

# Application of Differentiated Learning Methods to Improve Islamic Education Learning Outcomes of Class V Students of SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur

Yeni Fatmala Sari<sup>1</sup>

## \*Correspondence:

Email :

[yenifatmalasari@gmail.com](mailto:yenifatmalasari@gmail.com)

## Authors Affiliation:

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sjech  
M. Djamil Djambek Bukittinggi,  
Indonesia

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## Abstrac

This study aims to improve the learning outcomes of fifth-grade students at SD Negeri 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur through the implementation of differentiated instruction methods. The study was conducted in two cycles, each involving planning, implementation, observation, and reflection stages. In the first cycle, although there was an increase in student engagement, the test results indicated that many students did not meet the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM). In the second cycle, improvements were made by enhancing interaction, time management, and student motivation. As a result, significant improvements were observed in student engagement and KKM achievement, with most students showing better learning outcomes. This study concludes that differentiated instruction methods are effective in improving student learning outcomes, provided they are accompanied by improvements in classroom management and external support from home.

## Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa kelas V SD Negeri 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur melalui penerapan metode pembelajaran berdiferensiasi. Penelitian ini dilaksanakan dalam dua siklus yang masing-masing siklus meliputi tahap perencanaan, pelaksanaan, observasi, dan refleksi. Pada siklus pertama, meskipun terjadi peningkatan keaktifan siswa, namun hasil tes belajar menunjukkan masih banyak siswa yang belum mencapai Kriteria Ketuntasan Minimal (KKM). Pada siklus kedua, perbaikan dilakukan dengan memperbaiki interaksi, manajemen waktu, dan motivasi siswa. Hasilnya, terjadi peningkatan yang signifikan dalam keterlibatan siswa dan pencapaian KKM, dengan sebagian besar siswa menunjukkan hasil belajar yang lebih baik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa metode pembelajaran berdiferensiasi efektif dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa, asalkan diikuti dengan perbaikan manajemen pembelajaran dan dukungan eksternal dari rumah.

## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental elements in creating a quality next generation. In an effort to achieve educational goals, teachers play a very strategic role, especially in choosing effective learning methods to improve student learning outcomes. One of the main challenges faced by teachers is the diversity of abilities, needs and learning styles of students in one class. This often leads to inequality in the understanding and achievement of student learning outcomes.

The diversity of students in a class creates its own challenges for teachers to create an effective and inclusive learning atmosphere. Students with different backgrounds, interests and learning styles require a more adaptive approach so that they can gain an optimal learning experience. One concrete example of this challenge was found at SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur, where the learning outcomes of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) of grade V students showed a significant disparity.



Based on initial observations, it was found that although some students were able to achieve satisfactory results, others had difficulty in understanding the material taught. This was especially the case with the subject matter of "Living Well by Sharing" in Islamic Education. Most students have not been able to understand well the basic concepts in Islamic religious education. When researchers asked about religious knowledge, many students seemed confused and had difficulty providing adequate answers.

In this case, a uniform learning approach that tends to use the lecture method is one of the factors causing students' failure to understand the material. The lecture method used by teachers causes students to tend to be passive, not actively involved in learning, and feel bored with the monotonous learning process. In addition, learning that is only dominated by the teacher's explanation causes students to be more interested in talking to their classmates rather than listening to the explanation given by the teacher, and often feel sleepy during the teaching and learning process.

Low student learning outcomes, with an average score of only 60.35, indicate a mismatch between the methods used and the needs of students. In fact, the Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) set is 75. This indicates that students have not been able to achieve the expected standards in PAI learning. Therefore, efforts are needed to find solutions that can overcome these problems.

One of the alternatives that can be used to improve student learning outcomes is to apply more varied learning methods that suit students' needs, such as differentiated learning methods. Differentiated learning methods allow teachers to design learning that is tailored to students' ability levels, interests, and learning styles, so that each student can learn in the way that is most effective for them.

The application of differentiated learning methods can provide space for students to actively participate in learning, increase their motivation, and improve their learning outcomes. With this approach, students not only gain knowledge, but also a more personalized and in-depth learning experience. This is especially important in a heterogeneous classroom context, where each student has different needs in learning.

Previous research has shown that implementing differentiated learning has a positive impact on student learning outcomes, especially in classes with high levels of heterogeneity. This method allows teachers to pay more attention to students' individual needs, so that they can learn according to their own pace and learning style. However, despite the many positive evidences related to the application of this method, it is still rare to find its optimal application, especially in SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur.

Based on the results of observations and interviews with teachers and students, it can be concluded that the application of differentiated learning methods in PAI subjects in this school has not been done optimally. Therefore, this study aims to implement differentiated learning methods in PAI learning to improve the learning outcomes of fifth grade students of SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur. Through this research, it is hoped that a more effective strategy can be found in managing student diversity in the classroom, so that PAI learning objectives can be achieved optimally.

## METHODS

This study used a classroom action research (PTK) approach which aimed to improve the process and learning outcomes of students in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) subjects in class V SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur. This research focuses on actions that involve increasing students' active participation, cooperation in communicating learning outcomes, seriousness in doing tasks, and students' cooperative attitude during the learning process. The

application of differentiated learning methods is the main step in this research, which is expected to adjust to students' learning styles and individual needs.

This research was conducted at SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur in Semester 1 of the 2024/2025 academic year, considering that the researcher is the principal there, making it easier to collect data and coordinate with the school. The research time lasted for two months, from December 2024 to January 2025, with four learning cycles. Each cycle included planning, implementation, observation, and reflection to measure the development of student participation and learning outcomes.

The population in this study were all fifth grade students of SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur, totaling 16 students, consisting of 8 boys and 8 girls. Because the number of students is relatively small, researchers use the target population, without taking a sample, so that the results of this study describe the actual conditions in the class. By using the population as the research subject, it is expected that there will be no sampling error and the analysis of variable relationships can be carried out without the need for inferential statistics.

Data collection was conducted through direct observation of students, interviews with teachers and students, and documentation of learning evaluation results. Observations were made to observe the improvement of students' participation and their interaction during the learning process. Interviews are used to obtain information about teachers' and students' views regarding the applied learning method. Documentation will include records of teaching and learning activities and evaluation results conducted during the research cycle.

The collected data will be analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis will describe changes in student attitudes and engagement, while quantitative analysis will be used to calculate the average value of student learning outcomes and evaluate whether there is a significant increase after the application of differentiated learning methods. Through this methodology, it is hoped that the research can contribute to improving the quality of Islamic Religious Education learning at SDN 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### **RESULT**

The results of the research in Cycle I showed that the application of differentiated learning methods had a significant impact on the teaching and learning process in class V of SD Negeri 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur. In the planning stage, researchers prepared teaching modules that were in accordance with the subject matter of "Zakat Fitrah" and designed tests to assess student learning outcomes. Researchers also optimize their role in the classroom, provide direct guidance to students, and involve students in group discussions using the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. Before starting the lesson, the researcher ensured that all students were present, which showed their commitment to the lesson.

At the implementation stage, the learning began with a short lecture on the material "Zakat Fitrah" followed by viewing the material through PowerPoint. The researcher used sparking questions to arouse students' interest and facilitate discussion. Students were then divided into groups to discuss the material and complete the assigned tasks. This activity aims to increase student interaction and help them better understand the concept of zakat fitrah in the context of everyday life. Once completed, students are asked to summarize the learning and provide feedback.

The results of observations of the researcher's activities during learning showed that the researcher managed to carry out most of the learning stages well. The researcher obtained a score of 27 with a percentage of 84.38%, which indicated that most aspects of learning had been carried out effectively. The researcher managed to motivate students, provide clear

explanations, and coordinate groups well. However, there were still some shortcomings, especially in optimizing time and explaining the tasks given to students. Researchers also need to improve supervision of students who are less active.

The results of observations of students in Cycle I showed that students showed an increase in activeness and attention during learning. With a score of 20 and a percentage of 83.33%, students showed greater interest in learning using differentiated learning methods. Many students asked questions if they did not understand the material and cooperated with their groupmates. Nevertheless, there are some students who still do not play an active role, especially in group assignments and discussions. Therefore, researchers need to provide more encouragement to increase student engagement.

Despite the progress, the results of the learning test in Cycle I showed that there were still students who had not reached the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM). Out of 16 students, only 8 students managed to reach the KKM, while the other 8 students had not yet reached the KKM. The average value of student learning outcomes in Cycle I was 70.29, with the highest score of 100 and the lowest score of 50. This shows an improvement compared to the initial results before the research, but there are still a number of students who need to get more attention in order to reach the expected standard.

Reflection on the implementation of Cycle I showed that the differentiated learning method was not yet fully effective in improving student learning outcomes. Problems that arose included the lack of student involvement in the learning process, as well as the lack of enthusiasm for learning seen in some students. The researcher noted that although most students had started to show improvement, there were still challenges in overcoming students who were less focused and inactive in learning.

To improve the learning process in Cycle II, researchers planned several improvements, such as increasing interaction with less active students, improving time management so that each student can focus more on the task, and providing more motivation so that students can be more enthusiastic in learning. Researchers will also further optimize the differentiated learning method by providing more interesting variations in the delivery of material and group activities. These improvements are expected to bring a more significant increase in student learning outcomes in the next cycle.

At the reflection stage, the researcher also noted some of the obstacles that occurred during the implementation of Cycle I. One of them was the lack of external support from home, where some students did not repeat lessons at home, making it difficult to understand the material in class. The researcher plans to provide more independent assignments or home activities that can help students prepare for further learning. In addition, the researcher also noted that the less conducive classroom atmosphere, such as the presence of noisy students, reduced students' focus on the material presented.

Researchers also realized the importance of utilizing time as effectively as possible in each learning session. Some students need more time to understand the material, while others are able to finish more quickly. Therefore, the researcher plans to pay more attention to the diversity of students' needs in each meeting, by giving fast students the opportunity to complete further tasks, while slow students get additional guidance.

In Cycle II, the researcher focused on improving some aspects that had been identified in Cycle I. The main improvements were time management, student motivation, and increased student engagement in learning. In planning, the researcher designed teaching modules using a variety of differentiated learning methods that were more interesting, taking into account the different needs and interests of students. The researcher also prepared a more structured test to assess students' understanding after the application of this method.

In the implementation stage of Cycle II, the researcher again started the learning with a short lecture followed by a lighter question to motivate students. However, this time the researcher involved students more in discussions and problem solving with the Problem Based Learning (PBL) model. The researcher also ensured that each group had an equal opportunity to express opinions and discuss actively. In this process, the researcher paid more attention to students who were less active by asking direct questions and encouraging them to participate more.

One of the important changes made in Cycle II was more effective time management. Researchers ensured that each activity had sufficient time allocation, so that each student could follow the learning well. Researchers also reduced activities that did not directly contribute to the understanding of the material, so that students were more focused on the core of learning. Thus, the learning process became more dynamic and students were more involved.

Observations of researcher activities in Cycle II showed significant improvements. The researcher managed to achieve a score of 30 with a percentage of 93.75%, which showed that most of the performance indicators had been achieved well. The researcher managed to manage time more effectively, provide clearer explanations, and improve coordination in group activities. In addition, the researcher also managed to provide stronger motivation to students, so that they were more enthusiastic in participating in learning.

The results of observations of students in Cycle II showed a significant increase in terms of student activeness and involvement. With a score of 25 and a percentage of 93.75%, students showed greater attention to the material presented. Many students asked questions, discussed with groups, and completed tasks well. Group activities also look more organized, and cooperation between students is getting stronger. The researcher noted that almost all students now play an active role in learning, which shows the success of the differentiated learning method.

The learning test results in Cycle II showed significant progress compared to Cycle I. Out of 16 students, 12 students managed to reach the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), while only 4 students did not reach it. The average score of students' learning outcomes in Cycle II was 85.43, with the highest score of 100 and the lowest score of 70. This shows that the differentiated learning method has had a positive impact on students' learning outcomes, with most students successfully understanding the material well.

In the reflection of Cycle II, the researcher noted that the differentiated learning method had successfully overcome some of the problems that had arisen in Cycle I. Students' activities were more organized, and their involvement in learning increased significantly. The researcher also noted that students' motivation to learn was higher, as they felt actively involved in learning that was tailored to their abilities and needs. However, there are still some students who need more attention in overcoming difficulties in understanding the material.

However, researchers also realize that support from home is very important in improving student learning outcomes. Some students still have difficulties in understanding the material, especially those who come from family backgrounds that are less supportive of their learning process. The researcher plans to further explore the potential of students' parents, by providing information and support so that they can help their children study at home. This is expected to improve students' readiness to participate in classroom learning.

The researcher also realized that the diversity of students in the class required a more flexible approach. Some students understand the material more quickly, while others need more intensive guidance. Therefore, the researcher plans to pay more attention to differences in students' learning speed by giving more varied tasks that are appropriate to their level of understanding. Researchers will also provide more opportunities for students who understand



the material quickly to provide explanations to their friends, so as to deepen their understanding.

## **DISCUSSION**

The discussion of research results in Cycle I and Cycle II shows significant developments in the application of differentiated learning methods in class V of SD Negeri 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur. In Cycle I, although there was an increase in learning outcomes, there were still a number of students who had not reached the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM). This indicates that although the method applied brought improvements, improvements were still needed in time management and more optimal student involvement. This is in line with Tomlinson's (2001) view, which states that differentiated learning requires adjustments to the pace and way students learn, taking into account individual differences in the classroom.

In Cycle II, researchers managed to overcome some of the weaknesses that emerged in Cycle I, especially in terms of time management and student motivation. By utilizing a more varied approach in the delivery of material and group activities, the researcher managed to increase student engagement. According to Hall, Strangman, and Meyer (2003), one of the keys to successful differentiated learning is the teacher's ability to adapt learning content, processes, and products to the individual needs of students, which is reflected in significant changes in student learning outcomes in Cycle II.

The success of differentiated learning can also be seen from the increase in student activeness during the learning process. In Cycle I, although there was an increase in student interest, there were still some students who were less active. However, in Cycle II, student activeness increased rapidly, as seen in the observation results which showed a score of 25 with a percentage of 93.75%. This is in accordance with Vygotsky's theory (1978) which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning. By involving students in group discussions and problem solving, learning becomes more meaningful and improves students' understanding of the material.

More effective time management in Cycle II also contributed to the success of learning. In Cycle I, time management was one of the obstacles, so some students had difficulty completing the task properly. This is in line with Darling-Hammond's (2000) opinion that time is one of the key factors affecting learning success. Researchers in Cycle II managed to optimize the use of time, by ensuring that each activity had the right time allocation and was in accordance with the learning objectives.

Although there was significant progress in Cycle II, the challenges of motivating less active students and ensuring the engagement of all students remained a concern. The researcher noted that some students still needed more encouragement to be able to actively participate. According to Schunk (2001), motivation is an important factor in learning, and teachers need to create an environment that can motivate students to participate and try harder in learning. Therefore, the researcher plans to pay more attention to the motivational aspect of students by providing more support and constructive feedback.

The role of parents is also an important factor affecting student learning outcomes, as noted in the Cycle I reflection. Some students experienced difficulties due to a lack of external support at home. This is in line with Epstein's (2001) theory which states that parental involvement in children's education greatly influences student learning outcomes. The researcher plans to involve parents more actively by providing independent assignments or home activities that can support student learning.

In addition, reflection on the different needs of students found during Cycle II shows that differentiated learning provides opportunities for faster students to progress, while slower students get additional guidance. This is in line with Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple

intelligences, which emphasizes that each student has different strengths and ways of learning. Therefore, by differentiating learning approaches, students can learn according to their individual style and pace, leading to the achievement of better learning outcomes.

The importance of adjusting the learning process and product to the students' needs is also evident in the improvements made in Cycle II. Learning that focuses on problem solving and group discussion pays more attention to student engagement, which is proven to improve their understanding of zakat fitrah material. This is in line with Brownell's (2005) opinion that problem-based learning can increase students' engagement and provide them with opportunities to develop critical thinking skills.

Although the differentiated learning method has shown positive results, the researcher also noted some challenges that still need to be overcome, especially in terms of classroom management and attention to less focused students. According to Hattie (2009), effective classroom management is one of the factors that influence learning success. Therefore, the researcher plans to pay more attention to a conducive classroom atmosphere and give more attention to students who are less engaged.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that the application of differentiated learning methods has a positive impact on student learning outcomes in class V of SD Negeri 03 Bahagia Padang Gelugur, although there are some challenges that need to be overcome. Based on the results of observations and learning tests in Cycle I and Cycle II, it was found that there was a significant increase in students' activeness, their involvement in discussions, as well as better learning outcomes. Although most students showed progress, there were still some who had not yet reached the Minimum Completion Criteria (KKM), especially in Cycle I.

In Cycle II, researchers managed to overcome some of the shortcomings that emerged in Cycle I, such as time management, student motivation, and supervision of less active students. With these improvements, the learning process became more effective, and student learning outcomes improved. Differentiated learning that adapts to students' individual needs is proven to help them understand the material more deeply, and increase engagement in learning activities.

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