Building Resilient Inclusive Education Post-Pandemic: An Indonesian Case Study

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ABSTRACT: This article aims to describe and analyze the problems faced by inclusive educational institutions in the new normal era in Indonesia. This research uses a mixed-methods approach. Data sources come from school leaders, class teachers, accompanying teachers, and parents of students. Data collection techniques using interviews and questionnaires Data analysis uses interactive analysis for qualitative data and descriptive quantitative analysis for quantitative data. Research is focused on the social, economic, and psychological context of children with special needs (ABK), as well as strategies for school management to continue to provide excellent service in the new normal era. Research has found that the pandemic has had a domino effect on learning in inclusive schools from a social, economic, and psychological perspective. Strategies for overcoming problems are formulated by implementing policies that refer to two main principles, namely the safety and health of students and educators. Learning in inclusive schools has more complex problems; children with special needs need extra assistance in the learning process. The simplification of the curriculum is one of the strategies chosen to facilitate the learning process. Efforts by educational institutions to fulfill the welfare of educators will be successful if they are balanced by the awareness and role of the parents of students. This study recommends that education policymakers, particularly inclusive school managers, develop learning strategies so that learning processes and outcomes are more optimal

KEYWORDS: Inclusive Education, New Normal, Childrem with Special Needs, Pandemic Impact, Educational Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of the COVID-19 virus in early 2020 has changed the paradigm of education in Indonesia, which originally applied face-to-face or face-to-face learning to virtual learning assisted by the use of Learning Management System (LMS) technology (Aristovnik et al., 2020); (Amir et al., 2020); (Azlan et al., 2020); and (Y. M. Tang et al., 2021). Meanwhile (Almusharraf & Khahro, 2020); (Habib et al., 2021) stated that the presence of LMS in the midst of the spread of the virus had made a major contribution to learning, which was hindered by the COVID-19 pandemic. All educational institutions during the pandemic have utilized the use of LMS such as Zoom meetings, Google Meet, Google Classroom, etc. to assist the learning process. However, if you look at the other side, the existence of LMS in the midst of a pandemic certainly has weaknesses, such as the teacher's inability to carry out the learning process, which is inversely proportional to the implementation of offline learning, especially if the device and internet infrastructure are inadequate, which will create obstacles in online learning.

In addition to this, implementing online learning is expected to bring out student independence in learning as an effort to overcome limitations in the online learning process (Mukhtar et al., 2020); (Tu et al., 2021) and (Bączek et al., 2021). However, this cannot be done by students who are born with special talents or with special needs. If we examine more deeply the learning that is carried out through online learning which is carried out during a pandemic can only be carried out by students with normal circumstances, different conditions from students who have limitations or special needs who need the help of a companion teacher in learning (Toquero, 2021); (Husin et al., 2021) and (A. Das & Joseph, 2022). These problems certainly have an impact on the psychology of children with special needs, and carrying out the learning process requires the help of others. Another impact during the pandemic was the limited social interaction between teachers and students, which resulted in delays in the learning process for children with special needs (Ford et al., 2022); and (Ersin & Atay, 2021).

Even though now the pandemic has subsided and the world has entered a new normal era, this is a new chapter for all sectors in the world, including the education sector, which will adapt to the changes that have occurred (Patra et al., 2022); (Li et al., 2022); (Wayan et al., 2022). Changes to a new chapter in the new normal era bring several new policies for the implementation of the learning process that are usually carried out, such as the priority of the safety and health of educators and students, changes in the paradigm of the learning process by implementing online learning and hybrid learning, and the use of appropriate technology to support the learning process.

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Looking at the phenomenology that occurs in educational institutions, especially inclusive educational institutions, the purpose of this research is to describe problems in inclusive educational institutions in the new normal era with a focus on social, economic, and psychological phenomenological studies in inclusive educational institutions. So that the subject of this research is focused on school principals, class teachers, accompanying teachers, and education staff. The final hope of writing the results of this research is that they will hopefully become reference material for other educational institutions that have the same problem

II. THEORETICAL BACKROUND
A. *Learning for Children with Special Needs During a Pandemic*

Before discussing more deeply the meaning of a lesson, first understand the meaning of learning itself. Learning can be said to be the addition of knowledge that was previously unknown in order to become more knowledgeable. There is a different meaning with learning," which is actually a process of channeling information from sources to recipients of information. As technology advances, it can be said that the learning process has changed for the better due to changes in social or technical educational conditions (Careaga-Butter et al., 2020); (Huynh et al., 2020); and (Mhlanga, 2022).

For children with special needs, the condition of the COVID-19 pandemic is a very difficult obstacle for them. Raghul et al., (2021); Rababah et al., (2022) gave a statement through research he conducted that this pandemic provided a severe ordeal for children with special needs in obtaining the right to learn, as well as bringing difficulties in the learning process such as not having adequate skills in online learning, e-learning devices that were not yet compatible, parents' difficulties in controlling and guiding during online learning, and a decrease in feedback between students and educators.

Based on this understanding, special handling and expertise are needed to overcome the learning problems of children with special needs during a pandemic. Saggers et al., (2019); Fegert et al., (2020) dan Galkienė Alvyra, (2021) argued that for the treatment of children with special needs several treatments could be carried out such as building collaboration between schools and parents, unifying an understanding with stakeholders from the government and educational institutions, the need for additional training for online learning systems for class teachers and accompanying teachers

B. *The Importance of Self-Directedness in Online Learning*

Independence in learning is a learning process in which each individual student is able to determine or be responsible for their learning activities independently. Burkšaitienė et al., (2021) provides an explanation that independence in learning refers to the learning process and the internal growth of each student as well as the external influences experienced through the existence of an order to carry out learning activities. Independence in learning focuses on the cognitive and affective aspects of students, which are then oriented towards realizing student motivation so that they are able to manage their learning process independently. There is a need to inculcate motivation and the level of self-confidence of each student, not only covering the ability for self-reflection but also improving the critical attitude so that students can produce good learning achievement.

This pandemic has taught us that independence in learning is a must for students. The pressure given during this pandemic trains skills improvement to explore new things, such as using online media platforms that were not previously used as learning tools. For children with special needs, this is a common challenge because the role of parental assistance is important for the success of the learning activities carried out

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The technique applied in writing this article is Mixing Methods (Creswell, 2009). This technique allows the author to combine two methods, namely qualitative and quantitative, where the independent variables contained in this article include psychological, social, and economic aspects. Data collection techniques in qualitative methods use interview and observation techniques. Meanwhile, quantitative techniques use questionnaires that are given to respondents directly.

The population in this study consisted of a school principal, 15 teachers, 20 accompanying teachers, and 7 education staff. So that the total population is 45 informants, then, without reducing the accuracy of the data, a sampling technique is carried out using purposive sampling, which takes into account various demographic criteria such as position, age, educational qualifications, and gender. So that the selected informants were the head of the institution, seven teachers, ten assistants, and three education staff. The following is Table 1 regarding demographic information from sources.

Table 1: Source Person Demographic Information

Interviewee	Gender	Age
Source Person 1	Male	35-40
Source Person 2	Male	30-35
Source Person 3	Female	25-30
Source Person 4	Male	25-30

Source Person 5	Female	30-35
Source Person 6	Female	20-25
Source Person 7	Female	20-25
Source Person 8	Female	25-30
Source Person 9	Female	20-25
Source Person 10	Female	35-40
Source Person 11	Female	30-35
Source Person 12	Male	30-35
Source Person 13	Male	25-30
Source Person 14	Male	25-30
Source Person 15	Female	30-35
Source Person 16	Female	25-30
Source Person 17	Female	20-25
Source Person 18	Male	20-25
Source Person 19	Male	35-40
Source Person 20	Male	25-30
Source Person 21	Male	25-30

Data from the questionnaire were described and analyzed quantitatively. In-depth interviews were applied in this study to get a more complete and in-depth picture (Mears, 2012) the impacts experienced by resource persons from schools carrying out inclusion programs in the new normal era. The data collected through interviews was translated back by the researcher through reduction activities, which means that the final conclusions drawn from these activities were carried out very carefully. The identity of the source is not explained, but only given coding or numbering so that the source can answer questions without burden. The results of the interview were written back through the transcript to draw a valid conclusion. While the results of the questionnaire that has been distributed are used to provide a clear picture of the quantitative analysis. The following table 2 criteria for the results of the assessment and table 3 focus items in-depth interviews

Table 2: Quantitative Results Percentage Criteria

Percentage	Criteria
75 % – 100 %	High
50 % - 74 %	Moderate
25 – 49 %	Low
0 -24 %	Very low

Table 3: In-depth interviews focus items

Psychological aspect	Social Aspect	Economic Aspect
Worries about the COVID-19 virus.	Self-reflection after teaching with fellow teachers	fulfillment of basic needs
Anxiety about being infected with the virus during a study visit to students' homes	Monitor distance learning activities.	Economic downturn
The level of students' understanding during learning	Coordinate with parents of students regarding the development of student learning.	Uncertain income
Obstacles encountered during the learning process.		Threat of layoffs
Readiness of students in learning		Financial management problems

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IV. RESULTS

Based on the results of the interviews he conducted with the school principal, in Purbalingga District initially there were 5 elementary schools that were recommended to serve children with special needs. The five primary schools consist of one private primary school and four state primary schools. However, at the time of this research (end of 2022), Purba Adhi Suta Elementary School was the only school that accepted and served students with special needs in Purbalingga Regency

During the COVID-19 pandemic for the 2020–2021 school year, learning was carried out through home visits every Monday and Wednesday. The accompanying teacher and homeroom teacher visit each student's home to provide teaching at the student's home (2x meetings every week). The first trial phase for schools providing educational services using the half entry technique begins on May 24, 2021. Class B (ABK), which is separated into low class and high class, enters Tuesday at 8 a.m. until 9 a.m. WIB. Class A (regular) admission is on Monday from 8:00 to 10:00.

According to school records, there were 45 accompanying teachers before the pandemic; there were 30 accompanying teachers during the pandemic. 1 school principal, 15 teachers (including sports teachers and religion teachers), 20 assistant teachers and 7 employees make up the total number of teachers and staff.

a) Social Component
1) Communication between teachers and school principals continues, as seen from the use of supporting tools such as Google Meet or Zoom to continue teaching during a pandemic;
2) Teacher communication with fellow teachers and assistants is still carried out even during a pandemic, with activities such as self-reflection once a month to discuss the challenges faced. The pandemic may have initially been managed online using WhatsApp groups and video conferencing. Even now, if proper hygiene rules are followed, it can be done offline.
3) School communication (Principal and teachers) with parents of students. This communication has actually been established since parents entrusted their children to study at school. During this pandemic, communication is increasingly being improved, because parents play an important role in accompanying their children in studying at home. Increasing school and parent communication through home visits and communication via WhatsApp. The results of the social aspect questionnaire given to 43 respondents are listed below.

Table 4. Social component

Component	Percentage
After completing home visits with other accompanying teachers, did all accompanying teachers do self-reflection?	90,69
Do classroom teachers often use internet technology to monitor the progress of their assistant teachers during a pandemic?	86,51
Does the class teacher frequently check in with parents after making home visits during the pandemic to assess student progress?	88,37
Does the instructor or assistant instructor regularly remind parents to communicate by reviewing material?	86,04
During learning, by visiting children's homes to provide feedback,	91,62
Average	88,65
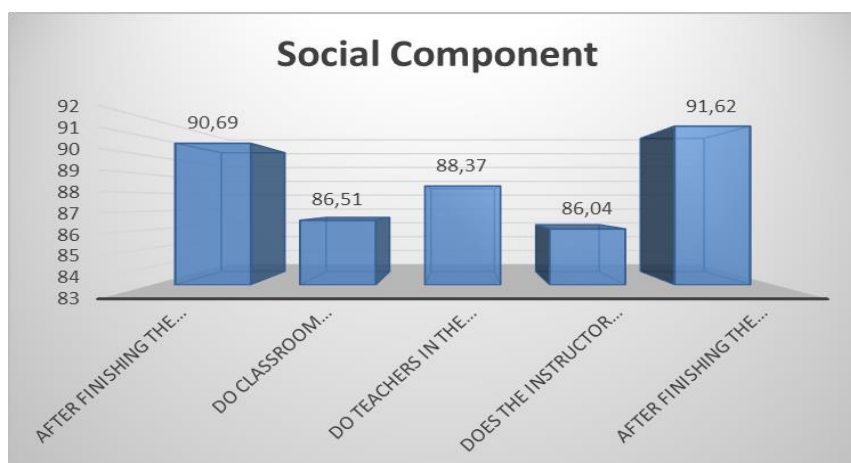
Figure 1. Chart Social Component

b) Financial Factor

Based on the results of the questionnaire analysis, it can be concluded that: 1) The principal's interview revealed that before the pandemic there were 45 accompanying teachers but due to the pandemic, as many as 15 people chose to quit their jobs. It is strongly suspected that this is due to changes in income that are considered insufficient for their needs; 2) the income of teachers and assistants before the outbreak occurred, their income was sufficient to meet their needs. In contrast, when the pandemic started to appear, their income dropped dramatically, even to make ends meet was very lacking. 3) Based on the percentage of needs that must be met during an outbreak, 11.1% said they were often met, 61.1% were met sometimes, and 27.8% were not met.

c) Psychiatric considerations

A person's success in managing his emotional, cognitive, and interpersonal characteristics is influenced by psychological factors psychologist (Matias et al., 2023); (L. Tang et al., 2022). As stated by (König et al., 2023), the psychological elements of the instructor relate to an educator's confidence in problem-solving skills and the responsibilities and duties of a teacher in the classroom. When visiting students' homes during the new normal period, the attitude of the class teacher or companion was examined psychologically in this study using a list of questions ranging from preparedness to evaluation.

Based on the findings of brief interviews with several informants, especially class teachers and accompanying teachers, they provided a psychological description of their experiences carrying out learning in the new normal era, especially the occurrence of anxiety about cases of transmission of the COVID-19 virus, but on the other hand, they had feelings of compassion for children with special needs. If conditions like this continue, then they will experience enormous learning difficulties. This indicates that they have a passion for and calling as educators in the efficacy of education, and because of this factor, they feel a sense of dissatisfaction with virtual learning for children with special needs.

Table 5: Psychiatric considerations

Component	Percentage
What worries you the most about the spread of the COVID-19 virus?	90,7
During visits to student homes, do you experience anxiety?	87
if the learning you do for your kids is done in the best possible way?	85,6
How do your students understand the material you teach when learning at home?	74
How well do your students understand what they are learning in class?	89,3
Have you made the best use of your home visit study time?	89,8
Do you often experience problems when leading learning during home visits?	87,9
How are your students preparing for home visits?	83,7
Would you like to be managed for learning through home visits to be successful?	66,9
Average	85,3

Figure 2. Chart Psychiatric considerations

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V. DISCUSSION

(a) THE CHANGE OF THE OLD EDUCATION PARADIGM TO THE NEW

The application of distance learning, or what is often called online learning," is an educational strategy to stop or control the spread of disease caused by the COVID-19 virus 19 (Zhang et al., 2020); (Farooqi et al., 2021); and (Xu & Liu, 2021). With the availability of internet access and electronic communication tools, online learning can be done anywhere without regard to time or location constraints.

With changes that seem very sudden in online learning conditions, without careful planning, there is no doubt that the learning outcomes obtained are below the expected standard of the learning objectives themselves. The implementation of online learning has been going on for more than 1.5 years since the start of the pandemic. Changing old conditions in affecting the quality of education carried out. The decline in quality occurs partly due to the teacher's limitations in explaining subject matter to students, so that students are expected to be able to find additional information independently to overcome the decline in the quality of learning. The other side of the problems of online learning is the lack of equal distribution of supporting infrastructure, such as the stability of the internet network, between students who live in cities and those in villages, and economic problems. the ability of students' parents to facilitate the internet, we can say that without the internet, we cannot learn online (Vedaei et al., 2020); (T. K. Das, 2021); and (Jordan et al., 2021)

Although there have been various platforms available to facilitate online learning, the use of these platforms may not necessarily be used by students, especially those with special needs whose learning requires the help of other people, namely accompanying teachers. So the right solution for implementing learning amid the threat of COVID-19 for inclusive schools is to apply learning by carrying out home visits to student homes with schedules determined by related educational institutions in this new normal era.

The implementation of learning through scheduled home visits seeks to ensure that children with special needs continue to learn and practice communication skills with other people, such as accompanying teachers and class instructors, as well as train them to be able to develop the desired qualities in students. However, based on several responses from those who responded regarding the effectiveness of the applied learning, when compared to learning that is done offline, it is believed that learning that is carried out with parents through visits has not been felt to be effective (Pei & Wu, 2019); (Wadhwa & Khatak, 2020) and (Wijanto et al., 2021).

(b) AMID A PANDEMIC: GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Children with special needs are those who were born with these needs or who have physical, mental, intellectual, or emotional limitations that distinguish them from other children of their age. Children with special needs are different from other children because of their differences. In Law Number 39 of 1999, Article 54 concerning human rights, children with special needs have outlined the rights that these children must uphold.

> *"Every child who is physically or mentally disabled has the right to receive education, training, and special assistance at the expense of the state to guarantee his existence in accordance with human dignity, self-development, and the ability to participate in the life of society and the state".*

The text explicitly states very clearly that children with special needs have the right to the best possible care, education, and the kind of training and assistance that will enable them to take an active part in the life of society. The right to education for children with special needs can be realized through their participation in inclusion programs. However, the reality on the ground is that learning problems for children with special needs are a big problem for them. Alčiauskaitė & Šinkariova, (2018) provide a statement that not all of them (children with special needs) can obtain rights and opportunities to obtain a proper education.

In addition, the common problems faced by children with special needs regarding limitations and opportunities to acquire rights in learning during a pandemic in people's lives have caused anxiety and panic about being infected with the COVID-19 virus, coupled with online education policies affecting the growth and development of children with special needs. It can be seen that good learning for children with special needs is established through social interaction with fellow students, teachers, and parents (Ahshan, 2021); (Sama et al., 2021); and (Goertz & Hense, 2021). gave a statement that, in the midst of a pandemic, the strategy that can be carried out in teaching children with special needs is by establishing collaboration between teachers and parents. The role that can be played by parents of students with special needs has a very significant effect on children's growth and development in the midst of a pandemic, along with the role that parents can play, namely being a motivator, mentor, innovator, companion, and designer of learning that can be adapted to the needs of children with special needs.

Toquero, (2021) and Herman & Godfrey, (2022) stated that even when the pandemic has limited their (teachers and students') movements, the learning process must still be carried out properly with courage and the role of parents as a bridge to overcome this problem. Parents play an important role in educating children with special needs during a pandemic because they act as a liaison between teachers and children as well as drivers of learning in this new normal era. Without the involvement of parents, teachers, policymakers, or the government, it is the obligation of all parties to ensure the success of learning that is carried out in the midst of a pandemic crisis.

(c) THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC ON ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

Anxiety that occurs during a pandemic is an impact that is definitely felt by everyone, starting from anxiety about carrying the COVID-19 virus, which can harm someone, anxiety about a limited social life, and even anxiety about a decrease in welfare (in this

case, it concerns the income earned through work). The decline in financial well-being during the pandemic is a serious problem for the entire world community.

Termination of employment due to companies or factories being unable to run their businesses has resulted in a large number of unemployed amid the pandemic. This phenomenon has an impact on a person's welfare in meeting his or her life needs (Prime et al., 2020); and (Wong et al., 2020). In addition to the industrial world, which has experienced a financial decline during the pandemic, the educational dimension, especially the welfare of teachers in educational institutions, has also decreased. This can be seen from the many schools that were forced to close due to the pandemic closing child care as well as non-formal education such as special courses (Garbe et al., 2020). School closures caused by the presence of the pandemic forced these institutions to cut expenses such as teacher salaries, which had an impact on decreasing the welfare of the teachers themselves (Hiraoka & Tomoda, 2020).

It is undeniable, like private schools that honor teachers, that these funds come from Education Development Contribution (SPP) funds given by parents to institutions. When the ability of students' parents to pay decreases as a result of the pandemic, the ability of parents to provide tuition fees also decreases. Likewise, additional funds for accompanying teachers from parents have also decreased. This phenomenon has an impact on teachers and other education professionals, who often decide to leave their jobs after realizing the negative impact of the pandemic (du Plessis, 2020); and (Debata et al., 2020)

Everyone from various parties, circles, and groups feels a very strong impact due to a pandemic like this. Epidemics exacerbate everything from social to economic limitations. Especially for individuals whose income is only enough to meet basic needs. Meanwhile, we understand that the economy plays an important role in ensuring human survival (Allen et al., 2020); (Issom & Nadia, n.d.) and (Dabrowski, 2021). Even though the pandemic is over, the condition of the actual income earned by co-instructors with permanent non-employee status certainly still raises concerns about unpredictable economic income. Of course, this made some teacher assistants decide to leave the classroom and find other sources of income to support their families. The instructors who are still in school (student status) also claim that the pandemic has had a significant impact on their salaries and that part of their average demand cannot be met. What's more, if learning still applies to online learning, this forces teachers to buy extra internet quotas so that learning can continue.

VI. CONCLUSION

The nearly two-year-old COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on educational standards. Online learning that is implemented seems to force children to learn on their own; instead of being beneficial, it has a negative impact on students, such as increasing their laziness to learn. In addition, the many assignments offered to students during online learning place a heavy burden on them during the learning process. Inadequate or insufficient internet access in a number of areas is the main obstacle to learning. The pandemic conditions have had a domino effect, especially for people who only have enough income to meet their basic needs. The income earned by instructor assistants with non-permanent status certainly brings concern about uncertain economic income, especially in online learning, which encourages teachers to be more careful in using internet quotas so that learning can take place. The rights of children with special needs in the classroom will not be fully fulfilled during a pandemic. They are also unable to communicate with anyone except their immediate family. As a result, it is more difficult for children with special needs to develop life skills.

Teachers in classrooms are more psychologically challenged to assess students carefully. This is due to the teacher's inability to personally see the progress of students in the classroom. Class teachers can observe student progress directly, in contrast to offline learning. In addition, by limiting involvement or physically separating children, children's growth is disrupted because effective learning is truly achieved through direct interaction with parents, friends, and teachers. Advances in technology allow learning to continue without the risk of contracting the COVID-19 virus. However, for children with special needs, it requires an appropriate strategy and extra assistance so that learning continues as it should.

Learning in the new normal era is a challenge for children with special needs and for inclusive educational institutions, especially in the effective and efficient use of technology and information. This is due to a change in the new paradigm of learning, which has collaborated offline learning with online learning and led to innovative developments in the field of technology and information for education

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