
Differentiation Strategy for Inclusive Primary Schools in Increasing Institutional Competitiveness

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ABSTRAK

Kemajuan peradaban yang begitu pesat diberbagai bidang saat ini, utamanya dalam bidang pendidikan menyebabkan persaingan samudera merah penuh darah diantara lembaga pendidikan dengan berbagai penawaran produk yang hampir sama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memaparkan implementasi strategi diferensiasi di sebuah sekolah dasar inklusi, yang menawarkan produk berbeda dari pesaing lembaga pendidikan lainnya. Strategi diferensiasi yang tepat dapat menjadi nilai daya saing lembaga, sehingga mampu menarik perhatian para pelanggan untuk mengafiliasikan diri dan memberikan penilaian tinggi terhadap lembaga pendidikan tersebut. Metode penelitian yang digunakan berupa penelitian studi kasus dengan tinjauan literatur yang komprehensif. Penelitian ini dilakukan di National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo dengan pengumpulan data berupa wawancara, observasi dan dokumentasi. Tinjauan literatur yang digunakan berupa jurnal ilmiah, artikel dan buku yang relevan. Berdasarkan hasil penelitian, ditemukan produk-produk menarik di National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo berupa program rutin dan program insidental yang menjadi keunggulan bersaing lembaga pendidikan tersebut. Program-program yang disesuaikan dengan perkembangan teknologi dan kebutuhan di masyarakat tersebut dikelola agar dapat mencapai tujuan pendidikan selaras dengan kemajuan peradaban. Melalui strategi diferensiasi inilah National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo dapat menjadi lembaga pendidikan pilihan serta memenangkan persaingan dengan penawaran produk yang unik dan berbeda.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Diferensiasi, Sekolah Dasar Inklusi, Daya Saing

ABSTRACT

The rapid progress of civilization in various fields today, especially in the field of education, has resulted in a bloody red ocean of competition between educational institutions with various product offerings that are almost the same. This research aims to explain the implementation of a differentiation strategy in an inclusive elementary school, which offers different products from competing educational institutions. The right differentiation strategy can become an institution's competitive value so that it can attract the attention of customers to affiliate themselves and give a high assessment of the educational institution. The research method used is case study research with a comprehensive literature review. This research was conducted at the National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo by collecting data in the form of interviews, observation, and documentation. The literature review used is in the form of scientific journals, relevant articles, and books. Based on the research results, interesting products were found at the National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo in the form of routine programs and incidental programs which became the educational institution's competitive advantage. Programs that are adapted to technological developments and the needs of society are managed so that they can achieve educational goals in line with the progress of civilization. It is through this differentiation strategy that National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo can become the educational institution of choice and win the competition with unique and different product offerings.

Keywords: Strategy Differentiation, Inclusive Primary Schools, Competitiveness

1. INTRODUCTION

Educational institutions as a forum for educating the nation's life act as a beacon in improving the quality of human life. Educational institutions are a way to improve human dignity to become someone who is meaningful and useful to others. The rapid progress of civilization in various fields today, especially in the field of education, has caused a red ocean of competition filled with blood between educational institutions with various product offerings that are almost the same (Kim, Mauborgne, & Wahono, 2012). World developments have encouraged the birth of various superior and innovative educational institutions in order to win the competition as educational institutions of choice. The large number of educational

institutions can be seen based on reference data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology (Kemenristekdikti) which records the number of educational institutions at the elementary school (SD) level in Indonesia as 148,975 units. East Java Province itself has 26,675 elementary schools and 695 units are in Ponorogo Regency (Kemendikbudristek, 2023).

The increasing number of educational institutions with almost the same product offerings means that competition is no longer relevant (Rifai, 2021). As a result, many educational institutions are threatened with bankruptcy and forced to close. Reported by Suara Indonesia news, a number of elementary schools in Ponorogo Regency that are threatened with closure include SDN 1 Poko Jambon, SDN Mangunsuman Siman, SDN 1 Glinggang Sampung, SDN Patihan Kidul Siman, SDN Karang Lor Sukorejo and SDN 2 Duri Slahung (Prisna, 2021). Facing such conditions requires the right strategy so that educational institutions can win the competition (Sulistiani, 2014). Therefore, a generic strategy is a fundamental solution for an educational institution to get out of the red ocean strategy by having a sustainable competitive advantage.

The right generic strategy to apply is: differentiation strategy. The advantage of this strategy is that an institution is able to offer products that are different from other competitors, but remain in tune with the needs and challenges of society so that it can strive to win a competition (Haridah, 2021). In the industrial world, product differentiation is a company's effort to create products that are different from other competitors' products, making them more desirable to customers or consumers (Taringan, Lopian, & Tampenawas, 2022). This strategy can become a competitive advantage for institutions and become a competitive advantage that differentiates other institutions. This interesting strategy was successfully implemented by one of the elementary schools in Ponorogo Regency, namely SD Immersion. Inclusive elementary school with the motto "Excellent School Based on Multiple Intelligences" has begun implementing a differentiation strategy by providing various unique and different programs, both routine and incidental programs. Through these programs and the commitment of all the teaching staff and educational staff within it, Immersion Elementary School was able to become an A-accredited elementary school in Ponorogo Regency. Apart from that, this differentiation strategy effort can increase the competitiveness of institutions so that many students from inside and outside the city make SD Immersion their educational institution of choice.

In line with the explanation above, Halma Zanaratul Ria in her research explained that the aim of the differentiation strategy is to provide more services to customers to meet their satisfaction (Ria, 2020). Sulistiani added that this differentiation aspect is the institution's competitive advantage so that it is able to win the competition compared to other educational institutions (Sulistiani, 2014). It is not an easy thing, it requires the right management process and product selection to build differentiation, such as research conducted by Yana Dwi Kurniya Wati and Murdadlo (Wati & Murdadlo, 2021).

Based on the previous studies described above, researchers are interested in conducting research at Ponorogo Immersion Elementary School which has an interesting side as an A-accredited inclusive elementary school offering various programs, both routine and incidental, while still meeting the needs and challenges in society. This research seeks to analyze the differentiation strategy of SD Immersion so that it can increase the competitiveness of the institution and make it the educational institution of choice.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach, with the method of documentation by collecting data. The data source used is secondary data. Secondary data are data sources that do not directly provide data to data collectors, for example through documents (Sugiyono, 2015). In this study, the secondary data sources were books, journals, and articles related to the research topic regarding the potential of augmented reality technology in encouraging student collaboration and cooperation in religious education. The documentation method by collecting secondary data through indirect data sources, can also be referred to as the library method.

The library research method is a way of finding and then analyzing previous research data or relevant literature references (Jayawardana & Gita, 2020). The library research method involves collecting and analyzing relevant literature that has been previously published. Usually, the literature used is the publication year range of the last five to ten years.

In the context of this research, library research methods can be used to identify and analyze research, articles, books, and other sources related to the use of augmented reality in encouraging collaboration and collaboration between students in religious education. Researchers can conduct a comprehensive literature review to understand the latest advances in the use of augmented reality in the context of

religious education, as well as gain an understanding of the benefits, challenges, and implementation strategies that have been put forward by previous researchers.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Institutional Differentiation Strategy

Every organization or institution has a strategy to support the activities and continuity of its organization. The strategy chosen must of course be in harmony with the circumstances and environmental conditions. Strategy is defined as a program that includes goals to be achieved as well as specific actions or steps taken to achieve these goals in an effort to respond to the environment. Experts give different definitions of its presentation and execution, but in essence they are all almost the same.

Strategy can be defined as a comprehensive plan that combines all resources and capabilities to achieve the goal of winning the competition in the long term (Sagala, 2007). In another sense, strategy is an overall approach to implement ideas, plans, and actions within a certain time period. A good strategy includes an organized work team, topics, supporting factors that are in accordance with the principles of implementing rational ideas, efficient funding, and strategies to achieve goals (Mundir, 2015).

Furthermore, The ability of a business to provide more value to its customers to make it different from its competitors is known as differentiation (Kotler, 2000). Differentiation is usually better known in the field of economics (trade), because it discusses a strategy in facing trade competition.

In the context of educational institutions (schools), the concept of differentiation means efforts made by schools to create and provide better educational services than those that can be provided by other schools to stakeholders, especially students and their guardians (Ria, 2020). In this way, schools are expected to be able to create educational innovations that can be an inspiration for other schools to attract the interest of prospective students and give them an edge.

This is relevant to one of the school institutions in Ponorogo district, namely the National Immersion Primary School Ponorogo as an educational institution that is able to create innovation and provide superior educational services so that it can be used as inspiration for other educational institutions, as well as being able to attract the interest of prospective students. This can be

proven by the increasing number of students both from within the city and outside the city.

The institution's differentiation efforts can be seen from the various programs it has, as well as from the institution's motto, namely as an inclusive school based on Multiple Intelligences.

3.2 Program Differentiation in Increasing Institutional Competitiveness

a. MIR (*Multiple Inteliences Research*)

SD Immersion is an inclusive private educational institution that accepts regular students and those with special needs. The types of students with special needs accepted include Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Deaf, Speech Impairment, Speech Delay, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Slow Learner. Realizing these conditions to respect the intelligence of each student, SD Immersion seeks to implement the concept of Multiple Intelligences, namely "multiple intelligences" or "multiple intelligences". That basically every child born into the world has its own aspect of intelligence. This theory was coined by Howard Gardner in 1983 (Al-Nur, 2023).

The efforts made by SD Immersion to develop the intelligence of each student are stated in the MIR (Multiple Intelligences Research) program. A research or study to determine the intelligence of each student. MIR is a research tool to determine the potential of each student's intelligence. SD Immersion has collaborated with the Next Edu institution in Surabaya since 2010 until now to strengthen this program. Next Edu holds a MIR (Multiple Intelligences Research) license which is useful for detecting students' basic intelligence. This program is implemented every time a new student is admitted, and the MIR results can then be used as a basis for determining the direction of intelligence, learning styles, models of self-development and increasing students' talents (Aghnia, 2023)

In line with the motto "Excellent School Based on Multiple Intelligences", SD Immersion seeks to accommodate the intelligence of students with both special and regular needs by providing equal facilities and opportunities to develop themselves. This MIR program is the only program that only SD Immersion has, which cannot be found in other educational institutions in Ponorogo Regency. The follow-up to the MIR results that have

been carried out is in the form of providing extracurricular and co-curricular programs implemented by SD Immersion, in accordance with Howard Gardner's 8 theoretical intelligences as well as the MIR results for each student. The intelligence results and forms of programs to develop students at Immersion Elementary School can be presented in the table, as follows:

Tabel 3.2.1 Types of Intelligence and Personal Development Programs

No	Types of Intelligence	Description of Intelligence	Extracurricular/Cocurricular Activities
1.	Visual-Spatial	Ability to think abstractly and expertly visualize things. Superior in form and physical standpoint.	Draw
2.	Linguistics-Verbal	Ability to use words both writing and reading. Able to write things well and interested in foreign languages.	Speaking Club, Language Studio
3.	Logical-Mathematical	Good at connecting things logically, analyzing problems well. Belief that a scientific approach can solve problems, able to have abstract ideas and make arguments according to reasoning.	Math Olympiad
4.	Kinesthetic-Physical	Good motor skills and adequate physical abilities, as well as good body dexterity and coordination.	Futsal, Swimming, Dance.
5.	Musical	Ability to learn and pursue matters related to sound, tone and rhythm. The tendency to express himself through music.	Choir
6.	Interpersonal Intelligence	Social intelligence is characterized by being good at understanding and interacting with other people. Enjoys communication and collaboration with other people.	Field Trips, Outbound.

7.	Intrapersonal Intelligence	The ability to understand one's own character and feelings. Skills to control emotions, motivate yourself, be consistent and plan yourself well.	Happy Day, Entrepreneur Kids
8.	Naturalistic Intelligence	Ability to blend with nature. Understand and enjoy the environment such as animals and plants. Loves the outdoors.	Scouts, Science Club

b. Religiosity

Religiosity is an important value and must be present in students. Especially in this era of technology and moral degradation, religious values are a lifeline to balance aspects of life in this world and aspects of the afterlife for students. In linguistic terms, religiosity can be interpreted as piety or great devotion to religion that is inherent in a person.

The urgency of developing religious values in students is in line with PP no. 5 of 2007 which explains that the aim of religious education in schools is to develop students' abilities to appreciate, understand and practice religious values and then align them with the mastery of science, technology and art. SD Immersion is a private school that is not based on religion, but seeks to develop a spirit of religiosity in students through a series of activities carried out both routinely and incidentally. This is one of the differentiating aspects of SD Immersion, not only trying to excel in learning activities but also in developing religiosity through subjects/intracurricular and various co-curricular activities. The activities carried out at Immersioan Elementary School can be described in table 3.2.2, as follows:

Table 3.2.2 Religiosity Development Program

No	Activity	Description	Implementation
1.	BTQ and Fiqh	It is a local content subject which is carried out by reading and writing Iqro'/Al-Qur'an and studying the basic laws of Islam. Supported by a Koran attendance book to determine student learning progress.	Routine Every Tuesday-Thursday.

2.	Congregational Duha Prayer	The duha prayer is carried out in congregation and is led by the Religion Teacher in the Immersion Elementary School prayer room before learning begins.	Routine - Grades 1-3: Tuesday Wednesday - Grades 4-6: Thursday Friday
3.	Congregational Noon Prayer	The Dhur prayer is carried out in congregation and is led by the Religion Teacher in the SD Immersion prayer room during the second break.	Routine Every Monday-Thursday.
4.	Memorizing Juz 30 (Juz'amma)	Memorizing juz 30 is mandatory for all students, supported by reciting the Koran together every morning before learning begins and a memorization test once a month.	Routine Every Monday-Saturday
5.	Mother's Prayer and Istighosah	The mother's prayer activities are in the form of alms activities for orphaned children followed by istighosah activities and joint prayer. This activity was attended by the entire school community.	Routine At the end of every month on Friday.
6.	Ramadan Cottage	In the form of Ramadan safari activities and various takjil on the highway. Then continued, reciting the Koran, breaking the fast, and sahur together at school, which was attended by all students in grades 3-6 and teachers.	Incidental In the month of Ramadan
7.	Eid al-Qurban	Qur'anic slaughtering of animals in the form of cows/goats at	Incidental On the Eid al-

		schools to be distributed to people in need.	Adha holiday
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c. Featured Program


The flagship program is a series of programs created by SD Immersion to build its differentiation side while improving the quality of educational output based on the social, economic and cultural values that exist in society. This superior program was held to meet the community's needs for the development of the world of education so that it can increase the value of the community's desires and needs. With unique and different programs, these programs can become an institution's competitive advantage. Among the programs owned, they are divided into routine programs and incidental programs with the explanation in table 3.2.3 and table 3.2.4, as follows:



Rutine Program



This routine program is implemented by SD Immersion either once a year, once a semester, or on a certain date every month.


Table 3.2.3 Routine Featured Programs

No	Program	Description	Documentation
1.	Parenting Class	This program is a forum for improving the knowledge and parenting skills of students' parents, staffed by figures who are experts in child development. Collaboration between schools and families to create harmony in the way children are educated at school and at home, improving the quality of interaction and positive communication between schools and parents (Santosa, Nugroho, & Nurmalasari, 2022). So that there is synergy in increasing students' intelligence.	 

		<p>This activity is carried out once every semester.</p>	
<p>2.</p>	<p>Children's Arts and Creation Festival</p>	<p>The Children's Arts and Creation Festival is a routine event or activity held by SD Immersion every year. This children's art and creation festival is an activity for recruiting new students (PPDB) aimed at attracting the interest of prospective students to study at Immersion Elementary School. The activity model for this Children's Arts and Creation Festival is in the form of competitions targeting PAUD and Kindergarten students with various competition models including Pujangganong and Jathil dance competitions, singing competitions, drawing competitions, English language competitions, and short surah memorization competitions with specified qualifications and conditions. .</p>	

3.	Fieldtrips and Outbound	<p><i>Field trips</i> a routine SD Immersion activity which is carried out every semester, attended by grades 1 to 6 with different times and places for each class. Field trips can be said to be activities in the form of visits or trips to several predetermined destinations with educational and learning activities outside the classroom. Such as umbul square, PLN UP3 Ponorogo, PCC supermarkets and so on, this is used to broaden students' insight. The advantage of the fieldtrip method is that students gain direct experience in a natural setting, increasing students' interest in learning to collect data, materials or objects for lessons in class and to observe objects or phenomena (Ubaidillah, 2018).</p>	 
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4.	Happy Day	<p><i>Happy day</i>It is held every 31st. It is said to be Happy Day because this day is expected to create an atmosphere full of joy and excitement (Nasrah & Azis, 2023). This program is designed to form positive and creative characters for students. Because students can express and determine interesting characters within themselves. Forming positive character at an early age has a positive impact on students' future in facing various challenges and problems (Kamaruddin, Santoso, & Hita, 2023). On Happy Day, students are free to wear the clothes they like with fun activities such as making art and cooking activities that are related to the lesson or theme of that day.</p>	 
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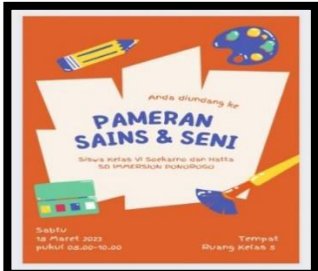
5.	Traditional Day	<p><i>Traditional day</i>sheld every 23rd, this date was chosen because it coincides with the anniversary of SD Immersion. At this celebration, the entire school community wears lurik clothes for girls and Penadon clothes for boys, this can be used as a characteristic of the surrounding elementary schools. Students are allowed to bring traditional food such as getuk, klepon, onde-onde, or other market snacks and then exchange food with other friends. Local wisdom can be understood as a manifestation of traditional values, religious values and local culture which are naturally formed in a community group to adapt to the surrounding environment so this activity is needed to support it (Sugiyarto & Amaruli, 2018).</p>	
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Incidental Program

Incidental programs are programs owned by SD Immersion which are implemented only at certain celebrations with agreement from school stakeholders. Programs are selected based on the needs and benefits obtained from them, adjusted to the school's capacity during the implementation process.

Table 3.2.4 Incidental Flagship Program

No.	Program	Description	Documentation
1.	Entrepreneur Kids	Entrepreneurship is an important part of an individual's self to	

		<p>transform an idea into action related to economic development and relationships and community participation (Pinho, Fernandes, Serrão, & Mascarenhas, 2019). Growing an entrepreneurial spirit in children cannot be separated from fun learning patterns carried out directly, this will provide good moments for children about the uniqueness and advantages of being an entrepreneur (Nadlifah, Fajzrina, Ismayiah, Loka, & Mujiati, 2023). Entrepreneur Kids is one of the activities at SD Immersion in the form of a bazaar held by grade 6 students. This activity is a place to train students' abilities to learn entrepreneurship, how they communicate and techniques to convince people.</p>	 
<p>2.</p>	<p>SCIENCE and ARTS Exhibition</p>	<p>The science and art exhibition is an activity specifically carried out by grade 6 students as an assessment of science and art learning practices. The science exhibition takes the form of an exhibition of student work, where students are previously formed into groups and given the freedom to choose what experiments they want to display at the exhibition (Ritonga, 2021). There were several experiments carried out by students, starting</p>	 

		<p>from making rainbow towers from mixing colors, plastic rockets, flaming hand experiments, experiments on replicating volcanoes erupting from soap and various other interesting experiments (Kustiwi, Satriwibowo, Febriana, Chania, & Iradati, 2023). There were several performances presented by students such as creative dance, piano, pianica, singing and various other performances. The importance of self-exploration for students, both regular and special needs, is to form self-experience based on the principles of learning and practice (Thuneberg, Salmi, & Fenyvesi, 2017).</p>	
3.	Cultural Parade	<p>SD Immersion also took part in the cultural parade held by the Babadan sub-district educational institution. SD Immersion represented several children to take part in this activity, they were given the freedom to wear culturally themed clothes and were given freedom to apply make-up. Elementary Immersion students are always enthusiastic in participating in this and similar activities so they always show their best.</p>	

3.3 Supporting Factors and Inhibiting Factors

There are supporting and inhibiting factors in the process of implementing differentiation strategies at Immersion Elementary School. These factors can be used as evaluation as well as material for follow-up efforts in improving program quality and building competitive advantages at Immersion Elementary School. Among the supporting and inhibiting factors, they can be described as follows:

Supporting factors

a. Stakeholder Collaboration

In realizing a program that is related to the interests of many people in an organization or institution in this increasingly complex educational era, cooperation between stakeholders is very important for the success of the school program. Schools can create learning environments that support students' integral growth and achievement of broader educational goals with strong stakeholder collaboration. SD Immersion has had this stakeholder collaboration through effective collaboration with open communication, active participation, information transparency, recognition, and commitment to the institution's common goals.

b. Competent human resources

To improve the quality of education, every school must ensure that the human resources involved in the education process are people who are talented and have the will to continue to develop. Schools can create a good learning environment and prepare students for future demands by paying attention to and optimizing important factors that support the development of competent human resources in school programs. Competent human resources are one of the characteristics of SD Immersion, including effective leadership, teacher empowerment, a clear reward system, supporting facilities and technology, and a collaborative culture.

c. Society participation

Community participation in school programs is not only the school's responsibility, but is also the result of the joint efforts of the school, parents and the local community. Effective communication, community empowerment, openness programs, parental involvement, collaboration with local businesses, and giving responsibility to the community are supporting factors that strengthen community participation in school programs. By paying attention to and optimizing these factors, schools can build strong

partnerships with communities, create empowering educational environments and have a positive impact on student development. This community participation factor is a supporting part of SD Immersion in implementing each of its programs.

Obstacle factor

a. Budget allocation

The development of educational programs and the physical construction of schools can be hampered by budget constraints, which are the main obstacles often faced by schools. School budgets are often insufficient to meet all school needs. Another inhibiting factor is budget priorities. Education programs often have to compete with other sectors that are considered more urgent for funding because they have to compete with other programs for funding. This can result in inadequate funding allocation to meet urgent educational needs.

Therefore, to overcome the problem of fund allocation, improvements must be made. Involving all stakeholders in the budget planning process, increasing transparency, and supporting advocacy to obtain additional support from government or other sources can help increase funding allocations for school programs. Allocating funds for educational programs wisely and efficiently also requires long-term planning, a deep understanding of student needs, and the ability to adapt to policy and economic changes.

b. Prasana Facilities

Overcoming obstacles caused by inadequate infrastructure is very important in efforts to improve the quality of education. This aims to ensure that all students have the same opportunity to get quality education. Therefore, the government, schools and society must work together in an effort to make it happen. The hope is that school programs can function well and make a positive contribution in shaping the future of the nation's next generation.

c. Program Implementation Time Management

Effective time management in implementing school programs can be a key factor in educational success. Schools can achieve educational goals by increasing efficiency and productivity by finding and overcoming these barriers. It is important for all parties involved to be able to work together to

overcome these obstacles, so that later they can create an environment that supports good time management.

4. CONCLUSION

Differentiation strategy is the right strategy to win the competition amidst competition that is no longer relevant. By offering different products, this strategy can attract customer attention and increase the desire to choose the product being offered. Just like the strategy implemented at SD Immersion. This educational institution has successfully offered various unique and different programs, such as the MIR program, religiosity development, and other interesting and contemporary superior programs. However, the process of implementing this differentiation strategy is not an easy thing, accompanied by supporting and inhibiting factors whose existence must be recognized and evaluated as a way to improve the program in the future.

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