

Inclusive Civic Participation through Differentiated Democratic Learning: Evidence from SMP IT An-Nida' Lubuklinggau

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Abstract

Democratic participation among young people requires learning environments that accommodate diverse interests, abilities, and forms of engagement. However, civic education practices often emphasize leadership positions and voting activities, providing limited opportunities for broader student participation. This study explores how differentiated democratic learning fosters inclusive civic participation among students at SMPIT An-Nida' Lubuklinggau, Indonesia. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, data were collected through participant observation, documentation, and reflective records generated during a school-based democratic learning program known as Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida'. The program engaged students in various democratic roles, including election candidates, political party members, election committee members, supervisory committee members, media campaign teams, coding teams, and voters. The findings indicate that differentiated democratic learning created multiple pathways for participation, enabling students with diverse interests and competencies to contribute meaningfully to democratic processes. Students developed civic competencies such as leadership, collaboration, communication, responsibility, and digital participation through authentic democratic experiences. Furthermore, the availability of diverse roles encouraged broader student engagement by recognizing different strengths and forms of contribution. The study suggests that inclusive civic participation can be strengthened when democratic education moves beyond conventional voting and leadership activities to embrace varied forms of student involvement. These findings contribute to the discourse on inclusive citizenship and youth engagement while supporting the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 16 through innovative civic education practices.

Keywords: inclusive civic participation, differentiated democratic learning, civic education

Introduction

Preparing young people to become active, responsible, and democratic citizens has become one of the fundamental goals of civic education worldwide. In response to rapid technological development, globalization, and social transformation, civic education is expected not only to transmit civic knowledge but also to prepare students to participate meaningfully in democratic life. Knowles (2018) argues that civic education should cultivate democratic dispositions and active participation rather than merely teaching constitutional concepts and political institutions. Similarly, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

(OECD, 2023) emphasizes that effective civic education should shift from knowledge-based instruction toward experiential learning that places students at the center of authentic civic experiences. Recent findings from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) 2022 also demonstrate that schools remain the most influential institutions in developing students' civic knowledge, democratic attitudes, and willingness to participate in civic life while responding to emerging issues such as digital transformation, social diversity, and sustainable development (Schulz et al., 2024).

Although young people are increasingly connected through digital technologies, their democratic participation has not necessarily

increased. Borhan (2025) explains that many countries continue to experience declining voter participation, decreasing trust in public institutions, and widening inequalities in civic engagement among younger generations. At the same time, new forms of participation have emerged through digital platforms, social movements, and community-based initiatives, indicating that democratic participation has become more diverse than conventional political activities. These developments require schools to redesign civic education so that students acquire opportunities to experience democratic participation through authentic learning rather than solely studying democracy as theoretical knowledge. Current discussions in civic education increasingly recognize the importance of inclusive citizenship, which promotes equal opportunities for all individuals to participate in civic and democratic life regardless of differences in interests, abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, or preferred ways of contributing.

According to Borhan (2025), reducing participation gaps among young people requires educational environments that intentionally create inclusive opportunities for civic and social engagement. Likewise, the OECD (2023) argues that equitable and inclusive education systems should acknowledge learner diversity by providing learning experiences that allow every student to participate meaningfully according to their individual characteristics. Consequently, democratic participation in schools should no longer be interpreted solely as occupying leadership positions or participating in elections but should also recognize organizational, communicative, technological, and collaborative contributions as meaningful forms of civic participation. One pedagogical approach that supports this objective is differentiated learning. Tomlinson (2017) defines differentiated learning as a proactive approach that accommodates students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles through flexible instructional strategies.

Expanding this perspective, the OECD (2023) explains that differentiated instruction represents one of the core principles of equitable and inclusive education because it

enables teachers to respond to learner diversity while maximizing participation opportunities for every student. When these principles are applied within civic education, democratic learning can be designed to provide multiple pathways for participation, allowing students to contribute according to their strengths and interests rather than expecting identical forms of engagement from every learner. Such an approach has the potential to strengthen inclusive civic participation because every student is recognized as having valuable contributions to democratic processes. Previous studies have extensively examined civic engagement through service learning, project-based learning, digital citizenship, and democratic leadership. For example, Choi, Glassman, and Cristol (2017) demonstrated that digital citizenship supports responsible civic participation in the digital era, while Kim and Choi (2020) showed that project-based civic learning contributes to students' civic engagement and collaborative competencies.

Meanwhile, Blevins, LeCompte, and Wells (2016) found that authentic civic experiences significantly strengthen democratic participation among students. Nevertheless, relatively little attention has been devoted to understanding how differentiated democratic learning creates multiple pathways for participation that accommodate learner diversity and promote inclusive civic participation. Most democratic learning programs continue to emphasize leadership positions and voting activities, leaving students with different talents and interests fewer opportunities to contribute meaningfully. This research gap is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context. Civic Education (Pendidikan Pancasila) is expected to develop democratic citizens who embody Pancasila values while actively participating in civic and social life.

However, democratic learning practices frequently remain teacher-centered and focus primarily on conceptual understanding instead of authentic democratic participation. Responding to this challenge, SMPIT An-Nida' Lubuklinggau developed Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida', a school-based democratic learning program that adopted differentiated democratic learning by

providing students with diverse democratic roles. Instead of limiting participation to election candidates and voters, the program engaged students as political party members, election committee members, supervisory committee members, media campaign teams, student technology teams, and voters. Through these differentiated participation pathways, every student was encouraged to contribute according to individual interests, competencies, and preferred forms of engagement.

Therefore, this study aims to explore how differentiated democratic learning fosters inclusive civic participation among students at SMPIT An-Nida' Lubuklinggau. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this study seeks to describe how diverse democratic roles broaden participation opportunities and contribute to the development of civic competencies among junior high school students. The findings are expected to enrich the discourse on inclusive citizenship and youth engagement within civic education while providing practical implications for developing democratic learning environments that support Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions).

Literature Review

Inclusive Civic Participation

The concept of civic participation has developed beyond conventional political activities such as voting or holding public office. Contemporary civic education recognizes civic participation as a multidimensional process that enables young people to contribute to society through community engagement, collaborative problem-solving, public dialogue, and democratic decision-making. In educational settings, these experiences are expected to foster civic competence while strengthening students' willingness to participate in democratic life.

Recent empirical research by Alscher, Ludewig, and McElvany (2022) demonstrates that civic education significantly influences adolescents' willingness to participate in

political and civic life. Their findings indicate that teaching quality, particularly cognitive activation and an open classroom climate, enhances students' political interest and civic knowledge, which subsequently increase their willingness to participate in democratic processes. These findings suggest that civic participation is shaped not only by civic knowledge but also by meaningful learning experiences that actively involve students in democratic activities.

More recently, Ni et al. (2025) argue that civic participation among young people should be understood as a diverse and meaningful developmental experience rather than merely a measure of political involvement. Their study shows that different forms of civic engagement contribute positively to young people's sense of purpose and personal development, indicating that educational institutions should provide multiple opportunities for participation according to students' interests and capacities. This perspective supports the idea that democratic participation in schools should extend beyond leadership positions and accommodate diverse forms of student contribution.

Differentiated Democratic Learning

Differentiated learning has become one of the principal approaches for accommodating learner diversity within contemporary education. According to Tomlinson (2017), differentiated instruction enables teachers to adjust learning experiences according to students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles while maintaining common learning objectives. Although this approach has been widely implemented across various disciplines, research examining its application in civic education remains limited.

Recent studies in civic education indicate that differentiated instructional strategies increase student engagement by providing more flexible learning experiences. For example, Putri et al. (2025) found that implementing differentiated instruction in Civics Education under the Merdeka Curriculum improved students' participation, conceptual understanding, and civic attitudes because teachers adapted learning content,

processes, and products according to learner diversity. These findings indicate that differentiated learning can provide an important pedagogical foundation for democratic education by ensuring that every learner has opportunities to participate meaningfully regardless of individual differences.

Building upon this perspective, the present study introduces the concept of Differentiated Democratic Learning, which refers to democratic learning designed to provide multiple participation pathways according to students' interests, competencies, and preferred forms of engagement. Unlike conventional democratic learning that frequently emphasizes leadership and voting, differentiated democratic learning recognizes organizational, communicative, technological, creative, and collaborative contributions as equally valuable forms of democratic participation.

Democratic Learning and Youth Civic Engagement

Authentic democratic learning enables students to experience democracy through participation rather than merely learning democratic concepts. Previous research consistently demonstrates that democratic learning environments encourage civic efficacy, political interest, and civic responsibility among young people.

Alscher et al. (2022) report that students' willingness to participate in civic and political life is strongly influenced by cognitively activating learning experiences and open classroom discussions. Similarly, recent studies on youth civic engagement emphasize that meaningful participation develops when educational institutions provide authentic opportunities for students to collaborate, deliberate, and contribute to solving collective problems rather than positioning them solely as passive recipients of civic knowledge.

Despite these advances, previous studies have mainly focused on improving civic participation through teaching quality, open classroom climate, project-based learning, and differentiated instruction separately. Limited attention has been devoted to understanding

how differentiated democratic learning can integrate these perspectives by creating multiple democratic participation pathways that accommodate learner diversity while simultaneously strengthening inclusive civic participation. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates how differentiated democratic learning implemented through Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' facilitates inclusive civic participation among junior high school students.

Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach to explore how differentiated democratic learning fosters inclusive civic participation among junior high school students. Qualitative descriptive research aims to provide a comprehensive description of a phenomenon in its natural setting while remaining close to participants' experiences. Kim, Sefcik, and Bradway (2017) explain that this approach is appropriate when researchers seek to describe events or experiences without developing new theories. Likewise, Bradshaw, Atkinson, and Doody (2017) emphasize that qualitative description is particularly suitable for applied educational research because it produces findings that are directly relevant to practice.

Data Collection

Data were collected through participant observation and document analysis. Participant observation enabled the researcher to observe students' participation directly during the implementation of Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida', whereas document analysis was employed to examine school documents related to the democratic learning program. Combining multiple sources of qualitative evidence strengthened the richness of the data and supported a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the six-phase framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). The analysis consisted of familiarizing with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the final report. This analytical approach was selected because it enables researchers to identify, organize, and interpret recurring patterns across qualitative data systematically. To enhance the credibility of the findings, observational data were continuously compared with documentary evidence through method triangulation.

Result and Discussion

Differentiated Democratic Learning Created Multiple Pathways for Student Participation

The findings reveal that the implementation of Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' transformed democratic learning from a conventional electoral activity into an inclusive learning process that accommodated students' diverse interests, talents, and competencies. Rather than limiting participation to election candidates, committee members, and voters, the program intentionally designed multiple democratic roles that enabled broader student involvement throughout the entire electoral process. These roles included election candidates, political party members, election committee members (Komisi Pemilihan Umum), election supervisory committee members (Badan Pengawas Pemilu), media teams, coding teams, liaison officers, and voters.

The observation data indicate that differentiated democratic participation began even before the election campaign. Students from Grades VII and VIII voluntarily participated in the selection process for election committee members and election supervisory committee members, resulting in ten committee members and ten supervisors responsible for managing and overseeing the election. At the same time, students interested

in political leadership registered as prospective candidates and underwent a selection process conducted by student council and scouting advisors. From approximately thirty prospective candidates, five pairs of student council candidates and three male and three female scout leader candidates were selected to participate in the election.



Figure 1. Selection of the Election Committee (KPU), Election Supervisory Committee (Bawaslu), and Student Leader Candidates.

Unlike conventional student elections, participation in Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' was not restricted to students with leadership aspirations. Students who preferred organizational responsibilities joined political parties and election committees, while those with creative interests became members of campaign media teams responsible for designing campaign posters, brochures, PowerPoint presentations, promotional videos, and social media content. Students with programming competencies participated in coding teams that developed and operated the electronic voting application used during the election. Consequently, democratic participation became accessible to students with different interests and competencies, allowing every learner to contribute meaningfully according to their strengths.

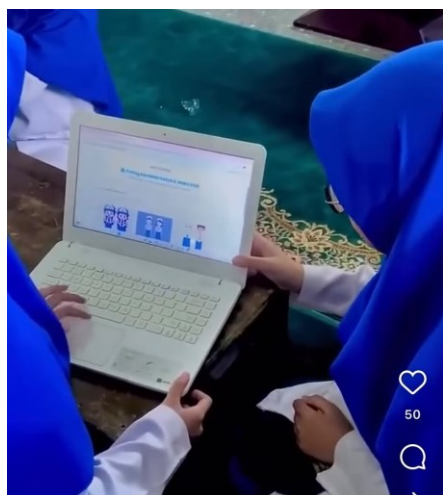


Figure 2. Student Media Team and Student-Developed Electronic Voting System.

Classroom observations further showed that differentiated democratic roles encouraged students who were typically less active during classroom discussions to participate confidently in roles that matched their abilities. Students who were reluctant to speak in front of large audiences actively contributed through media production and digital communication, whereas students with strong technological interests demonstrated high levels of engagement while designing and managing the electronic voting system. These observations suggest that providing multiple participation pathways reduced barriers to democratic engagement by recognizing learner diversity rather than expecting uniform forms of participation.

Another important finding concerns the continuity of students' participation throughout the democratic process. Democratic engagement did not occur only during election day but was distributed across the entire program, including institutional formation, political party organization, campaign preparation, public debates, the cooling-off period, electronic voting, vote counting, and leadership inauguration. As a result, students experienced democracy as an ongoing collaborative process involving planning, communication, deliberation, organization, supervision, and accountability instead of perceiving democracy merely as a voting activity.

These findings support the study of Alscher, Ludewig, and McElvany (2022), who

found that high-quality civic education significantly enhances adolescents' willingness to participate in civic and political life by fostering political interest and civic knowledge. The present study extends this finding by demonstrating that willingness to participate is also strengthened when democratic learning provides differentiated opportunities that accommodate students' diverse interests and competencies rather than assigning identical forms of participation to all learners.

The findings are also consistent with Conner, Mitra, Holquist, and Boat (2025), who reported that meaningful opportunities for student participation increase students' engagement, sense of agency, and ownership of school activities. In the present study, students were not merely involved as participants but assumed authentic responsibilities that directly influenced the success of the democratic process. This authentic involvement encouraged students to perceive themselves as active contributors rather than passive recipients of civic learning.

Furthermore, the results resonate with the work of Castro et al. (2025), who argue that civic participation during adolescence develops through authentic decision-making experiences that require collaboration, responsibility, and prosocial behavior. The implementation of Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' provided students with opportunities to negotiate campaign strategies, coordinate organizational responsibilities, supervise electoral procedures, and solve practical problems collectively. Such experiences enabled students to practice democratic values in authentic situations rather than learning democracy solely through classroom instruction.

Overall, the findings suggest that differentiated democratic learning broadens student participation by creating multiple democratic pathways that recognize learner diversity. Instead of concentrating democratic responsibilities among a limited number of student leaders, the program distributed meaningful roles across students with different interests, talents, and competencies. This indicates that differentiated democratic learning can serve as an effective pedagogical

approach for fostering inclusive civic participation because it allows every student to experience democracy through authentic and personally meaningful participation.

Inclusive Civic Participation Emerged through Diverse Democratic Roles

The findings indicate that inclusive civic participation was fostered through the provision of diverse democratic roles that enabled students with different interests, talents, and competencies to participate meaningfully in the democratic learning process. Rather than defining participation solely through leadership positions or voting, Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' recognized multiple forms of democratic contribution as equally valuable. Consequently, students who might otherwise remain passive in conventional student elections became actively engaged through roles that reflected their individual strengths.

Observation data revealed that each democratic role contributed differently to students' participation. Election candidates developed leadership capacities by presenting their vision, mission, and work programs during public campaigns and debates. Political party members collaborated to formulate campaign strategies, coordinate team responsibilities, and mobilize support from other students. Election committee members (KPU) organized the electoral process, prepared voting procedures, and ensured that every stage of the election was conducted systematically. Election supervisory committee members (Bawaslu) monitored the implementation of election regulations, observed campaign activities, and promoted procedural fairness throughout the election process.

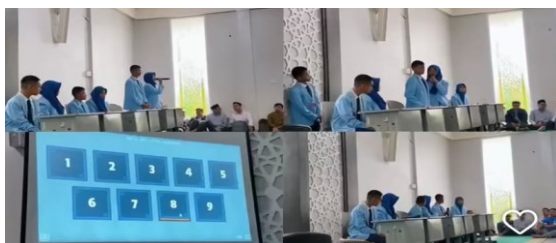


Figure 3. Debates

The findings further demonstrate that differentiated democratic learning successfully accommodated students whose interests extended beyond political leadership. Students with creative abilities participated in media teams by producing campaign videos, designing brochures, preparing presentation materials, managing social media content, and documenting election activities. Their contribution significantly enhanced public communication during the election while allowing them to develop communication, creativity, and teamwork skills in authentic democratic contexts.



Figure 4. One of the creation from media team

An equally significant finding emerged from the participation of students in the coding team. Students who possessed programming skills were responsible for designing, testing, and operating the electronic voting application used during the election. Unlike conventional civic learning, where technology is often treated merely as a learning tool, Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' positioned technological competence as a meaningful form of democratic participation. The coding team collaborated closely with the election committee to ensure that the voting system functioned accurately, transparently, and efficiently. This finding illustrates that digital competence can become an integral

component of democratic participation rather than simply supporting administrative activities.

Observation also showed that students who were generally quiet during classroom learning became highly engaged when assigned responsibilities aligned with their interests. Several students who rarely participated in oral discussions demonstrated remarkable commitment while developing campaign media or managing the electronic voting system. Conversely, students who were confident in public communication assumed leadership roles as candidates, campaign coordinators, or debate participants. This variation indicates that differentiated democratic learning successfully reduced participation barriers by recognizing that students contribute to democracy in different ways.

Another important finding concerns students' collaborative participation throughout the democratic process. Students worked collectively across different democratic roles rather than competing individually. Media teams collaborated with political parties to prepare campaign materials, coding teams coordinated with election committees to operate the electronic voting system, and election supervisors worked closely with committee members to ensure transparency and accountability. Such collaboration enabled students to experience democratic participation as a shared responsibility requiring cooperation, mutual respect, and collective problem-solving.

These findings are consistent with Lundberg et al. (2025), who found that participation in school-based extracurricular and organizational activities positively predicts later civic and political engagement because students develop opportunities to exercise responsibility, collaboration, and civic commitment. The present study extends this finding by demonstrating that participation becomes more inclusive when schools intentionally diversify democratic roles instead of concentrating participation among student leaders alone.

Similarly, Conner et al. (2025) argue that authentic opportunities for student participation strengthen students' sense of

agency because they perceive their contributions as meaningful to the school community. In Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida', students were entrusted with responsibilities that directly influenced the success of the democratic process. Such authentic responsibilities encouraged students to perceive themselves as active democratic actors rather than passive learners.

The findings also reinforce the argument of Castro et al. (2025) that civic participation during adolescence develops through authentic opportunities to make decisions, collaborate with peers, and solve collective problems. However, this study contributes an additional perspective by demonstrating that authentic civic participation does not require every student to perform identical democratic roles. Instead, participation becomes more inclusive when democratic learning accommodates learner diversity by providing differentiated pathways through which students can contribute according to their interests and competencies.

Overall, the findings suggest that inclusive civic participation is strengthened when democratic education recognizes multiple forms of contribution as equally valuable. Rather than measuring participation solely by students' visibility in leadership positions, differentiated democratic learning broadens civic participation by enabling every learner to contribute meaningfully through diverse democratic responsibilities. This finding highlights the importance of designing democratic learning environments that value diversity, equity, and authentic participation as essential principles of civic education.

Authentic Democratic Experiences Strengthened Students' Civic Competencies

The findings indicate that differentiated democratic learning not only expanded students' participation in democratic activities but also contributed significantly to the development of civic competencies. Through authentic involvement in Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida', students experienced democracy as a real social practice rather than merely as theoretical knowledge presented in

the classroom. Observation data showed that each democratic role required students to apply different competencies, enabling them to develop civic knowledge, democratic dispositions, and participatory skills simultaneously.

One of the most visible competencies developed during the program was leadership. Students who served as election candidates were required to formulate visions and missions, communicate policy ideas, respond to public questions during debates, and demonstrate accountability before their peers. Rather than competing solely for electoral success, candidates learned to represent collective interests, communicate persuasively, and accept public evaluation throughout the democratic process. These authentic experiences enabled students to understand leadership as a form of public responsibility rather than personal authority.

Communication competence also developed across almost every democratic role. Candidates practiced persuasive communication during campaign presentations and debates, while political party members negotiated campaign strategies and coordinated team responsibilities. Media teams strengthened written and visual communication skills by preparing campaign videos, digital posters, brochures, and social media content. Election committee members communicated procedural information to voters, whereas supervisory committee members facilitated dialogue when procedural issues emerged. These findings demonstrate that democratic learning created multiple opportunities for students to communicate within authentic civic contexts.

Observation further revealed that collaboration became one of the strongest competencies developed throughout the program. The successful implementation of *Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida'* depended on continuous cooperation among different student groups. Election committees coordinated with supervisory committees to maintain electoral integrity, political parties collaborated with media teams to prepare campaign materials, and coding teams worked closely with election organizers to ensure the

functionality of the electronic voting system. Such interactions required students to negotiate responsibilities, coordinate tasks, and solve practical problems collectively. Consequently, democratic participation became a collaborative learning experience rather than an individual competition.

Another important finding concerns the development of responsibility and accountability. Every democratic role required students to complete assigned responsibilities within agreed procedures and timelines. Election committee members ensured that electoral stages were implemented systematically, supervisory committee members monitored procedural fairness, while coding teams assumed responsibility for maintaining the accuracy and reliability of the electronic voting system. Students demonstrated increasing awareness that democratic participation involves responsibility toward both individual duties and collective outcomes.

The program also fostered students' critical thinking and deliberative competence. Public debates encouraged candidates to defend their ideas using logical arguments while responding to questions from teachers and fellow students. Likewise, political party meetings involved collective discussions regarding campaign strategies and organizational decisions. Observation data showed that students increasingly expressed opinions respectfully, evaluated different perspectives, and sought consensus when disagreements occurred. These experiences strengthened democratic deliberation by encouraging reasoned discussion rather than personal confrontation.

A distinctive contribution of this study is the finding that digital competence emerged as an integral component of civic participation. Students participating in the coding team designed and operated the electronic voting application used during the election, while media teams utilized various digital platforms to disseminate campaign information and conduct public opinion surveys. These activities demonstrate that technological competence can function not merely as a technical skill but also as an important

dimension of democratic participation. Through these experiences, students learned how digital technology can enhance transparency, participation, and accessibility within democratic processes.

The findings support the study conducted by Geboers et al. (2015), who reported that active participation in civic learning activities contributes to the development of civic knowledge, civic skills, civic attitudes, and civic participation among adolescents. Extending this perspective, Hoskins and Janmaat (2019) found that authentic participation within school environments strengthens students' democratic efficacy because learners perceive themselves as capable of influencing collective decisions. Likewise, Castro et al. (2025) emphasize that adolescents develop civic competence more effectively when they are directly involved in collaborative decision-making and authentic social problem-solving rather than passive classroom instruction.

The present study extends previous research by demonstrating that civic competencies develop not only through democratic participation itself but also through the differentiation of democratic roles. Students acquired different competencies according to the responsibilities associated with each role. Leadership competencies were primarily developed by candidates and political party members, organizational competencies by election committees and supervisory committees, digital competencies by coding and media teams, and democratic responsibility by all participants throughout the electoral process. These findings suggest that differentiated democratic learning provides a more inclusive approach to civic education because it allows every learner to develop civic competencies through participation that aligns with individual interests and abilities.

Overall, the findings indicate that authentic democratic experiences implemented through differentiated democratic learning contribute to the holistic development of civic competencies. Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of civic knowledge, the program enabled them to practice democratic values through meaningful participation,

collaboration, communication, deliberation, responsibility, and digital innovation. Consequently, democratic learning became a transformative educational experience that prepared students to participate responsibly in democratic society.

The findings of this study suggest that differentiated democratic learning represents a promising pedagogical approach for strengthening inclusive civic participation in secondary education. Unlike conventional democratic learning, which generally limits students' participation to leadership positions and voting activities, the implementation of Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' provided multiple democratic roles that enabled students with diverse interests, competencies, and aspirations to participate meaningfully throughout the democratic process. Consequently, democratic participation became more inclusive because students were recognized not only as future voters or leaders but also as organizers, communicators, digital innovators, supervisors, and collaborative problem-solvers. These findings extend previous studies on civic participation by demonstrating that learner diversity can become an educational resource when democratic learning intentionally provides differentiated opportunities for participation. Therefore, differentiated democratic learning may serve as an alternative approach for promoting inclusive civic participation while simultaneously developing students' civic competencies through authentic democratic experiences.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that differentiated democratic learning provides an effective pedagogical approach for fostering inclusive civic participation among junior high school students. The implementation of Pesta Demokrasi An-Nida' at SMPIT An-Nida' Lubuklinggau transformed democratic learning from a conventional student election into an authentic educational experience by creating multiple pathways for participation. Rather than limiting students' involvement to leadership positions or voting activities, the program enabled them to participate through

diverse democratic roles, including election candidates, political party members, election committee members, election supervisory committee members, media teams, coding teams, liaison officers, and voters. This differentiated structure ensured that students with diverse interests, abilities, and competencies could contribute meaningfully to the democratic process.

The findings further indicate that authentic participation through differentiated democratic roles contributed to the development of students' civic competencies, including leadership, communication, collaboration, responsibility, deliberation, conflict resolution, and digital competence. The integration of technology through student-led coding teams and electronic voting also demonstrates that digital skills can become an important dimension of democratic participation within civic education. These experiences encouraged students to perceive democracy not merely as an electoral procedure but as a collaborative process that requires active participation, shared responsibility, and respect for democratic values.

This study contributes to the field of civic education by proposing differentiated democratic learning as an inclusive pedagogical approach that accommodates learner diversity through authentic democratic participation. The findings suggest that democratic learning becomes more meaningful when schools provide multiple opportunities for students to participate according to their interests and competencies rather than expecting identical forms of engagement from all learners. Therefore, differentiated democratic learning offers a promising alternative for strengthening inclusive civic participation while supporting the development of civic competencies among adolescents.

Despite these contributions, this study was conducted in a single school context, limiting the transferability of the findings to other educational settings. Future research is therefore encouraged to examine the implementation of differentiated democratic learning across different school types, educational levels, and cultural contexts.

Comparative and mixed-methods studies may also provide deeper insights into its long-term impact on students' civic engagement, democratic dispositions, and participation beyond the school environment.

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