# Differentiated Instruction Practices: A Disclosure of Receiving Teachers

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**Abstract**

This phenomenological study aimed to explore the lived experiences and insights of receiving teachers in Davao City regarding their implementation of differentiated instruction practices for diverse learners. The study aimed to shed light on the specific teaching strategies or teaching practices and approaches to learning employed by receiving teachers and understand how these practices contributed to meeting students' individual needs and promoting their academic success. The participants of this study were composed of 5 teachers in public elementary schools using a qualitative research design. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with a purposive sample of receiving teachers with experience implementing differentiated instruction. The interviews sought to elicit detailed descriptions of the teachers' experiences in teaching and learning, challenges faced, coping mechanisms employed, and the overall impact on their teaching practices and classroom dynamics. Thematic analysis was used to identify recurring themes and patterns in the data. The findings revealed valuable insights gained by the receiving teachers through their implementation of differentiated instruction. Teachers who use flashcards, think-pair-share, and scaffolding were reported to have an increased understanding of student needs, enhanced instructional strategies, and improved student engagement. The challenges faced by teachers included time constraints, varying student readiness levels, and the need for ongoing professional development. However, these challenges were overcome through adaptive coping mechanisms, such as flexibility and adaptation of teachers, professional development, and building relationships and connections with students. This study also highlights teachers' insights on the importance of using differentiated instruction in promoting inclusive education and meeting the diverse learning needs of students by promoting learners' engagement, addressing individual differences, and promoting student resilience. The findings provide practical implications for educators, school administrators, and policymakers, emphasizing the need for ongoing professional development, collaborative structures, and supportive environments to implement differentiated instruction effectively. Further research is recommended to explore the perspectives of students and parents to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of differentiated instruction on all stakeholders involved in the educational process.

# 1. Introduction

With the growing diversity in classrooms, it is essential to employ appropriate instructional strategies. Differentiated instruction (DI) is a highly valued approach, although it presents challenges. Failure to meet students' expectations or address their needs can result in disengagement and boredom. Differentiated instruction is a pedagogical approach that recognizes students' diverse learning needs and preferences, enabling teachers to tailor their instructional strategies to meet these unique requirements. This methodology promotes inclusive education by acknowledging and addressing students' strengths, interests, and challenges in a classroom setting. By implementing differentiated instruction, teachers create an environment that supports and values the diverse needs of their students, fostering a sense of belonging and engagement. Understanding the varied instructional practices employed by teachers is crucial in assessing the effectiveness of differentiated instruction and its impact on student learning outcomes. Some examples of differentiated instructions include flexible grouping, jigsaw, varied instructional materials, pair share, scaffolding, choice boards, technology integration, visual supports, manipulatives, hands-on activities, varied assessment methods, mnemonic devices, and memory strategies, cooperative learning, multisensory instruction, individualized goal setting, reflection, and self-assessment. By employing these strategies, teachers can create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment that promotes active student engagement, enhances understanding, and supports the academic success of all learners.

In a study conducted in China by Ginja and Chen (2020), the significance of differentiated instruction in diverse classrooms was underscored. The findings highlighted positive outcomes, such as enhanced student motivation, improved relationships between learners and educators, and reduced achievement gaps. However, the study also identified several challenges that impeded the effective implementation of differentiated instruction. These obstacles encompassed a shortage of trained educators, misconceptions surrounding differentiated instruction, large class sizes, limited access to professional development opportunities, and inadequate availability of resources. To address these challenges, the study proposed recommendations, including incorporating practical courses in teacher training programs, raising awareness through academic events, and ensuring the provision of necessary facilities and educational resources. Similarly, Yavuz (2020) conducted a study at a private high school in Istanbul, Turkey, emphasizing differentiated instruction's unique and engaging characteristics. The research also sheds light on insights from teacher reflective journals, highlighting concerns related to time constraints and the need for increased learner awareness and training in differentiated instruction.

In the Philippine setting, Suson et al. (2020) conducted a study that revealed students' ability to learn utilizing various aspects of their intelligence regardless of the circumstances. This finding was particularly intriguing as it recognized the diverse learning intelligence possessed by individuals. From a pedagogical perspective, the study recommended that educators adopt innovative approaches to cater to the needs of diverse learners. It emphasized integrating enriched reading activities and differentiated instructions to enhance learners' competency in basic reading comprehension. The study also unexpectedly revealed shared learning contexts among students despite their diverse learning styles. As a result, it emphasized the importance of teachers acknowledging and accommodating students' different approaches to learning.

Furthermore, in a recent study by Patalinghug and Arnado (2021) among elementary school teachers in the North Butuan District of the Division of Butuan City, Agusan del Norte, the researchers examined teachers' knowledge of differentiated instructional strategies in mathematics and their utilization of Technology Pedagogy and Content Knowledge (TPACK). The study aimed to determine the level of differentiated instruction regarding lesson design and implementation. The findings indicated a high level of differentiated instruction among the participants, particularly emphasizing varied learning activities. The study also highlighted the importance of effective lesson planning, appropriate teaching methods, and

engaging strategies and techniques in promoting interactive student engagement. To further enhance teaching practices, the study recommended encouraging teachers to participate in webinars or related seminars focused on TPACK to improve their knowledge and skills in dealing with mathematical content and correct word problems while addressing concerns related to differentiated instruction.

Moreover, Aldanese and Limpot (2023) conducted an online survey in public schools within the Division of Davao City, Davao del Sur, during the 2021-2022 school year, exploring the mediating role of classroom management in the relationship between differentiated instruction and student engagement. The findings revealed that classroom management was mediating, emphasizing the importance of active student involvement in classroom activities for positive learning experiences. Additionally, the study highlighted the significance of effective lesson planning, appropriate teaching methods, and the implementation of engaging strategies and techniques by teachers to foster interactive student engagement and a heightened interest in learning. Furthermore, in a study conducted by Nieves (2020) involving teachers in the Sarangani District of the Davao Occidental Division, it was found that teachers who incorporated differentiated instruction in their classrooms designed lessons based on students' learning styles, grouped students according to shared interests, topics, or abilities for assignments, utilized formative assessment to assess student learning, created a safe and supportive classroom environment through effective classroom management, and continuously assessed and adjusted lesson content to meet the individual needs of students.

In the classroom setting where diverse learners are present, there is a necessity to address the individual needs, strengths, interests, and challenges of students. Hence, failure to meet students' expectations or address their individual needs can result in disengagement and boredom. In order to unravel the lived experiences of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners; identify the coping mechanism of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners; and give insights into the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction, the researcher earned curiosity to conduct the study.

## 1.1 Review of Related Literature

Students with diverse backgrounds and learning styles bring a variety of unique needs and interests to the classroom. Educators must acknowledge and address these differences to establish an inclusive and effective learning environment. By employing differentiated instruction practices, teachers can actively combat boredom and promote meaningful engagement among students. This approach enables them to create a vibrant and stimulating classroom that effectively supports the diverse needs of all learners.

**The Lived Experiences of Teachers Using Differentiated Instruction.**

Differentiated instruction is an approach that allows teachers to modify their teaching methods and curriculum to meet the diverse learning needs of their diverse students. Previous studies have shown that differentiated instruction can improve student achievement and engagement. (Lynch & Pierannunzi, 2019). However, little is known about teachers' and students' perceptions and experiences toward implementing differentiated instruction for diverse learners.

A study by Bakır (2021) explored the perceptions of Turkish teachers toward differentiated instruction for diverse learners. The study found that teachers had positive attitudes towards differentiated instruction but faced challenges implementing it due to a lack of training, support, and resources. Also, a study by Cross explored the experiences of Australian teachers in implementing differentiated instruction for diverse learners. The study found that teachers faced various challenges, including a lack of time, resources,

support, and resistance from colleagues and students. However, the study also identified strategies for overcoming these challenges, such as providing professional development opportunities, collaborating with colleagues, and involving parents and students.

Moreover, in the study conducted by Suprayogi, Valcke, & Godwin (2017), meeting student differences is challenging since these differences can be related to a large variety of student characteristics, such as learner interests, learning styles, developmental level, learning speed, abilities, cultural background, language level, attitudes, regulation approaches, etc. Additionally, Effective implementation of differentiated instruction also requires the modification of curriculum and assessments to meet the needs of these learners. Recent research has emphasized the importance of using varied and challenging instructional materials to provide appropriate levels of challenge for these students (Alnahdi & Alzahrani, 2020; Mann et al., 2022).

Likewise, collaboration among teachers is also an essential aspect of implementing differentiated instruction. Co-teaching and team-teaching models effectively meet the needs of diverse learners (Mills & Griffin, 2019). Professional learning communities and peer coaching can also support teacher collaboration and professional growth (Gubbins & Sousa, 2020). In addition, assessment is a critical component of differentiated instruction. Various assessment methods, such as performance tasks and student self-assessments, can help teachers understand the strengths and needs of their diverse learners (Gentry & Owen, 2016).

Furthermore, flexible grouping strategies, such as ability and interest grouping, effectively implement differentiated instruction for diverse learners (Tomlinson & Strickland, 2019; Williams, 2021). These strategies can create a more personalized learning experience that meets the unique needs of diverse students. Collaborative learning strategies, such as cooperative learning and peer tutoring, promote academic achievement and social development among gifted students (Ma & Willer, 2020). Also, incorporating social-emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum effectively supports diverse learners' well-being and academic success (Mann et al., 2022).

**The Coping Mechanism of Teachers Using Differentiated Instruction**

Differentiated instruction (DI) is a pedagogical approach that recognizes the diverse needs of learners and strives to respond effectively to their learning requirements. It involves teachers purposefully aligning learning tasks and activities to meet the specific needs of each student (Tomlinson, 2017). Extensive research has demonstrated the favorable impact of differentiated instruction across various educational contexts, showcasing its positive effects on student achievement, as well as their level of interest and self-confidence in learning (Eysink et al., 2017).

While differentiated instruction (DI) has been widely acknowledged as crucial for the academic success of all learners (Guay et al., 2017), research indicates that teachers often encounter challenges in implementing and adapting their instruction to meet their students' characteristics (Geel et al., 2019). Despite recognizing the value and effectiveness of DI as an instructional practice (Graham et al., 2016), teachers worldwide still need help to differentiate their teaching approaches effectively.

Various research studies have shed light on the importance of teacher perspectives on the feasibility and challenges associated with implementing differentiated instruction (DI). Gaitas and Alves Martins (2017) discovered that teachers often encounter difficulties adapting activities and materials to cater to their students' diverse skills, abilities, and learning profiles. They also face challenges in effectively conducting formative and regular diagnostic assessments to support student achievement. Although teachers acknowledge DI as a

demanding and stressful professional responsibility (Stollman et al., 2019), the existing literature predominantly focuses on the benefits of DI for students, paying less attention to the potential impact of teaching heterogeneous groups on the well-being of teachers themselves (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015).

To effectively implement differentiated instruction (DI), Tomlinson (2017) suggests that teachers should adjust their instruction's content, processes, and products based on their students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. There are various instructional activities and strategies that can be employed to implement DI, such as creating homogeneous or heterogeneous subgroups based on students' performance or interests and utilizing tiered assignments (Hachfeld & Lazarides, 2021). For example, tiered assignments can involve providing additional assignments for high achievers or modifying the level of challenge, complexity, outcome, process, product, and resources (Letzel et al., 2020). Other potential DI practices include using tutoring systems, incorporating nonverbal learning aids like checklists, and implementing open education approaches such as station-based work, interest-based centers, project-based learning, or portfolios (Tomlinson, 2017).

In a recent study by Van Geel et al. (2019), a cognitive task analysis was conducted to examine the knowledge and skills necessary for teachers to implement differentiated instruction (DI). The authors identified several factors contributing to the complexity of executing DI, including the lesson content, student group composition (i.e., student diversity), school support such as collaboration and availability of materials, and the accessibility of student achievement data. According to Van Geel et al. (2019), these factors are interconnected and often influence one another in the context of differentiated instruction. The authors argue that DI goes beyond the mere application of adaptive strategies; it is a reflective process where teachers deeply understand their student's learning needs, set specific learning goals, and determine the appropriate DI practices. In other words, previous research suggests that implementing DI requires planning and thoughtful reflection rather than improvisation or spontaneous decision-making.

**Insights of Teachers on the Importance of Using Differentiated Instruction to Diverse Learners**

Teachers who employ differentiated instruction (DI) in their classrooms gain valuable insights into its effectiveness and challenges when catering to the diverse needs of their students (Ginja & Chen, 2020). The insights gained from these educators shed light on the impact of DI on student learning and offer valuable perspectives on its implementation. Understanding these insights can inform educational practices and support the successful application of DI to meet the diverse needs of all learners (Tomlinson, 2017)

In the study conducted by van Geel et al. (2019), it was emphasized that teachers need to have an accurate view of students' levels of understanding and make informed choices about appropriate instruction and learning activities based on their needs and goals (Deunk et al., 2015). This understanding and decision-making process is crucial for effective differentiation. Additionally, Parsons et al. (2018) found that adaptive teaching throughout the various phases of instruction, including planning, teaching, and reflection, is essential for successful differentiation. Furthermore, the complexity of differentiation lies not only in the interrelatedness of these phases but also in the deliberate and accurate choices made by teachers, which should be based on well-considered goals and continuous monitoring of student progress.

Moreover, a study conducted by Barrio, Lindo, and Reyes (2016) explored the insights of teachers who utilized differentiated instruction (DI) to meet the diverse needs of their students. The study revealed that teachers who implemented DI exhibited a deep understanding of their student's individual needs and were able to adapt their teaching methods accordingly. They employed a range of instructional strategies, fostered a positive and supportive learning environment, and demonstrated a solid commitment to meeting the

needs of all students. These findings hold important implications for teacher education and professional development. Teacher educators should provide pre-service teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement DI. In-service teachers should be given opportunities for ongoing professional development to enhance their understanding of DI and facilitate sharing experiences with fellow educators. Furthermore, the study highlighted the positive impact of DI on student learning outcomes. Students taught using DI were more engaged in learning, achieved higher academic success, and developed a positive attitude toward school (Barrio et al., 2016).

Differentiated instruction acknowledges that learners are not fixed entities but dynamic individuals with ever-changing needs and interests. It promotes continuous assessment, introspection, and adaptation to meet learners at their current level and assist them in reaching their educational objectives. By appreciating and respecting every student's unique strengths and untapped potential, differentiated instruction fosters a sense of inclusiveness, self-assurance, and innate drive, vital for achieving academic excellence and nurturing a lifelong passion for learning.

## 1.2 Research Objective

This study aims to explore the experiences of receiving teachers in using differentiated instructions. It has the following specific objectives:

1. To describe the lived experiences of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners;

2. To identify the coping mechanism of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners;

3. To give insights into the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners.

## 1.3. Purpose of the Study

This study intends to conduct a phenomenological approach to explore the lived experiences and insights of receiving teachers, shed light on their specific strategies, and understand how these practices contributed to meeting students' individual needs and promoting their academic success.

Furthermore, the target beneficiaries of this study were the following:

***Department of Education Officials***. The study can offer valuable perspectives on the difficulties and possibilities of overseeing teachers with diverse learners. This can aid in creating impactful policies and strategies to enhance the quality of education in schools.

***School Heads***. By examining the experiences and viewpoints of school heads regarding the management of teachers handling diverse learners using differentiated instructions. The study can yield valuable perspectives

that can assist in formulating practical approaches to support these educators and enhance the overall standard of education in schools.

*Teachers.* The study's examination of the encounters of receiving teachers in overseeing learners with different learning needs can furnish valuable observations. This can aid in developing efficient approaches to support these teachers and enhance the general quality of education in schools.

*Students.* Finally, the study can offer valuable perspectives addressing the student's needs. These insights can assist in developing efficient strategies to enhance the quality of education and improve student outcomes in schools.

## 1.4 Theoretical Lens

The theory that affirmed this study was Social Cognitive Theory. Social Cognitive Theory was proposed by Albert Bandura in 1986. It emphasizes the reciprocal interaction between individual behavior and the environment. Social Cognitive theory has influenced many fields of study, including education, health sciences, social policy, and psychotherapy (Bandura, 1986).

Social learning theory is becoming more widely recognized as a critical component of sustainable natural resource management and the promotion of desirable behavioral change (Muro & Jeffrey, 2008). The foundation of this theory lies in the idea that we learn from social interactions. People develop similar behaviors by observing the behaviors of others. People assimilate and imitate the behavior of others after observing it, especially if their observational experiences are positive or include rewards related to the observed behavior. It defines imitation as reproducing observed motor activities (Bandura, 1977).

In the context of differentiated instruction practices, this theory can provide insights into how teachers' beliefs, self-efficacy, and observational learning influence their implementation of differentiated instruction strategies. Bandura (1986) stated that individuals learn through observing others, imitating behaviors, and evaluating the consequences of their actions.

This study was further anchored on Constructivism Theory. Constructivism Theory was proposed by Lev Vygotsky in 1978.  This theory posits that learners construct their world understanding through active engagement with knowledge and social interactions. According to this perspective, learning is constructing meaning rather than passively receiving information.

In the context of differentiated instruction practices, the constructivist lens provides valuable insights into how teachers can create supportive learning environments that facilitate student agency, collaboration, and the construction of knowledge. By adopting the constructivist principle, teachers can better cater to the diverse needs and abilities of their students (Lev Vygotsky, 1978)

One key aspect of constructivism is the idea of scaffolding. Vygotsky (1978) highlighted the importance of providing appropriate support to learners to help them progress in their learning. Teachers can use scaffolding techniques to provide targeted support and guidance to individuals or groups of students. This may involve breaking down complex tasks into smaller, more manageable steps, providing resources and tools, or offering assistance when needed. Scaffolding helps students build upon their existing knowledge and skills, enabling them to reach higher levels of understanding and competence.

Constructivism offers a valuable perspective for studying differentiated instruction practices. By emphasizing the active role of learners in constructing their understanding, the importance of scaffolding and the zone of proximal development, and the role of social interaction, this theoretical framework guides teachers in creating supportive learning environments that promote student agency, collaboration, and the construction of knowledge (Lev Vygotsky, 1978).

*2.* **Methodology**

**2.1 Research Design**

In this study, I used a qualitative research design. According to Mason (2002), qualitative research can explore a wide range of social world dimensions, including the texture and weave of daily life and the understandings and experiences of the research participants. This study allowed me to access the participant's thoughts and feelings and to develop an understanding of the meaning of their shared stories to give context to the experiences of the differentiated instruction practices of the receiving teachers.

To deepen understanding of this study, I used the phenomenological approach. The phenomenological type of qualitative research design will be used in this study to gain an in-depth understanding of the differentiated instruction practices of teachers. Specifically, the study will employ the descriptive phenomenology approach of Edmund Husserl, the philosopher who founded phenomenology. According to him, in this approach, the researcher's perceptions are set aside or bracketed to enter the participant's lifeworld without any presuppositions. Furthermore, this approach does not involve the participant's history but rather the experiences they encountered (Andrada et al., 2020).

Moreover, the data can be used independently, but the definitions must be rebuilt. Bracketing can validate the interpretation by increasing the level of objectivity. Furthermore, this research method seeks to determine the phenomenon's significance via psychological phenomenological reduction and 'epoche' or bracketing (Salkind et al., 2006).

This method is used in the current study to describe the lived experiences of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners, identify the coping mechanism of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners, and give insights into the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction. The participants' answers were detailed, interpreted, and reconstructed, but the thoughts remained unchanged. As a result, the researcher chose this approach to preserve the objectivity and validity of the data while avoiding biases.

**2.2 Participants of the Study**

I conducted in-depth interviews with five receiving teachers in public elementary schools. They are the five critical informants in this study from the District of Davao City. The participants are the Five receiving teachers. All of them will be selected using purposive sampling. Palinkas, Horwitz, Green, Wisdom, Duan, N., and Hoagwood (2015) described purposive sampling as a judgmental or expert sample, a non-

probability sample. The main objective of a purposive sample is to produce a sample that can be logically assumed to be representative of the population. The inclusion criteria are: Must be employed in the Department of Education, directly involved in handling differentiated instruction, and teachers handling diverse learners.

## 2.3 Research Instrument

The tool that I employed was the semi-structured interview guide questionnaire. It comprised three main questions, with probing questions each that helped the subject share her experiences. It was used as a guide to gather necessary information. Furthermore, a voice recorder was utilized to collect and review the data and obtain the exact details of participants' responses.

Themes of the phenomena were generated from the lived experiences of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction. Data acquired were described using thematic analysis, which is widely used in qualitative analytic methods because of its flexibility (Boyatzis, 2010). The participant was ideal for in-depth interviews. This method was very suitable for collecting data from the participant. Further, the research questions were aligned based on the research objectives.

## 2.4 Ethical Considerations

This study established this ethical aspect in research following the DOST Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (PHREB) mandate. Before the start of the study, participants' entire agreement was obtained, and in place, the confidentiality or restriction of participants' personal information was ensured. Thus, any arising conflict of interest from financial, familial, or proprietary considerations, the study site was dealt with accordingly. The researcher observed complete ethical standards in the conduct of the study in adherence to the global protection of human rights.

## 2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

According to Sutton and Austin (2015), data gathering involves producing massive amounts of data. Several methods of recording the information gathered during an in-depth interview, including taking handwritten notes or recording audio and video. In my study, I employed in-depth interviews with the key informants in the accumulation of data. Sutton and Austin (2015) added that before data analysis starts, the recordings must be verbatim transcribed if the researcher used audio or video recording for data collection. After conducting the in-depth interview of the participants and accomplishing the transcript, to check for the validity of their answers, the researcher allowed the participants to cross–examine the written transcript.

***Before Collection.*** In collecting the significant data for this study, researchers followed specific steps and procedures. First, I asked the Public Schools District Supervisor, the school head, and the participant. The participant's involvement was entirely voluntary, and I allowed them to withdraw at any time. The informed

consent was made available to the subject for seven days. They had the entire time during that interval to reread the informed consent and decide whether or not to agree to the terms and conditions.

*During Collection*. The semi-structured interview guide served as a tool for my research. I prepared probing questions to get accurate and thorough responses that would help me develop the study's themes.

*During the In-Depth Interview (IDI)*, I asked my subjects' permission to use an audio recording and cellular phone for picture taking or documentation. I also had to take notes as a backup for my retrieved information. There will be a transcription written verbatim from the answers given by the participants during the interview with the audio recording as evidence.

*After Collection.* The next step was transcribing after I had acquired the data. A transcription matrix was used to encode all of the acquired data. The matrix was split into rows for the specific objectives of the study, columns for three main questions with probing questions each, and columns for the information provided by the participants. The participant cross-examined the encoded transcription, which gave her access to the complete interview transcription. She had the option to freely reject any transcriptions that contained information she disagreed with. They can remove the provided information from the transcription and audio recordings if they choose.

## 3. Results and Discussion

This part provided the result of the data analysis conducted. Discussions were also presented to provide a comprehensive explanation of the themes that were generated in response to the objectives set in this study.

### 3.1. Practices of Teachers Using Differentiated Instruction

**Usage of Flash Card**

One method to help learners enhance their skills is the use of flashcards. The majority of students responded enthusiastically when asked to view the vivid flashcard. Students who struggle with writing may find using visual materials challenging and exciting.

*Teacher 1: As a teacher, I need to be flexible and adaptable by using varied teaching strategies to meet the needs of my diverse learners, like using flashcards and colorful visual aids for my visual learners.*

*Teacher 2: Most of my learners are visual learners, so I use strategies to catch the attention of my learners, such as flashcards.*

The study by Rahmawati and Liskinasih (2022) aims to determine how Socrative digital flashcards affected the students' vocabulary acquisition. The findings revealed that students who used Socrative had significantly higher vocabulary acquisition than groups who used PowerPoint flashcards. Digital flashcards from Socrative helped learners build their vocabulary. Hence, a thorough understanding of the vocabulary in a foreign language is necessary for effective communication. Interactive multimedia is

anticipated to be used by teachers when teaching vocabulary, such as flash cards.

**Usage of Think-Pair -Share**

One of the cooperative learning techniques that encourages student engagement in the classroom is the Think-Pair-Share method. This tactic encourages participation in class activities like discussions and allows students to explore their thoughts with others.

*Teacher 1: One of the teaching strategies that I employ to promote collaboration and student engagement for my diverse learners in a class is think-pair-share.*

*Teacher 2: I use think-pair-share activity to allow my learners to be engaged in the task and do discussions on their own as they brainstorm ideas.*

Krantz and Smith's (2020) study findings showed that the Think-Pair-Share technique was applied during the learning process following the steps outlined in the teacher's learning process plan. Students have shown good appreciation for the Think-Pair-Share technique's use. Students claimed that Think-Pair-Share could help them overcome obstacles in the speaking activity learning process. The outcomes demonstrated that the use of Think Pair Share (TPS) is a Technique that Enhances Student Learning Motivation and Learning Success.

**Usage of Scaffolding**

As today's classrooms become more and more diverse, the usage of scaffolding in class has to be explored. Teachers may use different instructional scaffolds to help learners acquire multiplicative reasoning.

*Teacher 1: Another teaching strategy that I employ to enhance my instructional strategy and  to promote reasoning for my diverse learners is scaffolding*

*Teacher 2: To enhance my instructional strategy, I use varied teaching strategies like think pair share activity, scaffolding, and even role-playing to cater to and meet the needs of my learners, and I find it compelling.*

The findings indicated that kinesthetic and linguistic scaffolds were the most advantageous for assisting students in developing mathematical thinking with both tangible and abstract units while raising the level of mathematical understanding.

In conclusion, using flashcards, think-pair-share, and scaffolding were differentiated activities that contributed to the increased understanding of student needs, enhanced instructional strategies, and improved student engagement.

**3.2. The Coping Mechanism of Teachers Using Differentiated Instruction**

**Flexibility and Adaptation**

Adapting instructional approaches to meet the diverse needs of learners is a crucial aspect of differentiated instruction. Teachers employ various strategies to accommodate individual student differences,

modify lesson plans, apply varied teaching strategies, and differentiated assessments. This enables them to create an inclusive learning environment that supports the diverse learning needs of all students.

*Teacher 1: As a teacher, I need to be flexible and adaptable by using varied teaching strategies to meet the needs of my diverse learners, like using flashcards and colorful visual aids for my visual learners.*

*Teacher 2: I use varied teaching strategies like think pair share activity, scaffolding, and even role-playing to cater to and meet the needs of my learners, and I find it effective.*

One approach that teachers use to adapt their instructional approaches is modifying lesson plans. This involves changing the content, instructional strategies, and learning activities to align with students' readiness levels, interests, and learning styles. For example, teachers may provide additional support or extension activities to meet the needs of students who require more challenge or offer alternative instructional materials to cater to different learning preferences (Tomlinson, 2017).

Moreover, adjusting instructional materials is another strategy teachers employ to adapt to diverse learner needs. This involves selecting or creating materials that are accessible and meaningful to all students. Teachers may use various resources, such as visuals, manipulatives, multimedia, or technology tools, to enhance understanding and engage students with different learning preferences or abilities (Tomlinson, 2017).

*Teacher 1: We need to modify and align our lesson plans and learning activities to students' interests and learning styles because, as teachers, we aim to satisfy and feed the minds of our learners according to their preferences.*

*Teacher 2: I believe aligning our teaching and learning tools like lesson plans and teaching strategies is the first step to meeting the diverse needs of our learners.*

Differentiating assessments is also vital in adapting instructional approaches. Teachers design assessments that allow students to demonstrate their understanding and skills differently, considering their strengths and needs. This may include providing options for different types of assessments, such as performance tasks, projects, presentations, or written responses, to accommodate diverse learning styles and preferences (Gubbins & Sousa, 2020).

*Teacher 1: In the classroom, if teachers have varied teaching strategies, they must also have varied assessments for learners to best demonstrate their understanding and skills.*

*Teacher 2: I have varied assessments to allow my learners to best demonstrate their understanding and skills, like giving them performance tasks, projects, oral recitation, written assessments like essays, pencil paper tests, and the like.*

Furthermore, a meta-analysis conducted by Hattie (2012) found that differentiation strategies, such as adjusting task difficulty, modifying instructional methods, and providing feedback, positively affected student achievement. This highlights the significance of teachers' adaptation strategies in promoting inclusive and effective learning environments.

*Teacher 1: Our student readiness levels vary, so the development of varied teaching strategies and assessments helps my learners to be assisted in their learning needs*

*Teacher 2: Our students' readiness level in class activities varies from one student to another, but with differentiated activities and tests, my students become more participative in class. I can say that each of them understands the lesson better by meeting their needs.*

In conclusion, varying students' readiness level is an issue in class, so teachers' adaptation strategies in differentiated instruction play a crucial role in meeting these diverse needs of the learners. Teachers create inclusive learning environments that support individual student differences and foster academic growth by modifying lesson plans, adjusting instructional materials, and differentiating assessments.

## Professional Development

Professional development programs and training are crucial in supporting teachers' coping mechanisms and enhancing their ability to implement differentiated instruction effectively. Access to relevant workshops, conferences, online resources, and ongoing support contributes to their professional growth. It empowers them with the knowledge and skills needed to meet the diverse needs of their students.

*Teacher 1: Differentiated strategies and assessments should be included in our LAC sessions for teachers to learn and apply more because our teachers need training and workshops for professional development.*

*Teacher 2: Due to our need for ongoing professional development, seminars on differentiated instruction will be of significant contribution to the professional development of teachers*

Research has shown the positive impact of professional development on teachers' ability to implement differentiated instruction. For example, in a study by Borko, Jacobs, Eiteljorg, and Pittman (2008), teachers who participated in a professional development program focused on differentiated instruction reported increased confidence in implementing differentiated strategies and a greater understanding of addressing student diversity.

*Teacher 1: With differentiated activities and assessments, my students understand the lesson very well by seeing them demonstrate their learnings and skills very satisfactorily.*

Moreover, a meta-analysis conducted by Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, and Shapley (2007) examined the impact of various forms of professional development on student achievement. They found that professional development programs that provided teachers with extended duration, active learning opportunities, and coherence with the curriculum positively affected student outcomes. These findings highlight the importance of high-quality professional development in supporting teachers' implementation of differentiated instruction.

Teachers' access to relevant workshops and conferences can also contribute to their professional growth and ability to implement differentiated instruction strategies. These events provide opportunities for teachers to learn from experts in the field, engage in hands-on activities, and network with peers who share similar interests and challenges. By attending workshops and conferences, teachers gain new insights, instructional strategies, and resources to effectively address the diverse needs of their students (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

*Teacher 2: During LAC sessions, we could request our master Teachers to share their expertise and knowledge on differentiated instruction for us to learn together and achieve together.*

Online resources and ongoing support further enhance teachers' professional development in differentiated instruction. Websites, online courses, and virtual communities provide teachers with anytime access to instructional materials, research-based practices, and collaborative platforms to share experiences and seek guidance. Ongoing support, such as instructional coaching or mentoring programs, helps teachers apply what they have learned in professional development settings to their daily instructional practices (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

*Teacher 1: Our master Teachers could mentor us more about differentiated instruction.*

In conclusion, professional development opportunities, including workshops, conferences, online resources, and ongoing support, are vital in supporting teachers' coping mechanisms and enhancing their ability to effectively implement differentiated instruction. Research suggests that high-quality professional development programs positively impact teacher confidence, understanding of student diversity, and student outcomes. It is essential for educators to have access to relevant and continuous professional development to foster their professional growth and promote inclusive teaching practices.

**Building Relationships and Connection with Students**

Providing individualized support and scaffolding is a crucial aspect of differentiated instruction that helps teachers meet the specific needs of diverse learners. Strategies such as modeling, guided practice, and gradual release of responsibility assist students in building skills, overcoming challenges, and achieving academic success (Tomlinson, 2017).

Teachers can employ modeling techniques by demonstrating desired behaviors, problem-solving processes, or thinking strategies. Through explicit modeling, teachers provide students with clear examples of approaching tasks and challenges, making learning more accessible and comprehensible (Tomlinson, 2017).

The guided practice provides structured opportunities for students to apply newly acquired knowledge or skills with the teacher's support and guidance. This strategy allows teachers to monitor student progress, provide timely feedback, and offer assistance, promoting more profound understanding and skill development (Tomlinson, 2017).

*Teacher 1: Despite time constraints, I need to give time and guide the students for them to know what to do and could monitor their progress in what they are doing.*

The gradual release of responsibility is a scaffolded approach where teachers gradually shift the responsibility of learning from themselves to the students. Initially, teachers provide explicit instruction and support, then gradually release control, allowing students to take ownership of their learning. This approach fosters independence, self-regulation, and metacognitive skills, enabling students to become more self-directed learners (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983).

*Teacher 2: As teachers, we need to give time to our students and guide them so that they can demonstrate their understanding and skills as we teach them to become independent learners.*

Additionally, creating a positive and inclusive classroom climate is another essential element of differentiated instruction. Teachers can cultivate such an environment by fostering positive relationships with students, promoting student collaboration, and establishing a safe and respectful learning space (Tomlinson, 2017).

Building positive relationships with students involves showing genuine care, respect, and interest in their well-being and academic growth. When students feel valued and supported, they are more likely to engage in learning and take risks actively (Brophy, 2006).

*Teacher 1: With activities catering to the interests of my students, we develop good relationships, and it helps them to be more engaged in class, resulting in good grades.*

Promoting student collaboration allows for peer interaction, cooperative learning, and shared responsibility. Collaborative activities, such as group projects, discussions, and think-pair-share exercises, encourage students to learn from and with each other, fostering a sense of belonging and creating an inclusive classroom environment (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

*Teacher 2: I directly reinforce the positive behavior of my students. When they answer correctly and perform the assigned task according to their expectations, I praise them and give them good feedback.*

Establishing a safe and respectful learning environment involves setting clear expectations, implementing consistent discipline procedures, and promoting positive behavior through reinforcement and praise. When students feel safe and respected, they are more willing to participate, take intellectual risks, and contribute to classroom discussions (Marzano & Marzano, 2003).

In conclusion, despite time constraints in our classes, we need individualized support, and scaffolding and cultivating a positive classroom climate are integral to differentiated instruction. By providing individualized support and using strategies such as modeling, guided practice, and gradual release of responsibility, teachers can meet the diverse needs of learners. Additionally, creating a positive and inclusive classroom climate through fostering relationships, promoting collaboration, and establishing a safe learning environment contributes to student engagement and academic success.

## 3.3. Insights of Teachers on the Importance of Using Differentiated Instruction to Diverse Learners.

**Promote Learners' Engagement**

Studies show student engagement is necessary to fulfill the education mission (Larry, 2022). Research has demonstrated that engaging students in the learning process increases their attention and focus and motivates them to engage in higher-level critical thinking (University of Washington, 2023).

*Participants of the study openly shared:*

*Teacher 1: Based on my perspective, differentiated instruction is fundamental to promote learners' engagement, where my learners were given a chance to experience a learning strategy suitable to their needs.*

*Teacher 2: It is manifested that my learners' performance has shown improvement since they know their worth and have the confidence to participate in all the activities, and they always look forward to discovering new things. Using differentiated instruction allows me to promote learners' engagement.*

Furthermore, a positive student engagement experience is often characterized by good behavior, positive feeling, and student thinking and effort. Positively engaged students are often inquisitive, interested,

and inspired by their learning (Promethean World, 2022). Student engagement involves behavioral, emotional, and cognitive factors. The behavioral factors include effort, persistence, concentration, questioning, and class communication. The emotional factors involve students' effective communication and practices on campus. (Li and Xue, 2023).

**Address Individual Differences**

Implementing differentiated instruction for diverse learners also requires a supportive school culture. This includes school leaders who prioritize and support differentiation for diverse learners and collaboration and communication among teachers to share effective practices (Johnson et al., 2021; VanTassel-Baska et al., 2020).

*Similar experience shared:*

*Teacher 2: I believe differentiated instruction is essential because it addresses individual differences where my learners were given a chance to experience a learning strategy based on their learning style.*

*Teacher 3: For me, the importance of using differentiated instruction is it tries to address the different learning styles of my learners. When I assessed my students' learning needs using strategies that fit them, I realized that differentiated instruction helps address their learning needs.*

Moreover, research has highlighted the importance of addressing cultural and linguistic diversity among gifted and talented learners. Educators must consider their students' unique backgrounds and experiences when designing differentiated instruction (Smutny et al., 2021). Additionally, recent research has emphasized the importance of creating inclusive classrooms prioritizing equity and access for all learners, regardless of their background or ability level (Williams, 2021).

It is noted that informants encountered different challenges as receiving teachers who used differentiated instruction yet found ways to overcome fears to handle diverse learners. Awareness of oneself is necessary to move forward to what is expected of a teacher to be, that you can do it. Openness to new things is also essential for teachers who have diverse learners. Awareness and openness can motivate a person to do what is supposed to be done. As teachers who are engaged in teaching, differentiated instruction is expected to move forward and do something for the learners' future. Teachers need to develop themselves to be better by gaining enough knowledge and being motivated to achieve the ultimate goal of education.

**Promote Student Resilience**

Building student resilience can help children overcome obstacles and adjust their answers as needed, reducing the negative effects of adversity and difficulties met during classroom instruction. This is particularly true when adolescents are connected to kind, encouraging classmates and adults whose behavior is based on resilience-building concepts.

*Teacher 1: For me, the importance of using differentiated instruction in my class is to allow student resiliency to build among my learners, wherein they are ready to mitigate any problem that arises during classroom instruction*

*Teacher 2: It is imperative to let my learners experience differentiated instruction so that they will be flexible in all of the differentiated teachings I employ to them. In that sense, if issues arise in class, they are ready to*

*adapt to changes.*

Donolato, Toffalini, Giofrè, Caviola, and Mammarella (2020) cited that student resiliency was crucial in assisting kids in overcoming the difficulties in their studies. Regardless of age, all students persevered despite obstacles they had never faced. However, just because kids were tough doesn't mean they didn't have problems or fall behind in academics. Many young students may want assistance to restore those lost learning experiences and skills on the academic and emotional levels.

Therefore, in Davao City, teachers acknowledged the importance of using differentiated instruction in promoting inclusive education and meeting the diverse learning needs of students. Differentiated instruction is crucial for promoting learners' engagement, addressing individual differences, and promoting student resilience.

In general, a multifaceted strategy that includes a variety of instructional methodologies, continual assessment and feedback, customized curriculum and assessments, and support for teachers and school administrators is needed to effectively execute differentiated instruction for diverse learners. Educators may build a learning environment that fits the individual needs of the varied learners, fosters academic success and social-emotional growth, and supports the success of all students by using a comprehensive and collaborative approach.

## 4. Conclusion

This contains the summary, conclusions, and implications of the study. The summary of findings is based on the result and discussion. The data was thoroughly analyzed and interpreted accordingly to the study's objectives.

The researcher aimed to describe the lived experiences of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners, identify the coping mechanism of the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners, and give insights into the receiving teachers using differentiated instruction to diverse learners.

Primary data was obtained through personal interviews of the respondents using a guide questionnaire to attain these objectives.

Based on the results of the study, these conclusions could be drawn:

As experienced by the teachers in Davao City, the teacher who uses flashcards, think-pair-share, and scaffolding were reported to have an increased understanding of student needs, enhanced instructional strategies, and improved student engagement.

The challenges faced by teachers included time constraints, varying student readiness levels, and the need for ongoing professional development. However, these challenges were overcome through adaptive coping mechanisms, such as flexibility and adaptation of teachers, professional development, and building relationship and connection with students.

Valuable insights gained by the receiving teachers through their implementation of differentiated

instruction. Teachers acknowledged the importance of using differentiated instruction in promoting inclusive education and meeting the diverse learning needs of students. Differentiated instruction is crucial in promoting learners' engagement, addressing individual differences, and promoting student resilience.

In conclusion, effective implementation of differentiated instruction for diverse learners requires a multifaceted approach that incorporates a range of instructional strategies, ongoing assessment and feedback, modified curriculum and assessments, and support for teachers and school leaders.

By adopting a comprehensive and collaborative approach, educators can create a learning environment that meets the unique needs of diverse learners, promotes academic achievement and social-emotional development, and supports the well-being and success of all students.

## 5. Recommendation

In view of the findings and conclusions drawn from this study, the researcher hereby generally provides recommendations for the Department of Education policymakers, school stakeholders, teachers, and future researchers.

*Department of Education policymakers*. Based on the issue of the variation of student readiness levels and the need for ongoing professional development for the teachers, it is recommended in the study that Department of Education Policy Makers should address the needs of the teachers in terms of professional development and varied learning needs of the learners.

*School Stakeholders*. The school administrators can collaborate with teachers and parents to promote differentiated instruction as an effective way of promoting inclusive education and meeting the diverse learning needs of students. Further, school heads should assist in receiving teachers so that they can be efficient in their tasks, minimizing resource-constraints-related issues gearing towards both a Win-Win and a great conducive learning environment.

*Teachers.* Teachers can continue to perform their tasks and responsibilities in school. Teachers must facilitate effective implementation of differentiated instruction, especially on how they may help differentiated learners to learn better.

*Future Researchers.* It is also recommended that the following issues, which are not covered in the present study, should be considered by future researchers: to explore the perspectives of students and parents to gain a comprehensive understanding of the impact of differentiated instruction on all stakeholders involved in the educational process or may also Conduct an Assessment/Project Evaluation on implemented Government Intervention Programs related to differentiated instruction or inclusive education.

Overall, it is recommended that all educational stakeholders work together for effective instruction, high teaching competence, and quality curriculum for learners' development.

## Acknowledgment

## References

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