IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTENT DIFFERENTIATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION LEARNING AT MEDAN CITY SEKOLAH PENGGERAK

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of content differentiation in early childhood education at school Pengbangun in Medan City, focusing on how teachers adapt teaching materials based on children's needs, children's participation in content selection, the relevance of content to children's real lives, learning resources, the use of technology, key challenges, and strategies for overcoming challenges. The method used was qualitative descriptive research, using purposive sampling. Interviews, observations, and documentation were conducted as data collection techniques. Data analysis techniques include data collection, data reduction, data presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. For data validity, source triangulation is employed to ensure the accuracy of the data. The results show that teachers at PAUD Sekolah Motivator in Medan City adjusts teaching materials based on children's readiness, interests, and learning styles through assessment and observation. Children are involved in content selection, and materials are linked to real life. The learning resources used are diverse, supported by the use of technology. Challenges include time constraints, difficulties in designing varied activities, as well as limitations in facilities and creativity. To address these challenges, teachers develop various strategies, such as collaborating with colleagues, attending training sessions, and conducting regular content planning.

INTRODUCTIONS

Childhood Education (PAUD) is foundation important in form base development good boy in a way cognitive , social-emotional , language , and motor (Giráldez et al., 2024; Osborne & Ahinkorah, 2024) . Success education at the stage this is very decisive readiness child in face level education next , at the same time become foundation in build character . However , in practice , every child age early own needs , interests , style learning , and level varying levels of readiness (Lersilp et al., 2024) . Differences This demand the existence of flexible and responsive learning

strategies , because approach uniform learning often fail fulfil need Study child optimally . One of the relevant approach For answer challenge the is learning differentiated , especially in aspect differentiation content .

Approach with differentiation content aim adapt teaching materials with individual characteristics of children . (Fatimah et al., 2025; Saputri et al., 2025) . Regarding This in line with Sucihati & Yuliantina (2025) , that differentiation content in Early childhood education allows teachers to give relevant and challenging material in accordance with level readiness , interest , and style Study children . Besides that , differentiation content No only related with material studied children , but also with curriculum and content learning (Violy, 2024) . With apply differentiation allows child explore its potential optimally , in line with principle learning meaningful and enjoyable (Roberts, JL, Inman, 2015; Tomlinson & Jarvis, 2023) . With Thus , differentiation content become approach strategic in implement child - centered learning . Regarding this is also in line with the principles of Independent Learning and Independent Curriculum which emphasize importance child - centered learning (Azis & Lubis, 2023) .

In context implementation Independent Curriculum , Sekolah Penggerak set as a model of change education that encourages participant - centered learning educate (Masau & Arismunandar, 2024) . Sekolah Penggerak expected capable implement learning differentiated in a way intact , including in aspect content learning (Mahmudi, 2023) . However , in implementation in the field Not yet Of course in accordance expectations , especially at the PAUD level which is facing various challenges , such as limitations source learning , low teacher's understanding of draft differentiation , as well as lack of training and mentoring sustainable .

Interview results beginning with teachers at YWKA Kindergarten who are Sekolah Penggerak force in Medan City is related implementation differentiation content , although There is teacher's efforts to adapt material learning with interest children . However , still there is various challenges experienced by teachers , namely in the form of limitations skills in make varied materials . In addition that , teachers also experience difficulty choose appropriate topics with objective learning . If the teacher experiences constraint in choose or compile relevant material , things the can impact on less optimally achievement objective learning (Bordoh, 2025; Chang et al., 2025; Lubis, 2022) . In addition , the limitations skills in designing varied materials can limit choice child in explore interests and styles Study they (Ata-Akturk & Sevimli-Celik, 2023) .

Based on description said , can concluded that required in -depth study about implementation differentiation content in early childhood education , especially in Sekolah Penggerak Medan City . Focus study This covering How adjustment content with need children , participation child in election content , relevance content with life real children , sources learning , utilization technology , challenges main , and coping strategies challenges . Research results expected can give contribution real for development practice learning in PAUD, as well as become reference in formulate supportive training and policies implementation differentiation in a way more effective .

METHOD

Type of research used is descriptive qualitative , where technique taking the sample using purposive sampling or based on criteria . The criteria are that is based on accreditation schools , and representatives of teachers or PAUD school principals from each sub-district in Medan City . So that obtained sample study as much as six teachers or principal from Al- Muttaqien Private Kindergarten , Prada Aulia Early Childhood Education , Al-Ihsan Private Kindergarten, YWKA Kindergarten, Private Kindergarten Annizam , and Nurul Azizi Kindergarten . Furthermore, the data collection technique uses interviews , observations , and documentation . The data analysis technique used was developed by Miles and Huberman (Kasman & Lubis, 2022) , where this data analysis process consists of from four channel activities , namely : data collection , data reduction , data presentation , data withdrawal conclusions and verification contained in the image under This .
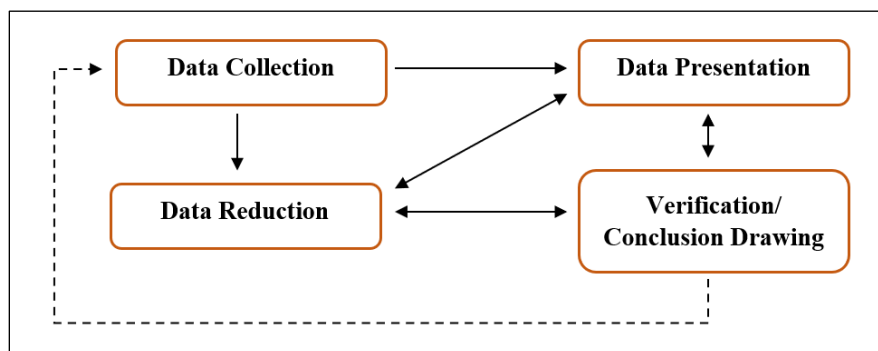
Figure 1 . Data Analysis Steps

In the research In this case , data validity is also carried out with apply technique triangulation sources that will done with compare results interviews , observations , and documentation .

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Differentiation content in PAUD learning aims For adapt content or teaching materials with characteristics individual children , such as readiness learning , interests , and styles Study child (Nuraini & Ramadan, 2024) . Regarding This important applied in PAUD because at the age early , children own highly varied developments One each other (Alatalo & Westlund, 2021; Khodijah & Ratno, 2025) . Research This done towards teachers or Head School Driver level PAUD units in Medan City , namely : Al- Muttaqien Private Kindergarten , Prada Aulia PAUD, Al-Ihsan Private Kindergarten, YWKA Kindergarten, Private Kindergarten Annizam , and Kindergarten Nurul Azizi with aspect study includes : adjustments content with need children , participation child in election content , relevance content with life real children , sources learning , utilization technology , challenges main , and coping strategies challenges . As for the results his research found in the table following .

Table 1. Implementation Differentiation Content Based on Aspects in Six PAUD Units

No.	Aspect	Muttaqien Kindergarten	Prada Aulia Early Childhood Education Center	Al-Ihsan Kindergarten	YWKA Kindergarten	Annizam Kindergarten	Nurul Azizi Kindergarten
1	**Adjustment Content with Children's Needs**	Mapping need children , and choices appropriate teaching materials theme	Content based on age , interests , readiness , and routine daily child	Based on age , group , interests , and diagnosis beginning	Based on assessment and observation child	Customized level understanding , and topics contemporary	Activity based on readiness and choice child
2	**Children's Participation in Election Content**	The child chooses material (for example observation animal)	The child is given option topic , although sometimes child want to	Discussion and agreement together	The child chooses between write words or letter	Option choice topic from apperception	Children may choose or propose activity

repeat same topic

3	**Relatedness Content with Life Real Kids**	Example concrete like part body	Based on routine daily	Customized material environment around child	Activity real like shop to the supermarket	Sometimes material No in accordance reality child	Experience child made into material ask answer
4	**Source Study**	Paudpedia , YouTube, Pinterest , PMM, wordwall , and quiziz .	Videos, images , objects concrete	Real objects , sources from manufacturer or artificial Alone	Books , videos, images , text story , object concrete	Objects direct or miniature that resembles	Books , videos, pictures , laptops, and infocus .
5	**Utilization Technology**	Laptop, speaker, infocus , without constraint	Projector (sometimes constrained network that is not stable)	Various application learning , optimal without obstacle	Infocus	Laptops, tablets, and various application	Infocus , laptop, and CT board . (obstacles facilities : wifi not yet available There is at each class)
6	**Main Challenges**	Look for appropriate material with child	Difficulty designing activity Study	Various choice material that is not The same every child	Limitations skills make material varied	Internal constraints creativity modify source Study child	time that is not Enough Lots For prepare content
7	**Coping Strategies Challenge**	Other teachers' discussions	Discussion with Friend colleagues	Discussion	Follow teacher training	Discussion with other teachers	Preparation content a week before learning done

Based on results research contained in Table 1, all PAUD units show that the teacher adjusts content learning with need children . In this aspect adjustment content with need sixth child unit education show teacher initiative in understand need child through mapping , assessment , and observation . Teachers at Al- Muttaqien Kindergarten , for example , carry out mapping need children and choose appropriate teaching materials theme . Meanwhile that , at PAUD Prada Aulia and Al-Ihsan Kindergarten, the content customized with age , interests , and routines daily children , even supported with results diagnosis beginning . YWKA Kindergarten implemented assessment and observation child as basic , while Annizam Kindergarten notice level understanding and issues contemporary . At Nurul Azizi Kindergarten, activities arranged based on readiness and choice child . Findings This in line with opinion (Wahyuningsari et al., 2022) , which states that differentiation content requires teachers to understand needs , readiness , interests , and styles Study child For develop meaningful learning .

In terms of participation child in election content , all unit give room for child For determine or propose material . Children at Al- Muttaqien Kindergarten can choose material like observation animals , and at PAUD Prada Aulia they given option topic , although sometimes child want to repeat theme certain . Al-Ihsan Kindergarten held

discussion together For determine topic , while Children at YWKA Kindergarten are given choice between write words or letter . At Annizam Kindergarten and Nurul Azizi Kindergarten, choice given since stage apperception or through proposal activities . This is reflect approach child - centered learning , as proposed by (Angyanur et al., 2022) that child given freedom choose activities , such as drawing , watching videos, or play with material concrete like playdough, for adapt with style Study they . Flexibility This support involvement child in a way active in the learning process and improve intrinsic motivation (Musdalifah, 2023) .

In this aspect relatedness content with life real children , teachers in various unit make an effort linking material with experience daily children . For example , at Al- Muttaqien Kindergarten use part body as example concrete , whereas in PAUD Prada Aulia the content taken from routine daily . Al-Ihsan Kindergarten adapts material with environment around , and even YWKA Kindergarten involving child in activity real like shop to the supermarket. However , Annizam Kindergarten face challenge when material No always in accordance with reality child . On the other hand , Nurul Azizi Kindergarten took advantage experience child as material ask answer . Practice This in accordance with principle constructivism which suggests that learning meaningful associated with experience real child (Zajda, 2021) . Through approach this , child No only accept information in a way passive but build knowledge based on experience (Fragkiadaki et al., 2021) .

Related source learning , the variations used are very diverse . Al – Muttaqien Kindergarten using digital platforms such as Paudpedia , YouTube, Pinterest, Wordwall , and Quizziz . PAUD Prada Aulia and Al-Ihsan Kindergarten utilize videos, images , and objects. concrete Good artificial Alone and from manufacturer . At YWKA Kindergarten, the source Study covering books , texts stories and objects concrete , while Annizam Kindergarten use object real or miniature that resembles object . Nurul Azizi Kindergarten added laptops and infocus as supporters .

Utilization technology also shows significant variations . Most of the school Already use technology such as laptops, infocus , and applications learning . Use technology in Al- Muttaqien Kindergarten and Al-Ihsan Kindergarten is optimal without obstacles . PAUD Prada Aulia and Nurul Azizi Kindergarten still face constraint network or limitations facilities , such as Not yet availability WiFi in all class . However Thus , Annizam Kindergarten and YWKA Kindergarten have used to with use tool like projector and tablet. According to (Zhang, 2023) , use various types of media in learning help fulfil need different and enriching learning experience Study child .

Even though Thus , the challenge main in implementation differentiation content Still become constraint for some teachers. Challenges the covering difficulty look for appropriate materials , designing activity varied learning , as well as limitations creativity and time in prepare content . Teachers at Annizam Kindergarten , for example , admit existence constraint in modify source studying , while the teacher at Nurul Azizi Kindergarten is facing limitations time . This is show that implementation differentiation content need competence and management good time from the teacher.

As response on challenge said , teachers in six PAUD units have apply various strategies. Dominant strategy is discussion with colleague colleagues , as conducted at Al- Muttaqien Kindergarten , Prada Aulia, Al-Ihsan, and Annizam . YWKA Kindergarten addresses constraint through teacher training , while Nurul Azizi Kindergarten prepares content a week before activity learning started . This effort in line with Saadah & Hanafiah (2024) who stated that collaboration and careful planning is factor important success implementation differentiation .

CONCLUSION

Study This show that six PAUD units in Medan City have apply differentiation content with adapt teaching materials based on need children who include readiness , interest , and style Study children . Teachers adjust content learning through mapping , assessment , observation , and involving child in a way active in the election process material . Practice differentiation is also reflected in teacher's efforts to link content learning with life real good boy through experience daily child . Variation source learning used , starting from object concrete , books , videos, to digital media, strengthening flexibility and creativity of teachers in convey material . In addition , the use of technology be one of element supporters main , although Still found constraint technical in some unit education . However , the

implementation differentiation content No let go from challenges , such as limitations time , difficulty designing activity varied , and limitations facilities and creativity .

For overcome challenge In this regard , the teachers developed various strategies, such as collaboration with colleague colleagues , following training , up to do planning content in a way periodically . In researchers Next , it is recommended For expand coverage research on PAUD units in other regions in order to see diversity practice differentiation content in more context extensive . In addition , research deep about effectiveness differentiation to results Study child age early is also important done , including exploring teacher training strategies and learning media development models appropriate innovative with characteristics child .

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