



The Implementation of Differentiated Learning on Students' Learning Creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education for Grade XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the positive and significant effect of the implementation of differentiated learning on students' learning creativity in the field of Christian Religious Education and Character Education of class XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 Academic Year. The research hypothesis is: "there is a positive and significant effect of the implementation of differentiated learning on students' learning creativity in the field of Christian Religious Education and Character Education of class XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 Academic Year." The population was all students of class XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 Academic Year totaling 332 people. The research sample used a purposive sampling technique, namely 36 students of class XI-6 as an experimental class with the implementation of differentiated learning and 36 students of class XI-9 as a control class using a conventional approach. This research method is a quantitative approach with a true experimental design method, namely Posttest-Only Control Design. The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire item consisting of 30 items. The research data for the questionnaire were analyzed using the pooled variance t-test formula. From the calculation results, the $t_{count} = 16.652 > t_{table} (\alpha = 5\%) = 2.000$ was obtained. The t-value is in the area of the H_0 rejection curve and H_a acceptance. Thus, it can be concluded that the research hypothesis is accepted, namely that there is a positive and significant influence of the implementation of differentiated learning on students' learning creativity in the field of Christian Religious Education and Character Education of class XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 Academic Year. The difference in students' learning creativity in the field of Christian Religious Education and Character Education of class XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 Academic Year is known from the average student learning creativity with the implementation of differentiated learning is 3.10 higher than the average student learning creativity with the conventional approach, which is 2.73.

Keywords: Differentiated Learning, Student Learning Creativity, Christian Religious Education

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has transformed education, particularly in Indonesia. Education is a conscious effort to enhance human resources and constitutes a process of teacher guidance for students, enabling them to fully develop and utilize their potential in ways that are beneficial to their lives, both as citizens and as individuals. Based on the author's observation at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang, students demonstrate a lack of creativity in learning, especially in the subject of Christian Religious Education. This can be seen from the following indicators: (1) students show low self-confidence in expressing opinions during the learning process; (2) students are not yet able to offer ideas or suggestions different from their peers; (3) only a few students are capable of asking questions in class during the learning process; and (4) there is a lack of curiosity about the learning material presented by the teacher. These observations indicate that students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education at the school is relatively low, and they are less active in engaging with the learning process. From these findings, it is evident that teachers have made efforts to encourage and stimulate students through the use of various teaching models and strategies. However, these efforts have not been fully successful, resulting in diminished student creativity during the learning process. Therefore, one approach that Christian Religious Education teachers can adopt to enhance students' learning creativity is Differentiated Instruction. This approach allows teachers to tailor their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs and abilities of individual students. It creates a learning environment that motivates students to think creatively and develop new ideas. By implementing differentiated instruction, it is expected that students' creativity in understanding and applying the values of Christian Religious Education and Character Education can be optimized. Through this research, it is anticipated that empirical evidence will be obtained to support the importance of implementing differentiated instruction in improving students' learning creativity. Furthermore, this study is expected to contribute to the development of more inclusive and innovative educational theory and practice.

METHODS

The type of research employed in this study is a *True Experimental Design*, using the *posttest-only control group design*. In this design, there are two groups: the first group, which receives treatment (X) through the application of differentiated instruction in Class XI-6, and the second group, which does not receive differentiated instruction in Class XI-9. The group receiving the treatment is referred to as the experimental group, while the group without treatment is referred to as the control group. This study was conducted with Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year. The researcher chose this location because of the observed problems related to the need to improve students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education. The research was carried out from March to May 2025. To analyze the research data, the researcher employed the following steps:

1. Constructing a distribution table of respondents' answers based on the available options.

2. Constructing a distribution table of respondents' answers based on weighted scores of the options.
3. Tabulating all respondents' answers, meaning that each response was organized and summed according to the predetermined weights.
4. Calculating the ideal score for the tested variables. The ideal score represents the highest possible score, assuming that every respondent selected the highest option. According to Sugiyono, the ideal score is calculated as:

$$\text{Ideal Score} = \text{highest score per item} \times \text{number of instrument items} \times \text{number of respondents}.$$
5. Determining the interpretation criteria

The criteria for acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis, according to Sugiyono, are as follows:

H_a (Alternative Hypothesis): Differentiated Instruction has a significant effect on students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education of Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year.

H_0 (Null Hypothesis): Differentiated Instruction has no significant effect on students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education of Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The author concludes that learning creativity refers to activities undertaken by students to create a learning environment and mindset that sharpen their intellectual capacity during the learning process. Learning creativity can also be defined as the ability to generate unique, unconventional, and appropriate ideas in order to respond to and further develop concepts and activities. Therefore, it is essential for students to cultivate both knowledge and critical thinking skills during learning.

Factors Influencing Learning Creativity

According to Yulianto, the factors influencing students' learning creativity can be categorized into two: internal and external factors. 1) Internal factors include interest and motivation. Students with a high level of interest in a subject or activity tend to be more creative. 2) External factors include the family environment. Support from family, such as parental encouragement and freedom of expression at home, provides a positive foundation for the development of students' creativity. From the Old Testament to the New Testament, human beings have been endowed with creative thinking to apply creativity in their daily lives. God's teachings and actions in the Old Testament are reflected in the creation of the universe and everything within it. The extraordinary account of creation in Genesis demonstrates God's unlimited creativity in forming the heavens, the earth, and all living beings. However, the creation of humankind was distinct. Genesis 1:27 states, "*So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them.*" Humanity was created in God's image and likeness, which signifies that God granted human beings creativity as a reflection of

His own creative nature. This creativity teaches us to innovate and create new developments over time, with the sole purpose of glorifying, preserving, and sustaining God's creation. Likewise, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ, the great King, demonstrated how to act creatively in interpreting God's Word so that humankind might understand and practice it in their lives. Differentiated instruction refers to blending diverse differences to acquire information, generate ideas, and express what students have learned. In other words, differentiated instruction involves creating a diverse classroom environment by providing students with opportunities to access content, process ideas, and enhance learning outcomes according to their abilities. This approach enables students to learn more effectively. Differentiated instruction fosters behavioral change, making students more active, creative, and goal-oriented (Gusteti & Neviyarni, 2022).

Characteristics of Differentiated Instruction

1. Proactive in nature
2. Emphasizes quality over quantity
3. Rooted in assessment
4. Provides varied approaches to content, process, product, and learning climate
5. Student-centered
6. Integrates individualized and traditional learning
7. Dynamic and adaptable

The objectives of differentiated instruction include:

1. Helping all students learn effectively.
2. Enhancing students' motivation and academic achievement.
3. Building harmonious teacher-student relationships.
4. Encouraging students to become independent learners.
5. Increasing teacher satisfaction.

Steps of Differentiated Instruction

The steps of differentiated instruction form a continuous cycle that begins with a deep understanding of the unique needs of each student. This is followed by planning and implementing flexible strategies in content, process, and product, and concludes with evaluation and reflection to improve teaching practices in order to accommodate diversity and maximize student potential. Christian education should foster students' growth in likeness to Christ as redeemed men and women. Students must learn about God to emulate Him and understand eschatological truths to prepare spiritually. They need to become true "followers of God" (Ephesians 5:1). Christian education begins with spiritual regeneration, through which God's life is imparted to the soul, allowing spiritual growth and awareness of God and His Word. Spiritual maturity progresses gradually, from regeneration to full maturity, by God's grace and "through the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 1:5-8). Christian Religious Education can therefore be understood as education centered on the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Bible, which serves as the foundation for believers in daily life. As a school subject, Christian Religious Education aims to guide and instruct Christian students in biblical teachings and Christ-centered living. Students are expected to reflect Christlike behavior and thought, embodying the image of God within themselves. Based on data analysis, the average score of students'

learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education using differentiated instruction in Grade XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year was 3.10. This indicates that Christian Religious Education teachers implemented differentiated instruction effectively, thereby improving students' creativity in learning. Among the 30 questionnaire items, the highest scores were item numbers 2 and 3, with an average score of 3.44. Most students responded that they frequently generated many ideas while learning Christian Religious Education and actively answered teachers' questions during class discussions. Conversely, the lowest score was item number 25, with an average score of 2.58, where most students stated that they sometimes developed initial ideas into deeper reflections based on biblical values. The highest-rated indicator was "fluency in thinking," with an average score of 3.19, which included the ability to generate multiple ideas, actively participate in discussions, and complete assignments smoothly. The lowest-rated indicator was "elaboration," with an average score of 3.00, which included the ability to refine ideas, adopt new perspectives, and modify prior understanding.

The average score of students' leaning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education using a conventional approach (without differentiated instruction) in Grade XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year was 2.73. This suggests that even though conventional teaching methods were applied effectively, students' creativity was still lower compared to differentiated instruction. The highest-scoring item was number 4, with an average of 3.22, where students often used biblical verses as the basis for asking or answering questions during discussions. The lowest-scoring item was number 17, with an average of 2.31, where students occasionally used different sources to support their arguments in Christian Religious Education. The highest-rated indicator in this approach was "flexibility in thinking," with an average score of 2.92, including the ability to view problems from various perspectives, find alternative solutions, and adapt to teaching methods. The lowest-rated indicator was "originality," with an average score of 2.57, involving the ability to express unique ideas, present uncommon work or thoughts, and demonstrate distinctive learning approaches. From the statistical test conducted to determine acceptance or rejection of the research hypothesis, the t_{count} was found to lie in the rejection region of H_0 and acceptance region of H_a : $t_{\text{table}} = -2.000 > t_{\text{count}} = 16.652 > t_{\text{table}} = 2.000$. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference in students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education between the implementation of differentiated instruction and conventional approaches in Grade XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year. This difference is evident in the mean scores, where the use of differentiated instruction yielded a higher average score (3.10) compared to the conventional approach (2.74). The findings and data analysis demonstrate that the effective implementation of differentiated instruction by Christian Religious Education teachers significantly enhanced students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education. This was evidenced by the mean difference of 0.36 between the two approaches, confirming that differentiated instruction more effectively fosters learning creativity than conventional teaching methods.

CONCLUSION

Based on the statistical test results, the calculated t value (t_{count}) falls within the right side of the two-tailed test curve, namely $t_{\text{table}} = -2.000 > t_{\text{count}} = 15.652 > t_{\text{table}} = 2.000$. It is evident that the t_{count} lies within the rejection region of H_0 and the acceptance region of H_a . Thus, it can be concluded that there is a positive and significant difference between the implementation of Differentiated Learning and the conventional approach (without the implementation of Differentiated Learning) in enhancing students' learning creativity in Christian Religious Education and Character Education for Grade XI students at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year. This significant difference is reflected in the mean score of students' learning creativity. The average score for students in Christian Religious Education and Character Education using the Differentiated Learning implementation in Grade XI at SMA Negeri 1 Sidikalang in the 2024/2025 academic year was higher, at 3.10, compared to the average score of 2.73 achieved by students taught through the conventional approach (without the implementation of Differentiated Learning).

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