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Obstacles to Implementation of Differentiation Learning in Sociology Subjects

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum at SMA Makassar City poses a significant challenge for sociology teachers in implementing differentiated learning. This type of qualitative research with a case study approach was used in this study which focused on the phase of teacher adaptation to an independent curriculum. Teachers from various backgrounds from both public and private schools were the main informants in this study. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, and observations made during the differentiated learning process were applied by teachers. The data obtained is then analyzed through three stages., Validation through source triangulation. The results of the study found that there are at least four main obstacles faced by teachers in their efforts to implement differentiated learning. First, the complexity of the process in differentiated learning causes some teachers to feel overwhelmed in designing and managing learning experiences that fit students' individual needs. Second, limited resources such as diverse teaching materials and different assessment instruments pose a real challenge in providing effective responses to variations in student styles and levels of understanding. Third, it is difficult to ensure active involvement of students in the classroom mainly due to time constraints and students' skills that are still developing. Fourth, teachers' understanding and skills in applying differentiated learning are still lacking. The barriers found in this study are real challenges faced by sociology teachers, and indicate the need for more intensive training and support to optimize differentiated approaches in the sociology learning process.

Keywords: differentiated learning, teacher, sociology

1. INTRODUCTION

Differentiated learning is an approach that takes into account the differences and diversity of students so that teachers can design learning that is tailored to the needs or characteristics of their students. Since the Merdeka curriculum was implemented, since then the concept of differentiated learning has often been discussed and socialized for implementation.

Differentiated learning arises from an awareness of the fact that students have various differences both in personality abilities, interests, talents, language, culture to learning styles. As a teacher it is important to pay attention to the various differences of students and try to present learning that is able to meet students' learning needs.

All levels of education are affected by this curriculum change, including high school, which must also adapt to the Merdeka curriculum to suit the demands of student competencies holistically. Senior High Schools including Sociology subjects also underwent transformation, but the implementation did not always run smoothly.

Challenges in applying disparate learning were experienced by all involved in the process.

In an era of increasingly diverse education, the application of differentiation learning is very important. Joseph [1] explained that students from various backgrounds have different speed of understanding and learning styles. However, its application is not easy, especially in the subject of sociology which tries to relate social theory to contemporary reality.

Teachers have an important role in shaping student learning experiences. But the application of differentiated learning that aims to respect individual differences can be a demanding intellectual battleground. Teachers need to not only understand the unique characteristics of each student but also design and manage lessons that meet those diverse needs.

In an effort to adapt the independent curriculum, teachers have implemented strategies that have proven effective for implementing differentiated learning. For example forming flexible groups based on student progress, using a variety of learning materials to suit

different learning styles, and providing open instruction that encourages students to think critically and creatively.

The use of educational technology such as online platforms and digital resources is also implemented to increase student engagement and interaction with learning materials. Collaborative spirit also dominates in differentiated learning, teachers use collaborative learning methods to facilitate interaction between students to build social skills and encourage mutual cooperation in learning.

By blending these elements we have created a dynamic learning environment that is inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of students. The application of a differentiated learning strategy is expected to be a concrete step in facing modern challenges in the field of education to form a generation that is better prepared for the future.

The subject of sociology as a science that studies social interaction and social dynamics of society plays an important role in shaping students' understanding of the world around them. But in reality students in one class have different backgrounds, interests, learning styles and levels of understanding, of course this is a challenge for sociology teachers in carrying out differentiated learning.

2. METHOD

This study uses a case study approach within a qualitative research framework with the aim of deepening understanding of the constraints experienced by sociology teachers in implementing differentiated learning in the context of the Merdeka curriculum in both public and private high schools. The research object involves various schools that have implemented the Merdeka curriculum as the main focus in implementing differentiated learning. The research informants were 11 sociology teachers who had experience applying a differentiated learning approach in their classes.

The selection of research information was carried out through a positive sampling technique where sociology teachers who had significant experience in implementing differentiation learning were the main targets. Data were obtained through in-depth interviews and direct observation in the learning environment. In-depth interviews were used to gain deeper insight into the perspective of experience and the constraints faced by teachers in implementing differentiation learning. Observation is used to directly observe the practice of learning in class and gain an understanding of the interactions between teachers and students.

Data obtained through interviews and observations were analyzed using a qualitative data analysis approach by adopting the Miles and Huberman analysis model which consisted of three important stages, namely low data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions and verification. At the data reduction stage,

data were obtained from interviews and observations as well as in-depth analysis to identify the themes and constraints that emerged. Furthermore, the data is presented in the form of narrative excerpts and important findings that are relevant to the ultimate goal of the study. Conclusion or verification involves the interpretation of friends who are adjusted to related theories and relevant literature.

3. Results and Discussion

This study found four main obstacles faced by teachers in their efforts to implement differentiated learning.

1.1 *The complexity of the process is confusing*

The complexity of the process in differentiation learning can overwhelm some teachers. In [2], process involves various aspects, including understanding student needs, designing appropriate teaching materials, managing classes with various levels of ability, and evaluating student understanding.

In this study found various factors that cause it. Student Diversity: Every student has different needs and characteristics. In [3], Managing this diversity requires deep understanding of individual abilities, interests, and learning styles, which can be a challenging task.

Several review papers in the past decade be found in [4] [5] [6] [7]. In [5], different lesson plans require careful thought and complex planning. According to some teachers, it is necessary to pay attention to how to present the material in various ways, design appropriate activities, and choose a fair assessment method. In [5], designing teaching materials that are accessible to different levels of ability and learning styles can be a tricky task. This study explains that teachers need to find ways to modify or create teaching materials that can stimulate students' understanding in different ways. In [6], complicated classroom management is also a factor in the complexity of the processes faced by teachers. Managing classes of varying ability levels and learning styles requires more sophisticated classroom management skills. In [7], teachers must be able to pay attention to all students, maintain involvement, and ensure fairness in the learning process.

The application of differentiation learning requires more time to plan, present material, and evaluate. This can make the teacher feel burdened if the lesson schedule is tight enough. A personalization approach is also needed by teachers because the challenge of creating a more personalized learning experience for each student can be complex. Teachers need to design activities that allow each student to feel involved and empowered.

Some teachers admit that they often experiment with new methods to support and adapt different learning. In [8], teachers need to deal with any

discomfort or uncertainty that may arise. Therefore, the implementation of differentiated learning requires understanding and skills that may not be possessed by all teachers. In [9], the process of learning and developing these skills on your own can be a challenging task

1.2 Limited resources such as various teaching materials and different assessment instruments

Resource constraint factors such as various teaching materials can have a significant impact on different learning. In this study it was found that some teachers admitted that they lacked various teaching materials, thus hindering the teacher's ability to present material in an interesting and relevant way for various levels of students' abilities and learning styles. In [10], when teaching materials are limited, students may not have many options to explore material according to their interests or learning style.

Limited teaching materials can limit the variety of activities that can be held in class. This can result in overusing certain teaching methods and ignoring the needs of students with different learning styles. In [11], more capable students may feel unchallenged if teaching materials do not provide opportunities for deeper understanding or further exploration. In [12], the lack of diverse teaching materials can prevent teachers from providing additional enrichment for students at higher ability levels. In [13], students who need additional help or support may find it difficult to find teaching materials that are appropriate to their ability level.

In [14], Limited teaching materials can limit teachers' creativity in designing interesting and innovative learning. With a lack of diverse teaching materials, teachers may find it difficult to meet the needs of diverse students, which can ultimately hinder learning effectiveness. A lack of variety in teaching materials can result in a lack of student motivation to engage in learning, especially for those who feel disinterested in the teaching methods presented.

Teaching materials that are not diverse can limit a teacher's ability to relate the material to students' real-life contexts. In [16], the lack of teaching materials that support diverse assessments can hinder teachers from providing feedback according to student needs.

Coping with limited resources such as diverse teaching materials requires creativity, collaborative efforts, and innovative thinking. In [17], teachers can seek alternative solutions, design their own learning materials, utilize online resources, and collaborate with fellow teachers to share resources. In [18], with the right support, these limitations can be overcome to create a more inclusive and diverse learning environment.

1.3 Teachers must ensure active involvement of students in class

Active engagement of students in class is an important factor for creating an effective learning environment. However, the reality is that many teachers often face challenges in ensuring the active involvement of all students. In [19], constraints at this stage can be seen from what the teacher does starting from opening activities, core activities, and closing activities. In [20], preliminary activities such as providing stimulus to students are often not carried out, closing activities such as testing students' understanding of the material that has been studied are also often missed. In [20], the reason is because the teacher only focuses on conveying the material and does not take the time into account properly.

The inhibiting factor is the teacher's own factor because it does not carry out learning activities in accordance with the teaching modules that have been made. Meanwhile [21] explained, basically the teacher must understand the teaching module because it affects the achievement of good learning outcomes and the teacher must carry out the teaching module in a programmed and structured manner. This is in accordance with the study of role theory that actors in carrying out roles will have influence or obstacles. This problem is related because the teacher does not carry out his role as a facilitator because he has constraints so that the teacher is unable to carry out his role properly.

1.4 Teachers' understanding and skills in carrying out differentiated learning are still lacking

The next obstacle found in this study is the lack of understanding of independent learning which makes it difficult for teachers to apply differentiation learning. In [22], this is the real challenge faced by sociology teachers. Teachers as facilitators have very little independent learning experience. In [23], as previously explained that differentiation learning is learning that adapts to class conditions, and the needs of each learner, if the teacher does not understand this properly then differentiation learning will not run optimally.

This can be due to several factors, including lack of sufficient training, changes in traditional teaching approaches, and high demands on teachers. In this study, several reasons were found why teachers' understanding and skills in applying differentiated learning may still be lacking.

In [24], Many teachers claim to have not received adequate training in differentiated learning. This can leave them feeling uncertain about how to carry it out effectively. This training needs to be discouraged because many teachers are still familiar with more traditional teaching methods and less familiar with newer differentiated approaches. In [25] some teachers also don't have clear models or concrete examples of how to implement differentiated learning in the classroom.

In addition, teachers often have limited time to plan and implement differentiated learning. This process takes longer than conventional teaching methods. Scoring systems that focus on uniform standards also often do not support a differentiated approach. In [27], teachers feel constrained in providing assessments that are appropriate to various levels of student ability.

Some teachers also worry that differentiated learning may leave behind weaker or unskilled students. In [28], the next factor is that managing classes with different levels of ability and learning styles can be challenging. Teachers may need to develop more advanced classroom management skills.

The application of differentiated learning can also involve a paradigm shift from a teacher-centered orientation to a student-centered orientation. This requires a change of mentality that is not always easy.

In [29], the fact to overcome the lack of understanding and skills in implementing differentiated learning, the steps that can be taken are as follows: First, teachers need to be provided with adequate training on the principles of differentiated learning and how to apply them effectively. In [30], second, provide concrete examples of how to apply differentiation learning in the classroom. This can help teachers understand practical ways of doing this. In [31], third, start with small steps in applying differentiation learning. Teachers can start by designing one or two different activities to accommodate student differences. In [32] fourth, collaborating with fellow teachers who already have experience in differentiation learning can help new teachers develop skills and understanding. Fifth, schools can support teachers by providing time for collaboration, conducting training, and providing the necessary resources. Sixth, teachers need to continually reflect on their teaching practices, identify what works and what needs improvement, and make necessary adjustments.

4. Conclusion

This study reveals 4 main obstacles in implementing differentiated learning for sociology teachers, namely: the complexity of the confusing process, limited resources that limit flexibility, challenges of student engagement in class, and the need for deeper teacher understanding and skills. From the results of this study it is hoped that it can optimize a differentiated approach in sociology learning, it is recommended that teachers receive intensive training, develop various teaching materials, interactive strategies of collaboration between teachers and sustainable approaches that involve periodic evaluations with this step it is expected to create an inclusive learning environment and support student development optimally in the era of the Merdeka curriculum. In addition, differentiated learning is not only about various teaching materials, but also about

approaches, activities, and interactions designed to meet the unique needs of each student.

Coping with limited resources such as diverse teaching materials requires creativity, collaborative efforts, and innovative thinking. Teachers can seek alternative solutions, design their own learning materials, utilize online resources, and collaborate with fellow teachers to share resources. With the right support, these limitations can be overcome to create a more inclusive and diverse learning environment.

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