including introducing the platform, identifying difficulties faced by teachers, and deepening our awareness of the difficulties involved in teaching speaking.

One application that can be utilized in addition to the platform in supporting classroom learning is the Canva application which can be used to create infographic designs such as posters, flyers, logos, and learning videos in order to support teaching and learning activities. Canva can also help make it easier to apply the platform (Wibowo et al., (2023). Marisana et al. (2023) also shows that the use of the platform is used as a means to improve teacher competence in the learning process. Teachers also get services to hone, add insight, and get a lot of innovation and creative ideas through the features offered. However, the weakness of using the platform is the lack of fluency of teachers in using the application so that there is a need for better development. As Softić (2022) explained earlier that teachers's or educators' digital competency including technology literacy, knowledge deepening, presentation skills, and professional skills. Therefore, teachers can also use other applications besides the independent teaching platform especially like Canva.

Budianti & Setiawan (2023) shows that the lack of qualified teachers in remote areas is a crucial problem in education. The unique challenges described include limited access to qualified teachers, inadequate infrastructure and geographical isolation. This negatively affects the quality of teaching, students' motivation and their learning outcomes. The quality of teachers in these remote areas is a gap in education. Through the platform, teachers in remote areas can be helped in improving teacher competencies especially in the self-training programs provided. In line with this, Sariman & Mujahidin (2023) also mentioned that most teachers have worked on the topics in the application, and a small number have taken concrete actions and received certificates. This needs special motivation and attention from both principals to completely access platform in order to increase understanding and produce work on the implementation of an independent curriculum so that teacher competence can continue to be honed and improved. Overall, the platform content can improve teacher competence. After conducting learning using it, teacher competence increases in accordance with the predetermined achievements so that the platform has a very high effectiveness in improving teacher competence in their learning performance (Soedjono, 2023). This is in line with Hasmawaty et al. (2023) and Lukum & et al, 2023 that there are several obstacles in using the platform, including technical matters related to the network, inadequate teacher capabilities and devices.

Conclusion

Teachers get many new learning methods that are more active, innovative and creative obtained from the use of independent teaching platform. The use of this application will then be applied to classroom learning with students. The platform as an application is very helpful to facilitate teachers in their efforts to improve their abilities as dynamists and facilitators in the classroom. Learners also find the learning material more interesting and can be done in various ways (varied). The platform helps teachers to manage the class to be more

conducive. This is because there are many features that can be utilized by teachers in finding learning references that suit their individual needs.

In addition, the utilization of platform is still constrained in some remote or some areas. This does not allow teachers to improve their competence massively because of several factors such as: limited access to quality teachers, inadequate infrastructure, and geographical isolation can make it difficult for teachers to develop themselves or to learn innovative learning strategies in independent teaching platform.

Recommendations

Through the platforms that are available, teachers should be able to use a variety of creative and innovative teaching strategies and modify them to fit the needs and characteristics of their students. By offering a variety of teaching modules and learning resources, educators can also incorporate varied learning. It is recommended that school principals provide time and resources to teachers so they can become proficient in using the platform. In addition, in order to support teachers in using the platform and honing their skills in implementing creative and innovative teaching methods, training sessions or workshops are required. In order for teachers and students to get the most out of the platform, it is necessary to provide an adequate infrastructure, which includes making an effort to provide enough internet access and technological devices. School principals can work together with other organizations, such as the Education Department or associated establishments, to overcome infrastructure and access constraints in isolated locations.

Scientific Ethics Declaration

The authors declare that the scientific ethical and legal responsibility of this article published in EPESS Journal belongs to the authors.

Acknowledgements or Notes

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