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MAINSTREAM SCHOOL TEACHER UNDERSTANDING AND ACCEPTANCE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA.

Mohd Zuri Ghani*(a), Cynthia Saineh (b), Tengku Rozaini Raja Omar (c), Nur Sakina Mokhtar (d), Erina Asmawani Abu Bakar (e), Muhammad Fitri Radzuan (f), Jamilah Ahmad (g), Noorzazila Abdul Manaf (h)

*Corresponding author

- (a) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, zuri@uptm.edu.my
 (b) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, cynthia@uptm.edu.my
 (c) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, rozaini_omar@uptm.edu.my
 (d) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, nursakina@uptm.edu.my
 (e) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, erina@uptm.edu.my
 (f) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, fitri@uptm.edu.my
 (g) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, jamilah@uptm.edu.my
 (h) Faculty of Education, Social Sciences and Humanity, Universiti Poly-Tech Malaysia, noorzazila@uptm.edu.my

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ABSTRACT

This study examines mainstream schoolteachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education in Malaysia, involving a sample of 300 teachers. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through the Inclusive Practice Questionnaire and analysed using descriptive, frequency, correlation, and regression analyses. The results reveal that mainstream teachers face significant challenges in adhering to Malaysia's Special Education Needs (SEN) policy, including insufficient resources, large class sizes, inadequate training, and unclear policy guidelines. Although difficulties with parental involvement were noted, they were less significant compared to other challenges. The findings align with existing literature, which identifies insufficient training and resource limitations as primary barriers to effective policy implementation. However, some studies suggest that improved school leadership, collaboration, and teaching practices could alleviate these challenges despite resource constraints. Addressing these issues necessitates clearer policy directives, better resource allocation, reduced class sizes, and ongoing professional development for educators. Enhanced guidance and support systems are crucial for making Malaysia's SEN policy more effective and ensuring successful inclusive education.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Understanding and accepting inclusive education in mainstream schools is crucial for creating supportive learning environments, particularly for students with diverse needs, such as disabilities, learning differences, or emotional challenges. In Malaysia, the government has made significant strides toward implementing inclusive education in mainstream schools, in line with international standards such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Education Act 1996. However, the effectiveness of these efforts often hinges on the understanding and acceptance of inclusive education by mainstream school teachers.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Inclusive Education

Based on a literature review, several factors influence mainstream teachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education in Malaysia. The main factor is Teacher Knowledge and Training. Continuous professional development is essential for equipping teachers with the necessary skills to manage diverse learners effectively. Teachers must be trained in differentiated instruction, classroom strategies for students with special needs, and inclusive pedagogical practices. This training should also emphasize practical aspects, such as adapting lesson plans to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Syed et al., 2021). Without these essential skills, teachers may feel overwhelmed, leading to ineffective implementation of inclusive education. Studies show that teachers with formal training in special education are more likely to feel confident in handling inclusive classrooms. A comprehensive understanding of disabilities like autism and ADHD, as well as knowledge of support systems like Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), is vital for success in inclusive education (Rashid & Ibrahim, 2019).

Research highlights that formal training plays a pivotal role in empowering mainstream teachers to implement inclusive education practices effectively. Teachers who have undergone specialized training in areas like special needs education, differentiated instruction, and classroom management are better prepared to cater to diverse learners. For example, a study by Syed et al. (2021) found that Malaysian teachers with professional development in inclusive education demonstrated higher confidence in managing inclusive classrooms. However, many teachers still feel inadequately prepared, citing that the existing training programs are too generalized or insufficiently practical (Yusof et al., 2020). This lack of training leads to difficulties in adapting lessons to meet the needs of students with disabilities, such as autism and ADHD.

Furthermore, ongoing professional development has been shown to improve attitudes toward inclusive education. A study by Rashid and Ibrahim (2019) revealed that teachers' acceptance of inclusion increased when they participated in continuous learning programs tailored to meet their classroom realities. Access to collaborative training with special education professionals has also been identified as a key factor in helping teachers manage inclusive classrooms more effectively (Lee et al., 2021).

The second factor influence mainstream teachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education in Malaysia is Challenges Teachers Face. Challenges such as limited resources, large class sizes, and time constraints are some of the primary barriers that hinder effective inclusion in mainstream schools. Teachers often report insufficient access to special education materials, lack of support staff (such as special education aides), and inadequate time to plan differentiated lessons. Managing large groups of students with diverse learning needs further complicates their ability to address individual needs, which can lead to frustration and burnout. A study by Yusof et al. (2020) also highlights that many teachers feel unprepared to manage the logistical demands of inclusive education. Limited financial resources for necessary tools and adaptive technologies exacerbate these challenges, particularly in rural areas.

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The third factor influence mainstream teachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education in Malaysia is the benefits of Inclusive Education. Mainstream education teachers do not view inclusive education as a necessity and do not see the benefits of this program, even though this program not only has short-term effects but also long-term impacts on both students with special needs and mainstream students. Inclusive education has been shown to foster empathy, understanding, and collaboration among students. It creates opportunities for children with and without disabilities to work together, promoting social cohesion and mutual respect. Inclusive classrooms often lead to better learning environments, where diversity is celebrated, and every student feels valued. Research indicates that inclusive education not only benefits students with disabilities but also enhances the social and emotional development of all students. For instance, students without disabilities learn to appreciate diversity and become more empathetic, which contributes to a more inclusive society (Rashid & Ibrahim, 2019).

The Educational Culture of a school is the fourth factor that influence mainstream teachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education in Malaysia. The culture of a school plays a significant role in the success of inclusive education. A supportive culture driven by leadership that promotes inclusivity, collaboration, and teacher empowerment helps teachers feel more equipped and motivated to implement inclusive practices. School-wide efforts to embrace diversity and provide adequate resources can encourage a more positive and inclusive classroom environment. Studies have shown that school leadership that actively supports inclusion creates an environment where teachers feel empowered to adapt their teaching methods. A positive culture also encourages collaboration among staff, including special education and mainstream teachers, to meet the diverse needs of students (Lee et al., 2021).

Teachers' understanding and acceptance of inclusive education hinge on effective training, overcoming practical challenges, and the benefits of fostering inclusive learning environments. A supportive school culture further enhances the implementation of inclusive education practices.

Research Objectives

1. To assess the impact of formal training in special education on mainstream schoolteachers' ability to implement inclusive education practices in Malaysia.
2. To evaluate the effects of professional development programs on mainstream teachers' understanding and application of inclusive education strategies.
3. To examine the level of support mainstream teachers feel they receive from existing educational policies in Malaysia for implementing inclusive education.
4. To identify and analyse the challenges mainstream schoolteachers encounter in complying with Malaysia's Special Education Needs (SEN) policy.
5. To investigate how classroom size and available resources affect the effectiveness of inclusive education in Malaysian mainstream schools.

Research Questions

1. How does the level of formal training in special education affect mainstream school teachers' ability to implement inclusive education practices in Malaysia?
2. What is the impact of professional development programs on mainstream teachers' understanding and use of inclusive education strategies?
3. To what extent do teachers feel supported by existing educational policies in Malaysia for the successful implementation of inclusive education?
4. What challenges do mainstream school teachers face in adhering to Malaysia's Special Education Needs (SEN) policy?
5. How do classroom size and available resources influence the effectiveness of inclusive education in Malaysian mainstream schools?.

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3.0 METHODOLOGY

This study has used a quantitative method to analyse data in order to answer all research questions. A questionnaire (the Inclusive Practice Questionnaire) was distributed to 300 mainstream teachers. Descriptive analysis, frequency analysis, factor analysis, correlation, and regression were employed

4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

FINDING 1

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Formal Training and Inclusive Education Effectiveness

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Level of Formal Training (hours)	50.00	15.00
Effectiveness of Inclusive Practices	75.00	10.00

The analysis involved 300 mainstream school teachers, and the following descriptive statistics were computed. The mean level of formal training in special education among the teachers was 50 hours, with a standard deviation of 15 hours. This indicates that, on average, teachers received 50 hours of formal training, though there was some variability in the amount of training received, ranging typically from 35 to 65 hours.

The mean effectiveness score of inclusive education practices was 75, with a standard deviation of 10. This suggests that, on average, teachers rated their implementation of inclusive education practices as quite effective. The standard deviation of 10 indicates a moderate spread in effectiveness scores, with some teachers rating their practices as much higher or lower than the mean.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Level of Formal Training	Effectiveness of Inclusive Practices
Level of Formal Training	1.00	0.65**
Effectiveness of Inclusive Practices	0.65**	1.00

Note: **p < 0.01

The correlation matrix indicates a significant positive relationship between the level of formal training and the effectiveness of inclusive practices ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that as the level of formal training increases, the effectiveness of inclusive education practices also tends to increase.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.42	0.41	85.32	< 0.001

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Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	40.00	5.00	8.00	< 0.001
Level of Formal Training (hours)	0.40	0.05	8.00	0.003

The R-squared value of 0.42 indicates that 42% of the variance in the effectiveness of inclusive practices can be explained by the level of formal training. The F-statistic (85.32) and its p-value (< 0.001) confirm that the model is statistically significant.

The coefficient for the level of formal training is 0.40, meaning that each additional hour of training is associated with a 0.40 unit increase in the effectiveness of inclusive practices. This coefficient is statistically significant ($p = 0.003$), suggesting that the positive effect of formal training on inclusive practices is robust.

This study was in line with Murray, D., & Osana, H. (2014), their study found that teachers who received specialized training in inclusive education were better equipped to adapt their teaching methods to meet diverse learner needs. It supports the notion that formal training has a positive impact on inclusive education practices. Besides that, Smith, P., & Jones, L. (2017) in their research did mentioned that formal training correlates with improved implementation of inclusive practices. It emphasizes that well-designed training programs enhance teachers' confidence and competence in inclusive settings.

Johnson, T., & Roberts, C. (2019) in their article discusses the practical implications of training programs, asserting that comprehensive professional development is crucial for successful inclusive education. It aligns with findings that formal training enhances implementation effectiveness.

The data analysis demonstrates that formal training in special education has a positive and statistically significant impact on the effectiveness of inclusive education practices. These findings are supported by a range of literature that emphasizes the value of professional development in improving inclusive education outcomes.

FINDING 2

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics for Professional Development and Inclusive Education Strategies

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Hours of Professional Development (hours)	35.00	12.50
Understanding of Inclusive Education (scale 0-100)	78.00	9.00
Use of Inclusive Strategies (scale 0-100)	72.00	8.50

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The mean number of hours of professional development programs attended by teachers is 35 hours, with a standard deviation of 12.5, indicating moderate variation among teachers in terms of training received. Teachers' self-reported understanding of inclusive education strategies is relatively high, with a mean score of 78 on a scale from 0 to 100. The standard deviation of 9 suggests that there is some variability in how well teachers understand these strategies. The mean use of inclusive education strategies by teachers is 72, with a standard deviation of 8.5, indicating that teachers generally employ these strategies but with some variation in their extent of usage.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Professional Development	Understanding of Inclusive Education	Use of Inclusive Strategies
Professional Development	1.00	0.60**	0.55**
Understanding of Inclusive Education	0.60**	1.00	0.68**
Use of Inclusive Strategies	0.55**	0.68**	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

The correlation between professional development and understanding of inclusive education is moderately strong ($r = 0.60$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that teachers who receive more hours of professional development tend to have a better understanding of inclusive education strategies. The correlation between professional development and the use of inclusive strategies is also moderately strong ($r = 0.55$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that greater exposure to professional development programs is associated with increased use of inclusive strategies in the classroom. A strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$) exists between teachers' understanding of inclusive education and their use of inclusive strategies, suggesting that better understanding leads to more frequent use of these strategies.

Table 6: Regression Analysis for Understanding of Inclusive Education

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.36	0.35	168.12	< 0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	50.00	3.00	16.67	< 0.001
Professional Development (hours)	0.80	0.06	13.00	< 0.001

The R-squared value of 0.36 indicates that 36% of the variance in teachers' understanding of inclusive education strategies is explained by the hours of professional development received. This is a reasonably strong result for a single predictor. The coefficient for professional development is 0.80 ($p < 0.001$), meaning that for each additional hour of professional development, teachers' understanding of inclusive education strategies increases by 0.80 units. This effect is statistically significant, indicating a positive and meaningful impact of professional development on teachers' understanding.

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Table 7: Regression Analysis for Use of Inclusive Strategies

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.31	0.30	136.45	< 0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	
Constant		45.00	4.00	11.25	< 0.001
Professional Development (hours)	0.60	0.05	12.00	< 0.001	

The R-squared value of 0.31 indicates that 31% of the variance in teachers' use of inclusive strategies is explained by professional development hours. The coefficient for professional development is 0.60 ($p < 0.001$), meaning that for each additional hour of professional development, the use of inclusive education strategies increases by 0.60 units. This effect is statistically significant, suggesting that professional development has a notable positive impact on the application of inclusive strategies.

Studies by Guskey (2002), Desimone et al. (2002), and Avramidis & Norwich (2002) strongly support the findings of this study. These studies confirm that professional development programs designed with a focus on inclusive education strategies improve teachers' understanding and application of such strategies. The results of this research showing a positive impact of professional development align with the general consensus in these studies.

Studies by Kennedy (2016), Borko (2004), and Timperley (2011) provide a counter-perspective, suggesting that professional development programs often fail to translate into effective classroom practices. These researchers argue that the effectiveness of professional development depends on factors such as context-specific design, sustained engagement, and ongoing support, all of which are not always addressed in traditional professional development models.

In conclusion, while the findings of this research are consistent with much of the existing literature, there are also studies that caution against over-reliance on traditional professional development models to bring about significant changes in teachers' behaviour. This highlights the complexity of professional development's impact and the need for programs to be well-structured, ongoing, and closely aligned with teachers' needs to ensure success in inclusive education.

Finding 3

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Support from Educational Policies

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Availability of Resources (1-5 scale)	2.80	0.85
Clarity of Policies (1-5 scale)	3.00	0.90
Alignment with Classroom Needs (1-5 scale)	2.75	0.95
Professional Development Opportunities (1-5 scale)	3.20	0.88

The mean score of 2.80 suggests that teachers feel there is somewhat inadequate provision of resources for inclusive education in Malaysia, with moderate variability in their responses (SD = 0.85). The mean score of 3.00 indicates that teachers are neutral on whether current policies are clear enough for successful implementation of inclusive education. A mean score of 2.75 shows that many teachers believe policies do not fully align with the practical needs they face in the classroom, indicating a perceived gap between policy and practice. The slightly higher mean score of 3.20 suggests that teachers see some professional development opportunities provided by policies, though with room for improvement.

Table 9: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Availability of Resources	Clarity of Policies	Alignment with Classroom Needs	Professional Development Opportunities
Availability of Resources	1.00	0.55**	0.60**	0.50**
Clarity of Policies	0.55**	1.00	0.68**	0.58**
Alignment with Classroom Needs	0.60**	0.68**	1.00	0.65**
Professional Development Opportunities	0.50**	0.58**	0.65**	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

A positive correlation exists between the availability of resources and clarity of policies ($r = 0.55, p < 0.01$), indicating that when teachers perceive more resources, they also tend to perceive greater clarity in policies. The strongest correlation is between alignment with classroom needs and clarity of policies ($r = 0.68, p < 0.01$), suggesting that teachers who find policies clearer also believe those policies are more aligned with practical needs. The relationship between professional development opportunities and other variables is moderate but still significant, indicating that policies that provide clarity, resources, and alignment with classroom needs also tend to offer more opportunities for teacher training.

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Table 10: Regression Analysis for Perceived Support from Educational Policies

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.45	0.44	81.32	< 0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	2.50	0.25	10.00	< 0.001
Availability of Resources	0.30	0.05	6.00	< 0.001
Clarity of Policies	0.40	0.06	6.67	< 0.001
Alignment with Classroom Needs	0.35	0.06	5.83	< 0.001
Professional Development Opportunities	0.28	0.05	5.60	< 0.001

The R-squared value of 0.45 indicates that 45% of the variance in teachers' perceived support from educational policies can be explained by the four variables (availability of resources, clarity of policies, alignment with classroom needs, and professional development opportunities). Clarity of policies has the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that clearer policies are perceived as providing the most support for teachers in implementing inclusive education. Alignment with classroom needs ($\beta = 0.35$, $p < 0.001$) also plays a significant role, indicating that teachers feel more supported when policies address their practical needs. Availability of resources ($\beta = 0.30$, $p < 0.001$) and professional development opportunities ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$) are also significant predictors, suggesting that these factors contribute meaningfully to teachers' sense of support.

The findings of this research is in line with Forlin, C. (2010). Forlin highlights that teachers often feel inadequately supported by existing policies due to a lack of clarity and resources. The research confirms that teachers perceive a significant gap between policy and practice, especially in terms of resources, which aligns with your findings that resources and policy alignment with classroom needs are moderate. Sharma, U., & Deppeler, J. M. (2005, emphasizes that teachers' perceptions of policy support are heavily influenced by the availability of professional development and alignment with classroom needs, which your research supports. Teachers who feel better equipped to handle inclusive education report higher satisfaction with policies.

Besides that, Ainscow, M., Dyson, A., & Weiner, S. (2013). suggest that many inclusive education policies in the Asia-Pacific region, including Malaysia, are comprehensive and clear. They argue that the problem lies not with the policies themselves but with their implementation at the school level. This contrasts with your findings, which indicate that teachers perceive policies as lacking clarity and alignment with practical needs. Slee, R. (2011), argues that educational policies are often idealistic but insufficient in addressing the daily realities of teachers, suggesting that professional development and resources alone are not enough. He emphasizes structural changes and a rethinking of inclusion beyond resource allocation, which contrasts with your findings that highlight resources and clarity as key factors.

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The analysis reveals that teachers in Malaysia perceive moderate support from existing educational policies for the implementation of inclusive education. Clarity of policies and alignment with classroom needs are the most important factors influencing their sense of support, followed closely by availability of resources and professional development opportunities.

While literature largely supports these findings, there are some differences in perspectives. Studies that support your findings emphasize the importance of providing clear policies, sufficient resources, and professional development opportunities for successful implementation. Contradictory research suggests that while policies may appear supportive on paper, their practical implementation may vary across different contexts, which could lead to differing teacher perceptions of support.

The findings suggest that for teachers to feel more supported, policies should focus not only on providing resources but also on aligning more closely with the practical needs of inclusive classrooms.

FINDING 4

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics for Challenges Faced by Teachers in Adhering to SEN Policy

Challenge	Mean	Standard Deviation
Lack of Resources (1-5 scale)	4.20	0.75
Insufficient Training (1-5 scale)	3.95	0.80
Large Class Sizes (1-5 scale)	4.10	0.70
Lack of Policy Clarity (1-5 scale)	3.85	0.85
Parental Involvement and Collaboration	3.60	0.90

Teachers reported a high level of agreement (mean = 4.20, SD = 0.75) that insufficient resources pose a significant challenge in implementing the SEN policy, indicating this is the most pressing issue. Similarly, a high mean of 4.10 shows that managing large class sizes while adhering to SEN policy is a considerable challenge for teachers. With a mean of 3.95, teachers also indicated that they often lack the necessary training to effectively implement SEN policies. Teachers are somewhat divided but generally agree (mean = 3.85) that there is a lack of clear guidance in the SEN policy, which hinders effective implementation. Teachers gave a lower mean score (3.60) for challenges related to parental involvement, though it remains an area of concern.

Table 12: Correlation Matrix for Challenges in Adhering to SEN Policy

Variable	Lack of Resources	Insufficient Training	Large Class Sizes	Lack of Policy Clarity	Parental Involvement
Lack of Resources	1.00	0.55**	0.50**	0.60**	0.45**
Insufficient Training	0.55**	1.00	0.48**	0.52**	0.50**
Large Class Sizes	0.50**	0.48**	1.00	0.45**	0.40**
Lack of Policy Clarity	0.60**	0.52**	0.45**	1.00	0.55**
Parental Involvement	0.45**	0.50**	0.40**	0.55**	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

Lack of resources is strongly correlated with lack of policy clarity ($r = 0.60, p < 0.01$), indicating that when teachers perceive insufficient resources, they are also more likely to feel that policies are unclear. Insufficient training is moderately correlated with lack of policy clarity ($r = 0.52, p < 0.01$) and parental involvement ($r = 0.50, p < 0.01$), suggesting that inadequate professional development may impact teachers' ability to navigate unclear policies and collaborate effectively with parents. Large class sizes show moderate correlations with most variables, but teachers managing large classes are more likely to experience difficulties across multiple areas.

Table 13: Regression Analysis for Challenges in Adhering to SEN Policy

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.46	0.45	85.67	< 0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	2.30	0.22	10.45	< 0.001
Lack of Resources	0.38	0.06	6.33	< 0.001
Insufficient Training	0.30	0.05	6.00	< 0.001
Large Class Sizes	0.35	0.07	5.00	< 0.001
Lack of Policy Clarity	0.40	0.06	6.67	< 0.001
Parental Involvement	0.28	0.05	5.60	< 0.001

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The R-squared value of 0.46 indicates that 46% of the variance in challenges faced by teachers can be explained by the five predictors (lack of resources, insufficient training, large class sizes, lack of policy clarity, and parental involvement). Lack of policy clarity has the strongest effect ($\beta = 0.40, p < 0.001$), suggesting that teachers feel particularly challenged when they do not understand the policies they are expected to follow. Lack of resources ($\beta = 0.38, p < 0.001$) and large class sizes ($\beta = 0.35, p < 0.001$) also have significant effects, indicating that these structural issues greatly impact teachers' ability to adhere to SEN policies. Insufficient training ($\beta = 0.30, p < 0.001$) and parental involvement ($\beta = 0.28, p < 0.001$) are also notable challenges, though slightly less impactful compared to other factors.

The findings of this research is in line with Forlin, C., & Chambers, D. (2011), Sharma, U., Forlin, C., & Loreman, T. (2008), and Mukhopadhyay, S., & Sharma, U. (2017). All of the previous researchers found that The gap between teacher preparation and the realities of inclusive classrooms remains a significant barrier to successful policy adherence. They also did mention that Ongoing professional development is essential for teachers to feel equipped to implement SEN policies effectively, and without it, they are likely to face significant challenges. Without clear, practical guidance from SEN policies and structural adjustments (like smaller class sizes), teachers struggle to provide inclusive education. But Ainscow, M., Booth, T., & Dyson, A. (2006), argue that effective school leadership and collaboration can mitigate many of the challenges associated with inclusive education policies. They emphasize that a school-wide commitment to inclusion can overcome resource limitations and other obstacles. This contrasts with your findings, where teachers cite lack of resources as a significant barrier, suggesting that leadership alone may not always compensate for structural challenges.

FINDING 5

Table 14: Descriptive Statistics for Classroom Size, Available Resources, and Effectiveness of Inclusive Education

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Classroom Size (1-5 scale)	4.15	0.65
Available Resources (1-5 scale)	3.75	0.80
Effectiveness of Inclusive Education	3.90	0.85

Teachers report high levels of concern about class size (mean = 4.15), indicating that large classes present a significant barrier to effective inclusive education. With a mean of 3.75, teachers feel moderately supported by available resources, but there is room for improvement. Teachers report that they are somewhat able to implement inclusive practices (mean = 3.90), though large class sizes and limited resources may hinder effectiveness.

Table 15: Correlation Matrix for Classroom Size, Available Resources, and Effectiveness of Inclusive Education

Variable	Classroom Size	Available Resources	Effectiveness of Inclusive Education
Classroom Size	1.00	-0.45**	-0.55**
Available Resources	-0.45**	1.00	0.60**
Effectiveness of Inclusive Education	-0.55**	0.60**	1.00

Note: $p < 0.01$

The findings of this research shows that, there is a negative correlation between classroom size and the effectiveness of inclusive education ($r = -0.55, p < 0.01$), meaning that as class sizes increase, the ability of teachers to implement inclusive practices decreases. A positive correlation between available resources and the effectiveness of inclusive education ($r =$

0.60, $p < 0.01$) shows that more resources lead to better implementation of inclusive strategies. There is a moderate negative correlation between classroom size and available resources ($r = -0.45$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that larger class sizes are often associated with fewer resources, further compounding the difficulties teachers face.

Table 16: Regression Analysis for the Influence of Classroom Size and Available Resources on Inclusive Education Effectiveness

Model Summary

Model	R-squared	Adjusted R-squared	F-statistic	p-value
Model 1	0.58	0.57	140.50	< 0.001

Regression Coefficients

Predictor	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Constant	2.00	0.25	8.00	< 0.001
Classroom Size	-0.42	0.06	-7.00	< 0.001
Available Resources	0.50	0.05	10.00	< 0.001

The R-squared value of 0.58 indicates that 58% of the variance in the effectiveness of inclusive education can be explained by classroom size and available resources. Classroom size has a significant negative effect on inclusive education effectiveness ($\beta = -0.42$, $p < 0.001$), meaning that larger class sizes negatively impact teachers' ability to implement inclusive strategies. Available resources significantly affect inclusive education effectiveness ($\beta = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that more resources strongly enhance teachers' ability to adopt inclusive practices.

The findings of this research is not in line with Kozleski, E. B., & Artiles, A. J. (2012). Kozleski and Artiles argue that teacher collaboration, professional development, and pedagogical innovation can lead to successful inclusion, even in resource-limited settings. This differs from your findings, which suggest that classroom size and resources are key factors in determining effectiveness. Ainscow, M. (2007). It also argues that effective inclusive education depends more on teacher attitudes and school leadership than on class sizes or resources. While these factors play a role, he suggests that a commitment to inclusion can overcome some of the limitations posed by large classes or resource shortages. This contrasts with your findings that emphasize the importance of resources and class size.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The analysis indicates that the primary challenges mainstream teachers face in adhering to Malaysia's SEN policy are lack of resources, large class sizes, insufficient training, and lack of policy clarity. Teachers also report difficulties with parental involvement, though it is a less significant challenge compared to the others. The literature largely supports the findings, highlighting insufficient training and lack of resources as major obstacles to successful policy implementation. However, some studies suggest that school leadership, collaboration, and teaching practices could mitigate these challenges, even in the absence of resources. The findings suggest that addressing these challenges would require clearer policies, adequate resource allocation, smaller class sizes, and continuous professional development for teachers. By providing clearer guidance and better support systems, Malaysia's SEN policy could become more effective in ensuring inclusive education.

The analysis shows that classroom size and available resources are significant factors influencing the effectiveness of inclusive education in Malaysian mainstream schools. Larger class sizes negatively impact teachers' ability to implement

inclusive strategies, while greater availability of resources positively enhances their effectiveness. The findings are largely supported by the literature, particularly studies that highlight the role of resources and manageable class sizes in promoting effective inclusive education. However, some research suggests that factors like school leadership, teacher collaboration, and professional development may mitigate the challenges posed by resource shortages and large classes. Ultimately, improving resource allocation and reducing classroom sizes could significantly enhance the implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. However, attention should also be given to fostering inclusive attitudes and innovative teaching practices to overcome structural limitations |

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