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Implementation of Humanistic Approach in Differentiated Social Studies Learning for Grade V Students of SDN 1 Mesuji Timur

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze how the humanistic approach is applied in differentiated learning in elementary schools. The study found that there are similarities in concept between the differentiated learning approach and the humanistic approach, both of which emphasize the importance of appreciating the uniqueness of each individual. Conducted at SDN 1 MESUJI TIMUR, this study is a type of qualitative descriptive research with a case study approach. The researcher aims to identify natural patterns that emerge when applying the humanistic approach in differentiated learning. Observations were made on the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. Data collection techniques involve diagnostics, observation, performance, and final tests. The subjects of the study consisted of 15 fifth grade students of SDN 1 MESUJI TIMUR, consisting of 8 boys and 7 girls in the 2024/2025 academic year. The findings of the study indicate that the application of the humanistic approach in differentiated learning has a positive impact on creativity and student learning outcomes.

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INTRODUCTION

The learning process is an effort undertaken by educators to guide students toward achieving predetermined educational goals. These goals are not solely oriented toward academic achievement but also encompass relatively permanent changes in various aspects of student development, such as intelligence, emotions, cognitive abilities, and social interaction (Sanusi, 2013). In this context, students occupy a central position as subjects of education, so the success of learning depends heavily on the extent to which the learning process accommodates their characteristics and learning needs.

Education in Indonesia faces increasingly complex challenges, one of which is the diversity of student abilities, interests, and learning styles. This situation often makes it difficult for educators to design effective and efficient learning for all students simultaneously. Therefore, educators are required to think creatively and innovatively to optimally achieve learning goals. One effort that can be made is to implement learning strategies that accommodate student diversity through a humanistic approach to differentiated learning (Puspitasari et al., 2020).

Differentiated learning is a learning approach designed to respond to differences in student learning styles, interests, and talents. Purwowidodo and Zaini (2023) stated that differentiated learning essentially views students as unique and dynamic individuals. This learning is not individualized, but rather designed to meet students' learning needs so that learning objectives can be optimally achieved (Gusteri & Neviyarni, 2022). This perspective aligns with humanistic learning theory, which emphasizes the importance of educators understanding the potential, needs, and characteristics of students as whole human beings (Saputri, 2023).

The integration of differentiated learning with humanistic learning theory requires educators to consider student characteristics, including differences in visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles (Rukmi et al., 2023). Through differentiated learning, students are given the space and freedom to develop their potential according to their individual learning styles (Fitriyah, 2023). Thus, learning is no longer uniform but adaptive to student needs, thereby supporting the achievement of optimal learning outcomes.

In the context of science and science learning, the differentiated learning approach strongly aligns with the perspective of humanistic learning theory. Fadhilah (2021) in Arzfi (2024) explains that differentiated learning in science and natural sciences is based on a humanistic perspective, which believes that humans are born with positive potential, have the freedom to choose, and are able to develop themselves through learning experiences. This is reinforced by Nurjan (2016), who asserts that humanistic learning places students at the center of learning by emphasizing the importance of the learning process itself.

Furthermore, Suciati and Prasetya Irawan (in Sari et al., 2021) suggest that the application of humanistic learning theory in learning includes setting learning objectives, selecting materials, identifying students' initial abilities, and designing learning activities that enable students to actively engage and experience learning directly. These principles align with differentiated learning, which emphasizes differentiation in the content, process, and product aspects of learning.

The application of differentiated science learning from a humanistic learning theory perspective emphasizes students' freedom to choose and develop learning characteristics according to their learning styles. This learning process is directed at shaping students' characteristics according to their abilities, as well as improving and developing their competencies. The application of differentiated science learning in fifth

grade at SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur is relatively new, considering that previous learning was still dominated by classical methods that were teacher-centered and paid little attention to student characteristics. As a result, many students experienced difficulty in understanding the material presented. Therefore, the application of differentiated learning based on humanistic theory is expected to have a positive impact in optimizing student learning outcomes.

Previous research has shown that implementing differentiated learning from a humanistic learning theory perspective can improve student creativity and learning outcomes. Research by Arzfi and Jamaris Jamna (2024) , for example, emphasizes the importance of understanding individual learning needs as a basis for planning and implementing learning in elementary schools. Both studies utilize differentiation of content, process, product, and assessment tools to facilitate learning tailored to students' learning styles. The differences between these studies lie in the subject focus and depth of implementation.

Based on this description, the purpose of this article is to analyze the benefits of implementing differentiated learning in science learning from a humanistic learning theory perspective on the learning outcomes of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur. Through this learning implementation, it is hoped that students will be able to understand the learning process more meaningfully and achieve optimal learning outcomes.

METHOD

This research employed a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach. This approach was chosen to deeply explore the natural characteristics of students during the learning process, ensuring that the data obtained reflects real-world conditions. Qualitative descriptive research emphasizes the quality of the process and the meaning of the research findings, rather than solely the quantity of data generated. Therefore, this research focuses on a comprehensive understanding of the ongoing learning process and students' responses to the implementation of the learning studied (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

Data collection was conducted through interviews, direct observation, and documentation. These data collection techniques were chosen because they provide a comprehensive picture of learning activities, student interactions, and learning outcomes. Observations were used to observe student behavior and engagement during learning, interviews were conducted to explore the understanding and experiences of students and educators, while documentation served as supporting data in the form of learning notes and student work results. Data collection is a crucial stage in qualitative research because it determines the validity and reliability of the research findings.

This research was conducted on fifth grade students of SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur in the 2023/2024 Academic Year with a total of 19 respondents, consisting of 13 female students and 6 male students. Indicators of learning achievement in the perspective of humanistic learning theory used in this study include students' courage in expressing

opinions related to learning materials, activeness in asking questions to deepen understanding, ability to find solutions to problems that arise during learning, ability to produce new products that are original, ability to provide evaluations of friends' work results, and achievement of an average score on the final test results that is above the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The application of differentiated learning from a humanistic learning theory perspective to fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur in the 2023/2024 academic year was implemented on the visual senses. The initial learning phase began with establishing learning objectives to be achieved by students as a guideline for implementing learning activities. Next, teachers and researchers designed learning modules tailored to the students' learning needs. Learning needs were identified through diagnostic assessments and initial interviews to obtain a picture of the students' abilities, interests, and learning styles (Rukmi, 2023).

Based on the results of the initial assessment, students were grouped according to their dominant learning styles: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. This grouping served as the basis for implementing differentiated learning, which encompassed differentiation of content, process, product, and assessment formats. In the initial implementation phase, some students appeared to be confused because differentiated learning was a new experience at school. However, as the learning process progressed, students began to adapt, participate effectively in activities, and demonstrate active involvement in their respective groups. The learning environment was conducive, and students demonstrated high enthusiasm. Although each group used different learning approaches, they remained focused on the same goal and topic.

Figure 1. Students discussing according to their respective learning styles.

The next learning activity focused on group discussion presentations. Each group

presented their learning outcomes, tailored to their individual learning styles, including a drawing of the eye they had created. During the presentations, students explained their group's work, and other groups responded with questions and feedback. Intergroup interactions demonstrated increased speaking confidence, self-confidence,

and communication skills. After completing the entire learning process, students took a posttest to determine their learning outcomes after implementing differentiated learning. This was then compared with the results of the pretest before the learning began.

Figure 2. Students present the results of the discussion

Based on observations during the lesson, the implementation of differentiated learning from a humanistic perspective had a positive impact on student attitudes and self-confidence. Students appeared more confident in expressing their opinions, actively asking questions, and engaging in discussions to gain a deeper understanding of the learning material. Student learning outcomes also showed significant improvement descriptively. The average learning score before the implementation of differentiated learning was 50.52, while after the implementation of differentiated learning, it increased to 80.52.

Table 1. Average Student Scores Before and After the Implementation of Differentiated Learning in Science from a Humanistic Perspective

Variable	Before implementation	After implementation
Average value	50.52	80.52

As the final stage of learning, students conducted a reflection activity on the learning process that had been implemented. The results of the reflection showed that students felt happier, more interested, and more motivated in participating in the learning. Students also showed increased curiosity, courage in speaking during presentations, and creativity in completing assignments according to their individual needs and learning styles. Overall, the results of this study indicate that the application of differentiated learning from the perspective of humanistic learning theory provides a meaningful learning experience, increases student engagement, and has a positive impact on improving learning outcomes and the development of student abilities.

DISCUSSION

The research results show that the application of differentiated learning in science lessons from a humanistic learning theory perspective has a positive impact on the learning process and outcomes of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur.

Increased student engagement, self-confidence, and learning outcomes reflect that learning centered on student needs and characteristics can create more meaningful learning experiences. These findings align with humanistic theory, which positions students as the primary subjects of learning and emphasizes the importance of fulfilling psychological needs in the learning process (Maslow, 1970; Rogers, 1983).

Grouping students based on visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning styles has been shown to help them understand material according to their learning characteristics. This reinforces the view that differentiated learning is not individualized learning, but rather learning designed to accommodate student differences so that learning objectives can be optimally achieved (Gusteri & Neviyarni, 2022). When students feel their learning needs are addressed, they demonstrate greater engagement, increased self-confidence, and increased courage in expressing opinions and discussing outcomes.

From the perspective of humanistic learning theory, increased student confidence and courage in presentations and group discussions indicate the fulfillment of the needs for safety, esteem, and self-actualization. Rogers (1983) emphasized that a learning environment that provides unconditional positive regard allows students to develop optimally without fear of negative evaluation. The findings of this study indicate that when teachers act as facilitators and provide space for students to express ideas according to their learning styles, the learning process becomes more lively and meaningful.

The improvement in student learning outcomes, as seen in the increase in average pretest and posttest scores, also indicates that differentiated learning from a humanistic perspective impacts not only the affective aspect but also the cognitive aspect. This finding aligns with research by Arzfi and Jamaris Jamna, who stated that humanistic-based differentiated learning can enhance creativity and learning outcomes in elementary school students because students learn through a process tailored to their potential and needs. Similar results were also found by Fitriyah (2023), who concluded that differentiation of content, process, and product can help students achieve more optimal learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the reflection activities conducted at the end of the lesson demonstrated that students were able to recognize the learning process they underwent. This reflection is a crucial part of humanistic learning, as it helps students understand their learning experiences consciously and meaningfully (Nurjan, 2016). Thus, learning is not solely oriented toward achieving grades, but also toward developing learning awareness and long-term learning experiences.

Overall, this discussion confirms that the application of differentiated learning from a humanistic learning theory perspective can create a conducive learning environment, increase student engagement, and improve learning outcomes. These findings are relevant to the demands of the Independent Curriculum, which emphasizes student-centered learning, character building, and the development of individual

student potential and uniqueness. Therefore, humanistic-based differentiated learning is a suitable alternative strategy for teaching science in elementary schools.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that the application of differentiated learning with a humanistic approach tailored to the individual needs of students is able to develop the creativity of fifth-grade students of SD Negeri 1 Mesuji Timur in learning the material of economic activities in the 2024/2025 Academic Year. The learning process that places students as learning subjects shows a positive impact on students' creative behavior, which is reflected in increased courage to express opinions, high curiosity through questioning activities, the ability to focus on problem solving, and the ability to produce original work or ideas and provide evaluation and feedback on the work of friends wisely. These findings indicate that student creativity develops optimally when learning is designed adaptively, respects differences in individual characteristics, and meets students' psychological needs. Therefore, the application of differentiated learning based on a humanistic approach is recommended to be continued to be developed in elementary schools, considering the diversity of learning readiness, interests, talents, and learning styles of students who require contextual, meaningful learning services, and oriented towards the development of their overall potential.

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