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## The Application of Differentiated Learning in Improving the Learning Outcomes of Faith Material to the Books of Allah Swt SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam

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**Abstract:** Differentiated learning is a teaching strategy that adjusts methods, materials, and evaluations to the needs, interests, and abilities of students. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the application of differentiated learning in improving student learning outcomes on the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT* at SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam. The research method used is classroom action research (PTK) with a cycle model consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data collection was carried out through learning outcome tests, observations, and interviews to measure the improvement of student understanding. The results of the study show that the application of differentiated learning is able to significantly improve students' understanding of concepts and learning outcomes. Students become more active in the learning process, more confident in expressing their opinions, and easier to understand the material according to their learning style. In addition, this approach also creates a more interactive and fun classroom atmosphere. Thus, differentiated learning can be an effective solution in improving the quality of learning, especially in faith materials. It is hoped that this strategy can continue to be developed and applied in learning to improve student learning outcomes optimally.

**Keywords:** Differentiated Learning, Learning Outcomes, Faith, Books of Allah, SMK.

## INTRODUCTION

Differentiated learning is an approach that adjusts teaching strategies to students' needs, interests, and abilities, so that they can achieve optimal learning outcomes (Tomlinson, 2020). This approach emphasizes that each student has a different learning style, level of readiness, and interest in understanding a material. In the context of learning Islam, especially in the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*, this strategy is a solution for the diversity of student

characteristics in understanding the concept of faith

However, the reality on the ground shows that many educators still apply conventional methods that do not pay attention to individual student differences. Learning is still carried out uniformly without considering the unique needs of each student. As a result, some students have difficulty understanding the material in depth, so their learning outcomes are not optimal (Subekti, 2021). This is exacerbated by the low active involvement of students in learning, which makes them tend to be passive in receiving information in the absence of a deep critical thinking process.

Differentiated learning has been proven to improve student learning outcomes by providing learning experiences that are more in line with their characteristics (Santoso, 2022). This approach includes differentiation in content, processes, products, and learning environments. Content differentiation involves adjusting teaching materials based on students' readiness levels, while process differentiation relates to teaching methods that vary according to their learning styles. Additionally, product differentiation allows students to demonstrate their understanding in different forms, such as projects, essays, or presentations, according to their individual preferences.

In addition to improving learning outcomes, differentiated learning also has a positive impact on student motivation and involvement in the learning process. According to Wulandari & Nugroho (2023), students who are taught with methods that suit their interests and needs are more likely to be active in discussions, dare to ask questions, and are more enthusiastic in completing assignments. This shows that this strategy not only improves the understanding of the material but also creates a more fun and interactive learning environment.

In its application, differentiated learning requires teachers to have a deep understanding of student characteristics as well as the ability to design flexible teaching strategies. According to Rahman (2022), teachers need to conduct diagnostic assessments to determine students' learning readiness before applying this approach. By understanding each student's strengths and weaknesses, teachers can develop a more effective lesson plan that suits their individual needs.

Despite its many benefits, the implementation of differentiated learning also faces several challenges. One of the main obstacles is the limited time that teachers have in designing and implementing different learning for each group of students (Hidayat, 2023). In addition, the lack of understanding and training for teachers in implementing this strategy is also a factor that hinders its effectiveness. Therefore, training and mentoring efforts are needed for teachers so that they can apply differentiated learning optimally in the classroom.

As a solution to the existing problems, this study proposes the application of differentiated learning as an innovative strategy in improving student learning outcomes at SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam. By adjusting teaching methods based on student learning readiness, interests, and profiles, it is hoped that the learning process will be more effective and interactive (Santoso, 2022). In addition, this approach is also believed to be able to create a more inclusive and enjoyable learning environment.

This research will analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of differentiated learning and its impact on students' understanding of the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*. The results of this research are expected to contribute to the development of more adaptive and student-based learning strategies. Thus, the application of differentiated learning can be a real solution in improving the quality of education, especially in Islamic religious learning at the vocational school level.

## METHODS

This study uses the Classroom Action Research (PTK) method with a cycle model developed by Kemmis & McTaggart (2020). This model consists of four main stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection, which are carried out repeatedly until optimal results are achieved. This research was carried out at SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam with a

focus on the application of differentiated learning in improving student learning outcomes on the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*.

In this study, there are two types, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained directly from students and teachers through learning outcome tests, observations, and interviews. The test is used to measure students' understanding before and after the implementation of differentiated learning. Observations are carried out to see student activities and their involvement in the learning process. Interviews were conducted with teachers to understand the challenges and effectiveness of these learning strategies. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from literature, research journals, and relevant curriculum documents as a basis for analyzing research results.

The data obtained were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative descriptive techniques (Sugiyono, 2021). Quantitative data in the form of student test results were analyzed using simple statistical methods, such as the percentage of grade improvement and the average score before and after the implementation of differentiated learning. Meanwhile, qualitative data from observations and interviews were analyzed by data reduction techniques, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to understand learning patterns and changes in student behavior in the classroom. The results of this analysis will be used to assess the effectiveness of differentiated learning in increasing students' understanding of the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*.

## RESULTS

The results of the study show that the application of differentiated learning has a positive impact on student learning outcomes on the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT* at SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam. Students show a significant increase in understanding after this strategy is implemented. Learning that is tailored to students' learning readiness, interests, and learning styles makes them more active in discussions, more confident in answering questions, and more enthusiastic in completing assignments. In addition, teachers also benefit from this method, as it is able to accommodate individual differences of students more effectively.

Before the implementation of differentiated learning, most students experienced difficulties in understanding the material of faith in the books of Allah SWT. This is reflected in the initial test results which show that the average score of students only reaches **65.4**. After differentiated learning was implemented, the students' test results increased to **82.7**, indicating an increase in understanding of the material taught.

In addition to the improvement of learning outcomes, there was also a change in the level of student participation in the classroom. The observation results showed that before this method was applied, only **40%** of students were active in discussions. However, once differentiated learning was implemented, the participation rate increased to **85%**, indicating that this method encouraged students to be more courageous in expressing opinions and interacting with peers and teachers.

The ease of understanding the material has also increased. Before this method was implemented, only **50%** of students found it easy to understand the material. After differentiated learning was implemented, this figure increased to **78%**, which shows that this method is able to adapt to the learning needs of each student, so that they absorb information faster and understand the concepts taught.

The observation results also showed that there were differences in learning preferences among students. Students with a visual learning style understand the material faster when presented in the form of **diagrams, images, and learning videos**. Meanwhile, students with a kinesthetic learning style are more interested in **discussion, simulation, and hands-on practice methods**. By applying variations in the way the material is delivered, learning becomes more interesting and in accordance with the individual needs of students.

The results of interviews with teachers confirmed that the application of differentiated learning helps increase student engagement in the learning process. Teachers find it easier to manage the classroom because students are more active and motivated to learn. In addition,

teachers also stated that this method allows them to better understand the characteristics and potential of students, so that they can provide more effective and personalized guidance.

The following is the data from the research results that show changes before and after the implementation of differentiated learning:

**Table 1. Comparison of Learning Outcomes and Student Participation Before and After Differentiated Learning**

Measured Aspects	Before Differentiated Learning	After Differentiated Learning	Increase (%)
Average Student Score	65,4	82,7	26,5%
Participation in Discussions	40%	85%	45%
Ease of Understanding Material	50%	78%	28%

To ensure the accuracy of the research results, data **were triangulated** by comparing the results of tests, observations, and interviews (Miles & Huberman, 2020). The analysis of the test results showed a significant increase in scores, which was in line with the observational findings regarding the increase in student engagement.

In addition, teachers also noted that after differentiated learning was implemented, students showed a more enthusiastic attitude in completing their tasks. They not only rely on memorization, but are also able to relate the concepts learned to everyday life. This shows that this method not only improves academic outcomes but also builds a deeper conceptual understanding.

Thus, this study proves that differentiated learning is an effective strategy in increasing students' understanding of the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*. By tailoring teaching methods based on students' individual needs, they can create a more interactive, fun, and inclusive learning environment. Therefore, this approach is recommended to be applied more widely in Islamic religious learning in other schools.

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses data triangulation, which is comparing the results of tests, observations, and interviews to obtain accurate conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 2020). The analysis of the test results showed a significant increase in scores, in line with observational findings related to the increase in student activity. Interviews with teachers and students also support that these learning strategies help them understand the material better. Thus, the results of this study can be said to be valid and can be used as a basis for the development of more effective learning methods in the future.

## DISCUSSION

The results of the study show that the application of differentiated learning has a significant impact on improving learning outcomes and student involvement in the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT*. This method has proven to be effective in adapting teaching strategies to students' needs and characteristics, so that they can understand the material better. However, to ensure the validity of the results of this study, a data validation process is carried out through various analysis methods.

Data validation is carried out using triangulation techniques, namely comparing various data sources to get more accurate conclusions (Miles & Huberman, 2020). Triangulation is carried out through source triangulation, method triangulation, and time triangulation. Source triangulation is carried out by collecting data from various sources, including student test results, direct observation in class, and interviews with teachers and students. By comparing data from these various sources, it can be ensured that the results obtained truly reflect the changes that occur in the classroom. Triangulation of methods is carried out by combining quantitative and qualitative methods to analyze learning outcomes. The results of the quantitative test are confirmed by participatory observation and qualitative interviews to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the student's behavior change and

understanding. Meanwhile, time triangulation is carried out by collecting data in several stages during the learning cycle, namely before the application of differentiated learning, during the learning process, and after this method is applied. Thus, the changes that occur can be observed gradually and more objectively.

Based on the validation results, it was found that the increase in the average score of students from 65.4 to 82.7 was not just the result of external factors, but was actually caused by the application of differentiated learning. This is confirmed through observations that show that students are more active in discussions and more confident in expressing opinions after this method is applied. In addition, the results of interviews with teachers showed that this method helped them in understanding the characteristics of students better. Teachers feel that students who were previously passive and less motivated become more enthusiastic about learning. This is in line with quantitative data that shows an increase in student participation in discussions from 40% to 85%, as well as an increase in the ease of understanding the material from 50% to 78%.

Aside from the academic side, this method also contributes to the improvement of students' social and communication skills. During the observation, it was found that students interacted with each other more often in study groups, exchanged opinions, and worked together in completing assignments. This shows that differentiated learning not only improves individual learning outcomes, but also builds cooperation in an inclusive learning environment.

With the results of this validation, it can be concluded that differentiated learning has high effectiveness in increasing students' understanding of the material of Faith in the Books of Allah SWT. Therefore, this approach is recommended to continue to be applied and developed in various subjects, especially in Islamic religious learning, in order to create a more adaptive and effective learning atmosphere for each student.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of differentiated learning has a significant impact on improving student learning outcomes on the material of *Faith in the Books of Allah SWT* at SMK Negeri 1 Bandar Masilam. The data obtained showed an increase in the average score of students from **65.4 before the application of the method to 82.7 afterwards**, proving that this strategy helps students in understanding the material more deeply. In addition, **student participation in discussions increased from 40% to 85%**, which shows that this approach also has an effect on student involvement in the learning process.

In terms of concept comprehension, **78% of students found it easier to understand the material after the implementation of differentiated learning**, compared to only 50% before the method was applied. The results of interviews with teachers also show that this strategy provides flexibility in accommodating the diverse learning needs of students, both those who have visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles. Therefore, this study corroborates that differentiated learning is an effective method to increase students' understanding and involvement in learning Islam.

From an academic perspective, the application of differentiated learning not only improves student learning outcomes but also helps them in developing critical and analytical thinking skills. By providing a learning experience that suits each student's learning style, this method allows them to understand the material better and be more confident in expressing their understanding.

In addition to the academic impact, this method also has **a positive social contribution**. Differentiated learning encourages cooperation between students, increases social interaction, and creates a more inclusive learning environment. Students who were previously less active in learning became more courageous in discussing and cooperating with their peers. This suggests that this method not only improves individual understanding but also builds social skills that are important in everyday life.

Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that differentiated learning be applied more widely, especially in subjects that require a deep conceptual understanding such as Islam. Teachers are also advised to continue to develop more flexible and adaptive teaching

strategies in order to accommodate the diversity of students more optimally. Thus, differentiated learning can be an effective approach in creating a more quality learning experience, both academically and socially.

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