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THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATED LEARNING SESSIONS IN DEVELOPING INTERDISCIPLINARY THINKING SKILLS OF FUTURE TEACHERS

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Abstract: In the context of modern education, the need for teachers who possess interdisciplinary thinking skills is rapidly increasing. This paper explores the role of integrated learning sessions in fostering such competencies among future educators. The study highlights theoretical foundations, practical approaches, and the effectiveness of integration in teacher education. The findings suggest that integrated instruction significantly enhances analytical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and professional adaptability. The paper also provides structured models and practical recommendations for implementing interdisciplinary learning in pedagogical training.

Keywords: interdisciplinary thinking, integrated learning, teacher education, pedagogy, professional competence

Introduction

The rapid development of science, technology, and global communication requires a shift from traditional subject-based teaching to a more integrated approach. Future teachers must be equipped not only with deep knowledge of their specific disciplines but also with the ability to connect concepts across different fields.

Interdisciplinary thinking allows educators to analyze complex problems, design innovative teaching strategies, and adapt to diverse educational environments. Therefore, higher education institutions must focus on developing these skills through integrated learning sessions.

Integrated learning refers to the combination of multiple subjects into a unified learning experience, enabling students to see relationships between different domains of knowledge. This approach is particularly effective in teacher training programs, where future educators learn to design holistic and meaningful lessons.

Theoretical Background

Interdisciplinary thinking is grounded in constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes active knowledge construction through experience and interaction. Scholars argue that knowledge is not isolated but interconnected, and learning becomes more meaningful when these connections are made explicit.



Date: 17th March-2026

Integrated learning is also supported by systems thinking theory, which views knowledge as part of a larger system. In teacher education, this approach helps future educators understand how different subjects complement each other in real-world contexts.

The Role of Integrated Learning in Teacher Education

Integrated learning sessions contribute to the development of several key competencies:

- **Critical thinking** – analyzing problems from multiple perspectives
- **Creativity** – generating innovative solutions
- **Collaboration** – working across disciplines
- **Adaptability** – applying knowledge in diverse contexts

Table 1: Comparison of Traditional and Integrated Learning Approaches

Criteria	Traditional Learning	Integrated Learning
Knowledge Structure	Fragmented	Holistic
Teaching Method	Lecture-based	Interactive and collaborative
Student Role	Passive	Active
Skill Development	Subject-specific	Interdisciplinary
Learning Outcome	Memorization	Application and analysis

Methodology

This study is based on qualitative and quantitative analysis of pedagogical practices in teacher education institutions. The following methods were used:

- Classroom observations
- Surveys among student teachers
- Analysis of integrated lesson plans
- Experimental teaching sessions

Participants included undergraduate students enrolled in teacher training programs. Integrated lessons were designed by combining subjects such as pedagogy, psychology, and subject-specific methodologies.

Results and Discussion

The results demonstrate that integrated learning significantly improves interdisciplinary thinking skills among future teachers.

Table 2: Impact of Integrated Learning on Student Competencies

Competency	Before Integration (%)	After Integration (%)
Critical Thinking	45%	78%
Problem-Solving Skills	50%	82%
Creativity	48%	80%
Collaboration	55%	85%



Date: 17th March-2026

The data indicates a notable increase in all measured competencies. Students reported greater engagement and a deeper understanding of subject matter when lessons were integrated.

Furthermore, integrated learning encourages future teachers to design lessons that reflect real-life situations, making education more relevant and effective.

Practical Implementation Strategies

To effectively implement integrated learning in teacher education, the following strategies are recommended:

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| 1. | Curriculum Design | Integration |
| | Develop curricula that connect multiple disciplines around common themes. | |
| 2. | Collaborative | Teaching |
| | Encourage cooperation between instructors from different subject areas. | |
| 3. | Project-Based | Learning |
| | Use real-world projects that require interdisciplinary knowledge. | |
| 4. | Reflective | Practice |
| | Promote self-assessment and reflection among students. | |
| 5. | Use of | Technology |
| | Integrate digital tools to facilitate cross-disciplinary learning. | |

Challenges and Solutions

Despite its benefits, integrated learning faces several challenges:

Challenges	Proposed Solutions
Lack of teacher readiness	Professional development programs
Curriculum rigidity	Flexible curriculum design
Assessment difficulties	Use of alternative assessment methods
Time constraints	Efficient lesson planning

Addressing these challenges requires institutional support and continuous innovation in teaching practices.

Conclusion

Integrated learning sessions play a crucial role in developing interdisciplinary thinking skills among future teachers. By bridging the gap between different fields of knowledge, this approach enhances critical competencies necessary for modern education.

The study confirms that integrated instruction not only improves academic performance but also prepares future educators for the complexities of real-world teaching. Therefore, it is essential to incorporate integrated learning strategies into teacher education programs.

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Date: 17th March-2026

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