

## Formative Assessment and Teacher Workload in Indonesian Primary Schools: A Systematic Literature Review

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### ABSTRAK

Formative assessment has become increasingly important in Indonesian primary schools following the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes continuous assessment and student-centered learning. However, most previous studies focused on learning outcomes, while the impact on teachers' workload remains limited. Therefore, this study examined the influence of formative assessment on teacher workload through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR).

This study applied a qualitative descriptive approach using the PRISMA 2020 protocol. Articles were collected from Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, and Google Scholar between 2021 and 2026. After the screening process, 21 studies were selected for analysis.

The findings indicate that formative assessment increases teachers' responsibilities in monitoring student progress, providing feedback, recording assessment results, and preparing reports. Digital and AI-assisted tools can improve efficiency, but challenges related to technological readiness, assessment literacy, and institutional support remain significant. Excessive assessment duties may also affect teachers' well-being and teaching effectiveness.

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## INTRODUCTION

Educational evaluation has experienced substantial transformation in recent years, particularly through the growing emphasis on formative assessment within student centered learning environments. Formative assessment is no longer viewed merely as an instrument for measuring academic performance, but rather as a continuous pedagogical process that supports learning improvement, instructional adjustment, and student engagement. Within primary education, formative assessment plays an important role in helping teachers monitor students' progress, identify learning difficulties, and provide feedback that encourages active participation and reflective learning.

The implementation of formative assessment has become increasingly prominent alongside curriculum reforms and competency based education policies in many countries. Recent educational studies indicate that formative assessment contributes positively to student motivation, classroom participation, and academic achievement when accompanied by effective feedback and appropriate instructional strategies (Asghair, 2025; Zainab et al., 2025). Nevertheless, several studies have also reported that the implementation of continuous assessment practices frequently creates additional instructional and administrative demands for teachers (Brozmanová et al., 2024; Morris et al., 2024). This issue is particularly visible in primary education because teachers are expected to simultaneously manage classroom instruction, student assessment, administrative reporting, and individualized feedback within limited instructional time.

In Indonesia, the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka has intensified the role of formative assessment in classroom practices. The curriculum emphasizes differentiated instruction, authentic learning experiences, and continuous evaluation to accommodate students' diverse learning needs. Consequently, teachers are required to conduct ongoing assessment activities while adapting instructional approaches to varied classroom conditions. However, the transition toward formative and competency based assessment systems has also generated new challenges related to assessment literacy, administrative management, and classroom implementation. Existing evidence suggests that many teachers continue to encounter difficulties in integrating formative assessment effectively into everyday instructional practices (Arsely et al., 2024; Clifton, 2023).

At the same time, teachers in Indonesian primary schools are facing increasingly complex workload pressures. Beyond teaching responsibilities, teachers are also required to prepare lesson modules, complete digital administration, document student progress, and produce various forms of assessment reports. These expanding responsibilities have transformed assessment practices into one of the major contributors to teachers' professional workload. Although educational technology and digital assessment systems are often promoted as solutions for improving efficiency, several studies indicate that technological adaptation may simultaneously create additional challenges associated with digital competence, training, and system management (Ginola & Amarulloh, 2025; Ilma & Rohmah, 2025).

Despite the growing number of studies discussing formative assessment and teacher workload, previous research remains fragmented. Most studies examine formative assessment in relation to student achievement, learning engagement, or instructional effectiveness, whereas research discussing its relationship with teacher workload remains limited. Similarly, studies concerning teacher workload often focus on curriculum implementation, administrative pressure, or technological adaptation without specifically examining the contribution of formative assessment practices to teachers' professional burden. Furthermore, very few systematic literature reviews have specifically explored this issue within the context of Indonesian primary education.

Therefore, this study aims to synthesize and critically examine the existing literature concerning formative assessment and teacher workload in Indonesian primary schools through a Systematic Literature Review approach. The novelty of this study lies in its integrative perspective that connects assessment practices, curriculum reform, administrative demands, and technological adaptation within a single analytical framework. This study also positions teacher workload not solely as an organizational issue, but as a pedagogical consequence emerging from ongoing educational reforms and assessment practices.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Formative assessment is widely understood as an ongoing assessment process designed to support student learning through continuous feedback and instructional adjustment. Unlike summative assessment, which primarily evaluates final learning outcomes, formative assessment focuses on monitoring learning progress during the instructional process. According to the Assessment for Learning framework, formative assessment enables teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses while encouraging active student participation in learning activities. Previous studies have shown that formative assessment can improve learning motivation, academic achievement, and classroom interaction when implemented systematically and supported by meaningful feedback mechanisms (Chen & Yi, 2026; Moran & Medina, 2026). Within primary education, formative assessment is also closely associated with differentiated learning because teachers are expected to accommodate students' diverse learning characteristics and developmental needs.

Teacher workload refers to the accumulation of professional responsibilities that teachers must complete within limited instructional and administrative time. In contemporary educational settings, teacher workload extends beyond classroom teaching and includes assessment administration, curriculum documentation, lesson preparation, student monitoring, and institutional reporting. Several studies indicate that excessive workload may negatively influence teachers' professional satisfaction, instructional quality, and emotional well being (Hunter & Nguyen, 2024; Mones & Amaral, 2025). In primary schools, workload challenges often become more complex because teachers are required to manage multiple subjects, diverse student needs, and continuous communication with parents and school administrators

simultaneously. Consequently, workload is increasingly recognized as an important factor affecting the sustainability of educational reform implementation.

Recent educational developments also highlight the growing relationship between formative assessment practices and teacher workload. Continuous assessment systems require teachers to provide regular feedback, maintain assessment records, monitor students' progress, and adjust instructional strategies continuously. Although these practices contribute positively to learning quality, they may also increase administrative and cognitive demands for teachers. Several studies report that teachers frequently perceive formative assessment as time consuming and administratively demanding, particularly in contexts characterized by large classroom populations and limited institutional support (Brozmanová et al., 2024; Francotte et al., 2023). The integration of digital technology and artificial intelligence into assessment practices further complicates this issue because teachers are expected to adapt to new technological systems while maintaining instructional effectiveness (Ginola & Amarulloh, 2025; Senduk, 2025). These conditions suggest that formative assessment and teacher workload are interconnected dimensions that require more comprehensive investigation, particularly within the context of Indonesian primary education.

## METHODOLOGY

This research applied a descriptive qualitative design by adopting a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as the central methodological approach. The purpose of the study was to explore the relationship between formative assessment practices and teacher workload in Indonesian primary schools through a systematic examination of previous empirical studies. The SLR method was considered suitable because it allows researchers to collect, evaluate, and integrate findings from earlier studies in a structured manner, thereby providing a broader understanding of current issues, emerging trends, and unresolved gaps within the field of primary education research (Snyder, 2019). Furthermore, the use of a systematic review framework contributes to greater transparency and consistency throughout the research process.

The review procedures were guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines developed by Page et al. (2021). The PRISMA framework was employed to ensure that the processes of identifying, screening, evaluating, and selecting studies were conducted systematically and transparently. This review concentrated on publications released between January 2021 and March 2026 in order to capture the most recent developments related to formative assessment implementation, assessment literacy, teacher administrative responsibilities, digital assessment practices, and educational reforms in primary schools.

The data collection process focused on scientific publications indexed nationally and internationally, including peer reviewed journal articles, conference proceedings, and doctoral dissertations. Relevant studies were retrieved from several academic databases, namely Scopus, ERIC, Google

Scholar, and Crossref metadata indexing. The search procedure utilized combinations of keywords such as “formative assessment,” “assessment for learning,” “teacher workload,” “administrative burden,” “primary school,” and “Indonesia.” These keyword combinations were searched within the Title, Abstract, and Keywords sections of each database to increase the relevance and accuracy of the retrieved studies.

The article selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 protocol. Initially, 427 records were identified from database searches and supplementary sources. After duplicate checking, 351 records remained and proceeded to the title and abstract screening stage. During screening, 247 records were excluded because they did not correspond with the objectives of the review. Subsequently, 104 full text articles were examined for eligibility. Among these studies, 83 articles were excluded due to inadequate methodological rigor, insufficient relevance to formative assessment or teacher workload, inaccessible full texts, or unsuitable educational contexts. Ultimately, 21 studies met all inclusion requirements and were retained for qualitative synthesis.

The inclusion criteria covered studies published in English between January 2021 and March 2026 that discussed formative assessment, classroom assessment, teacher workload, assessment literacy, feedback practices, or assessment related administrative responsibilities within primary education settings. Meanwhile, studies concentrating solely on higher education, secondary education, editorials, book reviews, and non peer reviewed publications were excluded from the review.

Data extraction was conducted systematically by documenting information related to authorship, publication year, study objectives, methodological design, participant characteristics, dimensions of formative assessment, workload indicators, and principal findings. The selected studies were then analyzed using thematic synthesis techniques to identify recurring patterns, conceptual relationships, and emerging issues associated with formative assessment and teacher workload in Indonesian primary schools.

**Table 1. PRISMA 2020 Review Summary**

<b>Review Stage</b>	<b>Number of Records</b>
Records identified	427
Records after duplicate removal	351
Records excluded during title and abstract screening	247
Full text articles assessed for eligibility	104
Full text articles excluded	83
Studies included in qualitative synthesis	21

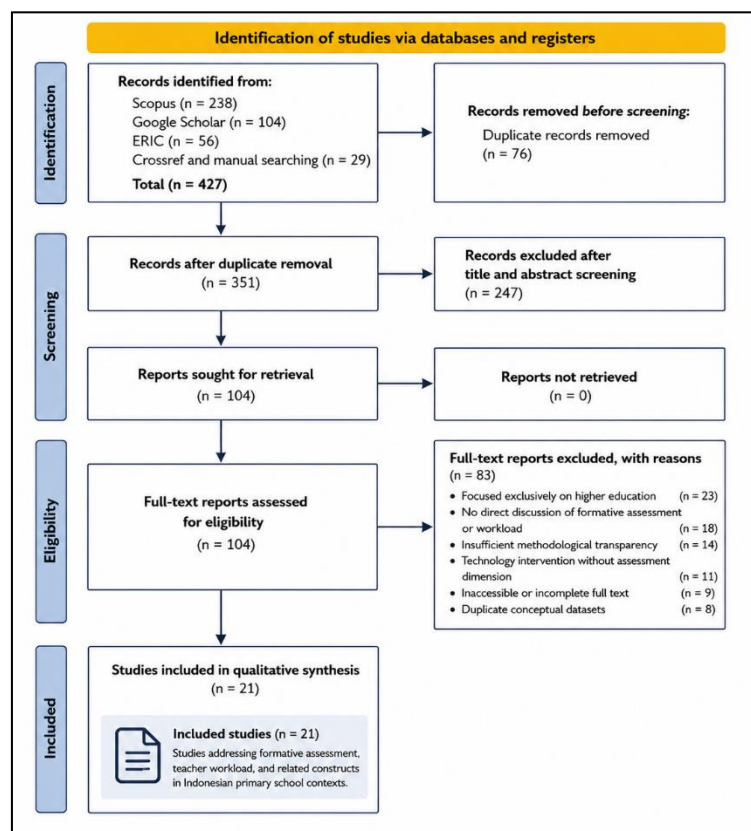


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Formative Assessment and Teacher Workload in Indonesian Primary Schools

## RESEARCH RESULT

The data analyzed in this review were derived from empirical studies examining formative assessment practices and teacher workload within primary education settings, particularly in relation to Indonesian elementary schools. The selected publications were reviewed systematically to identify common trends, administrative demands, instructional implications, and unresolved issues surrounding the implementation of formative assessment. The analysis of the 21 selected studies further revealed several recurring themes related to assessment responsibilities, feedback practices, assessment literacy, technology integration, and teachers' emotional workload.

Table 2. Summary of reviewed studies (n = 21)

No.	Researchers & Year	Journal/ Source	Main Research Findings
1	Clifton (2023)	University of Maryland Dissertation	Revealed that formative assessment implementation under Kurikulum Merdeka increased teachers' assessment documentation responsibilities.

2	Mones & Amaral (2025)	International Journal of Elementary Education	Found that multitasking demands and administrative assessment duties intensified teacher workload in Indonesian schools.
3	Brozmanová et al. (2024)	ICERI2024 Proceedings	Reported that student assessment activities significantly contributed to perceived teacher burden in primary education.
4	Morris et al. (2024)	Oxford Review of Education	Demonstrated that marking and feedback activities consumed substantial teacher time despite digital support systems.
5	Francotte et al. (2023)	Frontiers in Education	Found that continuous monitoring of student progress created additional administrative pressure for teachers.
6	Hunter & Nguyen (2024)	Curriculum Perspectives	Identified that curriculum planning and assessment requirements increased emotional and professional pressure among teachers.
7	Senduk (2025)	DEVOTIONIS	Reported that teachers experienced challenges in managing digital classroom assessment systems effectively.
8	Zainab et al. (2025)	ASSAJ	Found that school based assessment positively influenced student achievement but increased teacher assessment responsibilities.
9	Moran & Medina (2026)	International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education	Highlighted the importance of formative feedback in supporting student engagement and learning development.

10	Rochaminah et al. (2026)	Journal of Curriculum Studies Research	Revealed that teachers required stronger assessment literacy to implement problem posing assessment effectively.
11	Ilma & Rohmah (2025)	Cogent Education	Reported that teachers faced technological and pedagogical barriers in integrating AI and digital tools into assessment practices.
12	Fisher et al. (2025)	Educational research report	Found that digital innovation potentially reduced workload when supported by teacher training and institutional readiness.
13	Arsely et al. (2024)	JPI: Jurnal Pustaka Indonesia	Demonstrated that Kurikulum Merdeka expanded teachers' classroom assessment responsibilities.
14	Soko (2024)	Open University of Tanzania Dissertation	Identified class size as a major factor affecting assessment effectiveness and teacher workload.
15	Tadesse (2026)	Education and Urban Society	Found that overcrowded classrooms complicated formative assessment implementation and classroom monitoring.
16	Kamrozzaman & Mohan (2025)	International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science	Reported that post pandemic blended learning increased teachers' adaptation burden in assessment practices.
17	Ginola & Amarulloh (2025)	Journal on Smart Learning Technologies	Revealed both benefits and challenges of AI generated administrative support for Indonesian teachers.
18	Song & Mukundan (2025)	Frontiers in Education	Highlighted that assessment practices were strongly influenced by

19	Chihodzi et al. (2023)	Pythagoras	contextual and pedagogical factors. Found that assessment feedback practices in mathematics classrooms often lacked meaningful pedagogical function.
20	Khan et al. (2025)	Language Testing in Asia	Demonstrated that contextual factors strongly influenced formative assessment implementation and washback effects.
21	Selemani-Mbewe (2023)	University of Pretoria Dissertation	Reported that continuous assessment implementation required strategic pedagogical adaptation and teacher readiness.

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## DISCUSSION

The findings of this review indicate that formative assessment has evolved beyond a purely pedagogical activity and increasingly functions as an organizational responsibility within primary education. This finding reinforces earlier arguments suggesting that continuous assessment practices frequently expand teachers' professional and administrative duties, particularly in relation to documentation, reporting, and classroom monitoring (Brozmanová et al., 2024; Morris et al., 2024). In this context, formative assessment should be understood not only as an instructional strategy but also as a contributor to teacher workload within contemporary educational systems.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings support the *Assessment for Learning* (AfL) framework, which conceptualizes assessment as an integral component of the learning process rather than merely an instrument for measuring academic achievement (Chen & Yi, 2026; Moran & Medina, 2026). However, the present review extends this perspective by demonstrating that the effectiveness of formative assessment is strongly influenced by contextual variables such as teacher readiness, assessment literacy, workload distribution, and institutional support. This suggests that successful formative assessment implementation depends not only on pedagogical knowledge but also on broader organizational conditions.

The implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka appears to intensify this complexity. Although the policy promotes differentiated instruction and continuous evaluation, it simultaneously increases teachers' classroom assessment responsibilities (Clifton, 2023; Arsely et al., 2024). Similar findings have been reported by Mones and Amaral (2025), who found that multitasking demands significantly intensified teacher workload in Indonesian schools. These findings

imply that curriculum reform may unintentionally create additional professional pressure when institutional support systems are insufficient.

Another important issue concerns the contradiction between pedagogical ideals and classroom realities. Formative feedback is widely recognized as essential for improving student learning outcomes and engagement (Moran & Medina, 2026), yet several studies indicate that teachers frequently struggle to provide individualized feedback because of limited instructional time and large class sizes (Francotte et al., 2023; Soko, 2024; Tadesse, 2026). This demonstrates that the quality of formative assessment cannot be separated from structural classroom conditions.

Technology integration also presents a dual effect. On one hand, digital assessment tools and AI-assisted systems may improve efficiency and reduce repetitive administrative work (Fisher et al., 2025; Ginola & Amarulloh, 2025). On the other hand, inadequate technological readiness and limited digital competence may create additional professional burdens for teachers (Ilma & Rohmah, 2025; Senduk, 2025). Therefore, technology should not be viewed as an automatic solution, but as a supporting mechanism requiring adequate training and institutional investment.

The emotional consequences identified in this review further strengthen concerns regarding sustainability. Excessive assessment-related responsibilities were associated with stress, fatigue, and declining professional satisfaction among teachers (Hunter & Nguyen, 2024; Mones & Amaral, 2025). These findings suggest that teacher workload should be treated as a critical policy issue because prolonged professional pressure may negatively affect both teacher well-being and instructional quality.

The originality of this review lies in its integrated perspective combining pedagogical, organizational, technological, and policy-related dimensions within a single analytical framework. While previous studies often examined formative assessment effectiveness, digital assessment, or teacher workload separately, this review demonstrates that these dimensions are deeply interconnected in the context of Indonesian primary education. As a result, this study contributes a broader understanding of how formative assessment policies influence not only classroom learning processes but also teachers' professional experiences and institutional realities.

## CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review demonstrates that formative assessment has become an increasingly important component of primary education, particularly following the implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka in Indonesia. Although formative assessment supports student-centered learning and continuous evaluation, its implementation also expands teachers' professional responsibilities through increased documentation, monitoring, reporting, and feedback activities. As a result, formative assessment contributes not only to instructional improvement but also to growing teacher workload.

The findings further reveal that the effectiveness of formative assessment is strongly influenced by assessment literacy, institutional support, classroom

conditions, and technological readiness. Digital assessment systems and AI-supported tools provide opportunities to improve efficiency, yet insufficient training and limited technological competence may create additional professional pressure for teachers. Furthermore, excessive assessment responsibilities may negatively affect teachers' emotional well-being, including stress, fatigue, and declining professional satisfaction.

Overall, this review highlights the need for balanced educational policies that support both effective formative assessment practices and teacher workload management. Sustainable implementation requires adequate professional development, realistic administrative expectations, and supportive institutional systems to ensure that formative assessment can improve learning quality without creating excessive burdens for teachers.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Schools and educational policymakers need to develop a more balanced system for implementing formative assessment by considering teachers' workload capacity. The implementation of Kurikulum Merdeka should be accompanied by simplified assessment administration, reduced excessive documentation demands, and adequate institutional support so that teachers can implement formative assessment more effectively. In addition, professional development programs for teachers should focus on efficient formative assessment strategies, including feedback management, the use of digital assessment technologies, and classroom time management. In this way, formative assessment can continue to support learning quality without creating excessive workload pressures for teachers.

## **FURTHER RESEARCH**

Future research should examine the relationship between formative assessment practices and teacher workload using broader methodological approaches, including mixed methods, longitudinal studies, and comparative designs across different educational regions and school levels. Further investigations may also explore the effectiveness of digital assessment systems and AI-supported technologies in reducing administrative burdens while maintaining assessment quality. In addition, future studies are encouraged to analyze moderating variables such as assessment literacy, teaching experience, institutional support, and classroom size to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the sustainability of formative assessment implementation in Indonesian primary education contexts.

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