Analysis of Implementation of Independent Curriculum: Diagnostic Assessment and Differentiated Learning in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: Implementing an independent curriculum in educational units is one of the solutions to learning recovery. Some schools have implemented an independent curriculum in the 2022/2023 academic year. One way of implementing student-centered learning is to apply different learning, so in this independent curriculum by applying differential learning. This differential learning is one of the efforts in taking into account the learning needs of the students in terms of learning readiness, student learning profile, interests, and talents of the learners. This research aims to decrypt the implementation of independent curricula through diagnostic assessments and differential learning. The research methods used in this research are qualitative methods, with interviews. Subjects in this study are 1st and 4th-grade teachers at Suryodiningratan Elementary School who have implemented the Merdeka curriculum. The result of this study is the implementation that has been done in the school has been implemented with maximum, teachers performing assessment analysis diagnostic at the beginning of learning to map the learning needs of the pupils. In this case, the diagnostic assessment is performed in two stages, where cognitive diagnostic assessments measure students' cognitive and non-cognitive diagnostics assessments for measuring students' interests and needs. This early identification is used by teachers as a benchmark in mapping the implementation of differential learning. The differential learning done by the teacher is tailored to the needs, interests, and learning styles of the student.

Keywords: independent curriculum, diagnostic assessment, differential learning

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic prompted the government to make changes to the curriculum implementation to the conditions at the time. The first attempt was on the 2013 curriculum or better known as the emergency curriculum. Subsequently, a prototype curriculum was introduced in the School of Engineers. (Rozady & Koten, 2022). The application of this prototype curriculum has a visionary purpose (Solehudin dkk., 2022). In this curriculum, learning is project-oriented, students learn flexibly, and learning is holistic. (Faiz dkk., 2022).

This curriculum is also aimed at bringing the greatest change to the benefit of the students. (Bahri, 2022).

This prototype curriculum is the birth embryo of independent curricula. The independent curriculum aims to recover and compensate students for the loss of learning impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. (Mustaghfiroh, 2020). An independent curriculum emerged to give rise to a new paradigm in which students were given independence (Susilawati, 2021). The freedom here is the freedom for schools, teachers, and students to be independently creative. It will be able to explore students' abilities so that learning becomes more contextual and enjoyable.
Merdeka Learning is a program aimed at digging into the potential, innovation, and creativity of students and teachers to improve the quality of learning. (Saleh, 2020). Initially, this Merdeka curriculum was applied to some driving schools, but now it has been developed to be implemented in all schools according to their condition. (Angga dkk., 2022). Implementation of an independent curriculum refers to the student being independent in thinking, making changes as an active student, independent in career, able to collaborate with teachers and other students in the learning process, to form a student's character that is independent, courageous, intelligent in collaborating with the environment of the school (Hasibuan dkk., 2022).

In the concept of learning activities carried out on an independent curriculum, students will be assessed before learning begins, during the implementation of learning, and after learning is completed (Purwati dkk., 2023). In this curriculum, diagnostic assessment plays an important role in ensuring that education can run effectively and efficiently, where the main objective of the independent curricula is to be able to qualify graduates who can compete at a global level, in this case, diagnostic assessments help teachers in determining the level of initial ability of students as the teacher's reference in defining the material and learning approaches that correspond to the needs of students. (Haerazi dkk., 2023).

A diagnostic assessment is an assessment that is performed to identify the characteristics, competencies, conditions, strengths, and weaknesses of a student's learning model so that this diagnostic assessment becomes a method and a first step for teachers to know the needs of students. (Sindy Jayanti dkk., 2023).

The learning done in an independent curriculum is student-centered learning, i.e. by applying differential learning. Differential learning is one of the forms of learning that takes into account the needs of students in terms of learning readiness, student profile, interests, as well as the student's talents. (Aprima & Sari, 2022). Differential learning can accommodate the needs of students through methods, strategies, and models of teaching teachers. So teachers have to understand that there is no one way to implement methods, strategies, and models in one lesson but to organize them variably according to the needs of students based on the results of diagnostic assessments. (Insani dkk., 2023). In the application of differentiation, learning requires a mature preparation and adaptation of both the head of school and the teacher, as well as an understanding of the characteristics of students, the use of IT, and learning planning that focuses on the expected outcome. (Marzoan, 2023). In differential learning 3 approaches can be done, i.e. product, process, and content, product differentiation is done by giving choices on how students in expressing the desired learning according to their interests, and differentiating processes may be done by the way students in processing ideas and information according to the learning style, and differentiated content is what is learned in connection with the learning material and curriculum (Yani dkk., 2023).

The implementation of this research also refers to previous research, including the first study carried out (Yani dkk., 2023) "Implementation of Diagnostic Assessment to Tick Profile of Students' Learning Style in Differential Learning in Elementary Schools", the results of this study suggest that the diagnostic assessment performed influenced both in implementation and differential learning process in thematic learning through differentiation of content, products, and materials. Diagnostic tests involve mapping of learning styles, early knowledge of students, as well as students' interest in teachers to be able to carry out learning according to their needs. Optimization in the implementation of these diagnostic tests to improve the quality of thematic learning to suit the needs of students as well as time in learning.

The second research conducted by (Latifah, 2023) "Student Learning Style Analysis for Differentiated Learning in Elementary Schools", the results of this study showed that the
learning style of VB class students in SD N Purwoyoso 4 Semarang City was auditorium 29%, visual 52%, and kinesthetic 19%. This means most students can easily learn and understand an enrichment by reading and observing visual objects. Through the application of this differential learning, students are facilitated in their learning process through learning activities that vary according to their learning style.

The third study conducted by (Sudarto dkk., 2023) "Implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum in the State SD 2 Manurunge Kecamatan Tanete Riattang Bone district" results of the researchers shows that learning with the independent curriculum has been well implemented and in line with the expectations of the independent program, teachers can draw up a learning plan based on the teaching module, the teacher can plan the application of centralized learning to students and differentiated learning, but the differentiation implementation has not been maximized because the teacher has not performed the task of the project perfectly.

This previous research is the researchers reference material in carrying out research, the similarity in this research with the previous researchers is the same - the same research on independent curriculum and the difference lies in the subject and object of research as well as the focus of research so that this position of researchers more reinforces the connection of previous research and give a new picture of the findings in the field. In DIY, several schools are implementing independent curricula, one of them at SD Suryodiningratan. Where schools have competent teachers who can implement independent curricula. To do so, the researchers will study how the implementation of the school in implementing the independent curriculum in carrying out the diagnostic assessment and learning differentiation.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative descriptive approach. Qualitative descriptive research aims to describe existing phenomena by taking into account the characteristics, qualities, and interrelationships of interactions. Qualitative data analysis steps include data reduction, display, and conclusion drawings (Yuliani, 2018).

This research uses a case study method to explore reality. This research uses the anchor technique that was done on teachers of 1st and 4th classes as well as the head of the school in Suryodiningratan. The data validity techniques used by the researchers are data triangulation, and the data analysis techniques used in this study are Miles and Huberman analysis techniques, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawings.

![Figure 1. Research Stream](image-url)
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This research is focused on looking at the implementation of differentiated learning from the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

1. Planning

The school's planning in implementing the independent curriculum is with the readiness of the teacher and the teacher's understanding of the independent Curriculum so that before implementing it, the teacher gets training on the independent. Planning has been carried out by teachers including the preparation of Learning Objectives (TP) and Learning Goals (ATP), the creation of teaching modules, the implementation of initial assessments or diagnostic assessments, and the planning of learning steps. Based on the results of research done by teachers in the early stages of the preparation of TP and ATP is

"The learning objectives are structured based on looking from the learning access, adjusting to what should be achieved, teachers also do share to other school class teachers to be evaluation material. Access to learning is made easy so that students do not have too much trouble"

"According to the existing ATP, because we teach, there must be guidance."

Based on the statement, here the teacher performs the Learning Access Analysis (CP) that has been provided and looks at the material in the book, after which the teacher prepares the TP and makes the ATP by discussing the teacher in one phase.

A diagnostic assessment is an assessment performed by teachers to identify the abilities, advantages, and shortcomings of students so that education can be designed according to the conditions and abilities of students. (Kemendikbud, 2022). The function of this assessment is to identify the level of learning difficulties of students so that it can help teachers to develop more effective and efficient learning.

Based on the research, before the teacher performs the learning activity, the teacher carries out a mapping of the student's learning needs, interests, learning styles, and readiness to learn students following what has been communicated by the Buddha. As for the results of the interview on the diagnostic assessment carried out by the teacher:

"Teachers test students' abilities first, analyze what difficulties students experience, then give what students need more, such as counseling in counting or reading. Then in the school area of interest, there is an extra curriculum as a student's container develops interests and talents. The school also includes an inter-school competition for successful students. For the learning profile of the university, the students have provided the development of the student's learning profile according to the needs and difficulties of the students. Learning profiles also make it easier for teachers to organize learning"

"From the beginning, we have to know the character of the child one by one, in the first grade is not enough a month sometimes two to three months to learn the child's abilities. For children who don't read well not all of them have to be from kindergarten in our
country, the RPO requirement is 7 years old so we do not know if they can read or not because the condition is only 7 years of age. Well then if the children are fewer is our duty as a classmate to add lessons outside of school hours (free), especially for children who have difficulty reading we ask the student guardian first. If the guardian asks his son to study at the house, we will. Before the government suggested that there are students who have not yet been able to read and so the school's responsibility added we've done that because it's already a culture in our SD."

From the above statement, it can be concluded that the teacher has performed the diagnostic assessment using the instruments provided by the teacher. In addition, the teacher also conducted interviews with the student's guardian, conducted a commercialization of cognitive abilities, and in the interests of the student the school has provided a container for the student in developing interests according to his will.

After the teacher performs an initial assessment of the student, the next step is to design lessons around the initial matching results. Students who reach average grades learn gradually or step by step. If the student's score is below average, the teacher will provide learning help or guidance for the basic skills that are not met. Students who score above average are more educated.

Once the teacher knows the student's initial abilities, interests, and learning styles, then the teacher can draw up a plan to do in using learning methods, strategies, and models. As for the results of the interview on the learning plan for the independent curriculum among them. "Students are given a problem and then each student has their own opinion. Following today’s developments, children are more demanding to think critically, so for learning differentiation students are allowed freedom of opinion. Besides, teachers also use the interview method as one of the learning processes that can attract students' interests."

"Of course, we have to be smart as a teacher in the first grade because we're still paid age (0-8 years) no class 1, 2 that we still take learning while playing, we can't push for example directly mention, we should not have to learn while playing we play first to enter the material, we must make school fun not to be a "momok" become a taboo so kids if not school even miss wanting to school "

Based on the above statement, it can be concluded that teachers use a variety of learning variations, use a problem-based learning model, improve critical thinking by conducting interviews, and fun games, and students can freely express their opinions when discussing or learning. With this planning then learning will fit the needs of students and can run smoothly. Based on observations, schools have developed a learning plan that accommodates differences of interests and talents. In this case, learners are designed with the presence of collaboration, and the defense plan is listed after compiling TP and ATP by compiling teaching modules. Activities in this module are activities that can meet the needs of students based on the initial assessment as well as teachers have the freedom in choosing tools or learning media according to student learning needs.
2. Implementation of differential learning

According to Tomlinson (2001), differential learning is learning that accommodates, serves, and recognizes the diversity of students in their learning processes according to their readiness to learn their liking, and their appreciation. Differential learning does not mean directed learning, but more direct learning that can accommodate the various needs of learners through independent learning and maximizing student learning opportunities. In the implementation of the independent curriculum, the results of interviews with 1st and 4th-grade teachers are as follows:

"Learning in an independent curriculum is a new thing, we do learning according to the guidelines given by the government and we borrow to the children, we teach the children. It's just like the 2013 curriculum that's repeating it, by the way, the independent curricula that there are two can be themed can be per maple, the coincidence that our school uses each maple is not themed (on its own)"

"Implementation of independent curriculum learning activities in this school is carried out through several methods namely: group discussion solving problems, more to practice. For example, students are asked to play the role of characters according to the themes studied. For example in the matter of independence, there are who become Soekarno, Hatta, and others- with the purpose of every student is emphasized to learn to be speakers".

Teachers implement an independent curriculum by looking at the leaflets that have been prepared by the government. In its implementation, the school uses independent autonomy, in this case learning with the load of the maple. In addition to this, learning is also focused on students, so learning activities are carried out in collaboration or group discussion and are also project-based. Following the opinion of Andini (2016) in (Suwartiningsih, 2021) that this differential learning uses various approaches, including content about what students learn, the process is how students will get information and create ideas related to what they learn, and the product of how students demonstrate what they have learned.

As for the results of the school-related interviews in the implementation of differential learning conducted by teachers among them:

"First we prayed first in then literacy numeration, not merely reading but my communication with students like I asked yesterday who was driving a motorcycle, who is driving a car, how many wheels have already entered the enumeration. You can read it, but ask who's done, can you tell the story in front of you? Anybody daring? Well, that includes the numbering. New numeration literacy comes into learning. In our school every Friday there are activities outside the classroom using the Java language because our school is culturally based."

"The differential learning is going well. In a particular theme, the teacher also asked the students to conduct interviews with the environment around the school, adapting to the interests of the students of the present era. When evaluating the school, the school receives advice from the supervisor to conduct learning outside the room because most
students are considered to be more interested in learning and playing outside the classroom."

It is following the teacher's stated that teachers involve the surrounding environment in the learning process, teachers emphasize learning numeration and literacy, and the teacher teach according to the student's learning style. This is despite the results of research carried out by (Wahyuningsari dkk., 2022) teachers can analyze the contents of learning processes, products, and environments. Teachers can serve students in learning according to students' circumstances, schools use different learning processes to free students from being equal in everything, encouraging students in expressing themselves according to their uniqueness or interests. The differential learning pattern will be a flexible and non-rigid curriculum in the implementation of the learning process.

In the application of differential learning, some stages are carried out by the teacher. To effective learning with maximum results, some steps must be prepared by teachers. The teacher's steps in determining learning activities based on the results of the interview are as follows:

"According to schedule, because we use activities per maple"

"Determining matters and themes accordingly, making mind mapping material conclusions more attractive. For example, in the theme of my country, Explaining orally, practice according to the material showing a video to the child".

The learning steps are taken by the teacher according to the effective learning schedule or count that has been prepared at the beginning of the new teaching year, besides, the teacher determines the material and performs learning according to teaching modules and also the teacher uses interesting learning media in the learning process. Based on that, in line with the differential learning steps, first mapping the needs of students with diagnostic assessments, secondly creating LKPD, media teaching modules, and thirdly conducting evaluation and reflection of learning. In this case, schools provide facilities and facilities that support the implementation of differential learning.

3. Learning Evaluation

The principle of differential learning is the existence of sustainable assessment. So the evaluation of learning is done by the teacher after the teaching-learning process is completed. In the independent curriculum, the evaluation ended with a summary evaluation. Summary studies in independent curriculum learning conducted at school based on the results of interviews are:

"A summary assessment is conducted in each chapter of the matter. Usually, teachers conduct written tests. Each chapter must have its translation because in the curriculum it is independent to educate or to develop the students"

"One of the characters we planted, for example, when the student is late for the ceremony can't get in the first wait behind after you've finished writing in the big bucks. Although this school is a state most Islamic enters the class by knocking on the door,
greeting, and admission. Our evaluation of the character is also not only good test scores but bad characters are free, so support each other”

The same process as the evaluation in the Curriculum 2013, the summative evaluation is done after the end of the chapter, related to the penalty attitude is also done by the teacher, as in the assessment of the Curriculum 2013 with the character evaluation of the child. The test performed is a written test as a summary value and follows the material available.

Teachers need to reflect on the learning process, this reflection itself is feedback given to students after completion of the study, it is done by teachers to know the satisfaction of students with the process of learning already done, besides it can also be the result of observations that will be evaluated by the teacher.

In addition to conducting evaluations, teachers are also involved in how to develop soft skills and hard skills students as learning supporters, based on the results of research teachers' steps in improving soft skill and hard skill students among them:

"Enhancing children's soft-skill must adapt the talents that each individual possesses. The school regularly holds a three-month student guardian meeting to deepen the child's soft skills from the point of view of home activities. SD kids' soft skills are usually mostly pictures. Once the school invited one of the student guardians who happened to be an art lecturer at ISI to be a speaker at a ceremony to motivate children to work in the field of art. The school also holds a competition in its school for children who have advantages in soft skills and hard skills."

"If I was when my pinter's son gave me appreciation, appreciation, and compliments, give me applause. In my class, there's a kid who's in trouble, but he's clever and keeps asking to be taught, but don't let him know that the answer is only read and actually can, even though he is still in first grade."

As a form of evaluation in the learning process then teachers can also improve the soft skills and hard skills of students, that is, with the approach between teachers, teachers conduct guidance, develop talents according to the interests of students, and conduct activities that support the achievement of students.

In the implementation of the curriculum in schools must every school experience various kinds of obstacles. Implementation of the independent curriculum has been done well, but there are challenges for teachers in implementing the independent Curriculum. How to cultivate critical thinking students still have difficulties, students lack confidence in communicating the results of their learning, students still lack independence so the importance of collaboration between students.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study are Implementation that has been done in Suryodiningratan SD has been implemented with maximum, teacher performs analysis assessment diagnostic at the beginning of learning to map the learning needs of pupils. In this case, the diagnostic
assessment is performed in two stages, where cognitive diagnostic assessments measure students' cognitive and non-cognitive diagnostics assessments for measuring students' interests and needs. This early identification is used by teachers as a benchmark in mapping the implementation of differential learning. The differential learning done by the teacher is tailored to the needs, interests, and learning styles of the student.

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