Journal of Education and Learning Reviews, 1 (5): September-October 2024 ISSN: 3057-0387
Website: https://so19.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/JELS/about

Tailoring Education: A Comprehensive Review of Personalized Learning Approaches Based on Individual Strengths, Needs, Skills, and Interests

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Received 05/09/2024	Revised 20/09/2024	Accepted 01/10/2024

Abstract

Background and Aims: Personalized learning is important because it tailors educational experiences to each student's needs and strengths, resulting in more effective and engaging learning. This approach not only improves academic performance but also accommodates students' learning styles and interests, resulting in increased motivation and success. This paper investigates Tailoring Education: A Comprehensive Review of Personalized Learning Approaches Based on Individual Strengths, Needs, Skills, and Interests.

Methodology: This paper conducted a thorough analysis of various personalized learning approaches, such as adaptive learning technologies, differentiated instruction, and project-based learning. It combined findings from empirical studies, case studies, and theoretical frameworks to assess the efficacy and impact of these approaches on individual student needs and academic outcomes.

Results: The finding found that personalized learning approaches demonstrate their significant potential for meeting individual student needs and improving educational outcomes. Adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction have successfully tailored learning experiences to students' strengths, whereas competency-based and project-based learning provides flexible, student-centered pathways for meaningful engagement and academic progress. Collectively, these methodologies help to create a more individualized and responsive educational environment.

Conclusion: The findings show that personalized learning approaches effectively meet individual student needs while improving educational outcomes. These methodologies foster a more responsive and personalized learning environment by tailoring experiences to students' strengths and providing flexible, student-centered pathways.

Keywords: Tailoring Education, Personalized Learning, Individual Strengths

Introduction

Personalized learning is an educational approach that tailors instruction to each learner's unique needs, strengths, skills, and interests. According to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2013), personalized learning entails using data and technology to tailor educational experiences to each student's unique needs, to increase engagement and improve learning outcomes. The value of personalized learning stems from its ability to address students' diverse needs, resulting in a more equitable learning environment. Personalized learning enables educators to create instructional methods that cater to individual learning styles, potentially leading to increased student motivation and achievement (Horn & Staker, 2015). According to research, students who receive tailored instruction are more likely to remain engaged, perform better academically, and develop a deeper understanding of the material (Hattie 2009). This review article aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of personalized learning approaches, including theoretical foundations, methods, and implementation strategies. The article will look at how adaptive learning technologies, differentiated instruction, competency-based education, and project-based learning can all help with personalization in education. It will also discuss the challenges associated with these approaches and highlight successful case studies. The goal is to provide a thorough understanding of how personalized learning can be successfully implemented in educational settings to improve student outcomes.

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The growing recognition that traditional, one-size-fits-all educational models frequently fail to meet students' diverse needs emphasizes the need for research into personalized learning approaches. Personalized learning aims to bridge this gap by tailoring educational experiences to each learner's specific strengths, needs, skills, and interests. Pane, Steiner, Baird, and Hamilton (2017) found that personalized learning has the potential to significantly improve student engagement and achievement by tailoring instruction to individuals' learning profiles. This approach not only supports different learning styles but also promotes a more inclusive educational environment, which is critical for meeting the diverse needs of students in today's classrooms. Furthermore, a large body of evidence suggests that personalized learning can improve educational outcomes. For example, a meta-analysis by Cheung and Slavin (2013) shows that personalized learning interventions, such as adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction, frequently result in higher student achievement and motivation. Despite these advantages, challenges such as equitable implementation of personalized learning and the need for effective teacher training remain significant obstacles. A thorough review of personalized learning approaches is required to identify best practices, assess their effectiveness, and address these challenges to better support educators and improve student learning experiences (Wagner, 2014).

Objective

This paper investigates Tailoring Education: A Comprehensive Review of Personalized Learning Approaches Based on Individual Strengths, Needs, Skills, and Interests.

Theoretical Foundations

Historical Context of Personalized Learning

Personalized learning has evolved dramatically over time, reflecting changes in educational philosophy and technology. The concept of tailoring education to individual needs dates back to the early twentieth century when the progressive education movement emphasized individualized instruction and student-centered learning (Dewey, 1938). John Dewey's work advocated for education that is tailored to each student's unique interests and developmental stages. In recent decades, advances in technology and educational research have advanced personalized learning by combining data-driven methods and digital tools to provide more personalized educational experiences (Peters, 2009).

Key Theories and Models

Personalized learning is based on several key theories. Constructivist theories, particularly those proposed by Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, emphasize how learners build knowledge through interactions with their surroundings and social contexts. Piaget's stages of cognitive development and Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development emphasize the importance of tailoring instruction to the learner's current developmental stage (Piaget, 1972; Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, Carol Ann Tomlinson's differentiated instruction model focuses on tailoring teaching methods and resources to meet the needs of diverse learners in the same classroom (Tomlinson 2001). These theories and models support the idea that personalized learning can improve educational outcomes by tailoring instruction to each student's unique learning profile.

The Role of Learning Styles and Individual Differences

Individual differences and learning styles are important concepts in personalized learning. Howard Gardner proposed the theory of multiple intelligences, which holds that people have different types of intelligences and learning preferences that influence how they process information. Although the concept of learning styles is debatable, acknowledging individual differences in learning processes remains critical to personalized education. According to research, accounting for these differences can improve student engagement and achievement by tailoring learning experiences to each student's unique strengths and needs (Pashler et al., 2008).

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Conceptual Framework

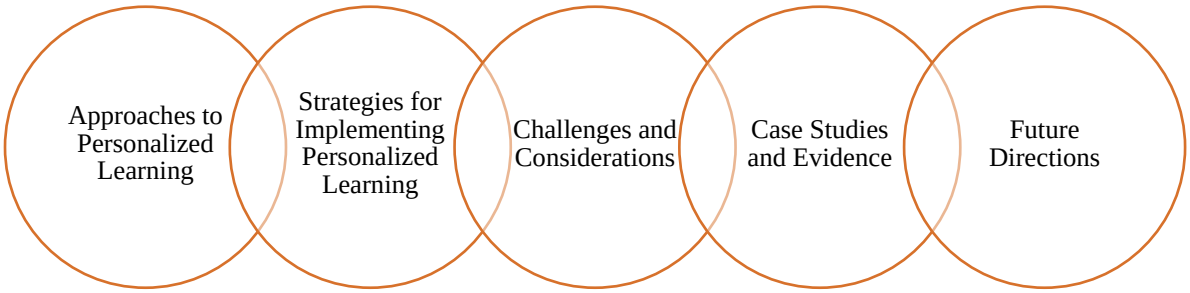

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Methodology

Given the scope of the title, the methodology for the review article "Tailoring Education: A Comprehensive Review of Personalized Learning Approaches Based on Individual Strengths, Needs, Skills, and Interests" would most likely follow a systematic or narrative review framework. Here is a breakdown of the methodology based on the components you've outlined:

1. Data Source

- **Primary sources**: Academic databases like PubMed, Google Scholar, ERIC, JSTOR, and Scopus would be used to find relevant peer-reviewed studies, reviews, and articles.
- **Types of sources**: The review would look at a variety of publications, including empirical studies, case studies, meta-analyses, and theoretical papers about personalized learning, educational technologies, and adaptive learning models.
- **Inclusion criteria**: Studies on personalized learning approaches would be included. They may concentrate on individual strengths, needs, skills, and interests. English-language publications from the last decade that discuss a variety of educational settings (K-12, higher education, online learning) are likely to be included.
- **Exclusion criteria**: Studies that do not address individualization or personalization in learning will be excluded. Articles that lack empirical data or are published in languages other than English may also be omitted.

2. Data Collecting Instrument

- **Search strategy**: A predefined search strategy based on keywords and phrases like "personalized learning," "individual strengths and needs," "adaptive learning technologies," "student-centered education," and "interest-based learning" would be used. Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT) and filters would be used to refine the search.
- **Data extraction form**: A structured form or spreadsheet would be created to extract and organize data from each of the included studies. Key fields may include study type, methodology, key findings, and relevance to personalized learning.
- **Screening tools**: The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) framework could be used for systematic reviews to ensure rigorous screening and selection procedures.

3. Data Collecting Process

- A literature search will be conducted across selected databases to gather information on personalized learning. The search process would be documented to ensure transparency and reproducibility.
- Screening process: After initial search results, articles go through a two-step screening process. (1) Title and abstract screening: Articles would be evaluated based on their titles and abstracts to determine relevance. (2) Full-text review: Selected articles would be thoroughly reviewed to ensure that they met the inclusion criteria.

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• Data extraction: Identify relevant studies and extract key information using a structured form. This includes the methodologies used in studies, findings on the efficacy of personalized learning approaches, and any gaps in the literature.

4. Data Analysis

• Qualitative synthesis involves categorizing extracted data based on student needs, skills, and interests. These themes would provide a structured approach to discussing the various personalized learning models.

• Comparative analysis: Personalized learning approaches will be evaluated for their strengths, weaknesses, and effectiveness in different educational settings.

• Identified patterns in personalized learning, including benefits like increased student engagement and improved learning outcomes, as well as challenges like scalability and teacher training.

• The analysis aims to identify gaps in the literature, including areas for further research, such as integrating new technologies or personalized learning for underrepresented groups.

Results

Approaches to Personalized Learning

1. Adaptive Learning Technologies

1.1 Description and Examples

Adaptive learning technologies use algorithms and data analytics to tailor educational content and experiences to the unique needs of each student. These systems adjust task difficulty, offer personalized resources, and provide feedback based on real-time student performance data. Examples include DreamBox, which tailors math instruction to student's skill levels, and Khan Academy's personalized learning dashboard, which suggests resources based on student progress (Pane et al., 2017). These technologies are intended to create a personalized learning path that maximizes student engagement and achievement.

1.2 Impact on Student Learning Outcomes

Research indicates that adaptive learning technologies can improve student learning outcomes by providing tailored instruction and immediate feedback. According to a study conducted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (2013), students who used adaptive learning platforms outperformed those in traditional settings. Similarly, a meta-analysis by Cheung and Slavin (2013) found that adaptive learning interventions can result in significant increases in student achievement, particularly in mathematics and reading.

2. Differentiated Instruction

2.1 Principles and Practices

Differentiated instruction involves tailoring teaching methods and content to meet the diverse learning needs of students in a classroom. According to Tomlinson (2001), the principles of differentiated instruction include providing multiple modes of representation, engagement, and expression to address a wide range of learning preferences and abilities. Teachers can differentiate by adjusting the content, processes, or learning products to ensure that all students have access to and engage with the material in ways that are appropriate for their individual needs.

2.2 Case Studies and Effectiveness

Case studies demonstrate how differentiated instruction improves student outcomes. For example, a study by Reis et al. (2011) found that differentiated instruction improved academic performance and engagement among high-achieving and gifted students. Furthermore, differentiated instruction practices have been linked to higher student motivation and narrower achievement gaps (Tomlinson & Allan, 2000).

3. Competency-Based Education

3.1 Definition and Implementation

Competency-based education (CBE) is a teaching method in which students advance based on their ability to demonstrate mastery of specific skills and knowledge, rather than seat time or credit hours. CBE emphasizes clear learning objectives and allows students to progress after

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mastering each competency (Gaudet, 2014). Implementation entails establishing clear learning objectives, administering formative assessments to track progress, and providing personalized support to assist students in meeting these objectives.

3.2 Advantages and Challenges

CBE has several advantages, including personalized pacing, flexible learning pathways, and an emphasis on mastery rather than time spent in class (Parker et al., 2014). However, challenges include the need for significant changes to traditional educational structures, such as grading systems and classroom practices, as well as ensuring that all students have the resources and support they require to succeed (Harrington, 2017).

4. Project-Based Learning

4.1 How It Supports Personalized Learning

Project-based learning (PBL) promotes personalized learning by immersing students in complex, real-world projects that necessitate critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration. PBL enables students to explore topics of personal interest and apply their skills in meaningful ways, catering to their unique interests and learning styles (Thomas, 2000). This approach promotes student autonomy and motivation by allowing students to take ownership of their learning process.

4.2 Examples and Evidence of Success

Several case studies show that PBL is effective, with students demonstrating improved problem-solving abilities and a deeper understanding of the material. For example, Krajcik and Blumenfeld (2006) discovered that students who participated in PBL demonstrated higher levels of motivation and academic achievement than those who received traditional instruction. Furthermore, the Buck Institute for Education has reported positive results from PBL implementations in a variety of educational settings, including increased student engagement and academic performance (Buck Institute for Education, 2015).

Strategies for Implementing Personalized Learning

1. Data Collection and Assessment Tools

To effectively implement personalized learning, robust data collection and assessment tools are required to understand each student's strengths, needs, and progress. These tools include formative assessments, student feedback systems, and learning analytics platforms. For example, formative assessments such as quizzes, observations, and self-assessments provide ongoing information about student comprehension and learning gaps (Black & Wiliam, 1998). Learning management systems (LMS) and educational data systems can aggregate this information, allowing educators to monitor student progress and adjust instruction accordingly (Siemens, 2013). These tools assist in developing a data-driven approach to personalizing learning, ensuring that interventions are targeted and effective.

2. Designing Personalized Learning Paths

Designing personalized learning paths entails creating educational experiences that are tailored to each student's learning profile. This process entails developing personalized learning objectives, selecting appropriate instructional materials, and adjusting pacing based on student needs (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2008). Personalized learning paths are frequently created using data from assessments and student feedback, allowing educators to tailor instruction and learning activities to each student's proficiency level and preferences. Adaptive learning platforms, for example, can help design these paths by tailoring content and exercises to student performance (Pane et al., 2015).

3. Role of Technology and Digital Resources

Technology and digital resources enable personalized learning by providing interactive and adaptable educational tools. Digital platforms, such as educational apps and online learning environments, provide personalized learning experiences by incorporating adaptive content, interactive simulations, and instant feedback (Bakia, Shear, Toyama, & Lasseter, 2012). These technologies promote differentiated instruction by allowing students to interact with materials tailored to their specific learning needs and preferences. For example, Khan Academy and Coursera

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use technology to provide personalized learning experiences and resources based on student's progress and needs (Koller, Harvey, & Magnotta, 2013).

4. Teacher Training and Professional Development

To effectively implement personalized learning, teachers must receive extensive training and continue their professional development. Educators must be able to use data effectively, create personalized learning experiences, and incorporate technology into their teaching practices (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Professional development programs should train teachers to use adaptive learning technologies, understand data analytics, and implement differentiated instruction strategies (Desimone, 2009). Continuous support and collaboration among educators are also required for sharing best practices and addressing challenges associated with personalized learning implementation (Guskey, 2002).

Challenges and Considerations

1. Equity and Access Issues

Equity and access are major issues in the implementation of personalized learning. Personalized learning frequently relies on technology, which can exacerbate existing disparities if students do not have equal access to digital devices and high-speed internet (Warschauer, 2011). According to a Pew Research Center study (2019), students from low-income families are less likely to have access to necessary technology, which can limit their ability to benefit from personalized learning initiatives. Furthermore, the digital divide can exacerbate educational disparities, as students who lack adequate resources may fall further behind their peers. Ensuring equitable access to technology and resources is critical for preventing existing educational disparities and assisting all students in benefiting from personalized learning approaches.

2. Balancing Standardization and Personalization

Balancing standardization and personalization presents a challenge in maintaining educational quality while catering to individual needs. Standardized curricula and assessments are intended to ensure consistency and accountability across educational systems, but they may conflict with personalized learning approaches that emphasize individualized instruction (Klein & Hamilton, 2011). The challenge is integrating personalized learning strategies within standardized frameworks to ensure that educational standards are met while also meeting individual learning needs. Researchers advocate a balanced approach that allows for flexibility in teaching and assessment while adhering to core educational standards (Elmore, 2004). This balance is essential for achieving accountability and personalized learning outcomes.

3. Addressing Diverse Needs in Heterogeneous Classrooms

Heterogeneous classrooms, with students from various backgrounds, abilities, and learning styles, pose a challenge to personalized learning. Designing instructional strategies to meet such diverse needs necessitates careful planning and differentiated teaching methods (Tomlinson, 2001). Teachers must use a variety of instructional strategies to accommodate different learning styles and levels of readiness, which can be time and resource-intensive (Guskey, 2002). Furthermore, ongoing professional development is required to provide educators with the skills necessary to effectively manage and respond to diverse classroom dynamics (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Successful personalized learning in heterogeneous classrooms is dependent on the ability to adapt instructional practices to meet a diverse range of student needs while ensuring that all students achieve their learning objectives.

Case Studies and Evidence

1. Examples of Successful Personalized Learning Implementations

Several case studies demonstrate the effective implementation of personalized learning in a variety of educational settings. For example, the Summit Learning Program, which has been implemented in several schools across the United States, makes use of a personalized learning platform that combines project-based learning with individualized mentorship. Summit Public Schools (2018) conducted a study that found significant improvements in student engagement and academic performance, with students performing better on reading and math assessments than they did with traditional schooling methods. Another example is the use of Khan Academy's personalized

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learning tools in schools, which use data-driven insights to tailor instruction to individual student needs. Koller, Harvey, and Magnotta (2013) found that students who used Khan Academy's platform outperformed their peers in terms of test scores and learning outcomes.

2. Lessons Learned from Different Educational Settings

Several important lessons about personalized learning have emerged from various educational settings. One key takeaway is the importance of effectively integrating technology into classroom instruction. Teachers in schools that successfully integrated personalized learning technologies, such as those included in the iNACOL Blended Learning Report (2014), discovered that having access to real-time data and adaptive learning tools significantly improved their ability to meet individual student needs. Furthermore, professional development and support for educators are critical to the successful implementation of personalized learning. Schools that invested in ongoing teacher training, as highlighted by the case studies in the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation report (2013), saw improved student outcomes and more effective personalization of instruction.

3. Impact on Student Engagement and Achievement

The impact of personalized learning on student engagement and achievement is well documented. Personalized learning strategies, such as adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction, have been shown to improve student motivation and academic performance. For example, Cheung and Slavin (2013) discovered that personalized learning interventions resulted in significant improvements in student achievement, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and reading. Furthermore, a study by Pane, Steiner, Baird, and Hamilton (2017) found that students in personalized learning environments had higher levels of engagement and academic growth than those in traditional educational settings. The positive effects on engagement and achievement highlight personalized learning's potential to improve educational experiences and outcomes for a diverse range of student populations.

Future Directions

1. Emerging Trends and Innovations

As new technologies and pedagogical approaches emerge, personalized learning evolves. One emerging trend is the incorporation of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning into educational tools, which improves the ability to provide highly personalized learning opportunities. For example, AI-powered platforms such as DreamBox and Content Technologies, Inc. use algorithms to analyze student performance and adjust learning materials in real-time (Cohen & O'Neil, 2018). Another innovation is the creation of virtual and augmented reality (VR/AR) applications that provide immersive learning experiences tailored to specific preferences and needs (Bailenson et al., 2008). These technologies have the potential to create engaging and interactive environments that are tailored to each student's learning style and pace, thereby furthering personalized learning.

2. Potential Areas for Further Research

Several areas require additional investigation to improve the effectiveness and implementation of personalized learning. One area is the long-term impact of personalized learning on student outcomes such as academic performance, social-emotional development, and future career success. Longitudinal studies may provide insights into how personalized learning affects students over time, allowing for better practice (Pane et al., 2017). Furthermore, research into the equitable distribution of personalized learning resources as well as the effectiveness of various instructional strategies across diverse educational settings is required to address equity concerns and ensure that all students benefit from personalized approaches (Warschauer, 2011). Exploring how personalized learning can be effectively scaled across different educational systems and contexts is also critical for expanding its reach.

3. Predictions for the Future of Personalized Learning

Looking ahead, personalized learning is expected to become more sophisticated and widespread. According to predictions, advances in AI and data analytics will improve the ability to tailor educational experiences to individual needs, making personalized learning more precise and effective (Woolf, 2010). Furthermore, as educational technologies become more accessible and

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affordable, personalized learning may become more common in a variety of settings, including underserved and rural communities (Johnson et al., 2023). The integration of personalized learning with broader educational reforms, such as competency-based education and blended learning models, is expected to result in more flexible and responsive educational systems that meet the diverse needs of learners (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2018). Overall, personalized learning is poised to shape the future of education by encouraging more personalized and engaging learning experiences.

Conclusion

This review of personalized learning approaches revealed several key findings. Personalized learning, using a variety of methodologies such as adaptive learning technologies, differentiated instruction, competency-based education, and project-based learning, has significant potential for meeting individual student needs and improving educational outcomes. Adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction are effective in tailoring educational experiences to students' strengths and needs, leading to improved academic performance and engagement (Pane et al., 2015; Tomlinson, 2001). Competency-based education and project-based learning are flexible, student-centered approaches that allow students to work at their own pace and complete meaningful, real-world tasks (Gaudet, 2014; Thomas, 2000). These approaches help to create a more personalized and responsive learning environment.

For educators, personalized learning has significant implications. Effective implementation necessitates a commitment to ongoing professional development, data-driven decision-making, and the incorporation of technology into instructional practices (Darling-Hammond 2006; Siemens 2013). Educators must also address equity and access issues, ensuring that all students have the resources they need to benefit from personalized learning (Warschauer, 2011). Policymakers play an important role in supporting personalized learning by providing the necessary funding, resources, and infrastructure, as well as promoting educational policies that encourage innovation and equity (Christensen, Horn, & Johnson, 2018).

The evidence and case studies reviewed show that personalized learning is effective and has potential. Personalized learning has the potential to address a wide range of learning needs, increase student engagement, and boost academic performance (Cheung & Slavin, 2013; Pane et al., 2017). However, its successful implementation is dependent on overcoming equity challenges, balancing standardization and personalization, and meeting the diverse needs of students in heterogeneous classrooms (Guskey, 2002; Tomlinson, 2001). The evidence and case studies reviewed demonstrate that personalized learning is both effective and promising. Personalized learning has the potential to meet a variety of learning needs, increase student engagement, and improve academic performance (Cheung & Slavin, 2013; Pane et al., 2017). However, its successful implementation is contingent on overcoming equity issues, balancing standardization and personalization, and meeting the diverse needs of students in diverse classrooms (Guskey, 2002; Tomlinson, 2001).

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Knowledge Contribution

Approaches to Personalized Learning	Strategies for Implementing Personalized Learning	Challenges and Considerations	Case Studies and Evidence	Future Directions
• *1. Adaptive Learning Technologies* • *2. Differentiated Instruction* • *3. Competency-Based Education* • *4. Project-Based Learning*	• *1. Data Collection and Assessment Tools* • *2. Designing Personalized Learning Paths* • *3. Role of Technology and Digital Resources* • *4. Teacher Training and Professional Development*	• *1. Equity and Access Issues* • *2. Balancing Standardization and Personalization* • *3. Addressing Diverse Needs in Heterogeneous Classrooms*	• *1. Examples of Successful Personalized Learning Implementations* • *2. Lessons Learned from Different Educational Settings* • *3. Impact on Student Engagement and Achievement*	• *1. Emerging Trends and Innovations* • *2. Potential Areas for Further Research* • *3. Predictions for the Future of Personalized Learning*

Personalized learning encompasses a variety of approaches, including adaptive learning technologies, differentiated instruction, competency-based education, and project-based learning, all aimed at tailoring education to individual students' unique strengths, needs, and interests. Effective implementation strategies include using data collection and assessment tools, creating personalized learning paths, integrating technology and digital resources, and prioritizing teacher training and professional development. However, challenges such as ensuring equity and access, balancing standardization and personalization, and meeting the diverse needs of students in heterogeneous classrooms persist. Case studies demonstrate successful personalized learning implementations, emphasizing the positive impact on student engagement and performance. Looking ahead, emerging educational trends, technological innovations, and additional research will shape the future of personalized learning, which has the potential to become a core component of modern education.

Recommendation

1. Practice Recommendation

Educators should prioritize the use of adaptive learning technologies and differentiated instruction in the classroom in order to effectively tailor educational experiences to individual student strengths and needs. To accomplish this, schools should invest in continuous professional development for teachers, with a focus on the effective use of these tools and strategies. Teachers should also make data-driven decisions, using real-time performance data from adaptive technologies to constantly adjust instruction. Furthermore, to promote equity, schools must ensure that all students, particularly those from underserved communities, have access to the technological resources and support systems they require to fully benefit from personalized learning approaches. A focus on competency-based education and project-based learning will enable students to take greater ownership of their learning by allowing them to work at their own pace and engage in real-world tasks that foster deeper understanding and practical skills.

2. Further Research Recommendation

Future research should look into strategies for addressing the equity issues associated with personalized learning, especially in diverse and heterogeneous classrooms. Specific areas of focus could include how personalized learning tools can be tailored to the needs of students from various socioeconomic backgrounds, students with special needs, and English language learners. Researchers should also look into how to strike a balance between standardization and personalization, identifying optimal frameworks that allow for individualized learning while maintaining essential educational standards. Longitudinal studies that look at the long-term effects of personalized learning on academic performance, student engagement, and post-graduate success would also shed light on its sustainability and broader impact. Finally, research into the scalability

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of personalized learning models in various educational settings (urban, rural, and international) is critical for understanding how to implement these approaches on a larger scale.

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Citation: Inthanon, W., & Wised, S. (2024). Tailoring Education: A Comprehensive Review of Personalized Learning Approaches Based on Individual Strengths, Needs, Skills, and Interests. Journal of Education and Learning Reviews, 1 (5), 35-46; DOI: https://doi.org/10.60027/jelr.2024.779

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