

Case Study: Problematics Of Implementing Differentiation Learning In Kediri City

Submitted: October 10, 2023
Accepted: January 16, 2024
Published: January 31, 2024

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Abstract: This research aims to describe the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning in Kediri City. SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City was chosen as the research location because it has implemented differentiated learning since the 2021/2022 school year. The type of research used is qualitative research with a case study research design. The subjects of this research were nine sources consisting of grade 1, 2, 4 and 5 teachers as well as the principal of SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City. Data collection techniques through observation, interviews and documentation studies. Based on the findings, it shows implementation obstacles such as lack of teacher understanding and knowledge regarding the concept of differentiated learning, difficulty in preparing differentiated teaching modules, difficulty identifying individual student learning needs, difficulty providing a variety of learning materials, limited energy and time, lack of time allocation in learning. , as well as difficulties in classroom management.

Keywords: Constraints, Implementation, Differentiated Learning

PRELIMINARY

Currently, education is experiencing a paradigm shift that requires teachers to design and implement more meaningful and interesting learning. Teachers no longer only focus on the learning method they prefer, but must consider the individual characteristics of each student (Swandewi, 2021). Teachers must be aware that each student has unique potential and they are required to have competence in creating interesting learning experiences that suit students' needs (Nisa & Hikmah, 2023).

Current learning conditions in elementary schools are often monotonous and do not implement creative learning. This has an impact on students' low motivation in participating in the learning process so that learning patterns must undergo a transformation. A teacher must always reflect so that the education he delivers becomes better. One learning strategy that can be implemented is differentiated learning (Aprima & Sari, 2022). The concept of differentiated learning recognizes that each student has their own uniqueness and abilities (Marlina, 2020). Therefore, teachers must be able to

adapt learning methods to suit the needs and learning styles of each student, thereby creating an effective and meaningful learning experience (Faiz et al., 2022; Made, 2022; Maryam A., S., 2021).

According to Herwina (2021) differentiated learning is a strategy or way of doing something that teachers apply to meet the educational needs of their students. This is in accordance with the view expressed by Tomlinson (2000) who states that differentiated learning is an effort to modify the learning process that takes place in the classroom to meet the specific educational needs of each individual student. One definition of differentiated learning is learning that accommodates, serves, and recognizes student diversity in learning according to students' learning readiness, interests, and preferences (Wulandari, 2022).

Students of the same age can differ in various ways, including their readiness to learn, their interests, the way they learn, their experiences, and their life circumstances so teachers need to differentiate learning to meet each student's learning needs (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). Because there are differences between individuals, the things students need to learn are greatly influenced by the nature of these differences. Therefore, teachers need to implement differentiated learning strategies in the classroom. Although implementing differentiated learning causes many obstacles experienced by teachers.

Van Casteren (in Smale-Jacobse et al., 2019) explains that although the concept of differentiated learning is not new in education, in its application in the classroom it is still difficult for teachers to understand differentiated learning. Schleider (in Smale-Jacobse et al., 2019) explains that recent studies show that teachers in various countries rarely adapt their learning to student characteristics. The results of a study by Onyishi & Sefotho (2020) explain that teachers in Enugu State, Nigeria who teach in classes with inclusive characteristics rarely apply different differentiation strategies in teaching their students. Furthermore, the results of a study by Van Geel (2019) explain that research results from the Dutch Ministry of Education show that teachers do not adapt their learning to student differences. Although differentiated learning emphasizes the differences in students' learning needs, it is not clear how to implement differentiated learning well.

Until now, there are still many teachers who find it difficult to implement differentiated learning well. Many of them think that differentiated learning requires

complicated preparation and is difficult to carry out in the school environment (Santika & Khoiriyah, 2023). A similar view was also conveyed by Herwina (2021) who stated that many teachers feel that differentiated learning requires them to prepare learning strategies for each student in class or even always in the students group based on their ability level (Herwina, 2021). Teachers' difficulties in planning differentiated learning and limitations in carrying out diagnostic assessments are also inhibiting factors in implementing diverse learning (Yani et al., 2023).

There is still not much research related to differentiated learning in Indonesia. The results of biometric analysis with the keyword "differentiated learning" for the last 5 years starting 2018-2023 which were extracted from the Publish or Perish (PoP) software show the distribution or distribution of 195 publications. The results of the data distribution show that of the total of 195 publications analyzed, only 36 publications discuss the topic of differentiated learning at the elementary school level. Furthermore, a broader bibliometric analysis was carried out using the keyword "differentiated instruction" for the last 5 years starting from 2018-2023 which was extracted from the Publish or Perish (PoP) software, showing the results of a publication distribution of 942 publications. The results show that out of a total of 942 publications, only 49 publications specifically address learning in elementary schools. Based on the results of the bibliometric analysis, it appears that there is still little analysis that has been carried out regarding differentiated learning in both national and international journals, especially in elementary schools.

In Kediri City, socialization of differentiated learning has been carried out by the education department since the 2021/2022 academic year. This research was conducted at SDN Sukorame 2, Kediri City for the reason that this school has implemented differentiated learning from the start. Apart from that, SDN Sukorame 2 was also chosen as a research location because it has developed various strategies and methods that suit the needs of each student. Therefore, this research aims to describe the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning at SDN Sukorame 2, Kediri City.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with analytical descriptive methods and case studies as the type of research. The subjects in this research were nine resource persons consisting of grade 1, 2, 4 and 5 teachers, as well as the principal of SDN

Sukorame 2 Kediri City. The selection of resource persons did not involve grade 3 and 6 teachers because they did not meet the research criteria where the research was conducted on resource persons who had implemented differentiated learning for at least one year. Data collection techniques in this research were carried out using observation, interviews and documentation studies. The data analysis technique in this research consists of the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of observations, interviews and documentation studies provide an overview of the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning which are then described as discussions and conclusions.

RESULTS

Based on the results of interviews with class teachers at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City, teachers experienced problems when planning lessons until learning took place. One of the initial obstacles faced by teachers is the teacher's lack of understanding and knowledge regarding the concept of differentiated learning. Lack of understanding of the concept of differentiated learning refers to an understanding that is not yet deep or not completely clear regarding the principles, strategies and techniques needed in differentiated learning for each student. Several teachers expressed that they did not understand one hundred percent the creation of differentiated teaching modules because they had to be adjusted to the diagnostic assessments carried out previously. Apart from that, teachers also revealed that limited energy and time were also obstacles for them in preparing teaching modules. The impact is confusion or doubt when planning and implementing differentiated learning. Based on the results of the documentation study, only class 1B, 2A, 2B and 4A teachers have prepared differentiated teaching modules.

Class 1A, 1B, 4B, 5A, and 5B teachers expressed difficulty in identifying individual students' learning needs. Teachers identify students' learning needs by means of diagnostic assessments. Ideally, mapping students' learning styles and interests, talents, should not be identified by teachers but should be identified by psychologists or counselors, whereas schools do not have facilities for staff who are experts in this field. The school can only give questionnaires to students. Based on the results of the document study, the questionnaire instruments given by teachers to students are not like actual

learning style instruments so they cannot be used as a reference in mapping student learning needs.

Teachers also face obstacles in providing diverse learning materials according to students' learning styles. For example, when providing different treatment to students with kinesthetic, audio and visual learning styles, extra energy and time is needed to provide appropriate learning materials. In differentiated learning, especially content differentiation, teachers must provide different material based on the selected diagnostic assessment. During observations in classes 4B, 5A, and 5B the teacher only provided learning materials based on auditory and visual learning styles. Teachers have difficulty providing learning materials based on kinesthetic learning styles even though based on observations made in one class there are auditory, visual and kinesthetic learning styles. This is because the textbooks provided by schools have not adapted the material to a differentiated approach, so teachers have to look for material from various sources, while material from other sources is not necessarily suitable for use in elementary school learning.

Allocation of learning time is also an obstacle faced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning. The time allocation provided by the school is 2 x 35 minutes for one lesson hour, while differentiated learning carried out by teachers on average requires more time allocation. For example, during observations in class 1A the teacher implemented differentiated learning in content and products. During product differentiation, the time required for students to make the product exceeds the planned time allocation so they have to shift hours to the next subject. Likewise, class 5B is based on the results of observations when the teacher carries out differentiated content learning beyond the required time allocation so that differentiated learning can only be implemented on certain materials.

The final obstacle identified was difficulties in classroom management, this refers to the challenges teachers face in maintaining classroom conditions that remain conducive and focused when implementing differentiated learning. For example, when teachers approach groups based on student learning styles, other groups tend to become busy or less focused, requiring more effective classroom management strategies to overcome this. This can be seen from the results of observations in classes 1A and 1B and 2A which show that differentiated learning may still be difficult to do in classes at lower levels.

Based on the results of interviews with the school principal, it can be seen that differentiated learning has only been implemented at SDN Sukorame 2 for two years. Furthermore, the Principal also highlighted the obstacles in preparing differentiated teaching modules. He stated that many teachers still do not fully understand the correct way to arrange teaching modules in differentiated learning so they are still hesitant in designing differentiated learning, especially preparing teaching modules. This shows that more intensive support and training is needed in terms of preparing diverse teaching materials according to individual student learning needs.

Thus, a lack of understanding of the concept of differentiated learning not only affects the effectiveness of learning, but also influences teachers' perceptions and approaches in dealing with obstacles that arise when implementing differentiated learning, including in class management and managing time allocation. This shows that there is a need for further support and training in terms of differentiated learning concepts and strategies so that teachers can implement them more effectively and efficiently at SDN Sukorame 2, Kediri City. Some teachers admit that they still do not fully understand the concept of differentiated teaching modules, so they are less effective in implementing them. For example, teachers feel that differentiated teaching modules are the same as regular teaching modules, so they do not differentiate according to students' needs. Observation results also show that some teachers still need to increase their understanding regarding the concept and implementation of differentiated learning, and tend to focus more on administrative aspects rather than actual implementation. From these findings, it can be concluded that there is a need to increase teacher knowledge and skills, support with extra time and energy, as well as adapting more adaptive learning strategies to overcome these obstacles in implementing differentiated learning at SDN Sukorame 2, Kediri City.

DISCUSSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that in implementing differentiated learning, teachers at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City felt many obstacles, both from the planning stage to implementation in the classroom. One of the main obstacles identified was teachers' lack of understanding and knowledge about the concept of

differentiated learning. This is reflected in the statements of teachers who state that they do not fully understand how to manage differentiated learning effectively.

Apart from that, teachers also experience difficulties in compiling teaching modules that suit individual students' learning needs. Limited time, limited energy, and lack of allocation of learning time are also obstacles felt by teachers. Observation results show that some teachers still need to increase their understanding regarding the concept and implementation of differentiated learning. All of these obstacles directly influence the effectiveness of learning, teachers' perceptions, and their approach to facing the challenges that arise when implementing differentiated learning. Therefore, there is a need for further support and training for teachers at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City to increase their knowledge and skills in implementing differentiated learning more effectively and efficiently.

In the results of observations and interviews with class 1A, 1B, 2A, 2B, 4A, 4B, 5A, and 5B teachers at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City, several obstacles were revealed that they experienced in implementing differentiated learning in the classroom. Teachers' lack of understanding and knowledge regarding the concept of differentiated learning. The main obstacle faced by teachers at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City is related to their lack of understanding and knowledge of the concept of differentiated learning. This lack of understanding includes a deep understanding of the principles, strategies, and techniques required for adaptive and differentiated learning for each student. This is reflected in teachers' statements that they do not fully understand how to create differentiated teaching modules or how to manage differentiated learning effectively. The ideal implementation of differentiated learning requires a deep understanding of the concept by teachers. This is in line with the opinion of Suprayogi & Valcke (2016) which states that teachers must have an understanding of various student learning styles, the use of different teaching materials according to individual student needs, and effective classroom management skills to support diverse learning.

1. Difficulty in Compiling Teaching Modules

Ideally, differentiated learning requires careful planning and more time to develop strategies that suit each student's learning needs (Khasanah, 2023). Hanifah (2023) believes that preparing differentiated teaching modules requires a deep understanding of students' needs and learning styles. In its implementation, teachers

admitted that they had difficulty in preparing differentiated teaching modules. The difficulties faced by this teacher include difficulty analyzing learning outcomes, formulating learning objectives, arranging the flow of learning objectives and teaching modules. This is supported by (Widiarti et al., 2023) who argue that teachers' difficulties in preparing differentiated teaching modules are a lack of understanding, the components of differentiated teaching modules, the combination of learning outcomes and the arrangement of material hierarchies, the selection and preparation of assessments, adjustments to students, and the emergence of aspects differentiation.

2. Difficulty in Identifying Student Learning Needs

Teachers must realize that each student has their own uniqueness and diverse abilities so that one student and another are not the same. However, in reality teachers find it difficult to identify the uniqueness of these students. Another difficulty is that teachers' understanding and skills are also caused by student heterogeneity (Nurcahyono & Jaya, 2022). Identification of student learning needs such as learning styles and interests, talents, ideally should not be identified by teachers but identified by psychologists or counselors, whereas schools do not have the facilities for staff who are experts in this field. The school can only give questionnaires to students. Without adequate facilities and expertise, educators may have difficulty identifying individual differences among their students. This is in line with Kurniati & Ratih (2023) who state that teachers have difficulty composing good questions to get sufficient answers for consideration in implementing differentiated learning.

3. Difficulty Providing Diverse Learning Materials

Differentiated learning often requires additional resources, such as different reading materials according to students' learning needs. If the necessary facilities and infrastructure are not available, educators may not be able to provide these resources to students. This can limit students' access to learning materials that suit their learning styles and needs. In its implementation, teachers have difficulty providing diverse material to students. This is due to the limited textbooks provided by schools so that teachers have to look for material themselves from other learning sources and then differentiate it. This agrees with Subban (2006) that different teaching materials for each group of students in differentiated learning require more thorough preparation and careful adjustments in order to meet students' learning needs effectively.

4. Limited Energy and Time

Limited energy and time are significant constraining factors. This is in line with Hall (2003) who believes that time constraints often make it difficult for teachers to implement different learning strategies for each group of students. This is related to the demands of other educational tasks that must also be completed by teachers. This obstacle is related to other demands in educational work that must also be met by teachers, making it difficult for them to provide sufficient energy and time to design and implement learning strategies that suit the needs of each student.

5. Requires a long allocation of learning time

Differentiated learning requires quite a long time allocation when implemented. This is due to the need for teachers to carefully adapt learning materials, methods and approaches according to the needs and level of understanding of each student. In implementing content, process and product differentiation, interactions between teachers and students require extra time to provide individual guidance and explain concepts in depth. This agrees with Hermansyah (2023) who states that teachers need more time allocation and this is a challenge for teachers because each school has allocated time for each teacher and their respective subjects.

6. Difficulties in Classroom Management

Teachers experience difficulties in student conditioning and classroom management when implementing differentiated learning. The challenges teachers face are not only related to planning and implementing differentiated learning for each student, but also in maintaining an orderly classroom situation conducive to effective learning. This is in line with the opinion of Azizah et al. (2023) which states that a lack of classroom management skills by teachers often leads to crowded and less conducive classroom conditions. Teachers become overwhelmed and have difficulty dividing attention between individuals, groups and order in the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description that has been presented, it can be concluded that the implementation of differentiated learning at SDN Sukorame 2 Kediri City faces a number of various obstacles. These obstacles include 1) lack of teacher understanding and knowledge regarding the concept of differentiated learning; 2) difficulties in preparing

differentiated teaching modules; 3) difficulty identifying individual student learning needs; 4) difficulty providing diverse learning materials; 5) limited energy and time; 6) lack of time allocation for learning; 7) difficulties in classroom management. For this reason, further research needs to develop an action plan that can be an alternative solution to the obstacles experienced by teachers in implementing differentiated learning, especially in elementary schools.

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