

A Narrative Study of Teachers' Challenges in Teaching Indonesian Language in Remote Areas: Challenges, Institutional Support, Teaching Strategies

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the challenges teachers face in teaching Indonesian in remote areas, as well as identify the forms of institutional support and learning strategies implemented. Using a qualitative method with a narrative study approach, data were collected through observation and in-depth interviews with teachers and principals in public and private junior secondary schools in remote areas. Data analysis refers to the Miles and Huberman interactive model. The results showed that teachers face challenges in the form of limited infrastructure, books, learning support tools, minimal institutional support for professional development, and low student interest in learning. Support from the government and educational institutions is still limited. In dealing with these conditions, teachers tend to use lecture, question-and-answer, and discussion strategies that are adjusted to the limitations in the field. This research is expected to be an input for policymakers in improving shared learning in remote areas.

Studi Naratif tentang Tantangan Guru dalam Mengajar Bahasa Indonesia di Daerah Terpencil: Tantangan, Dukungan Kelembagaan, Strategi Pengajaran

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi tantangan yang dihadapi guru dalam mengajar Bahasa Indonesia di daerah terpencil, serta mengidentifikasi bentuk dukungan institusional dan strategi pembelajaran yang diterapkan. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi naratif, data dikumpulkan melalui observasi dan wawancara mendalam dengan guru dan kepala sekolah di SMP negeri dan swasta di wilayah terpencil. Analisis data mengacu pada model interaktif Miles dan Huberman. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru menghadapi tantangan berupa keterbatasan sarana prasarana, buku, alat penunjang pembelajaran, minimalnya dukungan institusi untuk pengembangan profesional, serta rendahnya minat belajar siswa. Dukungan dari pemerintah dan lembaga pendidikan dinilai masih terbatas. Dalam menghadapi kondisi tersebut, guru cenderung menggunakan strategi ceramah, tanya jawab, dan diskusi yang disesuaikan dengan keterbatasan di lapangan. Penelitian ini diharapkan dapat menjadi masukan bagi pengambil kebijakan dalam meningkatkan pembelajaran bersama di daerah terpencil.

Keywords:

daerah terpencil;

dukungan institusi;

strategi pengajaran;

tantangan guru

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INTRODUCTION

Education in Indonesia has a crucial role in creating quality human resources who can contribute to the nation's progress and form a smart, critical, and innovative generation. One area that is no less important is the teaching of the Indonesian

language, which serves as the main means of communication throughout Indonesia (Maryance et al., 2021; Reimers, 2020). Teaching Indonesian language learning is part of an effort to improve the way Indonesian is taught and learned so that students can better master Indonesian in the aspects of speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Iryanto, 2021). However, the challenges in teaching Indonesian are increasingly complex, especially in remote areas far from centers of education and technological development.

Rahmi & Syukur (2023) and Rahiem (2020) explained that teaching and learning to children in remote areas face various significant obstacles, including limited infrastructure, inadequate facilities, and unstable internet access limitations that hinder the learning process. Ferri, Grifoni, & Guzzo (2020) describe that teaching and learning in remote areas are faced with low digital literacy among teachers and students. Sholihan (2023) and Ali (2020) highlighted the importance of adequate infrastructure in supporting the learning process in remote areas is the key to successful student learning. Adequate facilities and infrastructure increase the effectiveness of learning. Husnun (2023) and Kurniawati (2022) highlighted that adequate education facilities and infrastructure are key to the progress and success of an education.

Remote areas located far from education centers and technological developments face complex challenges in supporting the learning process. Long geographical distances are often a major barrier to accessing educational resources, such as textbooks, learning aids, and technological infrastructure, including the internet (Lembani et al., 2020). These limitations exacerbate gaps in the distribution of information and the updating of teaching methods, which should be an important aspect of efforts to improve the quality of education. Teachers serving in remote areas also often face difficulties in attending professional training or participating in educational forums, limiting their ability to adapt to changes in curriculum and learning technologies (Li, Shi, & Xue, 2020; Trust & Whalen, 2020). Strategic steps are needed from the government and various related parties to provide adequate educational facilities and technology in remote areas (Stenman & Pettersson, 2020).

Research by Hariyanto et al. (2023) and Han et al. (2023) explains that the learning process in remote areas, teachers face several challenges such as uneven internet access, lack of teaching materials, and low digital literacy. Solihin et al. (2020) and Muremela et al. (2023) revealed that the lack of teaching materials in rural schools hampers the quality of education, challenges including teacher competence, curriculum deployment, and pedagogical support that impact around 50% of teachers in remote areas. In addition, Sarjito (2023) and Cunha et al. (2020) explained that the application of technology in remote areas faces various obstacles, including uneven internet access and low digital literacy among teachers and students. Fanindela (2022) highlights that infrastructure limitations, lack of education facilities, and unstable internet access are obstacles to the teaching and learning process. Suyuti et al. (2023) explained that educational institutions need to provide support and ensure that teachers can cope with the learning process effectively.

Efendi & Sholeh (2023) and Pedro & Kumar (2019) describe that institutional support in the learning process plays an important role in helping teachers to create an effective and efficient learning process. Hastangka & Hidayah (2023) and Anbalagan (2019) explained that educational institutions can support learning and teaching by providing resources, services, and collaboration

opportunities in a flexible learning ecosystem. Arsana (2020) and Cudney et al. (2020) explained that providing resources, such as teaching materials, learning aids, and access to technology, is an essential step to ensure that teachers and students have adequate facilities to achieve educational goals. In addition, services that include training for teachers, academic guidance for students, and administrative support play an important role in improving the overall quality of the education process.

Collaborative opportunities involving teachers, students, and external parties such as educational communities or organizations can enrich the learning process while creating an inclusive and interactive learning environment. Fanani (2023) and Hima, Saputro & Farah (2021) highlighted that by providing adequate education facilities, teachers can create an effective learning process that supports the development of students' potential, improves the quality of education in secondary schools, and actively involves learners in the learning process. Several studies have highlighted the challenges of learning processes, institutional support, and learning strategies in remote areas. Among them, Misbahuddin, Wahyudin, & Muhajir (2023) highlighted the challenges of teaching in remote areas, such as low parental awareness, limited resources, and local conflicts that require institutional support and appropriate strategies.

Sparrow, Dartanto, & Hartwig (2020) highlighted how education in remote areas faces policy, human resources, and funding challenges, as well as institutional support in supporting teachers in remote areas. Highlighted how challenges such as technological adaptation, social inequalities, and lack of access to the internet and devices in disadvantaged communities, which create significant barriers for educators in remote areas, impact educational inclusion and student engagement. Safitri, Yuniarti, & Rostika (2022) found that education in remote areas in Indonesia faces various challenges, including limited access to resources and inadequate infrastructure, but with the application of technology and innovative strategies, the quality of education can be significantly improved.

Based on the results of previous research, there have not been many studies that deeply analyze the challenges faced by teachers in implementing learning in remote areas, especially in Indonesian language subjects. The uniqueness of this study lies in its specific focus on teachers' experiences in teaching Indonesian in remote areas using a narrative study approach. This allows researchers to explore in depth the personal and professional experiences of teachers in dealing with various learning dynamics in the field.

In the Indonesian context, remote areas generally refer to areas that are geographically difficult to reach, have limited access to basic infrastructure such as transportation, electricity, and information technology, and show relatively low educational indicators compared to urban or developed areas. These conditions often pose major challenges to effective and equitable learning. Therefore, through this study, the researcher aims to explore and understand the challenges faced by teachers in teaching Indonesian in remote areas, identify the extent to which institutional support plays a role in helping teachers overcome these obstacles, and analyze the strategies used by teachers in supporting the teaching and learning process. This research is expected to contribute to the development of more inclusive and contextualized education policies and practices, particularly in supporting the implementation of Indonesian language learning in areas with limited access.

METHOD

This study uses a qualitative research method with a narrative study to explore the challenges of teachers' experiences in teaching Indonesian language learning in remote areas, institutional support, and strategies applied to the teaching process. Data were collected through observation techniques, observation activities were carried out in the classroom to directly observe how the dynamics of learning in the classroom work and to find out the facilities and infrastructure that support the learning process. Observation activities were carried out for two consecutive weeks in each school, with a frequency of three times per week, and the duration of each observation session lasted between 60 to 90 minutes.

As well as in-depth interviews, interviews in this study used mixed interviews (structured interviews and non-structured interviews). Each interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes and was conducted individually with the Indonesian language teacher and the principal. The interviews included several key questions designed around the research focus, including: “What are the main obstacles you face in teaching Indonesian in this school?”, “How do you receive support from the school or related agencies in supporting the learning process?”, and “How do you assess students' learning motivation in Indonesian lessons?”. These questions were designed to explore aspects such as limited facilities, institutional support, students' learning motivation, and learning strategies designed to support the continuity of the learning process in these schools by involving Indonesian language teachers and principals at SMP Satu atap 4 Gunung Sari and SMP Nurul Muhdin NW Gunungsari, West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara (NTB).

Demographically, the teachers have an undergraduate education qualification (S1) in Indonesian Language Education and are still honorary staff for approximately two and a half years. Each teacher teaches a class with a relatively small number of students, ranging from 5 to 15 students in each of the VII, VIII, and IX grade levels. This limited number of students reflects the reality of education in remote areas, which is characterized by low population density and fluctuating school enrollment rates.

The selection of SMP Satu Atap 4 Gunung Sari and SMP Nurul Muhdin NW Gunungsari as research locations is based on the consideration that both schools represent the general condition of remote areas in West Nusa Tenggara. Its location in an area with difficult geographical access, as well as the inadequate condition of the road infrastructure, shows the challenges that are typical in underdeveloped areas. In addition, the absence of internet access is an additional obstacle to optimizing technology-based learning. The limited facilities and infrastructure make these two schools relevant as study sites to further explore the challenges faced by teachers in the Indonesian language learning process, as well as to understand the role of institutional support and pedagogical strategies developed amid these limitations. The specification of testing indicators is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Indicator

No	Variable	Indicator	Source
1.	Teacher Challenges	1. Limited educational resources 2. Student learning motivation 3. School Environmental Conditions	(Umar & Widodo, 2022) (Lubis, 2022; Nurcahya & Hadijah, 2020)
2.	Institutional Support	1. Training and professional development 2. Education resources	(Sulastri, Fitria, & Martha, 2020) (Rohmah & Chotimah, 2024)
3.	Teaching strategy	1. Teaching method 2. Student adaptation to the subject matter 3. Student engagement	(Zain & Putra, 2020) (Ramadhan, 2023) (Purba, Nababan, & Aji, 2021)

With the data collection method as above, it can be used to obtain data so that it can be compiled descriptively to describe and present the data that has been obtained. The next stage is analyzed, data analysis follows the interactive analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman, which includes data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing as illustrated in Figure 1.

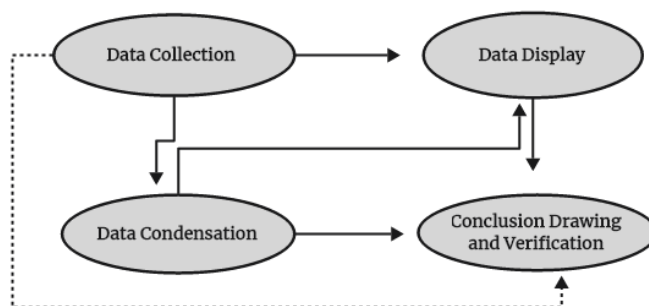


Figure 1. Components of Miles and Huberman Data Analysis

Data analysis in this study refers to the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman, which includes four main components, namely data collection, data condensation, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification (Fanindela, 2022). The first stage is data collection, which is conducted through in-depth interviews and direct observation in the field. The data obtained was then entered into the data condensation process, which is the stage where the data that has been collected is selected, simplified, and focused on information that is relevant to the research focus, in this case relating to teacher challenges, institutional support, and learning strategies in remote areas. After that, the condensed data was organized into data presentation, which is done by arranging information in the form of thematic narratives, direct quotes, or tables that make it easier for researchers to see patterns, relationships, and trends in the data that emerge. This stage is important to help researchers understand the overall dynamics that occur in the field (Iryanto, 2021).

The final stage is conclusion drawing and verification, where researchers begin to formulate interpretations of the data that has been displayed, then verify to ensure that the conclusions drawn are valid and can be accounted for. This process

takes place interactively and not linearly, because researchers can return to the previous stage if discrepancies are found or a need to deepen data analysis (Purba, Nababan, & Aji, 2021). To ensure the validity of the findings, this research also triangulated the data by comparing the results from observations, interviews, and supporting documents. This process is carried out to ensure the consistency of information obtained from various sources, so that the research results have a high level of validity (Rahmi & Syukur, 2023).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The challenges faced by teachers in the world of education must exist, especially in remote areas. This study identifies the challenges faced by Indonesian language teachers in remote areas, including institutional support and learning strategies designed to support the learning process. Based on the results of observations and in-depth interviews, the challenges faced by Indonesian language teachers in remote areas include:

Teacher Challenges

Based on the results of interviews in the field with G1 of SMP N and G2 of SMP Swasta, G1 said that the main challenges he faced were limited educational resources, facilities and infrastructure such as the availability of books, lack of teaching aids, and limited internet access as well as facilities such as chairs and tables that were lacking. A similar view was expressed by the second teacher G2 who stated that the same challenges faced at school but there are slight differences in challenges in the form of lack of classrooms and the implementation of an independent curriculum is one of the challenges for G2 so that with some of these Including the challenges of G1 and G2 in both schools is the motivation of students to learn, the results of interviews with G1 said that the level of student motivation at school is around 50% even though there are some students who feel lazy in following the learning process due to lack of access to teaching aids in supporting the learning process. Likewise, the results of the interview with G2 revealed that the level of student motivation reached 40% in participating in the learning process due to a lack of facilities and rooms in supporting the learning process, and some students were more interested in extracurricular activities or some things that were not related to academic learning. Including the condition of the school environment affects student learning motivation, which is fairly narrow.

The physical condition of the school (facilities, school cleanliness, or classroom cleanliness) is one of the factors that affect students' learning motivation. Based on the results of the interview with G1 said that the lack of cleanliness of the classroom, incomplete facilities and infrastructure, and noise around the classroom affect students' learning motivation. Likewise, the results of the interview with G2 said the same thing, including the lack of classrooms. Limited classroom space often makes students learn in unsupportive conditions, so that the learning atmosphere becomes uncomfortable and reduces student motivation to actively participate in the learning process (Arsana, 2020).

Institutional Support

Institutional support regarding training and professional development for teachers in the two schools shows significant differences. Based on the results of interviews with KS 1 at SMPN and KS 2 at Private SMP, KS1 said that the institution has provided training to develop teacher potencies in the form of learning

communities, even though there are still limitations that this learning community is held every week to improve and develop teacher professionalism. In contrast, the results of the interview with KS2 said that the institution has not been able to provide professional development training for teachers due to the condition of schools in remote areas and lack of facilities, but the institution provides opportunities for teachers to attend training outside the institution and the institution facilitates teachers who take part in outside training activities in the form of training information, as well as other needs.

The results of the interview with G1 said that the institution has tried to provide training and professional development for teachers, including providing educational resources. The institution has made every effort to provide educational resources despite limited funds. In contrast to G1, the results of the interview with G2 revealed that the institution has not been able to provide training and professional development for teachers due to limited funds and unsupportive facilities, but the institution provides opportunities for teachers to attend training outside the institution. Likewise, in providing educational resources, the institution has tried to provide facilities and infrastructure, but limited funds (Dzinamarira, Dzobo, & Chitungo, 2020).

Teaching Strategy

Based on the results of interviews with G1 said that the strategies applied were lecture, discussion, and question-and-answer methods. These teaching methods were applied according to student needs and adjusted to the state of school facilities, these teaching methods were the same in grades seven, eight, and nine. Likewise, the results of the interview with G2 said that the teaching strategies applied in grades seven, eight, and nine were the same as applying the lecture and interview methods; these methods were applied according to the school's shortcomings. The limited facilities and infrastructure have an impact on the application of these learning methods.

In both schools, student adaptation to learning materials shows significant differences. According to the results of interviews with G1 said that, student adaptation to learning materials is not too difficult, because the material taught is tailored to the needs of students, but some students have difficulty in adapting to learning materials because there are still some students with lower abilities. Likewise, the results of the interview with G2 revealed that with a smaller number of students, students tend to be easier to adapt to learning materials.

Based on the results of interviews, student involvement in the learning process has not reached an optimal level. The first teacher (G1) revealed that students' low participation was influenced by the limited supporting facilities in the learning process. This limitation is considered to hamper the effectiveness of student interaction, which has an impact on reducing their interest and involvement during learning activities. A similar view was expressed by the second teacher (G2), who stated that the level of student involvement was influenced by limited facilities and that learning needs to be further improved to create a more interactive learning environment and support the overall educational process (Wote & Sabarua, 2020).

Based on the results of the study, the main challenge for Indonesian language teachers in both schools in teaching in remote areas, is the limited facilities and infrastructure, uneven internet access and limited facilities, both in terms of equipment to support the learning process and other supporting facilities, these limited facilities and infrastructure often hinder the learning process. This is in line

with (Puspita & Andriani, 2021), which highlights that limited educational infrastructure and facilities significantly challenge teachers in remote areas, impacting their ability to provide quality education. These barriers, along with uneven internet access and insufficient education funding in each school, hinder effective teaching and learning.

Limited educational infrastructure and facilities pose a major challenge for educators in remote areas in carrying out their duties to provide quality education. This situation is further exacerbated by uneven internet access, which limits the opportunities for teachers and students to utilize technology as a modern learning medium (Jili, Ede, & Masuku, 2021). In addition, the lack of education funding allocation in some schools is also an obstacle to supporting an optimal teaching and learning process (Li, Shi, & Xue, 2020). These factors together create a gap in the quality of education, which results in limited opportunities for students to obtain maximum learning while preparing for future challenges.

Risma et al. (2021) highlighted the limited infrastructure and educational facilities in remote areas as a major challenge that affects teachers' ability to deliver quality learning. The absence or lack of supporting facilities such as textbooks, teaching aids, internet access, and physical facilities such as classrooms, tables, and chairs are the main factors that hinder the education process. In addition, weak institutional support in providing professional development training for teachers also has an impact on the low improvement of competence and teaching (Fairman et al., 2023). This situation is further exacerbated by non-ideal school environment conditions, such as unclean classrooms and noise disturbances, which reduce students' motivation to learn and active participation (Merry, 2019). In the face of these challenges, teachers in remote areas are often required to design innovative learning methods and adapt to existing conditions, although the results are not yet fully optimal.

The role and support of the institution are very important, especially in terms of teacher training and professional development, as shown by the results of the research, in which two schools showed very significant differences. In public schools, the institution provides a study committee room for teachers to attend training and professional development. In contrast to private schools, the institution has not been able to provide space for training teachers due to limited facilities and funds to support the training process. These findings are in line with the research of (Haniko et al., 2023), who revealed that institutional support for teacher training in remote areas in Indonesia is limited, underserved, mainly due to funding constraints and inadequate facilities.

In addition, the learning strategies applied by teachers in remote areas are strongly influenced by limited facilities and support from institutions. Based on the research results from the two schools that became the object of research, the two teachers tended to use the lecture, question and answer, and discussion methods as the main strategies in teaching. These findings are in line with the findings of (Takdir, 2021) who revealed that these methods, such as lecture, discussion, and question and answer methods are commonly used by teachers in remote areas with limited facilities, these methods do not require additional equipment and can still be implemented even without sophisticated technological support.

CONCLUSION

Based on the objectives of the study, which focused on exploring the challenges teachers face in teaching Indonesian in remote areas, as well as identifying the forms of institutional support and learning strategies that are implemented. Indonesian language teachers in remote areas face limited facilities and infrastructure, including access to books, teaching aids, classrooms and the internet, as well as unsupportive physical conditions of schools that reduce student motivation and participation; institutional support also differs, with public schools providing regular learning communities where teachers learn to design interesting learning methods while private schools rely solely on external training. Therefore, it is recommended to improve facilities through collaboration with mobile libraries and teacher training for locally based creative learning media, as well as the allocation of special BOS funds and incentive allowances for honorary teachers. This study is limited to two schools and is susceptible to participant bias, so further research can be conducted longitudinally or explore the role of local communities in supporting the learning process.

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