

What are the Difficulties of Teachers in Implementing Integrated Thematic Learning on the Previous Curriculum in Elementary Schools?

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Abstract. The educational curriculum is continuously changing according to technological developments. The Merdeka Curriculum is here to perfect the implementation of the 2013 curriculum. Implementation of the 2013 curriculum at the elementary school level is carried out through integrated thematic learning. This study aims to analyze the difficulties faced by teachers in implementing integrated thematic learning in the 2013 curriculum in elementary schools. This research uses a mixed-methods approach and uses a literature review technique to examine the difficulties of implementing integrated thematic learning. This mixed-methods study involved 133 elementary school teachers in Payakumbuh City as respondents. The research instrument was a closed statement questionnaire about the difficulties faced by the teacher and an open question questionnaire about the reasons and causes of the difficulties. The results of the research show that the main difficulties experienced by teachers in planning, implementing, and assessing integrated thematic learning are that teachers have difficulty in preparing learning media to facilitate the achievement of basic competencies (39.9%), teachers have difficulty connecting concepts between subjects so that the separation between subjects in the lesson is not very clear (50.4%), and teachers have difficulty assessing student portfolios (47.4%). Teachers say that they find it difficult to determine the right learning model, method, or strategy that covers all the material and students' needs. Teachers also have difficulty implementing integrated thematic learning with several subjects that require a lot of time.

Keywords: Teacher Difficulties, Integrated Thematic Learning, Elementary Schools

1. Introduction

Primary education in Indonesia has experienced various curriculum developments. Curriculum change is one of the systemic changes that can improve and restore learning. (Nurwati, 2022). The curriculum 2013 used to be the main curriculum implemented in schools, but in the 2022/2023 elementary schools will begin implementing the Merdeka Curriculum (Alimuddin, 2023; Jusuf & Sobari, 2022). Nadiem Makarim changed and established the Merdeka Curriculum as a refinement of the 2013 curriculum on December 10, 2019 (Rahmadayanti & Hartoyo, 2022). The Merdeka Curriculum is an idea for the transformation of Indonesian education to produce superior future generations. The Merdeka Curriculum, explained by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2021), focuses on essential material and the development of student competence in its phases so that students can learn more deeply, meaningfully, and enjoyably and are not in a hurry (Angga et al., 2022; Jusuf & Sobari, 2022). In the 2013 curriculum, which emphasizes thematic-integrative learning, the teacher acts as a facilitator for students; learning will be student-centered with the assistance of the teacher. Every implementation of curriculum policies imposed by the government is largely determined by the ability of teachers to implement them correctly (Nurwati, 2022). Therefore, the teacher is the most important human resource for implementing the 2013 curriculum. Teacher understanding and competence are very necessary for curriculum implementation because, without the support of competent teachers, the educational process will not be achieved (Lestari, 2023).

1.1. Problem Statement

The Merdeka Curriculum is here to perfect the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum. The implementation of the 2013 curriculum at the elementary school level is carried out through integrated thematic learning, namely learning that uses themes to link several subjects (Ananda & Fadhilaturrahmi, 2018; Angga et al., 2022; Rini Kristiantari, 2015). In the process of carrying out integrated thematic learning in elementary schools, all subjects will be integrated according to their respective principles (Fitria et al., 2020). This learning approach is applied to grades I through VI by combining various competencies from several subjects into a theme (Bangsawan et al., 2020; Nuraini & Abidin, 2020). With this integration, it is hoped that it can improve the quality of learning, increase student interest, improve critical thinking skills, and make learning more meaningful (Sari et al., 2018).

Integrated learning is absolutely necessary and highly demanded by the teacher's expertise in planning and designing learning and carrying out the learning process properly according to the design he makes. Thus, it will have an impact on student learning success (Fitria, 2014). In the implementation of integrated thematic learning in the 2013 curriculum in elementary schools, there are still various problems (Lestari, 2023; Lubis et al., 2021; Telaumbanua, 2014). The reality is that many teachers do not really understand thematic learning. In fact, there are some teachers who do not understand at all how to implement thematic learning, starting from the planning, process, and evaluation of thematic learning. This will certainly have a negative impact on the learning process that occurs in elementary schools (Ananda & Fadhilaturrahmi, 2018). Therefore, the problems and difficulties of implementing integrated thematic learning in schools are interesting things to discuss.

1.2. Related Research

Since the first implementation, the implementation of integrated learning has not gone smoothly. Until now, there have been many studies conducted in various regions of Indonesia related to the difficulties and barriers faced by teachers in applying integrated thematic learning (Nuraini & Abidin, 2020).

This is supported by the results of research Usriyah & Prayogo (2018) the integrated thematic explanation exists on the use of learning methods, class management, selection, and use of media, but is not maximum; most teachers have difficulties in the assessment process; and the means and resources of learning are not adequate.

Then the results of the study from Oktafiani et al. (2020) explain that teachers have difficulties carrying out authentic assessment due to a lack of time allocation, inadequate school facilities, many assessments put in place, limitations of IT mastery, and less supportive pupils.

Further supported by research from Muhith (2018) the problem of implementing integrated thematic learning is that teachers are not fully professional, teachers have difficulty providing integrated understanding to students, subjects are converted and mixed, and learning activities are not completely in accordance with the theory of implementing integrated thematic learning.

As a result of research from Sari et al. (2018) the obstacles experienced by teachers in the application of integrated thematic learning include the preparation of the Learning Implementation Plan, which takes a long time because in the Curriculum 2013 this uses thematic, less varied teaching styles, and only guided teachers' books, so that students are less enthusiastic, the presence of students who are less courageous to ask when the learning process, prasarana, means to be done alternately, and complicated assessment because of the many assessments that teachers should do every day.

Apart from explaining teachers' difficulties in implementing integrated thematic learning, this research also discusses the extent of teachers' understanding of integrated thematic learning. Analyze more deeply teachers' difficulties during planning, implementation and assessment. Finally, this research discusses how teachers can avoid these difficulties by presenting an ideal view of the problem.

1.3. Research Objectives

The aim of this research is to analyze the difficulties faced by teachers in implementing thematic learning in the 2013 curriculum in elementary schools. Although so far a lot of similar research has been found, the authors consider several factors that distinguish this study from previous research, including focusing on the problems of planning, implementation, and evaluation of integrated thematic implementation as well as the causes of such problems.

2. Theoretical Framework

A curriculum can be defined as a set of plans and how to set goals, content, and teaching materials, as well as the methods used to guide their implementation (Supriani et al., 2022). In the 2013 curriculum, using integrated thematic learning with a scientific approach Thematic learning can be defined as an activity of learning that involves integrating the material of several subjects into one theme or talk topic (Bangsawan et al., 2020; Hidayah et al., 2015).

Thematic learning as a model of learning has the following characteristics: being focused on the student, providing hands-on experience, the separation of subjects not being so clear, presenting concepts of various subjects, being flexible, learning results according to the interests and needs of students, and using the principle of learning while playing and having fun (Usriyah & Prayogo, 2018). In fact, thematic learning implementation is still considered to be a very complicated thing for most teachers. The complicated assumption is influenced by the teacher's view of himself because he feels less experienced, has no comprehensive knowledge, and lacks motivation to learn and try, so many teachers still feel difficulty in learning planning and implementation. Even teachers are confused about conducting learning evaluation because authentic assessment requires the persistence, rigor, and patience of teachers in implementation (Muhith, 2018). Thematic learning problems can be categorized into the following stages:

2.1. Integrated Thematic Learning Planning

Learning planning also affects the quality or non-quality of the learning process managed by the teacher. The teaching equipment should be prepared by the teacher before the teaching activity. Referring to Regulation Of The Minister Of Education And Culture Number 81 A of 2013 on the Implementation of the Curriculum, teachers are obliged to draw up a learning plan before making a breakdown in the classroom (Dimara, 2022). Unfortunately, not all teachers are aware of this, so the learning they conducted was meaningless. In preparing for learning, teachers should choose strategies for effective learning through a student-centered approach so that students are able to play an active role. This should also be supported with learning methods that are not only one but must vary so that the child is not bored (Bangsawan et al., 2020).

2.2. Integrated Thematic Learning Levels

At the stage of the implementation of teaching, the teacher applies what has been planned in the planning of learning. implementation learning Thematic curriculum 2013 is divided into three parts: initial activities, core activities, and final activities. These three activities are structured in unity in the implementation of learning and cannot be separated so that learning goes well (Bangsawan et al., 2020; Sari et al., 2018).

The stage of implementation, at this stage, begins with the stage: 1) The presentation of the theme: the way the theme is presented in integrated learning is determined by how the topic is chosen. If the theme is selected by the teacher, then the presentation of the theme will be followed by the teacher's explanation. When the subject is chosen by the student, the presentation of the topic is done by submitting questions to the student about the things they want to learn, and so on. 2) Opinion curah is an activity that is closely related to the determination of the theme within the sub-theme. On this occasion, the students actively communicate about the things they want to learn, and the teacher writes the opinions of the students on the board so that a network of themes and sub-themes is formed. 3) Creating a study contract: for high-class students, they are directed to create a learning contract in

accordance with the sub-theme they are studying. But for the students of the lower class, the teacher directly continues with the learning activities based on the steps that exist in the core activities in the learning plan. 4) Data collection and analysis: this phase includes exploration activities of themes or sub-themes according to the chosen sources and activities. 5) The presentation of learning outcomes is the last step in thematic learning. This phase is often called the culmination. In this step, students are invited to present their learning outcomes, either through exhibition, demonstration, or promotion (Ananda & Fadhilaturrehmi, 2018).

2.3. Integrated Thematic Learning Assessment

At the thematic learning assessment stage, teachers perform assessments to measure and contain the student's learning outcomes and to know if the material has been well delivered to the student (Bangsawan et al., 2020). Permendikbud No. 65 of 2013 on the Basic and Secondary Education Process Standards stipulates that learning is designed in the form of a curriculum and Learning Implementation Plan (RPP), with evaluation of the learning process using an authentic assessment approach that evaluates student preparedness, processes, and learning outcomes integrally (Oktafiani et al., 2020).

In integrative thematic learning, authentic assessment (authentic evaluation) is used, which is the real assessment of students carried out by teachers to gather information about the development of students' learning outcomes (Muhith, 2018). In integrative thematic learning, authentic assessment (authentic evaluation) is used, which is the real assessment of students carried out by teachers to gather information about the development of students' learning outcomes (see Table 1).

Table 1. The Main Problems of Teachers in Integrated Thematic Learning

No	Main Component	Indicator
1	Integrated Thematic Learning Planning	1.1 Difficulties in the preparation of the topic of learning 1.2 Difficulties in the preparation of the RPP 1.3 Difficulties in the preparation of media learning
2	Level of implementation of thematic learning integrated	2.1 Difficulty in activating classes 2.2 Difficulties in the application of learning methods 2.3 Difficulty in delivering materials suitable for integrative thematic learning
3	Integrated thematic learning assessment level	3.1 Difficulty in conducting observation assessments 3.2 Difficulty in performing performance assessments 3.3 Difficulty in assessing attitudes 3.4 Difficulties in carrying out portfolio evaluation 3.5 Difficulties in evaluating learning outcomes

Source: (Muhith, 2018; Nuraini & Abidin, 2020; Suprpto et al., 2021)

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

This research uses a mixed-methods approach with descriptive types to describe the difficulties faced by elementary school teachers in the City of Payakumbuh in implementing integrated thematic learning in elementary schools. A mixed method is a research method that combines quantitative and qualitative methods to obtain more comprehensive, valid, reliable, and objective data. Through the combination of the two methods, the data obtained from the

research will be more valid because data whose truth cannot be validated by quantitative methods will be confirmed by qualitative methods, or vice versa (Kurniasari, 2020).

3.2. Respondent

This research involved 133 elementary school teachers in Payakumbuh City. Every school has three to six teachers who participate in the questionnaire. 100% of the education is strata one. The age of the respondents ranged from 25 to 59 years. The average respondent has more than 10 years of teaching experience and has implemented integrated thematic learning.

3.3. Data Collection

The tools used in this study are a closed statement questionnaire and open question questionnaire that are distributed to all respondents via the Microsoft Form. The program consists of four parts: the identity of the respondent, the teacher's understanding of thematic learning, the difficulty of the teacher at the preparation stage, the difficulties of the teacher at the implementation stage, and the teacher's difficulty at the integrated thematic preparation level. In the closed question section, use the Likert scale with an interval of 4 answers: "very agree", "agree", "disagree", and "disagree" (see Table 2).

Table 2. Guidelines for Categorization of Questionnaire Statements

Skor	Category
76% - 100%	Strongly Agree
51% - 75%	Agree
26% - 50%	Disagree
1% - 25%	Strongly Disagree

3.4. Data Analysis

The data obtained from the closed questionnaire in this study was further analyzed using percentage descriptive techniques. The percentage value obtained can describe the level of difficulty faced by teachers in implementing integrative thematic learning. The formula used is as follows:

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

Where p: is the description of the percentage, n: is the number of scores obtained, and N: is the ideal score. In this study, n is the total number of respondents who answered the option being calculated, and N is the sum of all respondents responding to the statement item being computed. While the written responses obtained from the open lift are analyzed with three phases of content analysis techniques, namely the preparation, organizing, and reporting (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The preparatory phase of the analysis is carried out by reading and understanding the written responses of each respondent in the three stages of learning implementation (Planning, Implementation and Evaluation). Next, the organizational phase is carried out by defining keywords for each stage and categorizing those keywords based on similarity in difficulty characteristics. These two phases were conducted by both authors by discussing them together. The reporting phase is carried out by displaying the difficulty category and selecting one of the written responses as a quotation that is considered to represent the category (Nuraini & Abidin, 2020).

4. Findings

The exhibition of the results of the research is carried out in four sections: the comprehension part of integrated thematic learning, the planning part of the study, the implementation of the learning, and the evaluation part of the learning. For each of these sections, the percentage of respondents' answers for each item of the statement is presented in the table.

4.1. Teacher's Understanding of Integrative Thematic Learning

The Teacher's Understanding of Integrated Thematic Learning section contains three closed statements. The three statements consist of statements to assess their understanding of integrative thematic learning, the benefits and purposes of such learning, as well as the methods of applying such learning in the classroom. Table 3 shows the total and percentage of each answer option for each statement item.

Table 3. Total and percentage of respondents based on the level of understanding of integrated thematic learning

No	Item Statement	Srongly Agree	Agree	Disagre	Srongly Disagree	Totally
1	I understand the concept of integrative thematic learning.	53 (39,8%)	80 (60,2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	133
2	I understand the benefits and purposes of integrated thematic learning for both lower and upper-class students.	68 (51,1%)	65 (48,9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	133
3	I understand the method of integrated thematic learning.	48 (36,1%)	85 (63,9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	133

Respondent results from closed statements based on tables stated that the teacher's understanding of the understanding, benefits, and purposes, as well as the arrangements for the application of thematic learning, are well integrated. From the written responses, respondents found that, in general, the understanding of teachers about integrated thematic learning is quite understandable. Many of the respondents explained what "integrated thematic learning" is, as one respondent stated:

"Integrated thematic learning is learning that is packaged in the form of themes based on the load of several subjects that are combined or integrated"

4.2. Teacher Difficulties at the Level of Integrated Thematic Learning Planning

There are four statement items that represent indicators of teacher difficulty in the integrative thematic learning planning stage. The four indicators consist of difficulties in determining learning themes, drawing up learning implementation plans, using concrete learning strategies, and preparing learning media. Table 4 presents the total and percentage of respondents based on their answer options for each statement item. Overall, it can be said that of the total respondents who gave answers, more than 40% had difficulty with any item in the planning stage of learning. More specifically, items 2 and 4 show the highest percentage of difficulty, i.e., difficulty in drawing up a learning implementation plan and preparing the appropriate learning media.

Tabel 4. Total and Percentage of Respondents Based on Difficulty Levels in the Planning Stage of Integrated Thematic Learning

No	Item Statement	Srongly Agree	Agree	Disagre	Srongly Disagree	Totally
1	I have difficulty determining the thematic learning theme	0 (0%)	26 (19,6%)	93 (69,9%)	14 (10,5%)	133
2	It is not easy for me to draw up an integrated thematic learning implementation plan	7 (5,2%)	30 (22,6%)	68 (51,1%)	28 (21,1%)	133

3	I am skilled in using concrete learning strategies that facilitate student interaction with learning materials and resources	39 (29,3%)	66 (49,6%)	26 (19,6%)	2 (1,5%)	133
4	I have difficulty preparing learning media to streamline the achievement of basic competencies	53 (39,9%)	39 29,3%	35 (26,3%)	6 (4,5%)	133
5	In my opinion, determining assessment procedures and instruments in accordance with integrated thematic learning is not easy	32 (24,0%)	71 (53,4%)	25 (18,8%)	5 (3,8%)	133

From the written responses, it was found that the difficulties encountered by respondents at the planning stage of learning can be grouped into four categories. First, the teacher has difficulty blending materials and linking one topic with other topics related to themes in integrated thematic learning. As stated by the respondents:

"The difficulty is connecting one lesson with another and putting together integrated learning steps so that they are not separated"

The second difficulty that is natural to teachers in planning integrated thematic learning is that it is still difficult to determine the model, method, or learning strategy that is appropriate and suited to the material and needs of students. As stated by one respondent:

"The difficulty I encountered at the planning stage was determining the model or method of learning that suited the needs of the student"

Third, it is difficult to identify a medium that can cover all subjects within a subject. According to them, this also affects teachers ability to apply concrete learning in the classroom because one of the alternatives to creating concrete study and creating a good interaction between students and existing learning resources is by using the media.

"Difficulty in finding media that can be used for learning that covers all subjects in an integrated thematic"

Then the fourth difficulty is determining the correct allocation of time in one study. They say that learning about them takes a lot of time. While it has been determined to teach one lesson a day, sometimes the goal of learning is not achieved. As stated by one of the respondents:

"The difficulty I encountered was the difficulty in setting the right time allocation for learning because, in thematic learning planning, it takes a lot of time"

4.3. Teacher Difficulties in the Implementation of Integrated Thematic Learning

Teacher difficulties at the implementation stage of integrated thematic learning were measured using 10 indicators described in 10 statements. Difficulty indicators at this stage of implementation include difficulties in asking students questions in class, asking questions that can catch students' curiosity, using discussion methods, delivering material related to everyday life, involving students in using media, connecting concepts between learning, focusing learning on themes, systematic delivery of material, presenting learning in an integrated way, and using variations of learning methods. Table 5 shows the total and percentage of respondents for each statement.

Tabel 5. Total and Percentage of Respondents Based on Difficulty Levels in the Implementation Stage of Integrated Thematic Learning

No	Item Statement	Srongly Agree	Agree	Disagre	Srongly Disagree	Totally
1	In the implementation of the study, I have difficulty asking students about parts of the material that they do not understand	11 (8,3%)	53 (39,8%)	63 (47,4%)	6 (4,5%)	133
2	It's not easy for me to ask questions that can catch students' curiosity about the concepts they've learned	2 (1,5%)	39 (29,3%)	79 (59,4)	13 (9,8%)	133
3	I have trouble using discussion methods in learning	5 (3,8%)	48 (36,1%)	53 (39,8%)	27 (20,3%)	133
4	I am controlled when delivering materials related to everyday life	1 (0,8%)	13 (9,8%)	93 (69,9%)	26 (19,5%)	133
5	I find it difficult to involve students in the use of media tools during learning	3 (2,3%)	16 (12,0%)	86 (64,7%)	28 (21,0%)	133
6	I have been overwhelmed by trying to connect concepts between subjects so that the separation between them is not too clear	67 (50,4%)	23 (17,3%)	32 (24,0%)	11 (8,3%)	133
7	It's not easy for me to focus on learning	9 (6,7%)	48 (36,2%)	73 (54,9%)	3 (2,2%)	133
8	I have difficulty delivering teaching materials clearly and systematically	3 (2,2%)	14 (10,6%)	91 (68,4%)	25 (18,8%)	133
9	I feel incapable of teaching subjects in an integrated way	59 (44,4%)	1 (0,8%)	53 (39,8%)	20 (15,0%)	133
10	I have trouble using varied learning methods	48 (36,1%)	8 (6,0%)	63 (47,4%)	14 (10,5%)	133

At this stage of implementation of learning, the most difficulty experienced by respondents lies in the indicators of linking concepts between subjects (50,4%); I feel unskilled in teaching the subject in an integrated manner (44,4%); and I have difficulty using varied learning methods (36,1%). Based on the written responses of several respondents who acknowledged having difficulties, according to them, the materials to be taught are sometimes very different and irrelevant, as well as each subject having conceptual differences, and the teacher must study the relationships between the other concepts. Teachers acknowledge the lack of skills they currently have; some even say they have never tried to blend concepts between subjects. As stated by one of the following respondents:

"I have trouble connecting concepts in subjects so that they don't look separate."

Furthermore, from written responses, several complaints of respondents are obtained related to the causes of difficulties they encounter in implementing thematic learning, i.e., limited time when implementing the learning that is relevant to them and the learning material that is displayed in the learning is only small but repeated in the next learning.

4.4. Teacher Difficulties at the Level of Integrated Thematic Learning Assessment

Teachers' difficulty at the integrated thematic learning assessment stage is measured using 5 indicators, which include difficulty in the assessment of observation, performance assessment, attitude evaluation, portfolio assessment and evaluation of learning outcomes. Table 6 shows the number and percentage of respondents who have difficulty and who have no difficulty for each indicator.

Tabel 6. Total and Percentage of Respondents Based on Difficulty Levels in the Assessment Stage of Integrated Thematic Learning

No	Item Statement	Srongly Agree	Agree	Disagre	Srongly Disagree	Totally
1	Making an observational assessment of students is not an easy thing for me	11 (8,3%)	77 (57,8%)	33 (24,8%)	12 (9,1%)	133
2	I have trouble assessing the performance of the player	15 (11,3%)	45 (33,8%)	67 (50,4%)	6 (4,5%)	133
3	I'm in charge of evaluating the behavior of the students	11 (8,3%)	43 (32,3%)	67 (50,3%)	12 (9,1%)	133
4	I find it difficult to evaluate the portfolio of participants	63 (47,4%)	25 (18,8%)	36 (27,1%)	9 (6,7%)	133
5	I find it difficult to evaluate the learning outcomes of the students	2 (1,5%)	32 (24,1%)	87 (65,4%)	12 (9,0%)	133

At this stage of evaluation, respondents experienced dominant difficulties in evaluating the portfolios of students (47.4%). The lowest level of difficulty was in evaluating the learning outcomes of students (1,5%). Based on written responses, some of the difficulties faced by teachers in the integrated thematic assessment process include the difficulty of making the assessment instruments suitable for learning on a particular theme and selecting the assessment tools that correspond to the competence of students. In addition, there are many teachers who find it difficult to evaluate portfolios, as one of the respondents revealed:

"I have trouble doing portfolio assessments because not all of the students in his class can afford to be able to make portfolios properly"

The next difficulty that many teachers feel in the integrated thematic learning assessment is the evaluation of thematic learning, which ultimately remains the presentation of values per subject. This makes the learner confused at the time of learning, not mentioning the subject, but at the moment of assessing the value acquired in each subject. In addition to assessing knowledge (cognitive), teachers also feel difficulties in assessing attitudes (affective) and skills (psychomotor), as expressed by respondents:

"It's still hard for me to evaluate work demonstrations, attitudes, and behaviors."

5. Discussion

Based on the findings obtained from the results of the study, there are some major difficulties that teachers encounter in implementing integrated thematic learning. The first problem is the difficulty in connecting concepts between subjects so that the separation between them is not too clear. This is due to the lack of skills in mixing concepts between subjects, even though according to them, the materials to be taught are sometimes very different and have nothing to do with each other. Same with the research done (Muhith, 2018) the problem of implementing integrated thematic learning is that teachers are not fully professional, they have difficulties providing comprehensive understanding to students, they convert subjects and mix maps, and their learning activities are not completely in accordance with the theory of implementing integrated thematic learning.

The second problem is that teachers have difficulty preparing learning media to streamline the achievement of basic competences and cover all subjects in integrated thematics. This also results in teachers applying concrete learning in the classroom because one of the alternatives to creating concrete study and creating a good interaction between students and existing learning resources is by using such media. In implementing integrated learning, adequate learning facilities and infrastructure are needed to achieve basic competencies optimally. If not, the process of implementing integrated learning will not run smoothly, and this will, of course, affect the learning outcomes achieved by students (Dewi et al., 2022).

The third problem is determining the correct time allocation for one study. They say that learning about them takes a lot of time. While it has been determined to teach one lesson a day, sometimes the goal of learning is not achieved. As stated by one of the respondents. In the investigation carried out (Oktafiani et al., 2020) it was found that teachers have difficulties carrying out authentic assessments due to a lack of time allocation, inadequate school facilities, many assessments, limitations of technology mastery, and less supportive students. As a teacher and learning evaluator, you must take strategic steps to improve and perfect the implementation of thematic learning in elementary schools to create an effective learning atmosphere that meets your needs (Safitri et al., 2024).

The problems encountered in integrated thematic learning are caused by several factors, such as the minimum understanding of teachers in drawing up the implementation plan of integrated thematic learning, inadequate prasarana means, and a lack of teacher preparation in learning (Dimara, 2022). Teachers can avoid these difficulties by developing competence in assessing, improving the administration system, and conducting dissemination with experts regarding technological advances in systematic grade recording (Diani & Sukartono, 2022).

6. Conclusion

The results of this research have shown that there are still difficulties faced by elementary school teachers in applying integrated thematic learning. Although almost all teachers in this study stated that they have already understood the understanding and benefits of integrative thematic learning, many of them still face difficulties because they do not have sufficient skills to implement this integrated thematic learning. The three main difficulties experienced by teachers in planning, implementing, and assessing integrated thematic learning are teachers having difficulty preparing learning media to facilitate the achievement of basic competencies (39.9%) and difficulty connecting concepts between subjects so that there is no separation between subjects. too clear (50.4%), and difficulty assessing student portfolios (47.4%).

Limitation

This research is limited to class teachers in elementary education who have already implemented integrated thematic learning. Furthermore, the study focuses on the integrated thematic planning, implementation, and assessment stages.

Recommendation

Recommendations from this study are expected to be a reference for other researchers conducting similar research. To educational officials to be the evaluation for educational policies in the next curriculum. Preparing teachers to implement teaching to minimize difficulties.

Conflict of Interest

The author states that there is no conflict of interest.

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