

# The Importance of Understanding Individual Differences (*Individual Difference*) for Prospective Teachers Elementary School

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## Abstract

The teacher is one of the most important elements in the realization of the curriculum. Teachers who are directly related to the object of education, namely students. Individual students have unique differences. These individual differences include many things consisting of physical, intelligence levels, personality, psychology, differences in language skills and learning styles. Students as prospective teachers are ready and able to understand these individual differences so that students develop according to their potential. he has. There are several aspects that constitute individual differences, namely physical differences, intelligence, personality, differences in language skills, psychology and student learning styles. So that students are able to become professional teacher candidates based on educational competency standards, namely pedagogical competency, personality competency, social competency and professional competency. As a prospective primary school teacher, this aspect is very important to understand because these individual differences will be clearly seen during elementary school. The individual differences in students as expressed above have implications for the way teachers manage the learning process for students at school. This research was conducted with the literature study method to determine the importance of understanding individual differences for prospective elementary school teachers. For this reason, the courses that are given as a basis for understanding individual differences should be an important concern for prospective teachers, especially elementary schools.

## Keyword:

Individual differences, teacher candidates, elementary schools

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Learning can be defined as a process of teaching students that has been planned, implemented and evaluated so that students/students achieve learning goals effectively and efficiently (Nur, 2014). Learning is an effort to teach students (Fakhrurrazi, 2018). From these two opinions it can be concluded that learning is a process of teaching students that is planned, implemented and evaluated so that students achieve learning effectively and efficiently. One of the characteristics of effective learning is active learning both mentally and physically. Being mentally active is demonstrated by developing intellectual abilities and critical thinking abilities. Meanwhile, physically, for example compiling the essence of the lesson, making maps and so on. Mentally and physically, every individual child is different. The applicable curriculum has not been able to facilitate these individual differences. Teachers are one of the most important elements in realizing the curriculum. Teachers who are directly related to educational objects are students. Individual students have unique differences. These individual differences include many things consisting of gender, intelligence level, personality, learning style, talent and temperament. All aspects of individual differences must be understood by teachers. In universities that produce teacher graduates, basically they have designed courses whose aim is to understand individual differences in students, such as Educational Psychology, Basics of Educational Science, and Student Development. If these subjects are well understood by prospective teachers, then the education currently taking place will produce individual students who are able to develop according to the potential that exists within them. Therefore, the author is interested in creating a book

entitled "The Importance of Understanding Student Individual Differences for Prospective Elementary School Teachers ."

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to the types of research methods, there are many, according to the field being studied. Usually every person who goes into the field or research object, either individually or in groups, must determine what method to use in order to collect the necessary data before the research steps begin, because otherwise the research will be difficult to fulfill its objectives, so first we must understand and master the methodology in conducting research. The research method that researchers use in compiling this research report is library research, where data or information is obtained through books, magazines, manuscripts, notes and so on. According to researchers, this is to make it easier and reduce time, energy and costs in writing this research report.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### *Understanding Individual Differences*

The definition of individual differences is a difference that each individual has, both physical and non-physical, which makes a person have different characters/characteristics from one another. Every person, whether he is a child or an adult, and whether he is in a group or alone, is called an individual. Individual shows a person's position as an individual or individual. Individual traits are traits that relate to individual people, relating to individual differences. The characteristics and characteristics of one person are different from another. These differences are called individual differences or individual differences. So "differences in individual differences" according to Landgren S. & Olsson KA. (1982: 578) involve variations that occur, both variations in physical and psychological aspects. A mother who has a baby, said that the baby cried a lot, moved a lot, and strong in drinking. Another mother who also had a baby, said that her baby was quiet, slept a lot, but was strong in drinking. The stories of the two mothers showed that the two babies had characteristics and traits that were different from each other. From educational psychology studies it is known that every individual is unique, that is, no two individuals are exactly the same in terms of nature, character, or otherwise. Each individual is different from one another. Likewise with students, one student is definitely different from another. This is because every individual has intelligence, talent , learning style, personality and their respective temperaments. Gerry (1963) in the book on student development by Sunartodan B. Agung Hartono categorized individual differences as follows: (1) Physical differences, level and weight, gender, hearing, vision, and ability to act (2) Social differences, including economic status, religion, family relationships and ethnicity (3) Personality differences, including motives, interests and attitudes (4) Differences in intelligence and basic abilities (5) Differences in skills or intelligence at school.

### *Aspects of Individual Differences*

#### *Physical-motor differences*

Individual differences in physical appearance are not only limited to aspects observed by the five senses, such as: body shape or height, skin color. eye or hair color, gender, tone of voice or smell of sweat, but also includes physical aspects that cannot be observed through the senses, but can only be known after measurements are taken, such as age, body strength or running speed, blood type, hearing, vision and so on. Another physical aspect can be seen from motor skills, namely ability coordinating the work of the motor nervous system which causes reactions in the form of permanent movements or activities, according to the stimulus and response. In this case, you will find children who are agile and skilled, but there are also children who are slow in reacting to things (Desmita). Motor abilities are influenced by maturity of physical growth and level of thinking ability. Because each person's physical growth maturity and thinking ability are different, this has an impact on each individual's motor skills, and thus each individual's motor skills will also be different.

#### *Differences in intelligence*

Intelligence is a mental, mental or intellectual ability and is part of cognitive processes at a higher level. In general, intelligence can be understood as the ability to adapt to new situations quickly and effectively, the ability to use abstract concepts affectively, and the ability to understand relationships and learn them quickly. Experts define and formulate the term intelligence in various ways, but most agree that the definition and formulation of the term intelligence has a number of certain qualities as follows: (1) It is

adaptive, meaning it can be used flexibly to respond to various situations and problems faced (2) In connection with learning abilities, people who are intelligent in certain fields. can learn new information and behaviors in that field more easily than less intelligent people (3) The term intelligence also refers to the use of previously possessed knowledge to analyze and understand new situations effectively (4) The term intelligence involves the complex interaction and coordination of various mental processes (5) The term intelligence is related to a particular culture (culturespecific). Behavior that is considered intelligent in one culture is not always considered intelligent behavior in another culture.

#### *Differences in skills Language*

Language is one of the most important individual abilities in the learning process at school. Language ability is a person's ability to express their thoughts in the form of meaningful, logical and systematic expressions of words and sentences. Children's language abilities vary, there are children who can speak fluently, briefly and clearly, but there are also children who stutters, speaks convolutedly and is not clear. These individual differences in children's language development and proficiency have become an interesting area of study and research for a number of people psychologist and educator. Many experimental studies have been conducted to determine the factors that influence success or failure in children's language acquisition. From a number of research results, it is known that nature and nurture factors (innateness and environment) greatly influence children's language development. Because individual nature and nurturing factors vary, their influence on language development also varies. Therefore. between one individual and another individual differs in ability. the language. Differences in children's language skills are greatly influenced by various factors, such as intelligence, disposition, environment, physical factors, especially speech organs and so on.

#### *Psychological differences*

Individual differences in students can also be seen from their psychological aspects. There are children who smile easily, there are children who get angry easily, there are those who are social, there are those who are very egoistic, there are those who are whiny, there are those who are lazy, there are those who are diligent, there are those who are moody and so on. Psychological issues are very complex and very difficult to understand precisely, because they involve what is in the soul and feelings of students. Teachers are required to be able to understand the complex psychological phenomena of students. One possible way to explore the psychological aspects of students is to approach students personally. Teachers must establish a close relationship with students, so that they are willing to express their feelings openly. Teachers can get to know who students really are as individuals, what their desires, needs, and what they want to achieve. what problems he has faced, and so on. Teachers approach and get to know students in depth, and look for appropriate ways to provide guidance and arouse their learning motivation.

#### *Personality differences*

Personality is a distinctive pattern of behavior and way of thinking that determines a person's adjustment to the environment. There are 2 models that try to review personality differences, namely the big five model and the Brigg Myers model.

#### *Differences in Learning Styles*

Learning is an internal process that is measured through behavior. The existence of cognitive, affective and psychomotor differences between students influences their learning choices which appear in the form of differences in learning styles. Learning styles can explain learning differences between students in the same learning setting. Learning styles are specific behavioral patterns in receiving new information and developing new skills, as well as the process of storing new information or skills (Sarasin, 1999). Learning style is a collection of personal characteristics that make learning effective for some people and ineffective for others (Dunn & Dunn, 1993). Keefe (1988) states that learning styles are related to methods. children learn, as well as their preferred way of learning. Students in general will find it difficult to process information in a way that is uncomfortable for them. Student have their own learning needs, learn in different ways, and process information in different ways (Sarasin, 1999). Therefore, if a teacher's teaching style does not take into account their specific needs, then learning will not occur. When teachers teach according to students' learning styles, the teacher is telling students that he knows they are individuals who may learn differently from other students.

### *Implications of Teachers' Understanding of Student Characteristics for Learning*

The existence of student characteristics that are influenced by innate and environmental factors clearly has implications for the educational process in schools. In this case, the educational process in schools must be adapted to the characteristics of individual students. Based on this understanding, essentially the teaching and learning process carried out by teachers provides conducive conditions so that each individual student can learn optimally, even though they come and exist in groups. Furthermore, understanding the individual characteristics of students has important meaning in teaching and learning interactions. For a teacher in particular, information regarding the individual characteristics of students will be very useful in selecting and determining better or more appropriate teaching patterns, which can ensure ease of learning for each student. By understanding the individual characteristics of these students, teachers can reconstruct and organize lesson material in such a way, choose and determine more appropriate methods, so that the interaction process of each teaching and learning component occurs optimally. In addition, understanding the individual characteristics of students is also very useful for teachers in providing motivation and guidance for each student towards successful learning (Desmita, 2011: 57-58).

### *Implications of Teachers' Understanding of Students' Learning Styles for Learning*

Learning style is related to the way students learn, as well as their preferred way of learning. Therefore, if the teacher's teaching style does not pay attention to the special needs of students, then learning will not occur. On the other hand, when teachers teach according to students' learning styles, the teacher is telling students that he knows they are individuals who may learn in different ways to other students (Sugihartono, 2013: 53). Furthermore, Teacher can apply varied learning models to accommodate the learning styles of students in the class. In determining models and methods teachers can consider various things related to the characteristics of learning styles in students, both students with visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning styles. In this way, all students will feel cared for and experience meaningful learning because they can gain knowledge that suits their learning style.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Based on the results of the literature review, it was concluded that students as prospective elementary school teachers must understand individual differences because this is one of the competencies that teachers must have, namely pedagogical competence. Students as prospective teachers are ready and able to understand these individual differences so that students develop according to their potential. he has. There are several aspects that constitute individual differences, namely physical differences, intelligence, personality, differences in language skills, psychology and student learning styles. So that students are able to become professional teacher candidates based on educational competency standards, namely pedagogical competency, personality competency, social competency and professional competency. Through the description above, it can be concluded that students are organisms that are growing and with all forms of personal uniqueness that give rise to. there are individual differences. The individual differences in students as expressed above have implications for the way teachers manage the learning process for students at school. Teachers can vary methods and media in the learning process. Therefore. There will be effective learning interactions between teachers. with students.

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