Preface

The rapid development of technology and changing educational needs have created new challenges and opportunities for basic education. In the era of Society 5.0, education must go beyond academic achievement by developing critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, communication, adaptability, and digital literacy. Learning innovation and research are therefore essential to support educational practices that are meaningful, responsive, and future-ready.

It is an honour to present this Special Issue, entitled "Learning Innovation and Research in Basic Education", with the theme "Innovations and Solutions to Shape the Future of Basic Education in the Era of Society 5.0". This collection brings together research on innovative learning approaches, assessment, digital technology, educational policy, and pedagogical practices that contribute to the development of basic education.

The studies presented highlight several important aspects of educational innovation. Research on STEM-PjBL and STEAM-integrated Project-Based Learning demonstrates the potential of interdisciplinary and project-based approaches to strengthen students' critical thinking, learning outcomes, communication, and collaboration. Studies on numeracy examine both the development of a REACT-based digital numeracy literacy instrument and the Adversity Quotient of future elementary school teachers, highlighting the importance of contextual assessment and resilience in learning.

Other contributions address learner diversity, teacher development, and digital learning. The review of fast-track education considers its academic and socio-psychological implications for gifted learners, while research on the "Platform Merdeka Mengajar" highlights the role of digital resources in empowering primary school educators. The study of children's literature further demonstrates how culturally relevant texts and narrative pedagogy can promote students' behavioural, emotional, and cognitive engagement.

Digital innovation is also explored through the development of a historical virtual tour on the Yellow War in Lasem, demonstrating the potential of immersive learning resources to strengthen students' understanding of historical content. In addition, research on final project guidance provides perspectives on multidisciplinary academic support, highlighting the importance of collaboration and effective guidance in educational settings.

Collectively, these contributions demonstrate that meaningful innovation is not limited to technology. It involves the integration of effective pedagogy, contextual assessment,

digital resources, teacher capacity, cultural relevance, and attention to learners' diverse needs. Such approaches are important in shaping an education system that is both technologically responsive and human-centred in the era of Society 5.0.

I sincerely appreciate all authors for their valuable contributions, the reviewers for their constructive evaluations, and the Editorial Team for their dedication and support. I hope that this Special Issue will encourage further research, collaboration, and innovation towards a more inclusive, meaningful, and future-ready basic education system.

Guest Editor
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