
The Implementation of Teachers' Pedagogical Competence in Elementary Schools

Author

Zulkarnain^{1*}, Sofwan Adiputra², Arman³

Correspondence

^{1,2,3}Universitas Muhammadiyah Pringsewu

*prasetyaagus063@gmail.com

Abstract:

Teachers play a crucial role in the education system, particularly in developing pedagogical competence to create effective learning. Pedagogical competence includes understanding student characteristics, applying learning theories, and managing a conducive classroom environment. However, in practice, many teachers still face challenges in optimally implementing pedagogical competence, especially in elementary schools within The X cluster area, Pardasuka Subdistrict, Pringsewu Regency. This study aims to examine teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence, identify its application in teaching, and reveal the challenges faced by teachers. The research method used is qualitative with a case study approach in five elementary schools in the area. Data collection was conducted through interviews, questionnaires, and documentation, which were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman qualitative data analysis model. The results show that most teachers have a good understanding of pedagogical competence, but its implementation is still limited by constraints such as inadequate technological facilities, high administrative burdens, and a lack of continuous training. This study recommends reducing administrative burdens and enhancing sustainable professional development programs for teachers to optimize the application of pedagogical competence in teaching.

Keywords: Ad Pedagogical competence, elementary school, teaching implementation, professional development

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Introduction

Teachers play a crucial role in the education system, not only as instructors but also as guides and motivators who shape students' character and skills. Pedagogical competence, which encompasses a deep understanding of how students learn, mastery of the curriculum, the application of appropriate teaching methods, and classroom management skills, is key to creating effective learning. Ideally, a teacher with strong pedagogical competence can create a learning environment that is supportive, engaging, and relevant for students, enabling them to reach their full academic and personal potential.

However, the reality in the field often shows that the implementation of teachers' pedagogical competence in elementary schools does not align with the ideal conditions expected. According to existing research, many teachers still face challenges in mastering students' characteristics, applying creative teaching methods, and managing classrooms

effectively. Research by Melati & Susanto (2023) and Yunawati & Sila (2022) has found that many teachers struggle to understand students' learning needs, lack innovative teaching strategies, and make limited use of technology in teaching. As a result, the quality of learning is hindered, and students' motivation to learn decreases, ultimately affecting their academic performance.

If this issue persists, the overall quality of education will be at risk. Ineffective teaching leads to lower academic achievement and a decline in students' interest and motivation to learn. In the long term, this may impact students' ability to compete in the workforce and in their social lives. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct research that delves deeper into the implementation of teachers' pedagogical competence and the challenges they face in creating high-quality learning environments.

Several previous studies (Krisnawati et al., 2022; Wulandari et al., 2020) have demonstrated a significant positive impact between teachers' pedagogical competence and the quality of learning. However, these studies focus more on broader contexts, while research on the implementation of pedagogical competence in elementary schools in specific regions, such as the Jenderal Sudirman Cluster in Pardasuka District, Pringsewu, Lampung, remains limited. This study, therefore, aims to fill this gap by focusing on the local context and providing a clearer picture of the impact of teachers' pedagogical competence on the quality of learning in elementary schools.

This research is of high urgency, as strong pedagogical competence can enhance teaching effectiveness, students' learning outcomes, and their motivation to learn. By identifying the challenges and obstacles faced by teachers, this study aims to provide useful recommendations for improving teachers' pedagogical competence through more targeted training or professional development programs. Furthermore, the findings of this research are expected to contribute to the design of educational policies that better support the development of pedagogical competence at the elementary school level. The purpose of this study is to examine teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence, analyze its implementation in teaching, and identify the challenges and barriers faced by teachers in elementary schools within the Jenderal Sudirman Cluster, Pardasuka District, Pringsewu, Lampung. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of the influence of pedagogical competence on improving the quality of learning and offer practical solutions for enhancing the quality of education in elementary schools.

Research Methodology

Approach and Design

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence and its implementation in elementary school teaching. The qualitative approach was chosen because it aims to gain an in-depth understanding of teachers' experiences within the context of teaching, as well as the

challenges they face in improving the quality of learning. The case study method is used to investigate more deeply how and why pedagogical competence is applied in elementary schools.

The research was conducted in five elementary schools within the X Cluster, Pardasuka District, Pringsewu Regency. The research period lasted from February to June 2024, with data collection taking place from March to May 2024. The data used in this study are divided into two types: primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through interviews and questionnaires. Interviews were conducted with school principals, teachers, and school supervisors to identify their understanding of and challenges in implementing pedagogical competence, as well as its impact on the quality of learning. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers to gather information about their understanding of pedagogical competence. Secondary data were obtained from relevant documents, such as teacher performance assessment reports, student achievement data, and other related documents.

This study examines three main dimensions: teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence, the implementation of pedagogical competence in teaching, and the challenges faced by teachers. The indicators studied include mastery of student characteristics, the application of learning theories, curriculum development, educational activities, student potential development, communication with students, and assessment and evaluation of learning. Data collection techniques included interviews, observations, and documentation.

Data analysis was conducted using Miles and Huberman's qualitative data analysis model, which consists of three steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. To ensure the validity of the data, this study employed triangulation, which involves checking data from various sources and methods of data collection. Additionally, to maintain the validity and reliability of the research, the study also conducted assessments of transferability and dependability. Informed consent in this study was obtained by providing clear explanations to all participants regarding the purpose, procedures, benefits, and potential risks of their participation, ensuring that all participants understood the purpose and procedures of the study, as well as their rights to participate voluntarily.

Results and Discussion

This study aims to examine teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence, the implementation of pedagogical competence in enhancing the quality of learning, and the challenges and obstacles teachers face in improving the quality of learning in elementary schools within Cluster X, Pardasuka District, Pringsewu Regency, Lampung. Based on the data analysis obtained from interviews, questionnaires, and documentation, the key findings of this study are visualized in Figure 1.

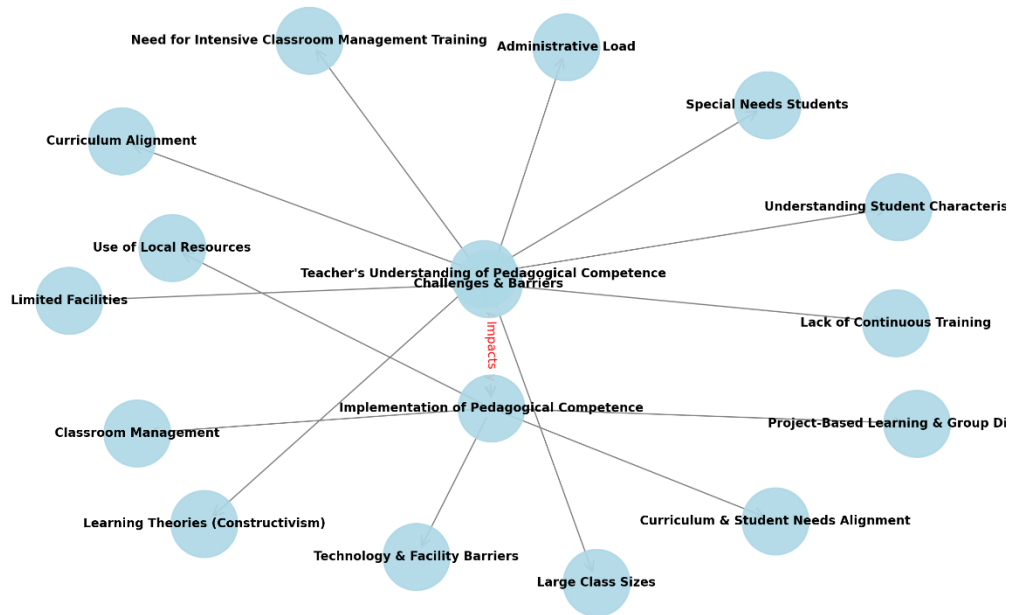


Figure 1. Key Finding Research on Pedagogical Competence Implementation

In general, the results of the study show that teachers in elementary schools in the Jenderal Sudirman Cluster have a good understanding of pedagogical competence, although there are still areas that require further strengthening. Most teachers demonstrate a solid understanding of student characteristics, including their needs, interests, and learning styles. Teachers also understand the importance of learning theories, such as constructivism, which underpins their efforts to create interactive and experience-based learning.

Furthermore, most teachers have been able to align learning materials with the applicable curriculum, providing students with learning experiences that meet national educational standards. However, the understanding of the needs of students with special needs still requires further attention. Some teachers expressed that they have not fully mastered how to adjust teaching for students with special needs, which is an area that should be strengthened through further training. This finding suggests that while teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence is generally good, there is still room for development, particularly in addressing the needs of students with diverse learning backgrounds or requirements.

The implementation of pedagogical competence in learning at elementary schools shows diverse results. Most teachers have implemented creative and participatory teaching strategies, such as project-based learning and group discussions. This approach aims to increase student involvement in the learning process, which can improve their understanding of the material. Additionally, classroom management has been carried out fairly well, creating a conducive learning environment and minimizing disruptions during lessons.

Teachers have strived to create an enjoyable learning atmosphere and encourage students to be more active in the learning activities.

However, the implementation of technology-based learning is still limited. Although some teachers have attempted to utilize local resources to support learning, they still face difficulties in utilizing technology optimally. Limited facilities, such as the lack of adequate technological devices and teaching aids, are the main barriers to the adoption of digital learning methods. Additionally, the limited time available for preparing learning materials is another hindrance, reducing the flexibility of teachers in designing more innovative activities that cater to students' needs. Despite these challenges, the efforts made by teachers to align the materials with the curriculum and the needs of students are highly appreciated, even though they are constrained by limited resources and time.

Several challenges and barriers in implementing pedagogical competence were identified during the study. One of the biggest obstacles is the high administrative burden, which reduces the time teachers have to prepare more innovative and creative lessons. Many teachers complained that the time spent on administrative tasks made it difficult for them to focus on deeper lesson planning and adjusting lessons to meet individual student needs.

Limited facilities, including a lack of teaching aids, media resources, and access to technology, also present a significant barrier to improving the quality of learning. Without proper teaching aids, teachers struggle to present material in an engaging and easily understandable way for students. Restricted access to digital technology also hinders technology-based learning, which could enrich students' learning experiences and enhance their digital skills.

Moreover, the large number of students in a single class presents a major challenge for teachers in providing individual attention to each student. With so many students, it is difficult for teachers to monitor individual progress and offer sufficient attention. This results in suboptimal learning, particularly for students who require special approaches.

The lack of continuous training also emerged as an issue in enhancing teachers' pedagogical competence. Teachers reported difficulty in keeping up with the evolving curriculum and the demand for more innovative teaching methods. They expressed the need for more intensive and ongoing training to adapt to these changes and improve their ability to manage classrooms and design effective lessons.

Teachers also emphasized the need for intensive training in classroom management. Some teachers revealed that they still struggle to manage large, heterogeneous classes, which affects the quality of their interactions with students and the success of the learning process. Therefore, training in effective classroom management is crucial to help teachers overcome these challenges.

The findings of this study indicate that teachers' pedagogical competence in elementary schools in the X Cluster, Pardasuka District, Pringsewu Regency, is generally good, although several challenges need to be addressed to optimize its implementation in

teaching. These findings are consistent with previous research showing that teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence plays a crucial role in creating effective learning. Most of the teachers in this study understood student characteristics, including their needs, interests, and learning styles, which is in line with the findings of Surtini and Muhtar (2024), who also identified that understanding student characteristics is a key factor in improving the quality of education. Furthermore, most teachers understand the importance of learning theories, such as constructivism, which emphasizes experience-based learning as a foundation for designing more interactive and participatory learning activities. This shows that teachers' deep understanding of learning theories significantly supports the creation of more effective and relevant learning for students.

However, despite teachers' solid understanding of pedagogical competence, its implementation in the field is still hindered by several significant barriers. One of the primary challenges identified is the lack of facilities that support the adoption of technology-based learning methods. This finding is also reflected in Amalia et al. (n.d.), who found that the lack of teaching aids, media resources, and access to technology presents a major obstacle in applying innovative teaching methods. In the elementary schools included in this study, although there is an effort to utilize local resources in teaching, the lack of technology remains a significant issue. Teachers reported difficulties in accessing and utilizing technology in teaching, which is essential for supporting digital and interactive learning. Therefore, even though teachers have attempted to implement creative teaching methods, the lack of technology remains a major barrier to effective learning.

Another challenge identified in this study is the high administrative burden, which reduces the time teachers have to prepare more innovative lessons. This finding is consistent with Teguh et al. (2022), which showed that the administrative burden often acts as a barrier to the effective implementation of pedagogical competence. Teachers involved in this study revealed that much of their time is spent on administrative tasks that are not directly related to the learning process. This heavy administrative load reduces the time available for planning meaningful and in-depth lessons. Reducing the administrative burden, as suggested by Teguh et al. (2022), could provide teachers with more space to focus on developing pedagogical competence and improving the quality of teaching.

An important finding in this study is the challenge related to managing large classes. Many teachers stated that the large number of students in a class is a major barrier to providing individual attention to each student, which can affect the quality of interactions and learning outcomes. This finding is also reflected in Marshavira et al. (2024), who studied the impact of class size on the implementation of pedagogical competence. The study found that effective classroom management is crucial for creating a conducive learning environment, but large class sizes can make it difficult for teachers to provide optimal attention to each student. Therefore, better classroom management, and possibly reducing

the number of students per class, could help teachers improve learning quality, especially in giving individual attention to students who need it.

In addition to these challenges, the findings of this study also indicate that teachers need continuous training to keep up with curriculum changes and the demand for innovation in teaching. As stated in Fitri et al. (n.d.), continuous training and professional development are essential for helping teachers adapt to dynamic curriculum changes and the need for more innovative teaching methods. Teachers in The X Cluster's elementary schools expressed the need for further training, especially in classroom management and the application of technology in teaching. This study shows that although most teachers have a theoretical understanding of pedagogical competence, its implementation is still limited by the lack of proper and ongoing training.

The development of teachers' pedagogical competence in efforts to improve the quality of education in elementary schools relies heavily on several key factors. One of the primary factors is professional development through training and advanced education. Fitri et al. (n.d.) emphasize that such training enables teachers to adopt more relevant and innovative pedagogical approaches. With proper training, teachers can become more adept at implementing effective teaching strategies, utilizing technology, and managing classrooms more efficiently, all of which positively impact the quality of student learning.

This approach is also reinforced by Hanna and Batsula (2022), who highlight the importance of managing teachers' professional competence to maintain the quality of elementary education. Effective management of time and resources can help reduce teachers' administrative burdens, allowing them to focus more on teaching. This is closely related to the findings of Ajat et al. (2023), which suggest that practice-based education and training can enhance teachers' abilities to use technology and local resources to create more interactive learning environments.

Research findings further support this argument. Wijaya, et.al. (2023) underscore the importance of effective learning management as part of pedagogical competence development. Optimal management of time and resources enables teachers to focus on improving teaching strategies. Furthermore, Bagus & Kurniawan (2023) highlight the significance of using technology in competency-based learning, where teachers who can effectively utilize digital tools can create more dynamic and interactive learning environments.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that while teachers' understanding of pedagogical competence in the elementary schools of The X Cluster is generally good, optimal implementation is still hindered by limited facilities, high administrative burdens, difficult classroom management, and a lack of continuous training. This indicates the need for more attention from relevant stakeholders, including the government and educational institutions, to provide adequate facilities, reduce administrative burdens, and enhance training and professional development programs for teachers. By doing so, pedagogical

competence can be more effectively implemented, which will ultimately improve the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes in elementary schools.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the pedagogical competence of elementary school teachers in the Cluster X, Pardasuka Subdistrict, Pringsewu Regency, Lampung, demonstrating a solid understanding of students' characteristics, learning theories, and curriculum application. However, gaps remain in areas such as special needs education and the optimal use of technology in learning. To improve these outcomes, addressing the administrative burdens on teachers and enhancing professional development programs, particularly in classroom management and digital tools integration, is recommended. Future research should explore innovative strategies for overcoming these challenges to further elevate educational quality in primary schools.

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