Differentiated Learning Management in Islamic Religious Education Lessons

Nursamsiah Br Ginting
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
E-mail: syamsiahginting8@gmail.com

Hasrian Rudi Setiawan
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
E-mail: hasrianrudi@umsu.ac.id

Indra Prasetia
Universitas Muhammadiyah Sumatera Utara
E-mail: indraprasetia@umsu.ac.id

Abstract
Teachers have to be innovative and imaginative in their approach to teaching since students have varied needs and learn in different ways. This study attempts to characterize the use of differentiated learning management in Islamic religious education classes at MAN Karo in Kabanjahe, North Sumatra, specifically in class X. This study employs descriptive research methodologies in a qualitative manner. The information used by the author to describe the organization, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of differentiated learning comes from responses, opinions, and information that is described in the form of problems using data collection techniques such as interviews, documentation, and observation. The findings indicated that MAN Karo's implementation of differentiated learning management in Islamic religious education classes has been successful and efficient in four areas: first, class organization; second, learning resource organization; and third, learning methods or models. These strategies allow students to become well-conditioned before class, during class, after instruction, and during evaluation. Second, differentiation in learning environments, products, procedures, and content is part of implementation. Third, monitoring, supervision, assessment, reporting, and follow-up tasks are all included in regular and continuous supervision. In short, students can be ready to start the class before coming to the class, while studying in class, after teaching, and evaluation.

Keywords: management, differentiated learning, islamic religious education

INTRODUCTION

Teachers must be creative and imaginative in their approach to teaching because students have different needs and learn in different ways. This is especially true in the digital age (Kazi, 2021; Nasution, et al., 2023). Teachers must automatically enhance their quality or competence as professional educators in response to any changes in the curriculum that call for advancement in the learning process and outcomes. This includes aspects of personality, social life, keen, compassionate, and nurturing instruction, as well as mastery of the scientific subjects being taught to students (Atuhurra & Kaffenberger, 2022; Febry, et al., 2022). This issue needs to be addressed as a kind of all-encompassing, holistic educational dynamization rather than as a professional duty.

Creative and inventive are the buzzwords for education preparedness for change. This implies that there could be a high prevalence of learning difficulties. However, educators have also planned ahead to address every learning challenge (Ndomondo, et al., 2022; Khairy, et al., 2022). The countrywide availability of advanced technology has made it possible for educators to use their creativity in the classroom. To achieve learning innovation, teachers must also be able to generate ideas through imitation, observation, and modification (Remillard, et al., 2019; Saerang, et al., 2023). Every student can absorb the Pancasila student profile and the 21st century education vision in this way (Irawati, et al., 2022; Octavia & Tirtoni, 2024).

Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Karo is the only high school/equivalent educational institution under the auspices of the Indonesian Ministry of Religion which has state status in Tanah Karo, North Sumatra. Founded in 1993, located at Jalan Samura Gang Madrasah Number 6 Kabanjahe (Ermawati, 2020). In the context of the independent curriculum, MAN Karo is obliged to carry out meaningful learning and liberate students to achieve the Pancasila student profile and the rahmatan lil 'alamin student profile. One practice is the application of differentiated learning to adapt the learning needs of each student.

Differentiated learning is not an individual teaching approach but must be managed by the madrasah so that it becomes a holistic learning system (Setyawan, 2022). Differentiated learning management aims to optimize management functions in the learning process, from the planning stage to evaluation or assessment (Kurniasih & Priyanti, 2023; Hanafiah, et al., 2024). Teachers' awareness of the differences in talents, interests and potential of each student becomes a reference in implementing the differentiated learning process. The basic problems that teachers will face are students' learning readiness, class conditions, completeness of learning facilities, and limited learning time (according to lesson hours for each field of study) (Basra, 2022; Komalasari, 2023).

The various problems above show that teachers must be creative and innovative during the learning process by utilizing existing facilities, as well as internalizing moral values as teaching and providing examples to students (Asadullah & Chaudhury, 2016; Nurfata & Pujiastuti, 2023). In this way, students will learn wholeheartedly, like the way the material is presented, while respecting the teacher. Apart from that, teachers are also able to condition learning in the classroom and create an active and conducive learning atmosphere. This learning conditioning process uses active learning methods and strategies, where students will be divided into several groups, both small and large groups, as well as group or independent assignments.

MAN Karo turned into a driving school in 2021. In the previous year it had not become a driving school due to Covid-19. After the change in status, teachers still "feel

like they are unfamiliar" with accepting curriculum changes, where there is still a lack of knowledge about the Merdeka curriculum in Islamic religious education subjects, so that teachers have difficulty compiling teaching materials, learning strategies and learning media that meet the different needs of each student. Teachers are still constrained in implementing differentiated learning. Teachers have difficulty implementing a differentiated assessment process that is appropriate to the diversity of students and learning management is not structured coherently, so that learning outcomes are not optimal.

In fact, relevant research on the management of differentiated learning has been researched from various scientific fields. This includes discussing aspects of efforts to improve the quality of student learning (Bendriyanti, et al., 2021), inclusive and differentiated learning strategies for elementary school students (Safitri, 2023), efforts to increase students' overall understanding (Naibaho, 2023), implementation of differentiated learning management based on the independent learning curriculum (Kusumardi, 2023; Gusteti & Neviyarni, 2022; Siagian, et al., 2022), increasing student creativity at school (Hasnawati & Netti, 2022; Aminuriyah, 2022), project based learning model (Wardani, et al., 2023; Sarie, 2022), increasing teacher competence in presenting differentiated teaching (Subhan, 2022), and efforts to fulfill students' learning needs (Maulidia & Prafitasari, 2023).

Observing the description above, it is understood that there is a gap analysis in previous studies regarding differentiated learning, namely in the aspects of research background and management of Islamic religious learning through strategies and media practiced by teachers. The Islamic Religious Education subject teacher at MAN Karo Kabanjahe has implemented differentiated learning in class X (ten). Each class has an average number of 30 students, each student has differences between one another, such as readiness to learn, student profile, and so on, so that the learning strategies and media applied when the learning process is taking place in class appear varied. Therefore, the author is very interested in researching how learning management differentiates in class X Islamic religious education subjects at MAN Karo.

METHOD

This study employed descriptive research methodologies in a qualitative manner. The data used to describe the organization, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of differentiated learning is gathered through observations, interviews, documentation, and other data collection techniques. This data used to describe the organization, implementation, supervision, and evaluation of differentiated learning (Assingkily, 2021). In this research, the data source is a natural situation and as it is, which is outlined in the form of a report and description of differentiated learning management in Class X Islamic religious subjects. The research background is at Madrasah Aliyah Negeri (MAN) Karo, located at Jalan Samura Gang Madrasah Number 6 Kabanjahe, North Sumatra. This research was carried out from October 2023 to February 2024.

The following informants served as the main sources of data for this study: teachers, students, and the head and deputy of the madrasah. Secondary sources drawn from books, papers, and scientific publications pertinent to the research topic are used to support this data. Using data reduction techniques, data display, and conclusion drafting, the acquired data is examined (Moleong, 2016). Next, triangulation of research time, triangulation of data sources, and triangulation of data collection procedures or methods

were used to test the validity of the data. Thus, the four requirements for legitimate data—credibility, reliability, transferability, and confirmability—are met (Sugiyono, 2019).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION
Organization of Differentiated Learning in PAI Lessons in Class X MAN Karo

Organizing can also be said to be a grouping of tools, materials, methods and strategies that will be used to achieve organizational goals. The research findings regarding the organization of differentiated learning in Islamic religious education subjects in class:

"*... In order to condition the classroom environment for student learning, organizing efforts are separated into three categories: organizing learning materials, organizing learning techniques and models, and organizing the class. Thus, in our madrasah, we have always planned a meeting to decide on the semester calendar from the start of the school year, and we also have an annual meeting for a thorough schedule of events at the madrasah. Presently, the topic of arranging learning is expressly discussed by instructors during MGMP meetings or during subject-matter discussions within their academic disciplines. This includes PAI teachers*".

In more detail, PAI teacher MAN Karo said that:

"*...As educators, we arrange the educational resources in accordance with the curriculum by gathering a variety of resources that are relevant to the instruction. To ensure that learning materials are delivered effectively and efficiently, we then arrange learning techniques or models by choosing multiple suitable models or learning methods. In conclusion, classroom management is implemented by PAI teachers to ensure that students feel at ease engaging in the learning process. Class organization is accomplished by incorporating students in the learning process*".

The interview quote above explains that organization is an important aspect in managing differentiated learning. When teachers implement differentiated instruction in Islamic religious education classes, In order for students to follow the learning process, teachers must first determine what is vital and what they need to acquire. To do this, they should create a lesson plan that is actually suited for the students' circumstances. The second step is to implement or carry out the pre-planned tasks before class (Operating Procedures). In addition to providing and instructing Islamic religious education materials, teachers should possess attributes that pupils find endearing.

Among these is a sense of humor, which will undoubtedly add to the teaching and learning process. Third, following the teaching and learning activities, the teacher's work is undoubtedly not done. This is known as the post-teaching stage. The instructor has a number of responsibilities, which include: 1) grading students' work; 2) scheduling the next meeting; and 3) Reassess the teaching and learning process that has been delivered and look for what needs to be improved and what needs to be improved. Fourth, evaluation, activities to measure and assess student learning outcomes both through written and oral exams.

Implementation of Differentiated Learning in PAI Lessons in Class X MAN Karo

The implementation of the differentiated learning process in Islamic religious education subjects at MAN Karo uses four strategies, as conveyed by the PAI teacher below:

> "... *the learning environment, product differentiation, process differentiation, and content differentiation are the four strategies from which to choose. This approach was specifically chosen to give pupils a relevant learning experience. Contextuality is another feature of the activities, which means that we use the local knowledge and surroundings to enhance our learning both inside and outside of the classroom*".

The interview quote above shows that learning differentiation varies, starting from aspects of content, process, product, to learning environment. According to Suwandi et al. (2023), content differentiation can be an alternative in increasing students' interest in learning. Content differentiation analyzes the content or learning material itself. This can be differentiated in several ways. First, students have different levels of mastery or knowledge of a subject. Some students may have no prior knowledge about the subject matter, some students may have partial knowledge, and some students may have mastered knowledge about the subject matter.

Secondly, there are variations in the learning styles of students. Learners can be kinesthetic, auditory, or visual. Visual explanations of some class topics can undoubtedly help a visual learner pick up new information quickly. Conversely, auditory learners will comprehend the subject matter more fully if they hear the teacher explain it orally or through audio. In contrast, a student who is a kinesthetic learner will comprehend concepts more quickly if he is able to actively engage in the learning process.

Apart from content differentiation, process aspects also have special emphasis in the learning process. According to Atikah et al. (2024), process differentiation is able to increase students' understanding of learning and adapt to the different learning styles of each student. Furthermore, this process differentiation talks about how a teacher can provide appropriate instructions to each student in the learning process. In addition, continuous assessment during learning will also help teachers understand whether each student has learned to the best of their ability or not. In order to determine the appropriate learning process and model for these students, teachers must understand the interests, abilities and level of knowledge of each student. Why is that? Because every student actually has their own unique and unique way of learning.

Next, product differentiation. According to Jaya (2023), product differentiation innovation can improve activities and learning outcomes. This aspect involves the method used by the teacher to determine the level of mastery of the material or teaching materials of each student. To determine mastery of the material, a teacher can do this by conducting tests, asking students to write reports on topics based on the lesson material, and so on. But whatever the method, the best assessment method is one that suits each student's level of intellectual interest and their preferred way of learning. For example, a good way to test kinesthetic learners is through practical assessments, while auditory learners are through verbal or verbal assessments.

In the context of a differentiation strategy, no less important priority is the learning environment. according to Herwina (2021), students are the hope of all indicators of learning success. Where, the public will assess the image of an institution through the graduates produced or graduates of educational institutions. Differentiated learning must engineer a conducive learning environment for students, as well as making collaborative

efforts with parents and the community to create a conducive learning climate, as well as optimizing student needs and learning outcomes.

As far as the differentiation of learning environments is concerned, a student generally has two options: one that can enhance their learning and one that could hinder it. While a noisy classroom will hinder students' ability to focus and comprehend the material, a peaceful and supportive environment might enhance learning outcomes. In the key activities of the specified lesson plan, teachers can apply differentiated instruction in Islamic religious education subjects from the beginning to the end.

Supervision and Assessment of Differentiated Learning in PAI Lessons in Class X MAN Karo

Supervision of the differentiated learning process in PAI lessons at MAN Karo is carried out by teachers on an ongoing basis. Usually, teachers, in supervising and assessing the differentiated learning they have implemented for students, will compile the results of the examination and produce it in the form of a learning report. According to the results of the interview with the Head of the Madrasah, it was stated that:

> "*... in differentiated learning using PAI material, supervision and assessment activities are focused on four goals: enhancing plans that are no longer practical for implementation and making sure that the plans to be prepared reflect the characteristics of students; providing technical support to educators and students who require advice and other assistance to address issues and challenges in the learning process; rewarding educators and students who perform well; and disseminating best practices in the implementation of learning*".

Furthermore, the PAI teacher at MAN Karo said that:

> "*... differentiated learning stages consist of three main components: (1) planning, implementing, and assessing learning outcomes in class, through discussion activities, consultations, or training; (2) planning, observing, and documenting stages through group discussions, interviews, and documentation; and (3) regularly reporting learning outcomes*".

The interview excerpt above informs that the supervision of differentiated learning is actually carried out by supervisors, namely school principals and madrasah supervisors from the Karo Regency Ministry of Religion. Likewise, teachers as implementers of learning activities are also asked to carry out self-monitoring in observing learning progress and student learning outcomes, as well as determining follow-up actions for the differentiation learning process (Naibaho, 2023). In this way, students' learning needs will match their interests, talents and learning styles, making it easier for students to find the spirit of achievement and continued learning independence.

Discussion

Learning is a crucial process for pupils to internalize principles, practice skills, and develop their intellectual insight. As leaders in learning, instructors actually have a significant impact on the process of learning (Huang, et al., 2024; Nasution, et al., 2023). The effectiveness of attaining educational objectives is determined by teacher leadership during the learning process since teachers are crucial in helping students realize their own potential (Syafaruddin & Lubis, 2021; Al Fasya, et al., 2022). Every student should be encouraged to learn independently and to see the value of information, two qualities that teachers should strongly encourage.

Developing personal potential and focusing on independent learning is not easy for teachers to stimulate students. Because, every student is unique and has their own way of learning (Shaked, 2023). Teachers need to acknowledge that every student is unique and that these variances are unavoidable. In this manner, teachers will use a variety of mixed methods to present pupils with the proper learning that they need (Lubis, et al., 2022). This phenomena encourages teachers to be ready to adapt their instruction to meet the requirements of their pupils and reinforces the crucial role that teachers play in the lives of their students.

Technology and the growing expectations society has of graduates from schools or madrasas present opportunities as well as problems for all administrators in educational institutions. Implementing differentiated learning in the autonomous curriculum is one of the newest difficulties facing educators (Fauzia & Ramadan, 2023; Hidayat, et al., 2021). Naturally, the primary objective of differentiated learning is to optimize the learning process in accordance with the requirements of various pupils (Pitaloka & Arsanti, 2022; Putri & Prafitasari, 2023; Clark-Wilson & Hoyles, 2019). Differentiated education must be used in every school, including MAN Karo.

Organizing differentiated learning carried out by Islamic religious education teachers in order to determine the procedures for activities that will take place. Starting from who will do an activity and then what must be completed, when these activities will be carried out, and what are the main goals and targets in the learning process. According to Putri, et al. (2023) classroom conditioning, placement of teaching materials according to class times, and use of appropriate learning methods will make it easier for teachers to manage learning. Ilma (2023) added that differentiation learning should not place the teacher as the center of learning, but rather make students the subject of active and independent learning. Of course, the learning practice that makes students both subjects and objects is through the formation of discussion groups.

Differentiated learning is an effort that is worthy of being chosen by teachers in responding to the differences and uniqueness of each student. The process is of course through classroom conditioning, using appropriate methods and strategies, and assisted by learning media (online or offline) (Setiyo, 2022). In practice, this type of learning presents a case that can trigger students' enthusiasm in solving it in group discussions (Sari & Mawardi, 2023). Thus, collaboration and communication between students will lead to the acceptance of teaching materials effectively and efficiently. In this context, the teacher acts as a facilitator and supervisor of learning activities.

In reality, differentiated learning is seen as an attempt to give pupils comprehension, logic, and appreciation as they are engaging in learning exchanges. In this context, educators watch students and adapt their teachings to meet their needs rather than using the same medium or technique of instruction over and over again. In other words, rather than teaching each student individually, the teacher groups them and then has a group discussion on a single topic.

Teachers can pique students' interest in the Islamic religious education subject by offering stimulants during the preparatory tasks. Proceed with perception and motivation exercises next to ensure that pupils are consistently excited about their learning experiences. These three phases of differentiated learning can be completed by offering variations based on the teacher's mapping. The evaluation is the same. In addition, teachers must conduct continual evaluations as part of the characteristics of differentiated learning, beginning with non-cognitive and cognitive diagnostic tests at the outset of the learning process. In order to determine the degree to which pupils accept the continuous

learning process, teachers must also conduct a variety of assessments. Every student's comprehension can be captured by this varied exam.

Supervision of the differentiated learning process in Islamic religious education subjects is carried out through regular and ongoing monitoring, evaluation, reporting and follow-up activities (Wahyuningsari, et al., 2022). Supervision of the learning process is carried out directly by the school principal as an internal supervisor and madrasah supervisors from the Karo Regency Ministry of Religion as external supervisors. Supervision in learning does not only focus on students, but also to strengthen teacher skills, assist teachers in the process of designing and preparing learning plans, implementing remedial programs, and inspiring the use of learning media that can be used in the classroom (Wulandari, 2022).

Differentiated learning will be implemented, and this will benefit instructors, students, and schools alike. Ineffective teaching practices can prevent pupils from developing to their full potential and impair their ability to meet learning objectives. On the other side, if the instructor has effectively implemented differentiated learning, then students' requirements will be satisfied, resulting in learning that is beneficial to the students. When thinking about contextual factors to enhance differentiated learning, it's also critical to realize that the classroom design needs to be flexible and supportive of group work and collaboration, while also encouraging and supporting students who prefer to work independently. Finally, a variety of environmental elements, including lighting, the ambiance in the classroom, the size of the class, the layout of the boards, etc., need to support student success.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above description, it can be concluded that differentiated learning management in Islamic religious education lessons at MAN Karo has been implemented effectively and efficiently, in terms of the aspects of organizing learning resources, learning methods or models, and organizing classes, so that students can be conditioned to starting before entering class, while studying in class, after teaching, and evaluation. Implementation includes differentiation of content, processes, products and learning environments. Then the supervision aspect includes regular and ongoing monitoring, supervision, evaluation, reporting and follow-up activities.

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