

Digital Edupreneurship and Teacher Agency Enhancing English Teaching Competencies in the Independent Curriculum

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the role of teacher agency in enhancing the competencies of English teachers in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum in Indonesia. **The research** focuses on secondary school English teachers who were categorized based on their response to curriculum changes: proactive, reactive, and passive. **The findings reveal** that teachers exhibiting proactive teacher agency are more agile in adapting to the Independent Curriculum and demonstrate greater development in their pedagogical, social, and professional skills. They leverage the autonomy offered by the Independent Curriculum to innovate teaching practices, incorporating technology and interactive learning approaches. **On the other** hand, teachers with reactive responses require additional support, including training, time, and resources, to adjust effectively, while those with passive responses tend to cling to traditional teaching methods, showing resistance to change, which hinders their competency development. **These results** highlight the need for continuous professional development, adequate resources, and collaboration among teachers to ensure the successful adoption of the Independent Curriculum. Structural support and improved communication between schools and teachers are essential to facilitate the effective participation of all teachers, regardless of their level of agency, in implementing the new curriculum.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Independent Curriculum (IC) was introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology in February 2022. The Minister of Education stated that this curriculum is designed to help Indonesia overcome its current learning challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Learning loss and the widening learning gap among students were seen as the primary signs of the learning crisis [1].

Another factor that led to the revision of the previous national curriculum, the 2013 Curriculum, was

the results of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development's (OECD) Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Surveys conducted between 2000 and 2018 showed no significant improvement in Indonesia's education system. To make matters worse, the findings of the 2018 PISA study were worse than those from the 2015 survey [2, 3].

Several benefits of implementing the Independent Curriculum in schools to strengthen the argument for revamping the current curriculum [4]. First, the curriculum is more straightforward and simplified, focusing on the necessary resources and the age-appropriate competency development for students. Teachers and students are granted greater autonomy, where students are free to choose courses based on their goals, interests, and abilities. Through varied learning experiences, educators will guide students to adapt to their own development and achievements. Schools also have the freedom to create and manage curricula and instruction that align with the characteristics and educational backgrounds of their students.

The Independent Curriculum was developed and implemented to enhance the quality of education in Indonesia [5, 6]. This curriculum is expected to provide more effective strategies for teachers in improving students' literacy, numeracy, and character development. Enhancing these competencies is anticipated to contribute to students' future academic success. The core principle of IC is student-centered learning, which aims to guide and support students in achieving their optimal development. Thus, the implementation of IC focuses on fostering outstanding and intelligent students who align with the values of Pancasila.

However, teachers play a crucial role in the successful implementation of curriculum changes in the classroom. In addition to introducing new policies, implementing a new curriculum requires transforming the school's teaching culture. Since teachers are the ones who directly apply the curriculum in classroom settings, their level of competence and readiness significantly influences its success [7, 8]. Furthermore, if teachers do not respond positively to curriculum changes, its implementation is unlikely to be effective. Successful curriculum reform relies on continuous communication among stakeholders and a shared understanding of the changes being introduced [9]. Therefore, policymakers must consider teachers' knowledge, experiences, and competencies before enacting curriculum modifications. Given that teachers play a pivotal role in curriculum development and implementation, it is essential to address their perspectives and practices in curriculum planning.

Teachers also serve as key drivers of creativity within the curriculum framework. Their agency can either support or hinder the adoption of new educational methods and practices [10]. In line with this emphasized that the success of curriculum reform "depends on what teachers do and think" [11, 12]. In other words, for the implementation of a new curriculum to be effective, teachers must align their knowledge, skills, beliefs, and pedagogical approaches with its principles.

Moreover, teachers must fully manage the direction of teaching and learning activities in the classroom [13]. One of the significant barriers to curriculum change is teachers' lack of understanding of its framework and objectives [14, 15]. Thus, every curriculum modification must consider the roles of teachers and their responses to the core principles of change.

In the context of English Language Teaching (ELT) within the IC, the primary goal is to enhance students' proficiency in the six English language skills listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing, and presenting through various text genres. Students are expected to develop communication skills that enable them to engage in a globalized world. The curriculum's objectives align with the broader goals of ELT, which emphasize:

- Proficiency in oral, written, visual, and audiovisual communication in English.
- Intercultural competence to appreciate both Indonesian and foreign cultural perspectives.
- Confidence in self-expression as responsible and independent individuals.
- Critical thinking and creativity.

The role of digital edupreneurship in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum significantly enhances teacher agency by providing educators with the autonomy to design, market, and deliver digital learning content tailored to student needs. Drawing from the framework of digital entrepreneurship, the integration of digital tools into teaching not only fosters a more interactive learning environment but also supports the personalization of learning experiences, which is essential in a student-centered curriculum. Teachers leveraging these resources are empowered to innovate their pedagogical practices, thereby directly impacting the

curriculum's implementation and improving overall teaching efficacy. Moreover, digital edupreneurship plays a critical role in equipping teachers with the skills and confidence to respond proactively to the challenges posed by the curriculum reform, fostering greater engagement and adaptability within the classroom. However, the success of IC in ELT depends on teachers' agency in responding to curriculum changes. Many teachers actively adapt to curriculum shifts by participating in government- or institution-provided training programs to improve their knowledge and skills in IC implementation. English language teachers perceive the new curriculum as an opportunity to refine their teaching approaches. Nevertheless, not all teachers share the same perspective. Some exhibit optimism and maximize their agency under IC, while others remain reluctant and struggle to keep up with its demands [16, 17].

Based on my initial observations in several senior high schools in Palembang, a similar trend is evident. There is a need for further research to identify challenges and propose solutions related to English teachers' agency and the adoption of IC in classroom instruction. To gain deeper insights into teacher agency and competencies, this study will focus on senior high schools in Palembang, South Sumatra, Indonesia, particularly in their efforts to implement digital edupreneurship and teacher agency in enhancing English teaching competencies under IC.

This study provides new insights into the role of teacher agency in implementing the Independent Curriculum by linking it to digital edupreneurship. While previous research focuses on traditional teaching methods, this study shows how proactive teacher agency, combined with digital skills, enables innovation in teaching. It highlights the importance of digital tools and interactive strategies in fostering a student-centered approach, offering a fresh perspective on enhancing teacher agency in the digital age. In line with the global goals for sustainable development, this study contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education, aiming to enhance the teaching competencies of English educators through the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. By fostering teacher agency and integrating digital edupreneurship, the study supports the development of more innovative and adaptable teaching practices, ultimately improving the quality of education. Additionally, this research aligns with SDG 5: Gender Equality by advocating for equal access to professional development opportunities for all teachers, regardless of gender, ensuring that the curriculum reform benefits diverse educators. Furthermore, the study reflects SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, as it highlights how empowering educators with digital skills can enhance their professional growth, leading to more effective teaching and contributing to the broader economic development through improved educational outcomes.



Figure 1. Alignment of this study with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Figure 1 Alignment of this study with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This research contributes to SDG 4: Quality Education, SDG 5: Gender Equality, and SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth, emphasizing the role of teacher agency, digital edupreneurship, and the Independent Curriculum in enhancing teaching competencies, promoting gender equality in education, and fostering economic development through digital skills in the teaching profession.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

2.1. Research Design

This study utilizes a comparative case analysis methodology, analyzed through the lens of critical discourse analysis, to explore how teacher agency influences their pedagogical practices in the implementation of the IC. This approach aligns that case study methods are particularly suited for answering "how" questions [18].

As [19] explains, qualitative case studies are empirical investigations that examine contemporary phenomena within their real-life context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context are not distinctly clear. In real-world settings, the context and phenomenon often intersect, making the case study approach ideal for studying these complex situations. This method utilizes triangulation, drawing evidence from multiple sources, to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research questions [20].

To gain an in-depth understanding, Fairclough's three-dimensional framework for data analysis will be applied. The collected data will undergo analysis at three levels: macro, meso, and micro [21, 22]. These levels allow for a thorough interpretation of the impacts of teacher agency on English teaching competencies within the framework of IC. Evidence sources may include documentation, video recordings, archival records, surveys, interviews, direct and participant observations, and tangible artifacts. The study employs a multiple-case research design rather than a single-case study because contrasting cases provide a more robust theoretical replication, reinforcing the findings and offering broader insights. As state by [23], the goal of comparative case study research is to build a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon at each level and analyze how these perspectives generate both similar and different interpretations of the policy or phenomenon being studied. By using this methodology, the researcher will gain a deeper understanding of how teacher agency in implementing IC influences the enhancement of English teaching competencies, especially through the lens of digital edupreneurship in the evolving educational landscape.

2.2. Subject of Research

This study will involve four English language instructors from senior high schools in Palembang, South Sumatera, Indonesia, selected through purposive sampling. Participants will be chosen based on three criteria: two schools from the downtown area and two from the suburbs to represent demographic diversity, instructors with prior experience in training and applying the Independent Curriculum, and a manageable sample size of four due to academic schedule constraints. This sample is considered sufficient to explore teacher agency and the role of digital edupreneurship in enhancing English teaching competencies within the Independent Curriculum context [24, 25].

2.3. Instrumental Technique

Although the methodology is robust, providing a more comprehensive explanation of the data analysis process would increase the transparency of the research. Specifically, a detailed description of how the three levels of analysis (macro, meso, micro) were applied to the data would offer greater clarity, particularly for readers who may be unfamiliar with Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

This study uses Fairclough's CDA to examine data at three levels: macro, meso, and micro. The macro level analyzes the socio-political context, focusing on how national policies and the Independent Curriculum are framed [26, 27]. The meso level explores how schools structures and teacher perceptions shape curriculum implementation. At the micro level, the focus is on classroom interactions and how teachers discourse and practices reflect their agency in response to reforms. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how external and internal factors influence teacher agency. For the second through fourth research questions, semi-structured interviews will be used to gather participants' opinions on the Independent Curriculum, focusing on its impact on their teaching methods, the role of digital edupreneurship, and the enhancement of their pedagogical competencies [28].

The final research question will be answered through classroom observations, where data will be collected through various sources, such as teachers' lesson plans, de-identified student work, and video recordings, which will help document the actual implementation of the curriculum [29, 30]. Additionally, a teaching background questionnaire and school profiles will be used to provide context about the teaching experience of the participants and the characteristics of their respective schools, contributing to a fuller understanding of how teacher agency and digital edupreneurship intersect with the implementation of Independent Curriculum.

2.4. Data Collection Technique

The Fairclough model of CDA will be employed to analyze qualitative data collected from various sources, including questionnaires, interviews, teaching videos, field notes, lesson plans, and student assignments. The analysis will unfold in three stages, beginning with Description, where the language use and structure within the data will be examined, focusing on vocabulary, grammar, and discourse patterns [31]. The second stage, Interpretation, will investigate the meanings conveyed through the language, exploring how

power dynamics and social roles are constructed in the discourse. Finally, in the Explanation stage, the findings will be contextualized within broader social, cultural, and ideological frameworks, revealing how these discourses reflect and reinforce societal values and norms. This multi-stage approach will provide a deeper understanding of how language and power shape educational practices, teacher agency, and the implementation of curriculum reforms, offering insights into the ways discourse influences both classroom interactions and educational outcomes [32, 33].

Table 1. Fairclough's CDA Data Analysis

Macro level of analysis	The analysis of the rationale for the enactment of Independent Curriculum
Meso level of analysis	The analysis of how participants perceive the implementation of Independent Curriculum
Micro level of analysis	The analysis of Participants' Pedagogical Practices in four selected schools as they implement Independent Curriculum

Table 1 presents the different levels of analysis in Fair clough's CDA framework as applied to the study of the implementation of Independent Curriculum. It outlines the three levels of analysis: the Macro level, which examines the rationale behind the enactment of the curriculum; the Meso level, which investigates how participants perceive the implementation of the curriculum; and the Micro level, which focuses on the pedagogical practices of participants in four selected schools as they implement the curriculum. This structured approach provides a comprehensive view of the curriculum's impact from broader institutional motives to individual teaching practices. They explore each data collected to answer the research questions formulated at the beginning of the study, with the analysis being guided by the theory or model proposed by [34].

2.5. Triangulation

The validity and reliability of this qualitative study will be ensured through trustworthiness, which includes credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability [35]. Credibility will be strengthened through triangulation and member-checking by using multiple data sources, including questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations, teaching videos, lesson plans, and de-identified student work [36, 37]. Transferability will be supported by providing detailed descriptions of the research context and findings, allowing readers to assess their relevance to other educational settings. Dependability and confirmability will be maintained through peer review involving experts in critical discourse analysis and teacher agency [38]. These procedures aim to ensure that the findings on teacher agency and digital edupreneurship in the Independent Curriculum are credible, consistent, and applicable across similar contexts.

2.6. Research Timeline

The research will be conducted in four public senior high schools in Palembang, South Sumatera, Indonesia. The timeline of the research is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Research Timeline

Time	Activity
August - November 2023	Writing of research proposal
January - April 2024	Revising research proposal
May - December 2024	Preparing to collect data
January - June 2025	Processing/analyzing data
January - June 2025	Writing up chapters
August 2024	Approval for exam

Table 2 presents the timeline of key activities involved in the research process. It outlines the planned stages of the research, beginning with the writing of the research proposal from August to November 2023, followed by the revision of the proposal from January to April 2024. The timeline also includes the preparation for data collection between May and December 2024, data processing and analysis from January to June 2025, writing up chapters from January to June 2025, and concludes with the approval for the exam in August 2024. This structured schedule provides a clear roadmap for the progress of the study [39].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. The Result of English Teachers Perceive Their Current Agency to Respond to Curriculum Change

The findings of this study indicate that English teachers' perceptions of their ability to adapt to the changes introduced by the Independent Curriculum vary, reflecting differing levels of teacher agency. Consistent with the theoretical framework on teacher agency, the survey results suggest that teachers' proactive responses to curriculum change were associated with a greater sense of competence in adapting their teaching methods. For example, one teacher stated, "I believe the changes in this curriculum are important, but it's hard to keep up due to the limited time and resources" (Teacher 1, Questionnaire, 2024). This response aligns with the theory that teacher agency is constrained by factors such as time and resources, which are often external to the individual teacher but influence their ability to implement curriculum changes effectively. Interview data further illuminated the contrast between teachers with high agency and those with low agency. Teachers with high teacher agency view curriculum changes as an opportunity to innovate and enhance the learning process. One teacher expressed, "I see the Independent Curriculum as an opportunity to increase student engagement. I have more freedom to choose the teaching methods that best meet students' needs" (Teacher 2, Interview, 2024). These teachers display a positive and proactive approach towards the changes, aligning with theory of teacher agency, which suggests that teachers with high agency are able to independently and constructively respond to changes based on their beliefs, knowledge, and social context [40].

Conversely, teachers with low teacher agency feel overwhelmed by the pace of the curriculum changes and lack confidence in implementing them effectively. One teacher shared, "I feel like this change is happening too quickly, and I don't fully understand how to implement it in my class" (Teacher 3, Interview 2024), indicating that the rapid pace of change, coupled with insufficient guidance and support, hinders the adaptation process. This finding echoes research, which found that teachers with lower agency struggle to adapt to curriculum changes due to inadequate external support, such as training and resources [41]. [42] emphasizes that teachers require robust support systems to facilitate their adaptation to new educational frameworks.

Another teacher also underscored the importance of support during the adaptation process, stating, "I feel like I need more relevant training to implement this curriculum effectively. Without sufficient guidance, I tend to revert to traditional methods" (Teacher 4, Interview, 2024). This reliance on external training highlights the critical role of structural support in fostering strong teacher agency. A teacher with moderate agency also reflected, "I understand the purpose of the Independent Curriculum, but I need more time to adjust my teaching methods" (Teacher 5, Interview, 2024), indicating that teachers require sufficient time to adjust their teaching approaches when faced with new curriculum [43, 44].

These findings underscore the significance of teacher agency in shaping teachers' perceptions of curriculum change and their ability to adapt to new pedagogical methods. Teachers with high teacher agency demonstrate a willingness to innovate and engage actively with the changes, as highlighted by [45], who emphasize that teacher agency is fostered by active involvement in social and professional contexts. On the other hand, teachers with low agency feel restricted by a lack of training, support, and time, which impedes their ability to implement the curriculum changes effectively.

According to [46], the success of curriculum reforms is heavily reliant on the active participation of teachers, which is driven by strong teacher agency. If teachers feel unsupported, as expressed by several participants in the interviews, they are more likely to react passively to changes, thus hindering the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. [46] also highlighted the importance of structural support in strengthening teacher agency, particularly during significant educational policy shifts. Providing teachers with adequate training, time for adaptation, and the necessary resources is crucial to helping them respond effectively to curriculum changes and enhance their teaching competencies in line with the goals of Digital Edupreneurship and teacher agency in the context of Independent Curriculum.

3.2. The Result of English Teachers with Proactive Responses Perceive the English Language Teaching (ELT) in Independent Curriculum

Based on the findings from the questionnaire and interviews, teachers who responded proactively to the implementation of the Independent Curriculum highlighted that this curriculum provided them with greater flexibility in designing and adapting teaching materials to meet students' needs. One teacher noted in the questionnaire, "I feel freer to adjust teaching materials based on students' needs, which enhances student engagement in the learning process" (Teacher 4, Questionnaire, 2024). This flexibility enables teachers to apply teaching methods that are more relevant to the classroom context, fostering increased student participation and

creating a more dynamic learning environment.

In interviews, teachers with proactive teacher agency expressed highly positive views regarding the Independent Curriculum, seeing it as an opportunity to innovate and enhance their teaching creativity. One teacher shared, "This curriculum allows me to be more flexible in using various teaching methods such as project-based learning and task-based learning, which I believe are more effective in enhancing students' language skills" (Teacher 5, Interview, 2024). Approaches like project-based learning and task-based learning have long been recognized in educational literature for promoting critical thinking, collaboration, and effective communication [47].

Teachers also emphasized the role of technology in enhancing the effectiveness of English language learning. One teacher stated, "With the Independent Curriculum, I use digital tools like videos and interactive learning applications more frequently, which really help students improve their listening and speaking skills" (Teacher 6, Interview, 2024). This aligns with previous studies highlighting the importance of integrating technology in language education to improve students' communication abilities. The use of digital tools not only facilitates material delivery but also enriches students' learning experiences by providing access to broader resources.

Other teachers also shared positive perspectives, emphasizing the flexibility the Independent Curriculum offers: "I find it more flexible to adapt teaching materials and methods to match students' abilities. This allows me to focus on developing the practical skills they need" (Teacher 7, Interview, 2024). This perspective aligns with the self-determination theory, which suggests that intrinsic motivation is fostered when individuals are given the freedom to choose and act based on their personal goals in this case, teaching objectives. However, some teachers also noted that adapting to the new curriculum required additional time and effort. One teacher mentioned, "Although I appreciate the freedom the Independent Curriculum provides, I still feel it takes time to fully adapt all the new materials and methods to the classroom conditions" (Teacher 8, Interview, 2024). This indicates that while proactive teacher agency fosters innovation, the adaptation process still requires adequate support and time [48].

Overall, the results suggest that teachers with proactive teacher agency feel more motivated and engaged in implementing the Independent Curriculum. The autonomy granted by this curriculum encourages creativity in teaching, as seen in the use of project-based and task-based learning methods. This is consistent with the self-determination theory, which posits that intrinsic motivation is nurtured when individuals are empowered to make decisions that align with their personal values and goals. Proactive teachers are more inclined to take initiative in adapting teaching methods to meet students' needs, ultimately enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes. These findings underscore the importance of digital edupreneurship and teacher agency in enhancing English teaching competencies within the framework of the Independent Curriculum.

3.3. The Result of English Teachers with Reactive Responses Perceive the ELT in Independent Curriculum

Based on the results of the interviews and questionnaires, teachers who displayed reactive responses indicated that they were more inclined to wait for guidance from the school or government before fully implementing the Independent Curriculum. One teacher mentioned, "I feel the need to follow the direction given by the school before I can fully implement this curriculum" (Teacher 7, Questionnaire, 2024). This suggests that teachers with reactive responses feel the need for formal training and direction to gain confidence in adopting the new strategies introduced by the curriculum.

Interview data further revealed that teachers with reactive responses were open to change but believed that they required more time, training, and additional support to implement the Independent Curriculum effectively. One teacher shared, "I am trying to implement the Independent Curriculum, but I still feel the need to take further training to really understand the best way to do it" (Teacher 8, Interview, 2024). This highlights the notion that, despite their openness to change, these teachers felt underprepared without further guidance and professional development.

Additionally, some teachers identified limitations such as time constraints and inadequate facilities as significant barriers to successfully implementing the Independent Curriculum. One teacher explained, "We have been given training, but the time in class is not enough to implement all the strategies expected by the Independent Curriculum" (Teacher 9, Interview, 2024). These teachers felt that heavy workloads and limited access to resources hindered their ability to fully adopt the new teaching approaches suggested by the curriculum.

Another teacher pointed out that the adaptation process was slowed due to discrepancies between

theoretical training and actual classroom conditions. "The training provided was useful, but when I tried to apply it in class, many things did not match what was taught in the training. So, I had to adjust myself according to the students' conditions" (Teacher 10, Interview, 2024). This gap between training theory and classroom reality further delays the process of implementing the Independent Curriculum.

Teachers with reactive responses to the curriculum change tend to wait for additional guidance and require more support to adapt to the Independent Curriculum. This aligns with research, which identified a lack of teacher understanding and readiness as major obstacles to curriculum change. Without adequate training and clear instructions, teachers felt the need to rely on external direction before they could fully adopt the new curriculum.

Teachers with reactive responses tend to follow instructions rather than take initiative, reflecting that their teacher agency still needs to be strengthened. Previous research revealed that teachers who are not ready to embrace change often wait for guidance, highlighting the necessity of continuous training and support to ensure successful curriculum implementation.

In the context of self-efficacy theory, teachers with reactive responses may exhibit lower self-efficacy, which makes them more hesitant to act independently in response to changes. They need positive experiences in implementing the curriculum and stronger external support to build their confidence in making changes. Therefore, ongoing professional development and adequate resources will be crucial in helping teachers with reactive responses become more prepared for curriculum changes.

Teachers with stronger teacher agency are more likely to innovate and adapt their teaching methods to meet the demands of new curricula. These teachers not only comply with the changes but actively create learning strategies that better suit the needs of their students and local contexts. Thus, proactive teacher agency plays a critical role in the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum, enabling teachers to be more flexible and innovative in responding to the challenges posed by the new curriculum. This underscores the importance of digital edupreneurship and teacher agency in enhancing English teaching competencies within the framework of the Independent Curriculum.

3.4. The Result of English Teachers with Passive Responses Perceive the ELT in Independent Curriculum

Based on the results of the interviews and questionnaires, teachers who exhibited passive responses in the questionnaire indicated that they did not feel a sense of urgency to change their teaching methods despite the introduction of the Independent Curriculum. One teacher noted, "I still use the same teaching method as before because I feel this method is still relevant and effective" (Teacher 10, Questionnaire, 2024). This reflects that teachers with passive responses are comfortable with their established practices and are not motivated to adopt new approaches introduced by the curriculum.

In interviews, teachers with passive responses expressed the view that the Independent Curriculum did not bring significant changes to their teaching practices. One teacher stated, "I don't see any significant difference between the Independent Curriculum and the previous curriculum. I still use the materials I've prepared for years" (Teacher 11, Interview, 2024). This indicates a resistance to change and a preference for continuity in teaching methods that these teachers believe have been effective over time.

Another teacher expressed skepticism about the potential benefits of the curriculum changes: "I think the changes are more administrative than substantive. I don't feel the need to change much in my teaching" (Teacher 12, Interview, 2024). This viewpoint reflects the belief that the curriculum changes are more procedural than meaningful and do not fundamentally alter teaching practices in a way that impacts student learning.

One teacher further shared, "I am not sure that these changes really help students learn better. I have more confidence in the methods that I have been using all this time" (Teacher 13, Interview, 2024). This reveals a lack of trust in the new approaches introduced by the Independent Curriculum, leading to a preference for sticking with established methods that they consider more effective.

Teachers with passive responses to the Independent Curriculum tend to resist change and continue using traditional methods that they feel are more effective. This aligns with Fullan's theory, which suggests that curriculum change often fails if teachers are not fully engaged in the process [49]. Teachers who are comfortable with their existing methods may not see the need to change, especially if they do not feel that the change aligns with their teaching needs or is supported adequately. The success of any curriculum change is largely dependent on active teacher participation, and if teachers are not motivated to change, the implementation of new curricula is likely to be ineffective.

This passive attitude is also consistent with the findings of [17], who noted that teachers who lack adequate support or training tend to cling to traditional teaching methods. These teachers view the methods they've used as tried and tested, so they don't perceive any compelling reason to innovate. This resistance to change reflects a tendency to maintain the status quo, often exacerbated by a lack of understanding of the advantages that new curriculum approaches may offer.

Moreover, Kotter's theory of resistance to change explains that teachers with passive responses often resist change because they feel excluded from the change process or fail to see its value. Without proper support and relevant training, these teachers remain disengaged, resulting in low motivation to adopt new teaching strategies. In the case of the Independent Curriculum, teachers who are not actively involved in its adaptation process and lack sufficient training will likely continue to resist the changes. This highlights the importance of fostering teacher agency and providing adequate professional development to help teachers embrace and effectively implement the new curriculum.

In addition, the lack of engagement and passive resistance among some teachers in adopting the Independent Curriculum underlines the need for targeted support, ongoing training, and active involvement in the curriculum change process. These factors are crucial in enhancing teacher agency, which is integral to improving English teaching competencies in line with the goals of the Independent Curriculum.

3.5. How English Teacher Agency Shapes Teachers' Competencies in Implementing the Independent Curriculum?

The findings of the study revealed that teacher agency plays a significant role in enhancing teacher competencies, particularly in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Teachers exhibiting proactive agency demonstrated greater development in both pedagogical and professional skills. These teachers were more engaged in the curriculum adaptation process, utilizing opportunities such as integrating technology into their teaching and creating an interactive learning environment. One teacher shared, "I feel like I adapt to the Independent Curriculum more quickly because I use a lot of technology to increase student engagement" (Teacher 14, Interview, 2024). This reflects the ability of proactive teachers to leverage the flexibility offered by the new curriculum to enhance their teaching effectiveness.

In addition to improving their pedagogical skills, proactive teachers also showed growth in their social competence, particularly in collaborating with peers to develop effective teaching strategies. One teacher mentioned, "I often discuss with my colleagues about the best way to implement the Independent Curriculum, and this really helps me understand the new curriculum better" (Teacher 15, Interview, 2024). Such collaboration reinforces teacher agency, allowing teachers to learn from each other's experiences and enhance their overall teaching practices [50].

On the other hand, teachers who exhibited reactive or passive responses to the Independent Curriculum showed slower progress in developing their competencies. These teachers were more inclined to maintain traditional teaching methods and did not fully embrace the opportunities presented by the new curriculum. One teacher with a reactive response stated, "I feel like I still need more training before I can fully implement the Independent Curriculum. Right now, I still use the old way of teaching" (Teacher 16, Interview, 2024). This illustrates how a lack of active involvement in the adaptation process hinders the development of pedagogical competence.

Teachers with passive responses were even more resistant to change, which negatively impacted their professional growth. One teacher noted, "I haven't seen much benefit from the Independent Curriculum, so I stick with the way I usually do it" (Teacher 17, Interview, 2024). This highlights how a lack of teacher agency can impede the adaptation to curriculum changes and hinder the development of new competencies.

This paper could further emphasize the novelty of its findings by linking them to global educational research on teacher agency and curriculum implementation. Drawing comparisons with similar studies from other countries would deepen the analysis and enrich the discussion of teacher agency within the context of curriculum reforms, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the subject. Thus, fostering strong teacher agency not only supports teachers in adapting to change but also encourages continuous enhancement of their competencies. Proactive teachers tend to show significant growth in their pedagogical, social, and professional skills, whereas reactive or passive teachers experience limited development due to their lack of engagement in the change process. This highlights the importance of supporting teachers' agency to enhance their competencies in line with the goals of the Independent Curriculum.

This study highlights the significant role of teacher agency in how teachers respond to changes in

the curriculum, particularly in the implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Teachers with high teacher agency expressed feeling more confident and prepared to innovate in response to the curriculum changes. They viewed the Independent Curriculum as an opportunity to enhance their teaching abilities and boost student engagement. In contrast, teachers with lower levels of agency, whether reactive or passive, showed a reliance on guidance from the school or external support to adjust to the new curriculum. This suggests that teachers' perceptions of their roles in the change process vary, which influences their readiness and ability to adapt [51].

Teachers who responded proactively to the Independent Curriculum demonstrated a positive outlook on the flexibility it offered. They leveraged technology and employed innovative teaching methods, such as project-based learning and task-based learning, to improve their students' English language skills. These teachers were able to tailor their teaching approaches to meet the specific needs of their students, reflecting the intrinsic motivation described in self-determination theory. When teachers feel empowered, they tend to exhibit more creativity and innovation. On the other hand, teachers with reactive responses were open to change but required additional training and guidance to implement the curriculum effectively. They also identified time and resource limitations as significant barriers to fully adopting the Independent Curriculum. The findings align with existing theories on teacher agency and curriculum change. Teachers with proactive agency, embracing the autonomy of the Independent Curriculum, are more likely to innovate and integrate digital tools, reflecting higher adaptability. In contrast, reactive or passive teachers rely on traditional methods, a trend consistent with theories suggesting that lack of support and professional development limits engagement with curriculum reforms. These results underscore the importance of fostering teacher agency to support successful curriculum implementation [52].

The study emphasizes the key role of teacher agency in adapting to the Independent Curriculum. Teachers with proactive agency, who embrace digital edupreneurship, are more innovative, integrating digital tools and interactive strategies that align with the curriculum's goal of student-centered learning. In contrast, reactive or passive teachers face challenges, relying on traditional methods that hinder both their professional growth and the curriculum's implementation. Expanding the discussion on digital edupreneurship highlights how equipping teachers with digital skills bridges the gap between curriculum reforms and classroom practice, benefiting both educators and students.

The study also underscored the impact of teacher agency on the development of teacher competencies. Teachers with proactive agency showed significant improvement in their pedagogical, social, and professional skills. They were quick to adapt to the demands of the Independent Curriculum and were successful in integrating technology and interactive teaching methods. In contrast, teachers with lower levels of agency, whether reactive or passive, showed slower progress in developing their competencies. They tended to rely on outdated methods, which hindered their pedagogical growth [53].

In conclusion, this study reinforces that teacher agency is a critical factor in the successful implementation of the Independent Curriculum. Teachers with strong agency are more likely to engage with the changes creatively and effectively, while reactive and passive teachers require more support and training to adapt. The findings emphasize the importance of providing continuous support, including training, resources, and time, to ensure that all teachers, regardless of their level of agency, can contribute to the successful implementation of the new curriculum. This paper would benefit from a more thorough exploration of the broader implications of its findings on policy and practice, particularly for an international audience. Specifically, it would be valuable to discuss how the findings could inform other countries or educational systems undergoing similar curriculum reforms, offering insights that could guide policy development and implementation strategies in diverse contexts. This study has several limitations, including a small sample size of four teachers from senior high schools in Palembang, South Sumatra, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. The regional focus may not fully represent the experiences of teachers across Indonesia. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the sample to include a diverse group of teachers from various regions and using a longitudinal approach to provide more generalizable insights on teacher agency and curriculum implementation.

4. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Educational leaders should create an environment that empowers teachers by giving them the autonomy to adapt the curriculum according to students' needs and local contexts. Additionally, it is essential to provide continuous professional development programs that focus on improving teachers' pedagogical and digital skills, particularly related to the Independent Curriculum and digital edupreneurship. The use of digital

tools should be encouraged by ensuring that teachers have access to relevant technology and training to support interactive, student-centered learning. Building a culture of collaboration and communication among teachers, school leaders, and policymakers is crucial for the successful implementation of the curriculum. Ensuring equal access to professional development opportunities for all teachers, regardless of gender or background, is also vital. Finally, an effective monitoring system should be established to assess the progress of curriculum implementation and provide ongoing support to teachers throughout the adaptation process.

5. CONCLUSION

The study highlights the critical role of teacher agency in adapting to Indonesia's Independent Curriculum. Teachers with high agency can effectively innovate and engage students, while those with low agency struggle to adjust. The research emphasizes the importance of ongoing support, relevant training, and adequate resources for teachers. It also suggests fostering collaboration and improving communication between schools and teachers. However, the study's limitations include a limited sample of English teachers from one region and a focus on teachers' perceptions without exploring broader curriculum implementations or external factors like school leadership and government policies.

Future research could address these limitations by expanding the scope to include different subjects and school contexts across Indonesia. Further studies could explore the broader impact of government policies and school leadership on teacher agency. Longitudinal studies could also provide valuable insights into the long-term effects of the Independent Curriculum on teacher competency development and student learning outcomes. Research into the interaction between teacher agency and structural support would further enrich the understanding of how to effectively facilitate curriculum changes. These areas of study would help address the research questions more comprehensively and open new opportunities for advancing teacher professional development in the context of the Independent Curriculum.

6. DECLARATIONS

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6.2. Author Contributions

Conceptualization: AT; Methodology: SW; Software: RP; Validation: KR and AT; Formal Analysis: SW and RP; Investigation: KR; Resources: AT; Data Curation: SW; Writing Original Draft Preparation: RP and KR; Writing Review and Editing: AT and SW; Visualization: RP; All authors, AT, SW, RP, KR, RS and RE have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

6.3. Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author.

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6.5. Declaration of Conflicting Interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest, known competing financial interests, or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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