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## **CHALLENGES AND POSSIBILITIES FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION: A CASE OF A SMALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL**

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### **Abstract**

Increasing student diversity in today's classrooms demands a teaching strategy that can adequately address the wide-ranging differences of students. Differentiated Instruction (DI) is recognised as such a strategy that enables teachers to maximise the learning potential of all students, regardless of their differences. However, implementation of DI is complex, and it is done infrequently and inconsistently in many classrooms. Teachers consider class sizes as a major factor for effective instruction, as a large class limits teachers' ability to deliver effective teaching strategies. The purpose of this case study is to investigate the existing challenges and possibilities that can affect teachers' implementation of DI in a small school. An elementary school which has a small student population in the Maldives is selected for the case study. The research sample consists of the principal and eight teachers of the chosen school. A survey, semi-structured interviews, and classroom observations were used as means for data collection. While descriptive statistics were used to analyse the survey data, interviews and observations were analysed qualitatively using content analysis method. The results indicate that time, resources, lack of knowledge, and lack of support as the most remarkable challenges for implementation of DI. Likewise, teachers' positive perception and eagerness to learn about the strategies, and the less student population were identified as the most significant possibilities for successful implementation of DI. These findings have several implications for practice and research on DI which are discussed in the paper.

**Keywords:** Challenges Differentiated Instruction (DI), Implementation, Possibilities, Small School.

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