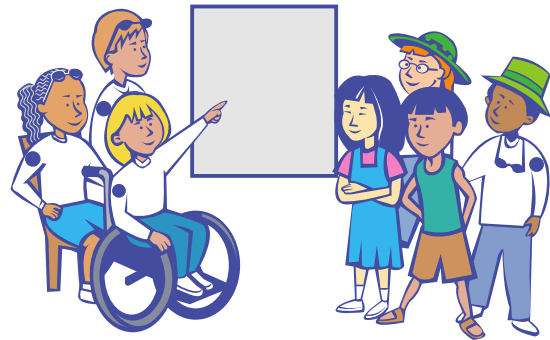


## ABSTRACT

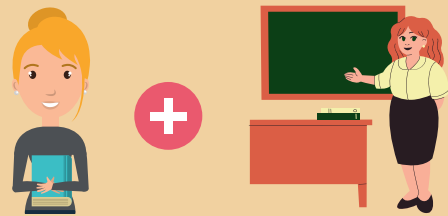
This is a descriptive quantitative study to find out the knowledge, attitude and perception of inclusive education among teachers in Malaysia. The researcher obtained data from 40 preschool teachers and 40 primary school teachers aged 18 years old and above ( $M = 27.78$ ,  $SD = 10.72$ ) by distributing an online questionnaire. Teachers' Attitude Towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS), Teacher Perception of Factors for Successful Inclusive Early Childhood Education (TPSIE), and a self-developed questionnaire were used to gather data for teacher's attitudes, their perception of successful inclusive education, and their knowledge on inclusive education respectively. Results were not significant for all statistical tests, implying that age, working experience, and teaching level had no impact on teachers' attitude and perception towards inclusive education. Analysis on open-ended questions revealed that less than half of the participants were aware about inclusive education. Among the participants who were able to answer those questions, most of them expressed concerns on the behavioural, emotional and social challenges of special needs students while managing an inclusive classroom. The findings generated discussion on how to overcome various issues in inclusive education, such as further training for teachers and communication between school administration and parents for students to better adjust to the school environment. This research implied the need to conduct larger confirmatory studies in a national context and further exploration of more statistical relationships within different variables.



## INTRODUCTION

The term inclusive education is operationally defined as students with disabilities getting access to age-appropriate mainstream classrooms where facilities and services are provided to allow full participation of those students alongside with their peers (Snow, 2013). In Malaysia, Bailey et al. (2014) concluded that participants' displayed little enthusiasm towards inclusion, as they believed that students with disabilities learn better in special education classes. However, Ali et al. (2006) reported that teachers in Malaysia reacted positively towards inclusive education. As past research demonstrated an inconsistency in results, further research was required to find out the viewpoints towards inclusive education in Malaysia.

## METHODS



40 preschool + 40 primary school teachers teaching in Malaysia

- Recruited using convenience sampling and snowball sampling method
- Inclusion criteria: Participants of any learning institute in Malaysia with minimum 3 months experience
- Exclusion criteria: Teachers from special needs schools and secondary schools



- Descriptive design
- Online survey with both close-ended and open-ended questions

### 1. Attitude Towards Inclusive Education

- 20-item; 8-point Likert scale (1 = 'Strongly agree'; 8 = 'Strongly disagree')
- Sample item: "The inclusion of SEN students can be beneficial for non-SEN students." (SEN - Special Education Needs)

### 2. Teacher Perception On Successful Inclusive Education

- 15-item; 5-point Likert scale (1 = "Low"; 5 = "High")
- Sample item: "Government provides suitable schooling arrangements."

### 3. Self-developed scale

- To obtain qualitative data for further clarification
- Sample item: "What are the challenges you face when you have a child/children with special education needs in your classroom?"



## Teachers' Knowledge, Attitude and Perception of Important Factors towards Inclusive Education in Malaysia

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**H1:** There is a significant difference in preschool and primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. **(Rejected)**

*Independent Samples T-Test of Teaching Level on Teacher's Attitude to Inclusion*

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means			
	F	p.	t	df	p. 2-tailed	MI-M2
Equal variances assumed	0.005	0.945	-0.53	78	0.6	-2.3

Note. M = Mean

**H2:** There is a significant relationship between years of teaching experience and attitudes towards inclusive education. **(Rejected)**

*The Correlations of Teachers' Attitude Towards Inclusion Scale, Teacher Perception of Factors for Successful Inclusive Early Childhood Education, Age, and Working Experience*

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4
1. TAIS	79.55	19.45	-			
2. TPSIE	59.81	11.83	-0.2			
3. Age	27.78	10.72	-0.07	-0.15		
4. Working Experience	6.13	8.71	0.07	-.34**	.79**	-

Note. TAIS = Teachers' Attitude Towards Inclusion Scale, TPSIE = Teacher Perception of Factors for Successful Inclusive Early Childhood Education.  
\* $p < .05$ , two-tailed. \*\* $p < .01$ , two-tailed.

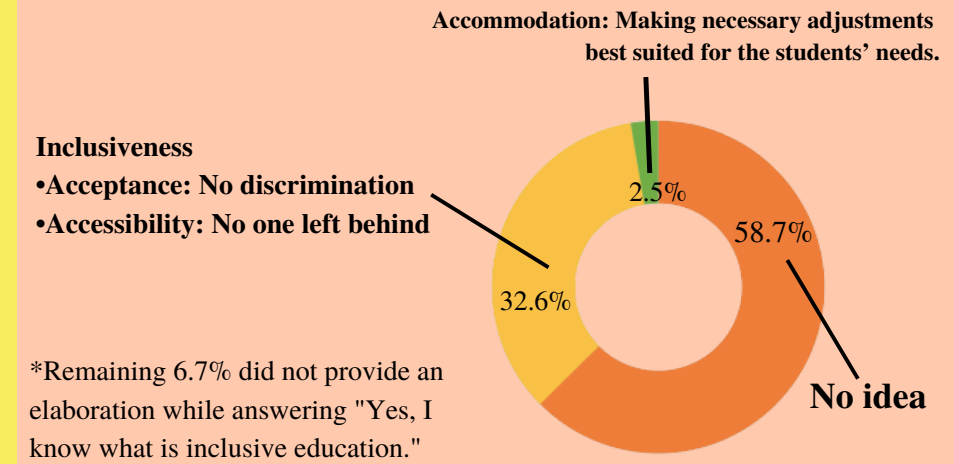
**H3:** There is a significant difference in preschool and primary school teachers' perception on factors for successful inclusive education. **(Rejected)**

*Mann-Whitney U Test in Teaching Level on Teacher's Perception of Successful Inclusive Education*

	U	z	p	r
Independent Samples	752.5	-0.46	0.65	0.05

Note. z = Standardized Test Statistic

### 1- Do you know what is inclusive education?



## CONCLUSION

This study has contributed to the field of inclusive education in our country, and several practical implications have been offered. Future studies should be conducted in a much larger scale to increase the generalisability of the results. With the increase in sample size, more statistical relationships could also be explored, such as gender differences in viewpoints towards inclusive education. By exploring the thoughts of Malaysian teachers towards inclusive education, it is vital that all stakeholders identify and implement pragmatic strategies such as more intensive training for teachers for them to feel competent while dealing with special needs students.

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