Improving Quality of Education in Elementary School:
Overcoming Any Issues of Elementary Education in Smart Society 5.0

Challenges and Opportunities Inclusive Education in Primary Schools: A Case Study of Readiness in The Era of Society 5.0

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Abstract. The current study examines the implementation of inclusive education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and primary schools in four provinces of Indonesia: Aceh, Jawa Barat, Jawa Tengah, and NTB. Focused Group Discussions (FGD), interviews, and observations are used in this study's qualitative methodology to provide meaningful understanding regarding the difficulties and opportunities faced by inclusive education in the Society 5.0 era. The results of the study show certain challenges when implementing inclusive education. The primary challenges are fluctuating budget support, minimal shadow teacher availability, and persistent facilities and infrastructure. In addition to that, the need to increase understanding of fundamental aspects of inclusive education must be hammered home. However, this study also reveals that inclusive education continues flourishing in the concerned challenges. In the context of Society 5.0, people are encouraged to collaborate actively with one another, the government, and schools to meet their needs. Progressive government policies and the stubborn persistence of teachers demonstrate that inclusive education can flourish even in adversity.

Keywords: Challenges, inclusive education, opportunities, readiness, society 5.0.

INTRODUCTION

The transformation towards Society 5.0 highlights the importance of empowering all individuals, regardless of their background, ability, or diversity. Inclusive education can be an important agenda in facing societal changes, particularly within the context of Society 5.0.(Mansur et al., 2023) In an era where collaboration and connectivity take center stage, inclusive education means overcoming academic barriers and integrating differences to create a diverse and inclusive society. Inclusive education aims to provide equal and quality education (Kefallinou et al., 2020) for all students in society, regardless of differences in ability or diversity, including those with special needs.(Estévez et al., 2021; Gaitas & Alves Martins, 2017) The inclusive-based education process aims to understand, accept, and support individuals with various needs through engagement, removing barriers, and creating opportunities for individual development and participation in all aspects of community life.(Scanlon et al., 2022) Inclusive education is a means to ensure every student gets an equal education and is a driving force for positive social change in an increasingly connected and collaborative society.

Focusing on inclusion in education, the community can prepare itself to optimize the potential of all its members, create an environment that is responsive to change, and embrace the advent of Society 5.0 with a strong and comprehensive educational basis.(Mansur et al., 2023) Progress to become a fully inclusive society.(Scanlon et al., 2022) Building the foundations of inclusive and sustainable education requires a thorough understanding of the dynamics of inclusive education, particularly in light of society's rapid transition into a new era. This ensures that equal education is accessible to everyone, irrespective of their diversity or ability.(Movkebayeva et al., 2016) Educational adjustments in anticipation of the advent of Society 5.0(Mansur et al., 2023; Nastiti & Abdu, 2020), marked by the fusion of advanced technology and social change, present fresh obstacles as well as chances for Indonesia's inclusive education system. The urgency of understanding the challenges and opportunities of inclusive education in this new era must be addressed.

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In Indonesia, inclusive education is a crucial component of basic education, particularly in the setting of Society 5.0. Including at the elementary school and madrasah ibtidaiyah levels of basic education. The development of an inclusive education system necessitates preparing for the adoption of more humane educational practices and standards. The readiness of the learning environment, as well as the ability of teachers to reflect on their learning and build their self-esteem, are indicators of basic education in implementing inclusive education, which is the basis for being able to start readiness. (Leifler, 2020) Increased teacher readiness will provide increased academic success for all children.(Ke et al., 2017; Movkebayeva et al., 2016) Therefore, teacher readiness is important in implementing inclusive learning within the context of Society 5.0.

Even though Indonesia has embraced the idea of inclusive education, there are still several barriers that need to be considered when putting it into practice. (Rante et al., 2020) Studies have been conducted to highlight the government's need for more attention and concern for implementing inclusive schools. (Tarnoto, 2016) The government also needs more facilitate inclusive education, ranging from infrastructure (Candra Pratiwi, 2015) to professionals running inclusive school programs. Teachers' competence towards inclusive education could be more robust. (Candra Pratiwi, 2015; Tarnoto, 2016) Children with special needs are frequently seen negatively by parents and the general public. (Tarnoto, 2016) Furthermore, the majority of research on inclusive education is currently done solely about students with impairments. (Mulyadi, 2017) To satisfy the demand for fresh research contributions, research outlining challenges and opportunities in attempts to enhance the execution of inclusive education still requires implementation.

The primary research concern addressed in this article is the identification of opportunities and challenges associated with the preparedness for inclusive education in elementary schools during the Society 5.0 era. This investigation considers previous research on inclusive education challenges and emphasizes the current significance of inclusive education within this context. The goal of this research is to give a thorough and improved understanding of the potential and difficulties associated with achieving and becoming ready to implement inclusive education in the context of Society 5.0. a time marked by quick changes in technology and society, with the term "collaboration" becoming increasingly popular. The results of the study can enhance our comprehension of the implementation of inclusive education within the framework of Society 5.0. Examining the shortcomings in Indonesia's inclusive education implementation is the goal of this study. The findings may offer fresh perspectives on how to increase inclusive education's efficacy in elementary schools. This research can offer sufficient insights to create a better inclusive education policy in the context of Society 5.0. Additionally, it is anticipated that gaining a deeper understanding of how cooperation among the government, local communities, and academic institutions can enhance the quality of inclusive education in Indonesia will prove advantageous. Therefore, the purpose of this essay is to outline the obstacles and potential solutions that can help inclusive education flourish in the context of Society 5.0.

METHOD

The current research utilizes a qualitative approach, referencing the works of Emzir (2016), Sugiyono (2022), and Yusuf (2017), with the aim of offering a thorough understanding of how inclusive education is implemented in the context of basic education in Indonesia. The qualitative approach was used for Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Primary School because it offered thorough and contextual insights into the benefits and challenges of inclusive education in the age of Society 5.0. Focused Group Discussions (FGD), interviews, and observations were the methods employed to obtain the data. To ascertain the perspectives of various stakeholders, including parents, educators, and teachers, regarding the implementation of inclusive education, focus group discussions (FGD) are utilized. To acquire a more profound comprehension of the viewpoints held by those engaged in the inclusive education process, in-depth interviews were carried out. Through direct observation, one can see the classroom environment, amenities, and student relationships. FGDs, which were conducted in every province, in-depth interviews with chosen research participants, and hands-on observation in classrooms and other educational settings

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were the methods used to gather data. In order to fully understand the possibilities and obstacles in inclusive education in madrasah ibtidaiyah and elementary schools in facing the dynamics of the period of society 5.0 in various Indonesian provinces, qualitative approaches and the inclusion of diverse research methodologies have been used. It is anticipated that this combination of techniques will offer a thorough picture of the state of inclusive education in each place.

Aceh, West Java, Central Java, and West Nusa Tenggara are the four provinces in Indonesia that comprise the country's geographical and cultural variety. This choice of locations guaranteed a comprehensive portrayal of inclusive education implementation in various regional contexts. Specifically, two Ibtidaiyah Madrasahs Negeri in Aceh Province, one private elementary school and one public elementary school in West Java Province, one Ibtidaiyah Madrasah Negeri in Central Java Province, and two Ibtidaiyah Madrasahs comprising one private and one public in West Nusa Tenggara Province are the six ibtidaiyah madrasahs and elementary schools that are utilised as research loci in total. Teachers, parents, and educators working in inclusive education in each province's elementary schools and madrasah ibtidaiyah served as research subjects. The selection of research subjects was conducted with consideration for the diversity of their experiences and backgrounds in order to cover a range of viewpoints pertinent to this particular research issue.

RESULTS

In 2012, the Government of Aceh announced a policy related to inclusive education, which placed Aceh as one of the inclusion provinces in Indonesia. However, its implementation has yet to progress well. (Haekal, 2021) Insufficient data on the impact of special education on children with special needs detrimentally affects inclusive education, and varying interpretations of inclusive education result in its implementation that remains segregated. Several recent studies have explored inclusive education in primary schools within Aceh province, documenting the experiences of special education teachers.(Haekal, 2021; Haflisyah, 2021; Sari, 2017; Wati, 2014) Most of these studies center on the execution of inclusive education in primary schools. In Aceh, inclusive education has been long practiced at the elementary school level, particularly in madrasah ibtidaiyah and elementary schools.

Inclusive education in one of the state ibtidaiyah madrasahs in Aceh Province began in 2018 at the initiative of the madrasah without being equipped with comprehensive knowledge about inclusive education. The service given is based on serving with the heart. Out of 400 pupils, the madrasa at the time serviced three children with special needs. The present special needs kids were really keen to receive educational services alongside their classmates and other kids. Now, in this madrassa in 2023, 16 children with special needs are being served. The curriculum applied is tailored to the needs of children. If the child is interested in art, then the curriculum is about art. If children can be developed cognitively, then the curriculum is cognitive because learning achievement indicators are lowered. A group of educators, committees, parents, puskesmas, and Syah Kuala University's Faculty of Medicine work together to identify children who have special needs. Technically, a team of psychologists from Syah Kuala University issued a certificate acknowledging the child's distinctive needs, which was then acknowledged by the school team.

In Madrasah ibtidaiyah in Aceh province, the Special Assistance Teachers available are ordinary teachers trained through the Madrasah Inclusion Educators Forum. In other states, ibtidaiyah madrassahs, six Special Assistance Teachers are available. In Aceh Province, the Ministry of Religious Affairs designates the state ibtidaiyah madrassas as Inclusion Madrasas. The appointment led to training that three teachers at the madrassa could attend. The Mini Teacher Working Group included teachers who could attend the training. Facilities and infrastructure that are unavailable but needed to provide inclusive education services are made independently and independently of school residents. The required learning resource room is also adjusted to the available room. Props to support inclusion learning are self-created but still need to be patented. Children with special needs in madrassas are very diverse; some are blind, have low vision, and others. There is no specific education budget allocation for the two madrasahs that have provided inclusive education services, as found in this study. The School Operational Assistance program funds are utilized to facilitate the execution of inclusive education.

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In the province of West Java, inclusive education presents a variety of opportunities and obstacles. The findings demonstrated that while the community's overall attitude towards inclusive education is positive, inclusive education still needs to be implemented completely. (Waki, 2017) One private elementary school accepts children with special needs more than 10% of its total students. Every class at this private elementary school often has two or more students with special needs. The special needs of the children served range from mental to physical impairments. Teachers with special help are available to accompany students with special needs at private elementary schools. Nevertheless, this school's special assistance teacher lacks prior experience in special education. Children with exceptional needs receive inclusive education services through self-taught means. There are three unique accompanying teachers for every level. In addition to providing special accompanying teachers, this private elementary school also implements special classes for mental disabilities. The goal of this special education facility is to help youngsters with exceptional needs become more cognitively proficient. The Bogor District Education Office officially recognized this private elementary school as a reference institution for inclusion. Fostering empathy for parents of special needs children to understand their children at school is the largest obstacle she confronts in providing inclusive education services for children with special needs. The facilities do not adequately support students with disabilities; however, this is acknowledged as a challenge. The stimulating event turns this challenge into an opportunity to address the needs of children with special requirements within the existing facilities. The environment of the school is excellent for implementing inclusive education. Youngsters rush to assist their friends with special needs and assist each other.

In private elementary schools, inclusive education is implemented differently than it is in public elementary schools. One of the public elementary schools that became a partner in the discussion of this study revealed that the condition of public schools is not better prepared than private schools. Many limitations and problems are faced. Public elementary schools are designated inclusion schools because they accept children with special needs. Public schools must accept because the existing policy must not reject students who apply according to the available quota. According to one teacher, they still need to learn more about offering inclusive education services to kids with special needs. So, they instruct and assess every youngster in the same way. There is no special treatment. Teachers educate them more based on fulfilling the responsibility to educate. In this condition, on the one hand, public elementary schools can meet the community's expectations to accept various conditions of students. However, on the other hand, they need to fulfill the promise of providing educational services as can be done by previous private schools. Government action is required, including measures to measure and sustainably increase teacher capacity in addition to legislation requiring inclusivity in all public schools.

Surakarta, in the Central Java Province, is one of the cities that was awarded the title of "child-worthy city" in 2023 by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia and was able to keep it. (Kemenppa, 2023) To maintain the title of a child-worthy city, of course, takes a lot of time and attention. (Hamudy, 2015) The context gains intrigue when linked to inclusive education within the framework of basic education during the Society 5.0 era. A child-worthy city places the educational goal of all children guaranteed the right to education, especially basic education. However, this does not have much effect because there is still resistance from students with special needs in schools and madrassahs. These rejections can occur due to negative stigma, negative effects, and negative beliefs. Some parents and communities still display an indifferent attitude towards the presence of children with special needs and inclusive schools.(Candra Pratiwi, 2015; Wibowo & Nurlaila, 2017)

Madrasah ibtidaiyah Negeri in Central Java can be said to be a favorite educational institution and the choice of the community whose education implementation is developing not only because of the factor of the head of the madrasah but also the collaborative movement of educators, parents, and stakeholders. Regretfully, the presence of solid infrastructure, a welcoming atmosphere, and high-quality madrasahs do not always imply that an institution is prepared to adopt inclusive education. One of the state ibtidaiyah madrasahs in Central Java disclosed that there are issues with madrasahs' preparedness to implement inclusive education and, at the same time, meet community expectations in the period of society 5.0, in the context of

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the rejection of children with special needs. The residents of the madrasah define inclusive education as offering services to pupils with disabilities. One student with disabilities, one special teacher. Madrasas cannot fulfill this. So when there are prospective parents who want to enroll their children in this madrasah, the madrasah is rejected and directed to enroll in an extraordinary school because of the condition of prospective students with disabilities. Moreover, without support in terms of socialization, teacher training, and robust encouragement from the hosting organization—in this case, the Ministry of Religious Affairs—a madrasah will inevitably face challenges in designating itself as an inclusive institution.

In eastern Indonesia, there are two stories of inclusive education implementation in different madrasah statuses in West Nusa Tenggara Province. The difference in the status of private and public educational institutions here is not only seen on the signboard of the institution but also on the physical appearance that is far different. State madrassas have high-rise classrooms, spacious courtyards, and modern facilities. The private madrasah, with the appearance of a half-completed building and half an old building with several classes, was vacated because the condition was no longer suitable and endangered students. These different conditions also impact the differences in inclusive education services provided. Both madrassas received a decree as inclusion madrassas from the Ministry of Religious Affairs. However, the implementation of inclusive education varies in practice.

The head of the madrasah initiates inclusive education in state-run ibtidaiyah madrasas. However, along the way, when the head of the madrasa was reassigned, the spirit of inclusive education in this madrasa seemed to dim. Educators and madrasah environments are not fully ready to implement inclusive education. Educators experience their difficulties and pressures. (Ian et al., 2021) So, as many as 22 inclusion students consisting of children with disabilities did not get services and eventually withdrew. Various facilities in this madrasah were built without considering the need to provide inclusive education. Different things are shown in the implementation of inclusive education in private madrassas. Even without adequate facilities and infrastructure, this madrasah can receive and provide optimal inclusive education services in various conditions for children with particular needs. Madrasah heads and educators share the same inclusive vision and perception. They establish partnerships with outstanding educational institutions and resource centres to help guarantee that their students' rights are upheld. Teachers proactively hold the independent learning resources that pupils require. Every thirty minutes at the start of each topic, a special class known as a resource centre is held to give intensive instruction tailored to cater to the requirements of children with special needs. After that, all students return to the regular classroom to join the rest of the class. The teachers present set an example, which then became an example of how students interacted with each other organically. Madrassa heads and teachers increase empathy by creating joint programs such as congregational duha prayers on the school grounds. This activity, congregational prayer, teaches kids about cooperative actions and is a medium of promotion and evaluation to the surrounding community. The community may observe how relationships are formed between pupils and indirectly track the growth of youngsters with special needs. Having special needs is no longer a barrier to learning and playing. These children feel the same as each other. Through a charity market that the headmaster started, funds are gathered for the budget. The services provided make private madrasahs, which, although they do not have favorite facilities, become favorites for parents of students who are willing to come from different districts to be able to ensure their children get inclusive education in this private madrasa.

DISCUSSION

The results indicate that efforts are still underway in primary schools and madrasah ibtidaiyah to develop inclusive education that aligns with the demands of contemporary society in the era of Society 5.0. The results highlight some fundamental challenges in implementing inclusive education. Challenges (Ian et al., 2021; Movkebayeva et al., 2016; Scanlon et al., 2022) inclusive education faced by basic education institutions in this era in the form of challenges such as policy development, fluctuations in budget support, limited accompanying teachers, school readiness, teacher readiness, and appropriate support for students with special needs that should

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be solved with innovative solutions. Furthermore, there is a need for better knowledge of inclusive education, as demonstrated by the experiences of some state ibtidaiyah madrasahs in this study that were unable to adopt inclusive education.

An approach that includes active involvement from communities, governments, and educational institutions is needed to find solutions to overcome the challenges. Learning from the findings of implementing inclusive education in private madrasahs in West Nusa Tenggara Province, collaboration between all parties can create an inclusive and sustainable education environment. Considering that everyone agrees that the effective execution of inclusive education relies on the collaboration and dedication of those directly engaged.(Kurniawati et al., 2014) In order to address the needs of society in the context of Society 5.0, governments, communities, and schools must actively cooperate. Progressive government support and a spirit of resilience from teachers prove that inclusive education can thrive despite limitations.

In addition to challenges, this research also shows that inclusive education continues to thrive amid these challenges. What private elementary schools in West Java, public madrasahs in Aceh, and private madrasahs in West Nusa Tenggara are doing shows how little opportunities can be utilized to implement inclusive education. Understanding opportunities, particularly in light of Society 5.0, encourages active collaboration to optimize the potential of all community members.(Mansur et al., 2023) By thoroughly examining the opportunities and challenges of inclusive education in this new era, we can formulate an educational system that not only addresses the needs of each individual student but also cultivates a generation ready to navigate the complexities of an increasingly interconnected and collaborative society.

According to this study, implementing inclusive education teaches that commitment is one factor that affects the realisation of inclusive education. not just the madrasah's or the principal's commitment, but also that of all associated parties. While madrasahs and school principals seem to be the main supporting elements in the execution of inclusive education in succession, it's not just the principals' upbeat outlook that matters. However, it should not be forgotten in professionalism in areas related to inclusive education.(Porakari et al., 2015) Inclusive education also requires related institutional capacity and readiness as an issue involving multiple parties. Furthermore, implementing inclusive education calls for steady financial assistance and cannot be completed quickly. The readiness of educational institutions is what determines whether inclusive education is implemented, not the standing of the institutions or the level of multi-stakeholder participation. Ready educational institutions find it easier to implement inclusive education despite various limitations. The readiness of madrasah schools to implement inclusive education must pay attention to the abilities of each madrasah. Private madrasahs in West Nusa Tenggara are cultivating empathy in line with earlier research showing a positive correlation between empathy and social acceptance—that is, the more empathy, the more acceptance.(Sandra & Zuhroh, 2021). Developing more empathy for students and the local community can help to acknowledge the presence of children with special needs.

Providing inclusive education services must at least consider the readiness of educational institutions. We know that all children can be serviced by drawing on the experiences of special needs students who were turned away and resigned from state ibtidaiyah madrasahs in West Nusa Tenggara and Central Java. However, not all educational institutions can provide services. Presumably, madrasahs and elementary schools must evaluate their ability and readiness to provide inclusive education services. Each institution can define limits on the definition and categories of inclusive students they can serve as they are prepared. The boundaries set will give rise to inclusive service innovations that may differ between schools and madrasahs, as Ainscow in Knigge (2020) formulates that inclusive education sometimes refers to different goals for various contexts. An examination of a particular environment must serve as the foundation for implementing inclusion. (Ainscow, 2020) Additionally, partnerships can be developed for student transfer as well as group learning. The recommendations given do not reject students but provide alternative educational institutions. Madrasah can do with various limitations that it has. The actions taken in the Society 5.0 era will impart creative problem-solving skills and foster teamwork.

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CONCLUSION

This study offers crucial insights into the potential and difficulties associated with executing inclusive education in the context of Society 5.0. This method connects the dynamics and complexity of a more interconnected and cooperative society with the execution of inclusive education. The findings of this study encourage us to continue to strive to overcome obstacles and maximize the potential to ensure that inclusive education can meet the demands of Society 5.0 and provide benefits to all students without exception. Understanding opportunities in the context of Society 5.0 is key to fostering active collaboration and optimizing the potential of all community members. Active involvement from communities, governments, and educational institutions is needed to address inclusive education's challenges. The focus on cross-sector collaboration is an innovative solution that can make a new contribution to understanding how to deal with implementation constraints. It is crucial to stress that these results can help managers of inclusive education become more prepared to introduce inclusive education in the context of society 5.0. However, it's important to emphasize that the readiness of institutions—rather than solely relying on the personal qualities of principals or teachers—is a vital element in actualizing inclusive education. Educational institutions must honestly evaluate their capabilities and limitations in providing inclusive education services. This method can shed light on how organisations might raise the calibre of inclusion services while taking resource constraints into account. With the creative application of inclusive education, the idea of Society 5.0 stresses cooperation. The creative solutions brought forth in this study help to think about how society may adapt to the changing times by coming up with better answers. However, research findings may not be directly applicable because these studies may have limited coverage in a particular region or educational institution. Therefore, generalizing the findings needs to be done with caution.
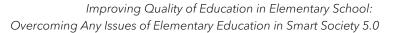
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