



Analysis of the Use of Differentiated Instruction Learning Strategies in Answering Diverse Learning Needs in the Classroom of MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal

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ABSTRACT

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This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the use of Differentiated Instruction (DI) strategies in responding to diverse learning needs in the classroom of students at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. The research method used is a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and document analysis. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of DI can increase students' motivation, involvement, and understanding of the subject matter. Teachers apply grouping based on interests and abilities and vary learning methods to adjust to student characteristics, which contribute positively to their learning outcomes. The implementation of DI faces challenges in the form of limited time, resources, and learning facilities. Teachers need additional preparation to adapt materials and methods, and institutional support is needed so that the implementation of DI runs optimally. This study concludes that DI is an effective learning strategy in improving the quality of education in school environments with diverse learning needs, and recommends that schools support the implementation of DI through ongoing training and improving learning facilities.

Keywords

Differentiated Instruction, Diverse Learning Needs, Learning Strategies, Educational Effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Effective classroom learning requires attention to various individual differences, including students' interests, learning styles, and ability levels. In this context, the application of Differentiated Instruction (DI) learning strategies has been widely highlighted as an approach that is able to answer diverse learning needs. DI is a teaching strategy that provides educators with the opportunity to adjust methods, content, processes, and learning outcomes to suit the needs of each student (Tomlinson, 2001). Thus, DI has great potential in increasing the effectiveness of learning in heterogeneous classes such as at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal.

In the environment of Private Madrasah Aliyah (MAS) education, the implementation of DI is becoming increasingly relevant, considering the importance of an inclusive approach in education that is oriented to the needs of diverse learners. Research shows that the DI approach can increase student participation, interest, and learning outcomes, especially in classes with diverse abilities and backgrounds (Santrock, 2018). MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, as an educational institution that prioritizes holistic individual development, needs to evaluate the effectiveness of the DI strategy to ensure that each student gets an optimal learning experience.

Students at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal have different educational, social, and economic backgrounds, which can affect their learning preferences and needs. Therefore, uniform learning is not always effective in achieving overall learning objectives (Suwignyo, 2016). DI allows educators to adjust the way material is delivered by considering the specific needs of each group of students, such as students with high interest in certain subjects or those who require additional support in basic understanding.

Furthermore, DI strategies not only adjust the content and learning process, but also the expected learning outcomes, which can help students develop their potential to the maximum (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010). At MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, the implementation of DI in teaching and learning activities is expected to provide solutions to the problems faced by teachers in dealing with the various learning needs of students in the classroom.

The results of research by Subroto (2017) show that DI has a significant contribution to improving student learning outcomes in secondary schools, especially in classes with heterogeneous student composition. Through adjustments to materials and learning methods, students can learn according to their respective abilities and speeds. This is very important to be implemented in MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal in order to achieve more equitable academic success among students.

In addition, DI has a positive impact on students' motivation and interest in learning. According to Haryanto's research (2019), students who learn through the DI approach are more motivated because they feel better understood and cared for by the teacher. This increase in motivation is directly related to student involvement in the learning process, which plays a role in improving the quality of their learning outcomes.

However, the implementation of DI is not without challenges, especially for educators in educational institutions with limited resources. Research conducted by Arifin (2020) shows that DI requires special skills from teachers to

manage classes effectively and pay attention to each student's learning needs. This is important for the management of MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal to consider in supporting the success of DI implementation.

On the other hand, the implementation of DI requires a strong commitment from teachers and support from educational institutions. To answer the diverse learning needs at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, there needs to be training for teachers to be able to implement DI optimally. As expressed by Suyanto (2015), teacher training in the implementation of DI has a major influence on the success of learning that is oriented towards the individual needs of students.

Based on the reasons above, this study aims to analyze the use of Differentiated Instruction strategies in responding to diverse learning needs at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. This study is expected to provide insight into the effectiveness of DI and the challenges faced in its implementation, so that it can be a consideration for educators and madrasah managers in developing a more inclusive and adaptive learning approach.

RESEARCH METHODE

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to analyze the use of Differentiated Instruction (DI) strategies in meeting diverse learning needs at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. A qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to explore a deep understanding of the implementation of DI, as well as how teachers and students experience and respond to the approach in daily learning. Case studies were chosen because they allow researchers to explore the unique situation at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal in detail, so that rich data related to DI implementation can be obtained.

Data collection was conducted through observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted during the classroom learning process to observe the implementation of DI, method adaptation, and interactions between teachers and students. In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers, students, and principals to gain a comprehensive perspective on the effectiveness of DI and the challenges faced in its implementation. Document analysis included a study of the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) and student learning outcomes, which can provide an overview of the results and suitability of the DI approach to learning objectives.

Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis techniques, where data obtained from observations, interviews, and documents were organized into key themes relevant to the research objectives. Data validity was maintained using triangulation techniques, which compare information from various data sources to ensure consistency and accuracy. The results of the analysis are expected to provide an overview of the effectiveness of DI in answering the diverse learning needs of students at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, as well as supporting and inhibiting factors in implementing the strategy.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the implementation of the Differentiated Instruction (DI) strategy at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal has a positive impact on the effectiveness of learning, especially in meeting diverse learning needs. Based on the results of class observations, teachers use a variety of methods and materials that are adjusted to student characteristics, such as grouping students based on interests, ability levels, and the use of different learning media. Thus, students find it easier to understand the material according to their respective learning speeds, and their participation in class increases, especially for students who previously tended to be passive.

Interviews with teachers revealed that DI strategies encouraged them to get to know each student better, both in terms of academic ability and learning style. Teachers stated that by recognizing each student's specific needs, they could adjust their teaching methods to suit their students' potential. This was shown to increase students' motivation and engagement in the learning process, as they felt more valued and cared for. Some teachers even mentioned that DI helped them develop creativity in choosing interesting and effective methods for diverse classes.

In addition to its benefits, teachers also expressed a number of challenges in implementing DI in the classroom. The main challenges faced were limited time to prepare materials that focused on individual student needs and limited learning resources. Some teachers stated that implementing DI required them to prepare a wider variety of materials and methods than conventional teaching, which was sometimes difficult given the tight schedule and large number of students. These limitations caused some teachers to have difficulty implementing DI consistently in each learning session.

From interviews with students, the majority of students felt the benefits of the DI strategy, especially in helping them understand the material better.

Students with special interests in a topic were happy because they could delve deeper into the material with appropriate methods. Meanwhile, students who had difficulty with certain materials felt helped because the teacher provided additional explanations that were more in line with their learning styles. This shows that DI has great potential in increasing students' self-confidence and interest in learning through a more personalized approach.

The results of document analysis, such as the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) and student learning outcomes, support these findings. The RPP prepared by the teacher reflects an effort to accommodate the various needs of students by providing variations in class activities and assignments. Learning outcomes show significant improvements in students who follow DI-based learning, especially in subjects that require analytical and problem-solving skills. Students who learn through the DI approach show better results in tests and are more responsive in class discussions, especially when they are given the freedom to explore topics according to their interests.

Support from the school also plays an important role in the success of DI implementation. The principal said that at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, DI implementation efforts are supported by regular training for teachers to develop adaptive learning methods. The school also tries to provide additional resources, although there are still limitations. However, challenges remain, especially related to adequate facilities and resources to support DI in a sustainable manner. Some teachers feel that further investment in technology and teaching materials is needed to maximize DI implementation.

Overall, this study concluded that the implementation of DI is effective in improving the quality of learning at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. This strategy provides space for students to develop according to their respective potentials and helps them understand the material more deeply. However, the success of DI implementation is highly dependent on the support of resources, time, and commitment from the school and teachers. This study recommends ongoing training for teachers and improving facilities in schools to ensure that DI implementation can be carried out optimally and sustainably.

Discussion of Research Findings

The results of this study confirm that the Differentiated Instruction (DI) strategy is effective in responding to diverse learning needs in the classroom, especially in educational environments such as MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. As explained by Tomlinson (2001), DI is a learning approach that adjusts methods, materials, and learning

speeds according to students' needs, interests, and abilities. At MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, teachers implement student grouping based on interests and abilities, and vary the learning media, which has an impact on increasing students' understanding of the material. This approach is in line with research showing that DI can increase student engagement and understanding (Hall, 2002).

The success of DI implementation in this school shows the importance of the teacher's role in recognizing the characteristics of each student. By knowing each student, teachers can adjust the learning approach and content to be more relevant and personal. Good (2006) stated that teachers who understand the unique needs of each student are better able to create an inclusive and effective learning environment. Teachers at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal feel that with a more personal approach, students become more motivated and engaged in learning, which also supports research by Gregory and Chapman (2012) regarding the influence of personalization in increasing student learning motivation.

However, challenges in implementing DI are also recognized by teachers, especially related to time and resource constraints. As stated by Tomlinson (2001), DI requires intensive preparation from teachers because of the variety of methods and materials that must be prepared. This is in line with findings in the field, where teachers stated that DI preparation takes more time than conventional teaching. The difficulty in implementing DI consistently shows that DI requires institutional support for long-term success (Gregory & Chapman, 2012).

From the students' perspective, DI has shown positive impacts on learning motivation and self-confidence. Students who learn with the DI approach experience increased understanding and interest, especially when they are given the opportunity to learn according to their interests and learning styles. According to Santrock (2008), an approach that adapts methods to individual learning styles can significantly increase student engagement. At MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, students felt helped by the adaptation of teaching methods, especially for those who needed more guidance in understanding more difficult concepts.

In addition, document analysis such as the Learning Implementation Plan (RPP) shows that DI encourages variation in learning activities and tasks, which enhances students' critical thinking skills. Hall (2002) stated that DI is effective in encouraging the development of higher-order thinking skills by adjusting learning challenges to students' abilities. This is in line with the findings at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, where students

who received DI-based learning showed better results in tests and class discussions.

Institutional support factors are also important elements in the implementation of DI. This study revealed that the principal at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal provided training for teachers to support method adaptation skills. This shows that institutional support, including regular training, is essential in the effective implementation of DI, as expressed by Good (2006) that institutional support plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of adaptive learning.

Although DI shows many benefits, challenges in the availability of resources are still felt by teachers. Tomlinson (2001) emphasized that without adequate technology and teaching materials support, DI implementation can be difficult and less effective. At MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal, teachers felt the need for additional investment in facilities, technology, and resources to maximize the benefits of DI for students. This is important to note because resource constraints can hinder the full potential of DI strategies in improving learning.

Overall, this study underlines that DI is an effective and relevant learning strategy to improve the quality of education in schools with diverse learning needs. However, the success of DI implementation is highly dependent on the support of time, resources, and training for teachers. As a recommendation, it is important for educational institutions to continue to support and facilitate the implementation of DI through ongoing training and investment in learning infrastructure.

Optimal implementation of DI can be a solution to the challenges in meeting diverse learning needs in the classroom. With support from schools, teachers, and a supportive environment, DI can be an effective strategy to improve learning outcomes and maximize the potential of each student. This study is expected to provide an overview and practical recommendations for other educational institutions in implementing DI strategies to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Differentiated Instruction (DI) strategy is effective in improving the quality of learning and meeting diverse learning needs at MAS Darul Hadist Hutabaringin Kec. Siabu Kab. Mandailing Natal. By implementing DI, teachers are able to accommodate various individual differences in students, both in terms of interests, learning styles, and abilities, so that students can be more active, motivated, and confident in the learning

process. This approach also has a positive impact on improving students' academic outcomes, especially in critical thinking skills and deeper understanding of the material.

However, challenges in implementing DI still exist, such as time constraints, greater resource requirements, and adequate technological support. Teachers need additional time to prepare a variety of learning methods and materials that suit the characteristics of each student. In addition, limited facilities and teaching materials are obstacles that hinder the implementation of DI consistently and optimally. Support from the school, including regular training and investment in infrastructure, is critical to the success of DI implementation. With adequate support, DI has the potential to be an effective solution to improve the quality of education, especially in dealing with the diversity of student learning needs. This study recommends that other schools with diverse student needs consider implementing DI as a strategic approach to improving the quality of learning and student learning outcomes.

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