



# A Differentiated Core Curriculum Model Based on Blended Learning of Employability Skills

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**Abstract.** Excellent human resources are one of the educational achievements that receive serious attention. School counselors have a crucial role and function in helping students develop their own qualities in a career context that includes education and employment. This article is written to examine the prototype of the differentiated core curriculum model using blended learning as an approach to improve student employability skills. The method used is a literature study by examining relevant and accredited sources. The differentiated core curriculum model based on blended learning includes face-to-face activities (including differentiation of the learning process) and online activities (including differentiation of content and products). This model emphasizes more intense face-to-face meetings, and online activities are only used as a medium for students to access materials and present learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** Differentiated Instruction, Core Curriculum, Employability Skills, Blended Learning.

## 1 Introduction

One of the characteristics of excellent human resources is competence and skill. However, in line with technological developments and various uncertain changes, individuals need to have skills in accordance with standards. In addition, current employment standards are flexible to emergency situations related to working time and mandatory work, and are able to accommodate various situations [1]. To support the achievement of these work standards, employability skills have the potential to encourage the ability to adapt or change proactively in individuals [2].

One of the HR strategies is learning and development which functions to provide an environment that encourages individuals to learn and develop [3, 4], so that you can keep up with current industry trends such as remote work, digitalization and automation [5]. Education is also a means to build human resources that are skilled, hardworking, dynamic, productive, mastering science and technology, and supported by industrial collaboration and global talent [6].

As educators, school counselors are responsible for helping students prepare for college and career experiences based on determination of basic academic competencies,

basic knowledge, and special elective subjects [7]. The core curriculum developed is generally used to develop students' personality components, but to be able to achieve this, student participation in learning is needed. Differentiated instruction in the core curriculum provides accommodations that help students access and participate in learning [8].

Meanwhile, to be able to help students master technology, technology is needed in the learning process, for example using a blended learning model. Blended learning is a learning model to help students get used to interacting with technology for formal activities, so that the possibility for students to integrate technology in the industrial world becomes much greater. Based on the description above, we offer a prototype design for a differentiated core curriculum model based on blended learning to increase employability skills.

## **2 Method**

This research was conducted using research methods in the form of literature studies. Literature studies help researchers gather other people's ideas on specific research questions through research findings and theories; allows researchers to read related findings or research; and find ideas about areas that still need research [9]. Sources collected include books, journals, articles, reports and various relevant published documents that are high quality, valid and current [10] which is an official publication from an accredited institution.

## **3 Result and Discussion**

### **3.1 Core Curriculum**

The core curriculum is intended to provide assistance to students through structured and systematic experiences to develop adaptive abilities and complete optimal developmental tasks [11]. Not only that, the core curriculum is a planned and written teaching program that is comprehensive, as a preventive measure and designed for development [12]. Core curriculum is a service aimed at all students as a strategic step to develop student potential [13]. Generally, the core curriculum is designed for teaching processes carried out in classrooms, large and small groups, or even individually [12]. Meanwhile, based on operational guidelines for service implementation [11], the core curriculum includes small group guidance services, classroom/group guidance, and large class/cross-class guidance.

### **3.2 Differentiated Instruction**

The concept of differentiated instruction is described as a learning model that emphasizes student inclusivity such as interests, learning styles, learning readiness in the form of knowledge, understanding, and the ability to use existing knowledge. Differentiated instruction believes that students learn using many methods [14]. Differentiated instruction planning needs to pay attention to several things such as collecting facts about

students, differentiating content and material, differentiating products and materials, and differentiating the learning process [15]. During differentiation classes, teachers proactively make plans and approaches that vary content, process and product, background knowledge, readiness, language and learning preferences and diverse student interests [16] to anticipate and respond to student differences based on readiness, interest, and learning needs/learning profile [17].

### **3.3 Blended Learning**

Blended learning is a learning model that combines the use of online and offline (face-to-face) methods without changing the essence and structure of learning. Blended learning consists of several models, but this article will focus on the use of a supplemental blended learning model which emphasizes the structure of face-to-face meetings rather than online meetings. This model provides opportunities for students to access material online, but the learning process is still carried out face-to-face with educators like traditional meetings [18]. The supplemental model is a learning model that conditions students to complete their assignments in an online setting as a complement to the face-to-face learning that has been carried out, or vice versa [19].

### **3.4 Employability Skills**

Employability skills are a collection of skills base commonly used as a skill in obtaining, maintaining, and developing a position or job. Employability skills are defined as a group of basic skills used to obtain, maintain or maintain, and do work [20–22], which are transferable and represent important functionalities such as knowledge, skills and attitudes in the workplace [23]. As basic skills, employability skills are important for 21st century individuals to possess.

Employability skills include three constituent aspects which are: *career identity*, *personal adaptability*, and *human and social capital* [2]. Career identity represents diverse career experiences and aspirations that include the construction of role identity, occupational identity, and organizational identity in the work context. Personal adaptability includes propensity to learn, openness, internal locus of control, and generalized self-efficacy, as important foundations in personal adaptability. Human and social capital is an aspect that includes human capital (includes age and education, work experience and training, work performance and organizational tenure, emotional intelligence, cognitive ability) and social capital (includes internal capabilities build social networks like establishing social relationships with other people, be it across positions, across organizations and across industries).

### **3.5 Differentiated Core Curriculum Model Based on Blended Learning**

The differentiated core curriculum emphasizes learning processes that are tailored to student characteristics. When preparing lessons, if possible the school counselor needs to understand the needs of the students in the class and observe the class [8]. Meanwhile, the core curriculum process is differentiated using a blended learning model, emphasizing differentiation in the presentation of material, the learning process, and the final product of learning outcomes at one meeting. The model we offer is a differentiated core curriculum model which emphasizes a greater frequency of offline activities. Online activities are only used as a means for teachers to store material or present

learning results as a final product. Details of face-to-face and online learning activities can be studied in table 1.

The packaging of employability skills material is carried out by analyzing the results of student employability skills assessments. Then, the results of the analysis are developed as a basis for developing material for implementing the core curriculum. We recommend that during this process, school counselors can consider the elements of student readiness, interests, and learning profiles as references in developing material. Apart from that, the learning process can be carried out using interactive methods to support efforts to increase employability skills in students.

**Table 1.** A blended learning model of differentiated core curriculum.

| Offline Activities of Differentiated Instruction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Online Activities of Differentiated Instruction                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Differentiated of content                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– School counselors provide employability skills material in several digital forms, according to student needs. Material is arranged based on readiness and/or interests.</li><li>– School counselors provide materials on cloud storage/other digital platforms.</li><li>– Students access various forms of materials (e.g. audio/podcasts, videos, e-books, etc.) provided by school counselors. Then students choose the type of format of the material they will study.</li></ul> |
| Differentiated of Process                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– There are no provisions on the use of learning methods for school counselors. Instead, the student's learning process is tailored to each student's readiness, interest and learning profile.</li><li>– Students study the material provided by the counselor, using their respective learning styles</li><li>– The counselor leads the discussion between students</li></ul> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Differentiated of product                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | School counselors give students the freedom to present their learning results in the desired format as a learning product. For example, making videos, podcasts, comics, posters, or other forms.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## 4 Conclusion

Based on the description above, to be able to achieve excellent human resources requires various comprehensive and holistic strategic steps. However, the process of implementing this model is not easy so it requires involvement from various parties. Regarding the differentiated core curriculum model based on blended learning, it still requires a lot of further study, especially the effectiveness of its implementation. We hope that this article can become a basis for future research, so that it can become an important reference for school counselors and educational institutions to practice this model, as well as for researchers who are interested in similar topics.

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