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**THE PILOT IMPLEMENTATION OF  
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN MALAYSIA:  
A REVIEW**

**A Thesis Presented in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree**

**of**

**Doctor of Philosophy in Education**

**at**

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## ABSTRACT

Inclusive education was introduced into the Malaysian school system as a pilot scheme in 1994, involving a small number of elementary schools throughout the country. This study examines teachers' and principals' conceptions of inclusive education, their understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy and their attitudes towards the pilot implementation of inclusive education. Using individual interviews and surveys, the researcher explored the views of regular and special education teachers from pilot and non-pilot elementary schools. A total of 36 special and regular classroom teachers and six principals from six geographically representative pilot schools and 18 traditional classroom teachers from six matching non-pilot schools participated in this study.

Data examination showed that differences existed in the teachers' conceptions of inclusive education. Seven hierarchically ordered conceptions of inclusive education were identified. They ranged from the provision of educational opportunities in the traditional classroom for all students regardless of disability to the provision of enrichment for students with special abilities.

Teachers were found to have limited understanding of the educational policies related to inclusive education. Many principals and teachers, nevertheless, favoured inclusive education but the teachers were concerned about an increase in workload as a result of the inclusion of children with special needs in their classes. Class size was also seen as a barrier to implementing inclusive education.

It was concluded that principals and teachers were concerned about the inadequate professional preparation of teachers for inclusive education and the difficulties of coping with children with special needs when placed in the traditional classroom settings. These findings have serious educational implications and support the need for comprehensive inservice training programmes that are designed to meet the needs of teachers during pre-service programmes and in in-service training. The researcher also gave some attention to the process of change as it occurred during the pilot

implementation of inclusive education while her discussion of theoretical issues, related to the implementation, led to the development of an explanatory model to assist understanding of an approach to the further implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia.

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## MINOR EMENDATIONS TO THE THESIS

. The Literature Review as the Study's Basis. This review provided a foundation for the study and was important in determining the aims for the study that also contributes to the wider available literature.

. Selection of Principals. One pilot school and its principal were selected from each of the six states shown in Table 3.2. Each non-pilot school and its principal was a neighbour of the pilot school.

. Review of Transcripts. Transcripts were not returned to principals due to the constraints of time while the transcriptions produced no answers that lacked clarity.

. A Comment on Sampling in the Study. Six schools from Malaysia's distinctly different regions were selected for the study in order to provide a national flavour to the study. Of course, further studies might well include larger numbers of schools and principals.

. Selected Quotes Presented in Two Languages. The quotes are presented in the Malay language as this was the original form of data collection. The quotes are presented in English which is the medium of this thesis. However, Malay readers will be able to read the quotes in their original form.

. A Note on Triangulation in the Study. This was largely confined to seeking the differing perceptions of participants towards the pilot implementation of inclusive education and, as ideas were generated during data analysis, to remain faithful to the data; hence, the grounding "in the data" as ideas were developed. The collection of data from principals and teachers, in both pilot and non-pilot schools, provided the differing perceptions that provided their possibly differing perceptions on similar questions.

. Terminology. The writer recognises that the use of raw numbers or %ages, when reporting the data in places (instead of, eg, "some" or "many") would strengthen the presentation.

. Addition to Bibliography.

Balshaw, M and H Lucas (2000) "Understanding the Development of Inclusive Schools in Harrow" Paper presented at the ISEC Conference, Manchester July  
[http://www.eenet.org.uk/theory\\_practice/development\\_harrow.shtml](http://www.eenet.org.uk/theory_practice/development_harrow.shtml)

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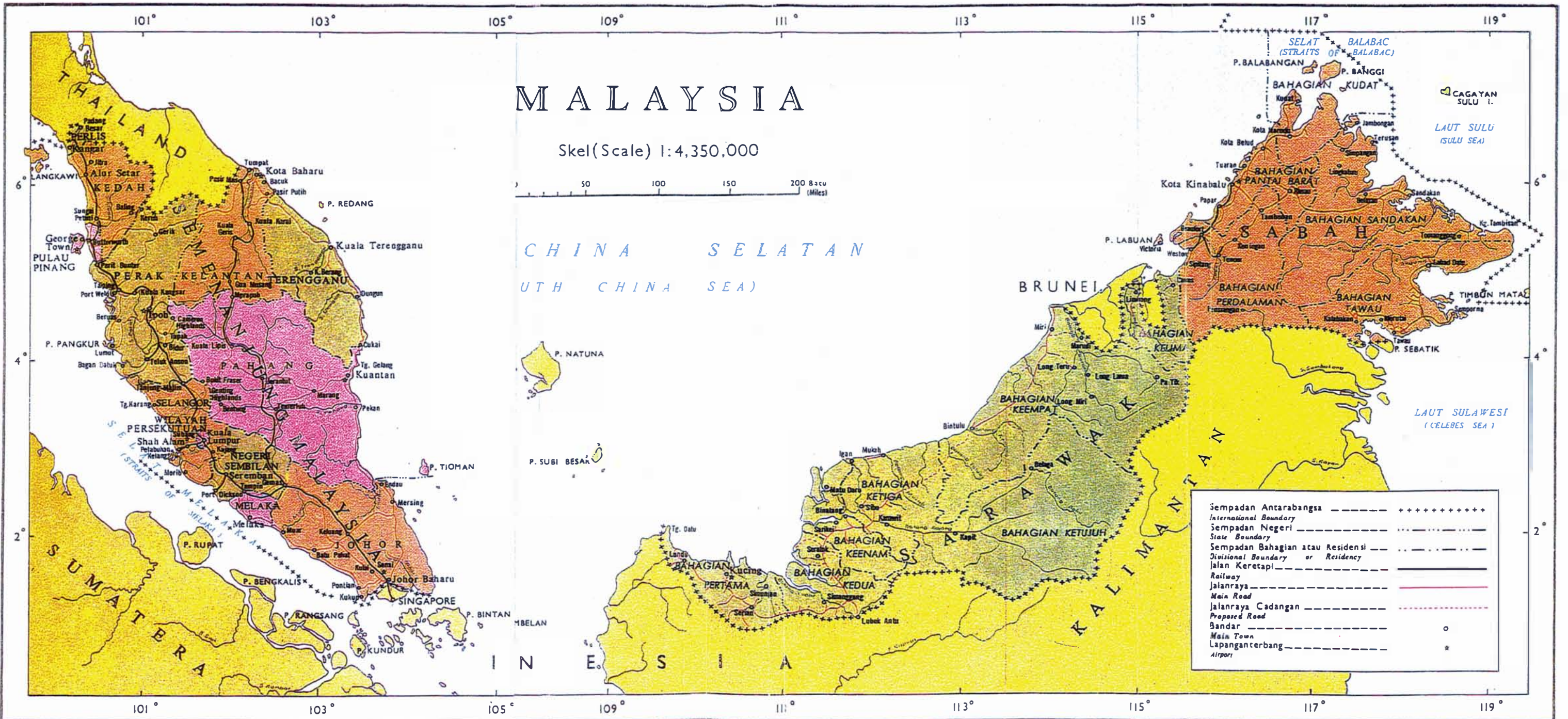
# MAP OF MALAYSIA

## MALAYSIA

Skel (Scale) 1:4,350,000



CHINA SELATAN  
(SOUTH CHINA SEA)



Sempadan Antarabangsa	-----+++++
International Boundary	-----+++++
Sempadan Negeri	-----+-----
State Boundary	-----+-----
Sempadan Bahagian atau Residensi	-----+-----
Divisional Boundary or Residency	-----+-----
Jalan Keretapi	—————
Railway	—————
Jalanraya	—————
Main Road	—————
Jalanraya Cadangan	-----+-----
Proposed Road	-----+-----
Bandar	○
Main Town	○
Lapangan terbang	✈
Airport	✈

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Introduction

*This chapter contains an overview of the research by describing the background of the study and a brief introduction to the concept of inclusive education. The present study is introduced briefly while the purpose and aims are identified at this early stage of the thesis. The essential purpose of the study was to review the pilot project of inclusive education in Malaysia as a means of identifying lessons for successful future implementation of the concept. The study takes the form of a case study, with interviews and questionnaires following initial document analysis, and the design is explained briefly together with the limitations of the study. The chapter concludes with an overview of the structure of the thesis.*

### 1.1 Background of the study

Special education provisions, especially for the hearing and visually impaired, have been a feature of Malaysian education since the early 1940s (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a). Special schools or institutions, which were mostly run by the religious and non-governmental organisations with governmental participation from the Ministries of Social Welfare, Education and Health, from 1948 to 1989, made possible this provision. The introduction of the Education Act 1961 established a legal foundation for the provision of extended educational opportunities for children with special needs, such as autism and learning disabilities (Ministry of Education, 1994b).

In 1995, the Ministry of Education broadened the scope of education for children with special needs by introducing inclusive education into the education system. Fourteen selected schools throughout the country implemented the programme of inclusive education as a pilot project.

The thrust of the inclusive education policy in the Malaysian context is focused on the stipulated goals and achievements of the nine challenges in the Prime Minister's vision of Malaysia for the year 2020 – for Malaysia to be a fully developed and industrialised nation with a strong, caring culture and society (Bakar, 1993). The implementation of inclusive education is one of the changes made in response to *Vision 2020* (Aziz, 1993), Challenge 7; that is, fostering a caring culture and society. In relation to children with special needs, the government argues that there has to be a full partnership in economic progress and the sharing of programmes for national human resource development. Bakar (1993) asserts that the planning and management of the education of children with special needs have to be within the appropriate general educational context, part and parcel of an integrated educational system; hence, the move towards inclusive education.

## 1.2 Inclusive education

The trend in social policy during the past two decades in Malaysia has been to promote integration and participation and to combat exclusion. UNESCO (1994) states that inclusion and participation are essential to human dignity and to the enjoyment and exercise of human rights. Within the field of education, the education of students with special needs is reflected by these ideas; that is, to provide equal education opportunity to that which presently exists for other students. Foreman (1996) states that the concept of inclusion is based on the notion that schools provide for the needs of all children whatever the level of their ability or disability. The philosophical basis for inclusive education, then, becomes a belief that all students should be included within the traditional classroom and provided with the support and assistance needed to succeed at a level that is appropriate for the individual.

In brief, inclusive education in Malaysia allows the placement of children with special needs in the traditional classrooms where learning with other children will take place. In the pilot programme investigated by the researcher, the selection of the child from the attached special class in a pilot school is based on the child's level of social and academic performance. A special teacher from the special class is transferred to the

traditional classroom to support the classroom teacher.

### **1.3 Introduction of the Present Research**

The researcher perceives a great need for the development of an inclusive education programme in Malaysia. At the time of this study, inclusive education in Malaysia had been implemented without preparation for many teachers, which is especially significant for those who were involved in the teaching of inclusive classes (Shariff, 1995).

Unfortunately, these teachers were trained only to teach children placed in the traditional classroom, and they had no experience in teaching children with special needs. Prior to implementation of this introduction of inclusive education, all the teachers in the pilot schools had to participate in a one-week seminar on the introduction of inclusive education conducted by the various state education departments.

Apart from lacking skills and experiences in dealing with children with special needs, the teachers also faced problems in dealing with children, in the traditional classroom, who have different levels of ability. In most Malaysian schools, there are 45 to 50 children per class. They are usually divided into small groups (usually of four children) based on their levels of ability. With such large numbers, preparation for teaching is already a major problem for teachers (Barnartt & Kabzems, 1992). With the integration of children with special needs into the traditional classroom, there would be more work and increased preparation time for teachers who would find it difficult to cope with the additional responsibilities involved in meeting the needs of children with a wider range of abilities.

Attitudes and beliefs of teachers towards children with special needs could affect the implementation of inclusive education. Malaysian teachers, who have different backgrounds of culture, race and religion, tend to have different attitudes towards the inclusive education policy. Some teachers believe that the integration of children with special needs into the traditional classroom is a taboo because of religious or social mores. Others feel that children with special needs should be segregated since they may

bring bad luck, maintaining that these children should remain either at home or be placed in special classes (Bosi, 1986).

Inclusive education in Malaysia should be directed at promoting and inculcating positive attitudes towards it. In doing so, principals and teachers need to understand and be willing to become involved. Until their attitudes and beliefs are understood, it will be difficult to plan and to implement inclusive education effectively. The present study was intended to assist this understanding and future planning.

#### **1.4 Purpose and aims of the study**

The purpose of this study was to gather information, relating to the pilot project of inclusive education in Malaysia that would be useful for the future planning of successful and effective implementation of inclusive education by examining teachers' conceptions of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system during this pilot phase. The aims were as follows:

- To describe and critique the policy for inclusive education,
- To identify teachers' knowledge of the inclusive education policy,
- To compare and contrast the conceptions of special and traditional classroom teachers of inclusive education,
- To identify the attitudes of teachers, in terms of their beliefs and values concerning the placement of children with special needs in traditional classes,
- To investigate teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of educational and social provisions made for children with special needs and
- To examine teachers' preferences for training in the education of children with special needs.

### **1.5 Research design: In Brief**

This study was a case study and the qualitative approach to be used was, broadly, phenomenography (Marton, 1981). This approach is widely recognized as a powerful technique for identifying and characterising the various ways in which people conceptualise phenomena (Marton, 1988; Burns, 1994). In line with phenomenographic research practice, this study was based largely on individual semi-structured interviews, which allowed participants to articulate their perceptions and experiences concerning inclusive education. The interviews were recorded and transcribed individually and analysed collectively. Questionnaires on background information and experiences were given to teachers after the interviews. Fifty-four special and traditional primary classroom teachers and six principals from six zones in Malaysia participated in the study. The teachers were randomly selected from six pilot and non-pilot inclusive education schools whereas the principals were from the six pilot inclusive education schools.

### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

This study had a few limitations. First, the data were collected in 1999 in Malaysia while the writer was still studying in New Zealand. Since then, inclusive education in Malaysia has experienced some changes. For instance, more schools have introduced inclusive education and more teachers have been trained to work with children with special needs. However, the subsequent changes in the development of inclusive education in Malaysia are beyond the scope of this study. The study, therefore, largely concerns the implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia during the first half of the 1990s.

The writer was involved in the early stages of the development of inclusive education in Malaysia, as she was working in the Education Department of Sabah as a special education officer at that time. She became interested in the topic of inclusive education when she found that a certain percentage of students in her school, as well as other

schools, required special education but whose needs were not adequately met by the existing approach of the time.

The study was limited to the small group of schools that initially began to implement inclusive education. However, many schools in Malaysia could not provide an appropriate education for students with special needs and these students were simply lumped together with regular students. Further, many parents and teachers had suggested to the writer that more special education classes should be introduced in Sabah. Moreover, the writer also had relatives and friends whose children required special education.

Since her return to Malaysia in 2001, the writer has not been able to conduct more research on inclusive education, as she has been appointed as a full-time principal in a secondary school in Sabah. However, she tries to stay abreast with the recent developments in inclusive education in Malaysia, particular with regards to research publications, seminars, and forums. The study, therefore, is limited in time.

Data for this study were collected when the writer made a short visit back to Malaysia. Data collection was planned while she was still studying in New Zealand. Despite the time constraint, she managed to complete the task smoothly, partly because she could get better cooperation from school principals as a special education officer and partly because she could get useful information from her superiors and colleagues at the Education Department in Sabah. However, the amount of data that were able to be collected was limited by the short period available for fieldwork by the writer.

Finally, subjects for this study were limited to a group of selected teachers and principals from the small number of early participating schools in inclusive education in Malaysia. To have better generalizability, future research of this kind should include parents and students as well as other schools and their staff members.



## **1.7 A Possible Contribution**

This study focused on the preparation and training needs and perspectives of principals and teachers related to the implementation of inclusive education. More and more children with special needs have been included in traditional classrooms. Bunch (1994) maintains that many children with special needs have been placed in inclusive classes in recent years. However, a considerable number of teachers are unwilling to become involved in inclusive education programmes (Bunch & Valeo, 1997). Such evidence suggests that the policy makers and administrators need to take steps to address the matters that affect the successful and effective implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. Hopefully, the present study will be a useful contribution for such future development of inclusive education in the writer's homeland of Malaysia.

## **1.8 Structure of the Study**

This study consists of eight chapters. This first chapter introduces the topic of inclusive education in Malaysia and the purpose of the study. It also discusses the significance of this study and some of its limitations.

The second chapter contains a review of literature on inclusive education, which included the use of documents, research articles, books and other secondary sources. The review of literature implied that there is a lack of research on inclusive education in Malaysia, as it is still a new topic.

The third chapter discusses the methodology of the study. It includes a discussion of the design and purpose of the study. It also discusses the methodological procedures used, including a brief explanation of phenomenography, informant and elite interviews, as well as document analysis.

The next four chapters contain the findings of this study. From the findings, conclusions on the teachers' and principals' perceptions towards inclusive education in

Malaysia, at the time of the pilot project, can be drawn. The four chapters present the results of relevant document analysis and surveys and interviews of principals and teachers in the pilot schools with some data from people in a selection of non-pilot schools.

Then follows a discussion chapter in which the writer links the main aspects of the preceding four results chapters with selected items from the literature review as well as theoretical ideas relating to inclusive education and the process of change.

The final chapter contains the writer's summary, conclusions, and recommendations on inclusive education in Malaysia, particularly drawn from the perceptions of teachers and principals towards the introduction of inclusive education in their schools. Summary comment is also made on the aims of the study. Finally, the writer also reflects on her methodology and suggests aspects for future research.

The writer now presents her review of the relevant literature that underlay her study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

*This chapter contains a brief description of special education and how it relates to the concept of inclusive education; particularly of the early move to inclusive education in Malaysia. The writer describes the development of inclusive education and its implementation, including the attitudes of the general public, principals and teachers. Further, she discusses the influence of the type and severity of disabling conditions, class size and placement, teacher education and the conditions for the successful implementation of inclusive education. The topic of teacher preparation, for work in inclusive education settings, is explored. Finally, the main aims of this study are identified.*

#### 2.1 Inclusive Education: An Introduction

In simple terms, the phrase “inclusive education” means that so-called “special” children will work alongside so-called “regular” children in a “regular classroom”. There seem to be two broad approaches to teaching these so-called special children: either they can be separated and segregated for teaching into classes with other special children or they can be integrated into regular classrooms in which they interact with regular children. Each approach has advantages and disadvantages.

The term “inclusive education” means different things to people who want different things from it (Fuchs & Fuchs, 1994). For example, many people see it as no different from the Regular Education Initiative (REI) policy which states that students with special needs should be served by an improvement in the education for all students, regardless of their abilities, without labelling them (Kauffman, 1989). According to Fuchs and Fuchs (1994), they see inclusive education as “old wine in a new bottle,” a subtle form of co-opting reformist impulses to maintain the *status quo*. Other advocates

see it as a shared responsibility among teachers and administrators in providing an appropriate education for children with special needs. Gall (1993) asserted that inclusive education is a concept that upholds the statutory and moral rights of students with special needs to attend publicly supported schools and to access qualitative support. Further, this view considers that segregation is ineffective because children in segregated settings do not get enough opportunities for acquiring academic and social skills. According to this perspective, any form of educational segregation is highly discriminatory.

## **2.2 Special Education: Its Nature and the Move Towards Inclusion**

First, it is important to provide an introduction to the field of “special education” of which “inclusive education” is one approach. “Special” education provides teaching and learning for children with “special needs,” including the severely disabled, blind, deaf, “slow” learners, the emotionally and physically handicapped.

In the context of Malaysia, according to Daud, former Minister of Education (1994), education is vital for the future of a nation as it can bond diverse cultural groups and create a solid foundation for continuous development. In Malaysia, the Education Law, Section 41 (1995) has extended services to children with special needs (Ministry of Education, 1995). Since Malaysia is a nation with multiple languages, religious beliefs, cultures and values, the main concern of policy-makers is national unity and integration. Unity in education can be achieved through a national language, a common curriculum and civic education (UNESCO, 1991).

In Europe, educational programs for individuals with special needs were developed in the early 1700s. For example, in 1784, the first school for the visually impaired was founded by Valentin Haüy in Paris (Gearheart, 1970). Within the next 20 years, several other schools were established in other parts of Europe; for example, in Liverpool, England, 1791; in Austria, 1804; and in Germany, 1806. In the USA, the first child with visual impairment was admitted to a public education class in 1900 (Gearheart, 1970).

In Malaysia, the first school for the visually impaired was opened in 1926, followed by the school for the hearing impaired in 1954 (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1985).

Historically, special education provisions in the USA were first legislated in 1827. Land was set aside for building an asylum in Kentucky for the hearing impaired and speech impaired (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Thurlow, 1992). In 1857, hospitals were specially built to cater for army and naval personnel who became impaired during war. In the same year, the American Congress passed an act to establish an institution for the hearing, speech and visually impaired. In 1954, it became the Gallaudet College, a school which continues to provide higher education for students who are hearing impaired. In 1918, Congress passed the Soldiers' Rehabilitation Act, providing vocational rehabilitation of World War I veterans who were disabled. However, in the USA, World War II gave a different impetus for the provision of services. Due to the large numbers of men and women entering the armed services, a labour shortage developed. Congress, therefore, passed legislation that provided job training and rehabilitation for people with special needs in order to enable them to find work.

In Australia, the first special school catering for students with sensory impairments was founded in 1880. In the same year, a school for children who were hearing impaired was opened in Sydney (Ashman & Elkins, 1994). In New Zealand, the first special school for children with special needs was established in 1863 (Michell, 1986).

During the late 1950s and early 1960s, a significant change occurred for individuals with special needs in the USA as more laws were enacted to meet their needs. The landmark case of *Brown vs Board of Education* (1954) established a philosophy of integration in American schools. According to the Fourteenth Amendment of the American Constitution, people cannot be denied 'equal protection of the law' or deprived of life, liberty, or property without the due process of law (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Thurow, 1992). In 1958, the USSR made history by launching the earth orbiting satellite, *Sputnik I*. This incident encouraged the US Congress to pass the National Defense Education Act that was designed to increase the education of

mathematics and science among students who were gifted.

In 1975, Public Law 94-142 (Education for All Handicapped Children Act), became a legal source that addressed the needs of children with special needs. It required that a free, appropriate education be made available to all students with special needs (aged three to twenty-one years) by September 1980 (Ysseldyke, Algozzine & Thurlow, 1992).

One influential concept of the rights of individuals with disabilities, during the 1960s and 1970s, was the principle of normalisation which made “available to the mentally retarded (sic) patterns and conditions of everyday life which are as close as possible to the norms and patterns of the mainstream society” (Nirje, 1969, pp.179-188). This principle has become the platform for the provision of education of students with special needs. Partnership between special and traditional education is based on the recognition that education for children with special needs is in accordance with the principles of human rights, equity and social justice (Foreman, 1996; Ryba, 1994). Keeping pace with the rapid evolution of educational practices and services for students with special needs is a challenge for educators, families, and service providers (Putnam, Spiegel & Bruininks, 1995).

Advocates for inclusive education believe that all students should receive traditional class placement and support (Elkins, 1997). This concept is supported by a number of educators (Gall 1993; Ashman & Elkins, 1994) who assert that it is the moral right of students with special needs to attend traditional schools and to receive quality support. Andrews and Lupart (1993) stated that inclusive education integrates all children, regardless of their disabilities, and ensures that they have fair and equal access to regular school experiences. The goal of inclusion is not to erase differences but to enable all students to learn within an educational community that validates and values individuality (Lusthaus, Gazith & Lusthaus, 1992; Perrin & Nirje, 1985; Wilgosh, 1993). The ultimate aim of inclusive education is to ensure that all students become a natural and integral part of an education system.

Policies for special education in most developed and developing countries have the intention to integrate children with special needs into ordinary schools (Barnartt & Kabzems, 1992). Chambers and Kay (1992) pointed out that integration or mainstreaming policies have developed partly as a result of legislation which requires that provisions be made for the education of children with special needs alongside their peers. For example, Public Law (PL) 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975, of the United States ensures that children with special needs receive traditional education regardless of their disabilities (Ashman & Elkins, 1994). The United Kingdom Education Act (1981) requires that children with special needs learn together with children in the traditional classroom (Ford, 1994). Many states in Australia have legislation that ensures that educational services are provided to students with special needs; for example, the Queensland Education Act (1989) and the Australian Disability Discrimination Act (1992). In New Zealand, the Special Education Act (1989) has made provisions for students with special needs to gain access to education in traditional schools (UNESCO, 1995).

Education in Malaysia has assumed greater significance in light of the changes in policies and practices over recent decades. One of the most significant changes has been the move from segregation of students with special needs to integration of those students in regular classrooms. These children are now being educated alongside their peers in traditional classroom to the greatest extent possible (Meijer, Pijl & Hegarty, 1994); a move which has come about through changing beliefs and attitudes towards disabilities (Rietveld, 1994). Many educators, parents, advocates and individuals with disability believe that it is time for all children, regardless of the degree of disability, to attend classes together with their peers (Bunch & Valeo, 1997).

The United Nations, which has a long history of championing the rights of persons with special needs and working to improve their conditions through social and humanitarian programmes, proclaimed 1981 as the International Year of Persons with special needs. This helped to increase public awareness that led to significant developments in

education, health and job opportunities for people with special needs (Mittler, 1993). Further, the United Nations (1992) reported that more than half a billion people throughout the world have mental, physical or sensory impairment. Many are also affected by physical and social barriers that relegate them to the margins of society. International commitment towards education for all, including children with special needs, has been widely supported. Inclusive orientation was an important issue at the World Conference on “Special Needs Education: Access and Quality” which was held in Salamanca, Spain, in June 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). Represented by 92 governments and 25 international organisations, the conference report maintained that schools with an inclusive orientation were:

*..the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, they provide an effective education to the majority of children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost-effectiveness of the entire system. (p. ix)*

In the United States context, the provision of an education “appropriate to the needs” of children with special needs is referred to as “mainstreaming” in the least restrictive environment. To the maximum extent possible, children with special needs, including children in public or private institutions, or other care facilities, are to receive education with children who do not have special needs. Special classes either separate children further schooling or allow the removal of children with special needs from the traditional educational environment. This should occur only when the nature or severity of the disability makes it impossible for education to be provided in traditional classes with the use of supplementary aids and services (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1976).

It was into this field of special education in Malaysia that the writer moved in 1990. Subsequently, in 1994, a Malaysian Government study grant provided the earliest beginning of the present study at a time when Malaysia began moving towards inclusive education. This grant enabled the researcher to plan and undertake a small-scale, systematic study of the development and provision of inclusive special needs education



in her home country of Malaysia.

### 2.3 Development of Inclusive Education

Since the mid-1980s there has been a general movement towards inclusive education for all individuals (Stainback & Stainback, 1990). However, the passage to inclusive education has been difficult because of the conflicts that exist between those who support and those who reject it. Those who reject inclusive education perceive it as inappropriate, (Bunch & Valeo, 1997) asserting that research which supports the theory is lacking (Patzkowsky, 1997).

Generally, the terms “least restrictive environment”, “integration”, “mainstreaming” and “inclusive” education refer to the common philosophy that students with special needs be taught in the same environment as other students (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1976; Perrin & Nirje, 1985; Chapman, 1988). However, in recent years, several researchers have given different interpretations of the terms. For example, Giangreco, Baumgart and Dolye (1995) and Sebba and Ainscow (1996) offer different interpretations for “inclusive education”, “mainstreaming” and “integration”, arguing that “mainstreaming” and “integration” focus on students with special needs and their education in regular schools and classes, whereas “inclusive” education, though prompted by the needs of students with disabilities, has been a movement designed to restructure classes so that all children representing the range of diversity are provided with an appropriate, meaningful education in the same classroom context as the wider body of children.

Giangreco (1997, p.194) argued that inclusive education is not an issue about disabilities but about educational equity and quality for all students because it benefits students with a full range of characteristics. Pearpoint and Forest (1997) indicated that inclusive education is an international concern that is being discussed in many countries, such as India, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, the United States and Britain. Inclusive education is also a topic of discussion in Malaysia, as shown initially, almost a decade ago, by the June 1994 seminar, “Inclusive Education,” held at Langkawi during which

the writer 's paper (Bosi, 1994) was presented. This paper reported on assessment for the placement of students in inclusive education. The seminar presentation was attended by government officials, teachers college lecturers and non-government organization (NGO) staff.

Solner and Thousand (1996) maintained that inclusive education is different from integration or mainstreaming which attempts to 'fit' a particular student into a standardised mainstream in which uniformity and conformity are more valued than learning. Many advocates believe that inclusive education should be practiced because it is the appropriate thing to do, emphasizing that the best place for all students to receive an education is in the traditional classroom (Patzkowsky, 1997). Solner & Thousand (1996) maintained that all children should receive their education in the regular classrooms. This approach allowed the "special" children to learn alongside the "regular" students in regular classroom settings.

Barr, Schultz, Doyle, Kronberg, and Crossett (1996) argued that inclusive education enhances socialisation and a sense of belonging for all students. The approach presents a challenge and opportunity for many educators. Summey and Strahan (1997, p. 36) stated that inclusive education emphasises improved instruction rather than the processes of classifying and labelling students. Bar, Schultz, Kronberg and Crossett (1996) maintained that special children needed to be accepted by the other children in the regular classrooms. With improved instruction given to the special children would help in their learning and this finding was found in the writer's study.

Some educators perceive inclusive education as more than placing children with special needs in regular classes. For example, Andrews and Lupart (1993), Luthaus, Gazith and Luthaus (1994) and Clark, Dyson, and Millward, (1995) perceived inclusive education as a merger of special and regular education. The philosophical basis for inclusive education, then, becomes a belief that all students should be taught in the regular classroom and given the support and assistance needed to succeed. Andrew and Lupart (1993) argued that all children, regardless of their disability, had the right to learn in

regular classrooms. Clark, Dyson, and Millward (1995) stated that “inclusive” education helps internationalise at least part of the language of special education, replacing such terms as “integration” in the UK and “mainstreaming” in the USA.

The inclusion of children with special needs in the traditional classes is seen as a move beyond the past when children with special needs were not only excluded to learn together with other children but also were often excluded from the community (Bunch, 1994).

The concept of inclusive education has emerged, based on human rights, equality and equity (Foreman, 1996). Equality in education means that each student is given the support required to achieve to the best of their abilities (Coots, Bishop, Scheyer & Falvey, 1995). In terms of human rights, students with special needs have the right to be in regular classes and to be provided with the same educational services as the other students. It is against the principle of equity to exclude students with special needs from regular schools (Foreman, 1996). According to Thomas, Walker and Webb (1998, p.15), inclusive education is not about disability but it is about acceptance, providing a framework within which all children, regardless of ability, gender, language, ethnic or cultural origin can be valued equally, treated with respect and provided with equal opportunity at school.

## **2.4 Implementation of Inclusive Education**

Though attitudes towards inclusive education are mostly favourable, there are problems in its implementation in Malaysia. Problems arise due to the lack of understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy and negative attitudes of teachers. There are teachers who do not want to include children with special needs in their classes. Similar problems are reported in other countries. For instance, primary school teachers in Finland have declared that the most problematic part of integration is the demanding nature of planning and executing teaching strategies that take into account children with special needs (Ihatsu & Savolainen, 1995). According to the Meijer, Pijl and Hegarty (1994), countries such as Italy, Sweden and the USA, do face problems in the

implementation of inclusive education. In Italy, teachers from the regular classes do not regard the teaching of students with special needs as their responsibility. In Sweden, teachers tend to pass on students with special needs, especially those who have social and emotional problems, to special education teachers. In the United States of America, differences in training and role perceptions often become a problem between special education teachers and teachers from the regular classes. Teachers from the regular classes assume that special education teachers are not capable of teaching regular classes because they lack the experience in teaching regular classes. On the other hand, many special education teachers think that teachers from the regular classes are not capable of dealing with students with special needs.

Harvey (1985) reported that the introduction of inclusive education in Victoria, Australia, caused widespread unease amongst teachers who were concerned about the extent to which specialist help would be made available, the type and amount of further training that would be needed and whether allowances would be made to teachers for the extra demands placed upon them. Adima (1992) reported that inclusive education in Nigeria was poorly understood. Many people claim that placing children with special needs in regular classrooms is unacceptable. They believe that inclusive education should be practised during recess and during non-academic activities. Further, without adequate professional training and continual updating of knowledge, people are in danger of abandoning tomorrow's children to yesterday's ideas and methods. Mittler (1991, cited in Mittler, 1993) stated that, no matter how clear an individual's vision of what is to be achieved and how schools and services should develop, progress depends on the attitudes, knowledge and skills of those who are in daily contact with children with special needs. Nevertheless, Stainback, Stainback, Courtage and Jaben (1985) stated that problems arising from including children with special needs in regular classrooms can be overcome if appropriate steps are taken to prepare teachers and students.

UNESCO (1995) reported that one-third of its member countries did not have inclusive education because of the scarcity of resources, insufficient or unsuitable schools,

unavailability of trained staff and unwillingness of schools to accept children with special needs. Ninety member countries were contacted to provide a review of special education but only 63 countries participated. Kohli (1993) indicated that other problems related to special education include myths, social taboos and genetic implications of consanguineous marriages common among Muslims.

In the United States of America, “inclusive education” is used to describe the restructuring of special education in an attempt to integrate students into mainstream classrooms through reorganisation and instructional innovations, such as cooperative learning, collaborative consultation and team teaching (Ware, 1995; Skrtic, Sailor & Gee, 1996). Because inclusive education requires fundamental changes in the basic structural features of schools, effective collaboration between regular and special education educators is essential (Skrtic, 1991).

Saleno, Johansen, Mumper, Chase, Pike, and Dorney (1997), in their study on the impact of cooperative teaching upon students with special needs, found that both teachers and students preferred collaborative teaching. Initially, the teachers were apprehensive but they gradually worked together, sharing responsibilities and decision making. This finding implied that collaboration is premised on the ability of professionals to work together to identify common problems and, through collective reflection, to devise, test and revise solutions (Skrtic, 1991).

## **2.5 Attitudes Towards Inclusive Education**

“Attitude” is defined as the degree of liking, or disliking, held towards a person, group or issue (Jones & Guskin, 1984; Chaplin, 1985). It is a tendency to respond to people, institutions or events either positively or negatively, including beliefs and actions related to them and, often, including stereotypes, expectancies or prejudices. “Stereotype” refers to the set of beliefs about the characteristics of a group. “Expectancy” refers to a particular behaviour or competence anticipated of group members or individuals. “Prejudice” refers to irrationally unfavourable decisions or actions one is prepared to

take against others (Jones & Guskin, 1984). Such ideas, as those noted in this paragraph, can be noted both historically and geographically.

### 2.5.1 Community attitudes

Historically, people with special needs, for example, the mentally challenged, were viewed as a 'burden' to society because they were unable to work and care for themselves. One extreme way of dealing with this 'burden' was the killing of people who were disabled in Sparta (MacMillan, 1982). Such an attitude was adopted by the Yorubas and the Igalas in Nigeria who engaged in the practice of killing the disabled by poisoning or starving them to death (Caulcrick, 1982). During the Reformation, people who were mentally challenged suffered great persecution by the Church because they were considered as witches. In later centuries, people who were mentally challenged were employed by the wealthy as fools or jesters for their guests or they appeared as circus attractions (MacMillan, 1982).

In the case of the Malaysian general public, attitudes towards individuals with special needs are often based on particular beliefs. For instance, those who hold certain religious values tend to consider a disability as a punishment from God while others may consider it simply as bad luck (Bosi, 1986). Hence, many children with special needs are kept at home in the house because their parents do not want people to know that they have such children for fear of public disgrace and humiliation (Bosi, 1986). According to Barnartt and Kabzens (1992), people in Zimbabwe tend to attribute a disability to witchcraft, usually because of wrongdoing on the part of the mother. It is also believed that the curse may be transferred to another person. Chen (1996) reported that many Chinese people still believe that China would not be able to provide special education for children with special needs until all regular children could receive an appropriate education. Furthermore, many Chinese are said to doubt the learning capabilities of children with special needs. Sandow (1994) found that negative attitudes have serious implications upon the education of children with special needs since the need to accept God's will or reject the Devil's work often takes precedence over any

attempts for remediation (p. 2).

### 2.5.2 Attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education

Research on inclusive education has shown that teachers tend to have mixed feelings towards the implementation of inclusive education. Those who are positive towards inclusive education have indicated that adequate support services are needed for success (Guerin & Szatlocky, 1974; Hudson, Graham & Warner, 1979; Cole & Chan, 1990; Barnartt & Kabzens, 1992). According to Pagliano (1988), teachers from the regular schools in Australia tend to have negative attitudes towards integration. In Finland, (Ihatsu & Savolainen, 1995) as well as in the Philippines (Leyser, Kapperman, Cunanan & Luebke, 1991), elementary teachers tend to be negative towards mainstreaming. In Norway, teachers have reported that placing children with special needs in regular classes would lead to isolation and humiliation for the children and their parents; they are often being seen as people with disabling conditions and, therefore, the children can become victims of discrimination (Befring, 1997). However, these teachers have emphasised the necessity of giving every child the opportunity to learn in the 'real' world.

Studies on teachers' attitudes towards children with special needs have revealed both positive and negative attitudes. McIntosh, Vaughn, Haager and Lee (1993) found that children with special needs in regular classroom settings appear to be accepted by the classroom teacher and treated fairly. They are involved in the same seating arrangements as other students, work on the same activities and use the same materials. However, the classroom teachers rarely modify their instruction to meet the needs of the children with special needs. There is less participation from these children compared with the other children. They are also not fully engaged in the learning process. Minke, Bear, Deemer and Griffin (1996) found that teachers would support integration with the provision of appropriate instructional resources designed for learners who are low achieving. Further, traditional teachers who are not involved in an inclusive class tend to have more negative attitudes toward inclusive education. The writer's study results

support the view of Minke et al.

Attitudes tend to be insidious and pervasive (Wade & Moore, 1992) because, once a person or a group has been attached to a certain stigma, it is difficult to avoid being treated differently. Teachers' attitudes towards children with special needs may include fear of contact. They fear that they, as teachers, will not be able to cope with new or additional responsibilities or they are concerned that the presence of children with special needs in regular classrooms will lead to complications in their professional careers (Jones & Guskin, 1984). However, Adams and Cohen (1974) found that teachers tend to attach less importance to the external aspects of children with special needs; for example, the stigma of being "intellectually challenged". They often learn from the experience of dealing with children with special needs. In this way, experience influences attitudes for the better. Baker and Gottlieb (1980, cited in Wade & Moore, 1992, p. 27) stated that

*Teachers' attitudes towards integration are expected to influence the extent to which children with special needs become not only physically integrated, but integral members of regular classes benefiting academically, socially and emotionally from the experience.*

According to Wade and Moore (1992), knowledge and understanding of special needs, as well as strategies and skills needed to provide an appropriate education, can give teachers not only confidence with, but also positive attitudes towards, their pupils with special needs. Wade and Moore added that teachers were confident in teaching special needs students if they had the appropriate skills to work with these students. Positive attitudes can enhance awareness and sensitivity to the needs of children with special needs and their immediate families.

Another aspect that influences teachers' attitudes towards children with special needs is related to the latter's reading skills. A study on the effects of classroom performance on teachers' attitudes toward reintegrating students with learning disabilities, by Nord, Shinn, and Good III, (1992) revealed that teachers are generally willing to teach



reintegrated students after knowing their reading levels. This finding indicated that teachers' attitudes could be modified from negative to positive.

Giangreco, Baumgart and Doyle (1995, p. 274) asserted that the inclusion of children with special needs in regular classroom settings can serve as a catalyst to open classroom doors and change staffing patterns that enable teachers to work together and support one another in the teaching environment. Hence, the role of teachers is crucial in influencing attitudes towards children with special needs. However, Bennett, Deluca and Bruns (1977) reported that teachers tend to have less positive attitudes towards inclusive education compared to parents, suggesting that teacher attitudes could affect the success of inclusive education.

### 2.5.3 Influence of the type and severity of disabilities upon teachers' attitudes

A number of variables influence teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. The type and severity of the disability tends to affect teachers' willingness to accept children with special needs in the classroom. For example, Barnartt and Kabzems (1992) found that 40 percent of Zimbabwean teachers refused to have a child who is intellectually challenged in their class. The results of the writer's study found that teachers were not happy to have special needs students in their classes. The teachers were saying that they could not teach effectively. Ward and Center (1987) and Ihatsu and Savolainen (1995) reported similar findings in New South Wales and Finland, respectively. Therefore, severity of a disability may determine the willingness of teachers to accept such children into their classes. Sigafos and Elkins (1994), in their study of attitudes and concerns of teachers in Australia towards the integration of children with disabilities, found that teachers are less positive towards children with multiple disabilities.

Abang (1992) found that children with special needs in Nigeria are integrated in regular schools but their uniqueness is still to be considered before integrating them. Teachers were happy to teach the special needs students provided that they could socialize with the other regular students. *Uniqueness* of children with special needs is related to the

ability to learn with others. Ihatsu and Savolainen (1995) indicated that, in Finland, the inclusion of children with physical disabilities and sensory impairments is more readily accepted in the regular classroom, compared to those who have learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Coates (1989), in a study on teachers' perceptions of, and attitudes towards, children with special needs in the regular classroom, found that teachers are skeptical that students who are mildly challenged could be educated entirely within a regular class.

Davis (1980) found that principals tend to view the chances for successful integration of students who are mentally challenged as being lower when compared with children with other kinds of special needs. Children with special needs may need more direct attention from teachers than other children. Wigle and Wilcox (1996, p. 326) found that children with special needs tend to receive less attention. The diversity of needs brought to the classroom by students with special needs greatly complicates an already complex task for the teacher.

#### 2.5.4 Influence of class size and placement upon teachers' attitudes

Traditionally, education has been provided in large, mixed-ability groups. In the 1950s, these groups, which often consisted of 40 or more students, were found in many Australian schools (Ashman & Elkins, 1994). Brighter students survived but students with lower ability had to catch up through increased personal effort or additional assistance. Over the years, class sizes have become smaller in Australia but not in Malaysia where the average class size is from 40 to 55 students (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994). Barnartt and Kabzems (1992) found that experienced teachers in Zimbabwe opposed adding another child to their oversized class. These teachers believed that inclusion of another child would affect their teaching and add more problems to an existing problem.

Hudson, Graham and Warner (1979) found that teachers from 28 school districts in Missouri and Kansas were willing to teach children with special needs provided that

class size, instructional materials and training were modified and made available to them. Hudson, Graham and Warner added that teachers were happy to work with special needs students should they be given small size class and additional training. Minke, Bear, Deemer and Griffin (1996) found that teachers from a suburban school district in the mid-Atlantic region require smaller class sizes for inclusive education. Placement for children with special needs should be undertaken with great care and foresight (Goodman & Miller, 1980) so that they can blend academically with the regular classroom children.

Irmsher (1995) asserted that placement of children with special needs in a classroom with same-age peers is an advantage for developing social, language and communication skills. Bunch (1997) stated that all children, regardless of differences in learning ability, should be placed in age-appropriate classrooms for their education. The Italian National Law 517 states that a maximum of two children with special needs should be integrated into one regular classroom and a support teacher provided to assist the classroom teacher (Vitello, 1994). This situation has convinced teachers and parents that such an environment would provide better learning opportunities for students with special needs. For full inclusion, only children who are mildly challenged are placed in integrated classes while those with more severe challenge are placed in more restrictive settings (Minke, Bear, Deemer & Griffin, 1996).

## **2.6 Teacher Preparation for Inclusive Education**

Students with special needs are increasingly being included in classrooms to learn with other students (Wigle & Wilcox, 1996). To meet their diverse needs, teachers should be adequately equipped. According to Sears and Cummings (1996), successful intervention in inclusive classrooms does not appear magically in the professional repertoire of teachers. Therefore, it is important to provide teachers with the necessary training (Fox & Ysseldyke, 1997). Teacher education programmes provide a logical starting place for changes in the instructional paradigms. They must be responsive to developments in effective classroom practice and provide teachers with the skills needed

in changing a school environment (Mercer, Lane, Jordan, Allsopp & Eisele, 1996).

### 2.6.1 Pre-service teacher training

Baker and Zigmond (1995) found that the new roles for teachers in inclusive education raise questions about their potential in carrying out their roles as teacher, planner and consultant. To prepare special education teachers at the pre-service level, teacher training colleges and universities, they advised, should provide coursework on diagnostic and remedial strategies, monitoring progress and adjusting instruction for individuals. Such training would provide a good foundation for collaborative teaching with regular teachers. Villa, Thousand, Nevin and Malgeri (1997) stated that one of the difficulties faced by inclusive schools responding to an increasing, diverse student population is inadequate teacher preparation. Hence, colleges and universities should share the responsibility of preparing teachers to meet the presence of children with special needs in the classroom. On the other hand, McNulty, Connolly, Wilson and Brewer (1996) suggested that teacher trainees should be evaluated to ensure that they are fully equipped with the highest degree of knowledge on educational practices, including the processes of instruction and assessment geared towards supporting learners of diverse abilities. They must also have the ability to work well with other faculty members to meet the needs of the learners.

Currently, (i.e. at the time of this study) Malaysia still faces a shortage of qualified, special education teachers. This hinders the implementation of inclusive education in the country (Shariff, 1995). Due to such teacher shortage, children with special needs are taught by regular teachers trained overseas or teachers who had undergone a short training course. To increase the number of special education teachers, the National University of Malaysia provides a degree program in special education. The first batch of 71 special education teachers graduated in the late 1990s (Sharrif, 1997). However, this number of teachers majoring in special education is not enough to cater for children with special needs in Malaysia. Sharrif (1995) found that it is difficult to convince teachers to undergo special education training due to an unattractive salary. Even

though sixty Malaysian ringgit is added to the monthly salary, such a sum encourages only the dedicated teachers to pursue training for teaching children with special needs.

Any national plan for teacher training should include special education, such as inclusive education, so that all trainees can learn ways of teaching children with special needs. It is for the benefit of special education and regular teachers that many countries, such as Malaysia (Sharriff, 1995), Finland (Ihatsu & Savolainen, 1995) and Australia (Slee, 1996), have advanced integrated courses related to children with special needs. Mainstream teachers must be trained to work as a team for problem-solving, planning and program implementation with special education teachers (Irmsher, 1995). Further, working in an inclusive education environment requires both special education teachers and regular teachers to work more closely and to share responsibility (Mostert & Kauffman, 1992).

Teachers should have the knowledge and skills needed to select and adapt instructional materials to meet the needs of individual students. According to Irmsher (1995), instructional arrangements should include team teaching, peer tutoring and teacher-assistance teams. Teachers should foster a cooperative learning environment that promotes socialisation. The importance of teacher development has prompted UNESCO to organise a project, entitled *Special Needs in the Classroom*, for teachers in certain developing countries (Sebba & Ainscow, 1996), providing teachers with opportunities to consider new possibilities and to explore ways in which their practice might be developed to facilitate learning.

The New South Wales Department of Education has mandated that all trainee teachers devote a percentage of their coursework to special educational instruction (Slee, 1996). They learn how to modify curriculum content and teaching approaches to accommodate the diverse needs of students with special needs. Teacher education programmes should enhance teachers' understanding of the different roles of special education teachers and regular teachers in serving children with special needs (Wigle & Wilcox, 1996).

It can be argued that special education teachers and regular teachers require the same kind of teaching skills. Students in regular classes may not have special needs but they often have learning or behavioural problems that can create difficulties for teachers and peers (Sindelar, 1995). Dempsey (1993) suggested that teachers tailor their courses not only in teaching children with special needs in the regular classroom but also in dispelling misconceptions towards children with special needs. Another aspect of training that is important for trainee teachers is behaviour modification. It is important that teachers are taught how to deal with children with problems. Problems are those related to hyperactive, insecurity, tantrum behaviour and low self-esteem. When teachers learn how to deal with children with behaviour problems only then they can teach effectively without being stressed by the task.

According to Carpenter and Higgins (1996), the presence of children with behavioural problems may jeopardise the learning process in an inclusive education class. The time taken for teachers to respond to inappropriate behaviour would cause the loss of instructional time. If this issue was not considered then the teacher would not be in a position to teach children with special needs effectively. Summing up the whole issue on teacher education programmes, Mercer, Lane, Jordan, Allsopp and Eisele (1996) stated that such programmes should provide a variety of experiences that include teaching children with special needs in regular classroom settings. They should include field experiences for practicing a wide variety of instructional strategies and providing teachers with feedback about their teaching effectiveness.

### 2.6.2 In-service teacher training

While the majority of teachers from the regular schools have positive attitudes towards mainstreaming and inclusive education (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996; Thousand, Rosenberg, Bishop & Villa, 1997), many teachers who have bachelor and master degrees demonstrate a lack of confidence in their ability to work with students with special needs (Home, 1983). Currently, it is argued that teachers are not adequately trained to work with children with special needs (Yell, 1995). In a study examining the

attitudes and needs of regular classroom teachers, Hudson, Graham and Warner (1979) found that teachers from the school districts in Missouri and Kansas need additional training to enable them to teach children with special needs. Such a need is probably typical of teachers in other countries too.

Further, as teachers from regular schools are likely to be involved in teaching children with special needs, they need to know how to meet the needs of these children (Rademacher, Schumaker & Deshler, 1996). Training that was once adequate should be supplemented, restructured or updated (Hegarty, 1993). Lack of appropriate training and support often leads to inappropriate learning opportunities for pupils. The National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Virginia, USA (1994) reported that one of the key issues of inclusive education, and the role of special education in restructuring, is that many teachers have to implement inclusive instruction and a collaborative model without adequate training. This yields poor outcomes for both students and teachers as the teachers lack the knowledge and skills to teach children with special needs.

A lack of competence in teaching children with special needs should not be considered as unwillingness to engage in an inclusive education program. Cipani (1995) claimed that the qualifications and teaching competencies for aides should be identified to ensure that they have the skills to have an impact on the learners. Moreover, teachers who have pursued special education courses and received in-service training in special education demonstrate more positive attitudes towards inclusive education than those who have not experienced this type of training (Downing, Eichinger & Williams, 1997).

According to Hornby, Atkinson and Howard, (1997, p.48) there is a great need for more and better teacher training and in-service training programs in basic literacy and numeracy, especially in meeting the needs of the students who have learning difficulties. Many teachers feel inadequately trained to teach students with special needs, especially those students who have serious problems in learning to read, write and spell. Wigle and Wilcox (1996) recommended that training be organised for teachers, claiming that

they should learn how to design learning activities, select appropriate learning materials and to adapt learning objectives to accommodate the needs of students with wide ranging abilities.

Although briefly moving away from the literature, at this point, the writer expresses some views acquired during her own professional experience. As a professional educator with a special interest in inclusive education, the writer believes that English should be included in the teacher education curriculum for special education in Malaysia. The teachers need to catch up with the latest research in education, which is mostly published in English. They are encouraged to write reports or do research to upgrade their knowledge. English is, therefore, essential for all special education teachers. To enhance teachers understanding on inclusive education, pedagogical methods for special education should be included in the curriculum. Special education teachers need to know the appropriate techniques in the identification, testing and teaching of students with special needs. They need to learn how to plan, to categorise and to motivate. They need to develop positive attitudes towards special education. Based on the writer's observations, special education teachers in Malaysia have to deal with students of different racial and religious background. They therefore should have adequate knowledge concerning the cultural traditions of each ethnic group. Sabah, the state where the writer resides, has 39 ethnic groups. Each ethnic group has its own cultural practices and cultural beliefs. Learning is often affected by socioeconomic status, customary practices and cultural beliefs. To work more effectively with students of diverse backgrounds, teachers therefore should have a multicultural outlook. Students tend to respond better to teachers who have some knowledge of their social and cultural backgrounds. Teachers with a multicultural outlook tend to feel more comfortable working with Kadazandusun students; a Chinese teacher, for example, should have fundamental knowledge of Kadazandusun culture. Each cultural group in Sabah has its customs or even superstitions. Knowledge of the customs and superstitions of each racial group would increase the confidence and comfort level of special education teachers in interacting with their students. The more knowledgeable a teacher is towards a student's background, the greater the acceptance of the student. The deeper the



understanding, the more meaningful, useful and enjoyable the learning process will be for the student.

Other aspects of curriculum that need to be included in the special education teacher curriculum are behaviour modification, home-school coordination, Educational psychology for special education, financial planning, and computer literacy. Behaviour modification is an integral part of special education. Special education teachers need to learn how to modify students' behaviours or attitudes in order to enhance learning. They need to know how to apply various positive reinforcement techniques to promote on task behaviour, to enhance memory and to generalize learning. This study will help shed some light on the issue of teacher training for special education.

Home-school coordination should be included in the special education teacher curriculum because it is important that they should know how to work with parents. Teachers need to learn how to communicate effectively with parents of various backgrounds. Based on the writer's experience, teachers in Sabah have to interact with different categories of parents, ranging from single parents to divorcees, from homemakers, office workers, to professionals. They need to know the attitudes and needs of parents from various economic backgrounds, ranging from farming, working class, to business. They need to learn how to develop individualized lesson plans that involve parents. For instance, they need to "teach" parents how to assist with their children's academic performance at home.

According to Fox and Ysseldyke (1997), meeting special needs is not only a matter of working with the child but also a matter of calling for reforms of the curriculum, policy structure and organisation of the whole school. Ongoing training and regular meetings to discuss the process are also important. Further, without adequate professional training and continuous updating of knowledge, teachers are in danger of abandoning tomorrow's children to yesterday's ideas and methods. No matter how clear an individual's vision of what is to be achieved and how schools and services should develop, progress depends on the attitudes, knowledge and skills of all those who are in

daily contact with children with special needs (Mittler, 1993).

## **2.7 Conditions for the Success of Inclusive Education**

Success of inclusive education depends greatly on the educators, administrators and teachers who can meet the needs of children with special needs. Prominent aspects of inclusive education, as stated by Andrew and Lupart, (1993) are that administrators and teachers have positive attitudes, values and abilities. To carry out inclusive education, they need to undergo professional training and development, understand the use of resources, develop administrative and leadership skills and learn how to support colleagues. Administrators and teachers should adapt themselves to situations as consultants and collaborate with the others who are involved in merging special and regular education.

Turner and Louis (1996) suggested four important factors in creating an inclusive environment in a school, including: sympathetic consideration of the images of children with special needs, identification of their fear of stigma; addressing of sub cultural needs; and establishing a caring relationship and collective responsibility. Merely integrating children with special needs into the regular classroom setting will not ensure the development of a community that values differences, especially one in learning and performance (Turner & Louis, 1996). To have a successful inclusive class, adequately trained teachers and sufficient instructional time are essential for the individual growth of each learner (Minke, Bear, Deemer & Griffin, 1996).

According to Andrews and Luppart (1993), the planning and management of education of children with special needs should be within the appropriate general educational context. It should not be allowed to develop into an isolated school system. It should be a priority and a shared responsibility for the entire school to meet the goals of integration towards the right of education, the right to equality of opportunity and the right to life-long education for all. This strategy is essential for a successful inclusive program (Tralli, Colombo, Deshler & Shumaker, 1996) because special education

teachers and regular teachers must work closely in collaboration to plan the instructional curriculum to meet the needs of children with special needs.

Gall (1993) commented that, in advocating the implementation of a full inclusion policy, one must be fully aware that it is a complex process that requires intensive planning and implementation strategies. The collaboration of the education and legal professions, in an examination of the concept of right and the reallocation of present resources by administrators and legislators, should be considered. Further, the development and full implementation of innovative teaching strategies by educators in the school, where implementation and practice occurs, and in tertiary organizations, where research and teacher development occurs, and university sectors should also be taken into account.

Andrews and Lupart (1993, p.8) stated that educational leaders have increasingly advocated an inclusive educational system. School systems, therefore, would undergo major transitions in order to foster lifelong learning, provide educational quality and equity and facilitate independent learning and thinking. They should also promote school-home partnership, encourage living and learning in a community and develop academic and social competence. The rationale for inclusive education includes the assumptions that children merge their own cultural needs and identify with those of the dominant group (acculturation), achieve the skills of academic and social competencies through interaction, with a range of learners and gain an appreciation of individual differences.

Success in inclusive education is not simply a matter of sending children with special needs to traditional classrooms and waiting for a miracle to happen. It depends largely on the cooperation of administrators, teachers and parents. Careful planning and effective teaching are as necessary in traditional classrooms as they are in any situation where teachers work with students with diverse abilities. Olson, Chalmers and Hoover (1997) found that support of specialists is essential for the success of inclusive education. Inclusive education requires special education and regular teachers to be

responsive and adaptive in terms of the unique learning needs of all students. They must be innovative, collaborative and able to accommodate student diversity through effective planning, communication, participation, and flexibility. Because effective inclusive practices for children with special needs lie in the hands of teachers, the latter should be given adequate preparation and support as they strive to refine their teaching repertoires (Sears & Cumming, 1996, p.224). Finally, Stoddard, Hewitt, O'Connor, Beckner, Elder, Laporta and Poth (1996) suggest that teachers tend to develop a sense of community in their classrooms by adopting inclusive practices, adjusting schedules and modifying the curriculum in order to meet the needs of their individual learners.

The writer feels that it is difficult for principals and teachers to implement inclusive education in their schools. Understanding and implementation of the inclusive education policy and attitudes towards inclusive education can affect the introduction of inclusive education in Malaysian schools. The lack of a common definition, large class size, lack of personnel and unwillingness to teach children with special needs are barriers to inclusive education in our country. This study focused on the preparation and training of principals and teachers for the successful implementation of inclusive education in Malaysian schools.

## **2.8 A Note on the Emergence of Inclusive Education in Malaysia**

From 1990, education provision in Malaysia began to become concerned with special education - to move from a focus on the deaf and blind, etc - to begin including "slow" learners and others with "special" needs. This concern led to the development of "inclusive education" from 1993 onwards. These developments are examined in Chapter Four.

## **2.9 Consistency in the Use of Certain Terms**

In this review of literature, terms such as "handicapped children", "special children", "special needs children", "disabled children" and "special needs children" have been used to describe students with special needs. Researchers in the earlier years had used

the terms “handicapped” or “disabled” to describe children with special needs. Such terms are now considered discriminatory, socially and culturally inappropriate or politically incorrect. However, the writer cannot simply change the specific terms that have been used in professional journals as it may distort their meanings or create misunderstanding.

Researchers nowadays prefer to use the term “children with special needs” to describe those who are in need of special education. To be consistent, the writer has decided to use the term “children with special needs” in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

## 2.10 Conclusion

This chapter began with a short introduction to the wide field of special education. It then moved to the more specific area of inclusive education by which children with special needs are included in regular classrooms. By considering the nature of inclusive education in a selective of Western countries, the writer prepared herself to undertake a study that could examine the important aspects of inclusive education in Malaysia. Based on the writer’s relevant literature review of the main aims of this study were developed as follows:

- To describe and critique the policy of inclusive education,
- To identify teachers’ knowledge of inclusive education,
- To compare and contrast the conceptions of special and traditional classroom teachers of inclusive education,
- To identify the attitudes of teachers, in term of their beliefs and values towards the placement of children with special needs in traditional classes,
- To investigate teachers’ perceptions of adequacy of educational and social provisions made for children with special needs and
- To examine teachers’ preferences for training in the education of children with special needs.

Finally, further information on the development of inclusive development in Malaysia

will be reported within Chapter Four.

Having presented her review of literature that was relevant to the study, the writer now describes the methodology that was used in this research.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### 3.0 Introduction

*In this chapter, the writer, first, defends her choice of developing and presenting a case study of the early stage of inclusive education in Malaysia. She then explains the methodology of the study beginning with a discussion of the sampling. The use of the chosen methodological procedures and instruments, including informant and elite interviews and document analysis, are explained while the general (i.e. simplified) usage of phenomenography and grounded theory are briefly discussed. The writer also comments on the key ethical issues that were involved in the study as well as her dual roles of researcher and government official and the task of collecting data in two languages.*

*The task of designing a study, with the possibility of influencing a nation's implementation of inclusive education, provides a huge challenge. In order to make the task manageable within the resources of one person, who is based in another country, some important decisions, of research approach and methodological design, were required.*

#### 3.1 Reasons for Choosing a Case Study

The writer chose to pursue a case study for various reasons. First, it would help her to maintain a continual focus on inclusive education in Malaysia. Besides, it would provide in-depth understanding of the implementation of Malaysian inclusive education and it would allow the construction of a "picture" of the phenomenon in Malaysia in order to address the research interests that formed the basis of the study.

In order to investigate the implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia, during its pilot phase in the mid-1990s, it was appropriate to do a case study. Moreover, very little

research is available on inclusive education in Malaysia. The writer wanted to examine and summarize relevant documentary sources. She also wanted to interview teachers from pilot and non-pilot inclusive education schools from six states to obtain data.

The writer wanted to know how inclusive education was implemented, in its early phase, in Malaysian schools and how local teachers and principals perceived it. It would be more relevant to do a case study, as very few schools in Malaysia had inclusive education at the time the study was carried out. Therefore, the group of schools in the study could be treated as a single case. Moreover, inclusive education in Malaysia was considered to be a new policy or new programme, which was best examined by using a case study as only a small number of schools were involved at the time of this study.

### **3.2 Definitions and Approaches of a Case Study**

A case study is concerned with how things happen and why (Anderson, 1990).

Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis (1976) defined the term “case study” as an umbrella term for research methods having in common the decision to focus an inquiry around an instance. In this study, the writer focused on the case of the introduction of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system.

Yin (1994, p.13) developed a technical definition for a case study. He stated that a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not evident. Multiple sources of evidence are used.

Case studies are not easy to undertake (Adelman, Jenkins & Kemmis, 1976; Anderson, 1990). The researcher must be good at asking questions, listening and observing. He or she should be adaptable, flexible and have an inquiring and unbiased mind (Anderson, 1990). Further, a case study focuses on different events, such as on a particular decision and how it has been implemented, or on the adoption of a policy or introduction of a new program.



There are two general approaches to undertaking a case study. The analytical strategy takes the literature and theoretical background of the case and utilises it as a framework for organising the data. The second approach utilises the techniques of the qualitative researcher and organises the data into descriptive themes that emerge from a content analysis of the data. Here, the researcher has to be clear about the scope and nature of the case study. In addition, Mathison (1988, p.13) maintained that good research practice requires researchers to, “triangulate, that is, to use multiple methods, data resources and research to enhance the validity of the research findings.” The present study used a combination of the above two approaches.

According to Adelman, Jenkins and Kemmis (1976, p.13), there are several advantages of case study investigation. The data are strong in case studies as they are gathered in the real settings in which people work and interact. In addition, case studies often hold appeal for the reader while they utilize participants’ knowledge and experiences, providing a natural basis for generalisation. Case studies recognise the complexity of human behaviour and the embedded nature of social truths.

By carefully attending to social situations, researchers can examine the discrepancies or conflicts between the viewpoints of participants. Hence, case studies can offer support to alternative interpretations. Case studies are steps to action as they begin in a world of action and contribute to it. Insights can be directly interpreted and used for staff or individual self-development, institutional feedback, formative evaluation and educational policy making. The writer considers that each of these advantages is present in her study.

However, a case study may have some shortcomings. For instance, researchers may be biased in their observations, as they tend to interpret things based on their own cultural backgrounds and beliefs. They may have their own preconceived notions that affect the outcomes of the study. The writer of this study, therefore, strove continually to be as fair and open-minded as possible in her observations and interviews with the subjects

and in her use and interpretation of data.

### 3.3 Reliability of the Study

According to Edwards (1986), reliability and validity are important factors in any kind of research. Reliability refers to the confidence and trust that somebody reading a research report can have in the way in which the data were gathered. He maintained that, in an ethnographic study, it is important to demonstrate the conditions under which one's observations were made (Edwards, p. 151).

Edwards (1986) elaborated that reliability in a quantitative study is ascertained by remaining distant from the subjects involved. Instruments used for data collection are interposed to minimize any interaction between the researcher and subjects. Extraneous variables are strictly controlled through randomization and standardization of subjects. The study must be replicable under similar conditions to seek confirmation or differences of results (Edwards, p. 152).

Edwards (1986) reiterated that reliability of a qualitative study is established by understanding the relationships among variables that exist in a natural context. It is established by systematically identifying and examining all causal and consequential factors in a natural setting (Edwards, p. 152). The researcher must provide all the details in which the study was carried out. Biases and other influences must be avoided. Rapport with the subjects and trust are crucial in obtaining reliable information. Edwards (1986) added that commitment of time, emotional energy, and objectivity are other important factors that have an impact upon the reliability of a study (Edwards, p.154). Further, a reliable study must have data that are systematically gathered and recorded (Edwards, 1986). All observations are written straightaway and all interviews tape-recorded to ensure accuracy (Edwards, 1986, p.154).

To ensure reliability of the study, the writer had taken the steps recommended by Edwards (1986). She had used herself as the main data-gathering tool. She had systematically gathered and recorded the data herself. Further, she was clear about the

purpose of her study and had kept it as her focus. Finally, she had examined her data carefully with guidance from her supervisor.

### 3.4 Validity of the Study

Validity is concerned with ensuring that ideas and propositions which emerge from a study are well grounded in, and soundly reasoned from, a reliable data base (Edwards, p. 156). Edwards (1986) maintained that validity, in a study such as the present one, is established by the researcher being seriously involved in the site of the study for a reasonable period besides collecting and analyzing the data by using the most appropriate techniques. The research is done in the natural setting of the subjects themselves.

The writer had collected the data by going to the schools and meeting the principals and teachers herself. She had obtained first-hand information by interacting directly with the subjects (Edwards, p 157). Edwards (1986) added that internal validity is established by actually observing what the researcher thought was being observed, while external validity was determined by making observations in an accurate and well reasoned way (p. 157).

To ensure validity of the study, the writer took the steps outlined by Edwards (1986). She tried to gain freedom of access to the participating schools by first establishing rapport with the principals. She telephoned them several times prior to interviewing them. During the interviews, she remained friendly and approachable, showing willingness to share information and to cooperate. She ascertained that a report of her study would be sent to the principals upon completion of her doctoral studies. She also had support from the Ministry of Education, where she once served as an education officer and a special educator and, currently, as a secondary school principal.

Further, the writer used interviews and surveys to gather data. She sought to do them as objectively and perceptively as possible, trying not to influence the subjects' responses.

Besides, she endeavoured to make appropriate selections of sample schools, teachers and principals. She had checked the background and reputation of the sample schools thoroughly to ensure that they were representative of inclusive education.

The literature for the study helped guide the development of the instruments.

### **3.5 Population and Sampling**

#### **3.5.1 A brief introduction to the Malaysian school system and the place of inclusive education**

The formal school system in Malaysia provides education in four stages, starting from primary to upper secondary, as shown in Appendix A. The primary level covers a period of six years. The lower secondary level covers a period of three years, followed by two years at upper secondary and another two years at pre-university (sixth form) level. The admission age for primary education is seven years. Education at primary and secondary levels is free (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994).

Most schools in Malaysia are government funded or government-aided schools. The school year is from January to October. Students are required to sit for public examinations at the end of primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and sixth form levels. They are promoted according to their performance. Those who have failed would still be promoted but are placed in different classes.

Inclusive education was introduced to the Malaysian education system at the beginning of 1995. The introduction was in line with the “Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education”, arising from a conference held in Salamanca, Spain, in 1994 (UNESCO, 1994). Participants in the conference reaffirmed their commitment to education for all, including those with special needs; traditional schools should accommodate children with special needs within a child-centered pedagogy that is capable of meeting their needs.

In Malaysia, schools selected to practise inclusive education were those that had

conducted special education classes. The pilot inclusive education schools integrated one to five students with special needs into the regular classrooms. Pilot schools, selected by the Ministry of Education for inclusive education, were found in all the Malaysian states and in the Federal Territory (Table 3.1). Many of them were located in urban areas.

**Table 3.1**

Population of Inclusive Schools in Pilot Inclusive Education Programme, Malaysia

WEST MALAYSIA				EAST MALAYSIA	
Northern	Central	S. West	Eastern	Sabah	Sarawak
Perlis	Selangor	Negeri Sembilan	Pahang	Sabah	Sarawak
Kedah	Federal Territory	Malacca	Kelantan		
Penang		Johore	Terengganu		
Perak					
4	2	3	3	1	1

### 3.5.2 How the schools were selected

six  
The schools were selected for this study by taking the following steps. The writer first identified the schools that were offering inclusive education. Then she obtained their addresses from the directory that was available at the Department of Education. Permission to obtain data was subsequently obtained by contacting the principals through mail and telephone.

### 3.5.3 Why the schools were selected

Several schools throughout Malaysia that offer inclusive education were identified. However, permission to collect data was granted by 14 principals. Due to time

constraint, the writer decided that 14 schools was a large enough sample. Moreover, every state was well represented; the bigger states tended to have more schools with inclusive education. Sabah and Sarawak are smaller states compared to the others, so they have only one or two schools that offer inclusive education. The writer was relieved that she could get at least one school principal from these two states to cooperate in her data collection. On the other hand, the northern part of West Malaysia has four states with a much larger population than Sabah or Sarawak. Thus, the writer managed to get more principals to cooperate from this region.

#### 3.5.4 Sampling plan

As noted in Table 3.1, the number of schools selected for the sample was fourteen. These schools were mostly located in the urban areas. The fourteen identified schools had existing special education classes. Diversity of the states was addressed. Further, there were special education classes in the schools. Besides, students with special needs were integrated into the traditional classes. In most of the inclusive education schools, the criteria for placement were based on the academic and psychosocial abilities of students.

For this study, teachers were selected from each of the pilot schools (three special education teachers and three traditional elementary teachers). Three traditional elementary teachers from each of the non-pilot schools were also included. For the purpose of this study, “traditional” teachers and classrooms were defined as teachers working with children without disabilities in classrooms that provide for such children. Finally, six principals from the pilot schools were selected, based on their schools being involved in inclusive education.

Only six teachers per school and another six principals were selected for the study due to the constraints of time, finances and distance that impacted upon the researcher’s ability to collect data for the study. The researcher was able to visit the schools, for data collection, only for a short period of time. The number of subjects who agreed to participate in this study was also limited.

### 3.5.5 Selection of schools and teachers

For the purpose of this study, schools were chosen from six states for data collection (Table 3.3). Selection of the states reflected the range of location, student ethnicity and cultural backgrounds so that the overall selection was reflective of the variety of inclusive education provision throughout the country (Appendix B). Four of the states, Penang from the northern zone, the Federal Territory from the central zone, Kelantan from the eastern zone and Malacca from the south-west zone, are located in West Malaysia. The other two states, Sabah and Sarawak, are located in East Malaysia.

Six non-pilot schools were chosen for the study. Due to financial and time constraints, it was difficult for the writer to access schools that have similar school populations to those involved in inclusive education. The selected schools were easily accessible by using public transportation.

Fifty-four teachers were involved in this study. Eighteen teachers, who were involved in inclusive education classes, were chosen from the pilot inclusive education schools. Eighteen special education teachers were chosen from the inclusive education pilot schools. Eighteen teachers were chosen from non-pilot schools. Finally, six principals were chosen from the pilot schools.

Teachers were chosen, based on the list of teachers provided by the school principals. The teachers were first numbered from one to 54. Going through the list, the writer selected one subject by every count of three; for example, by circling the third, the sixth, the ninth, name, and so forth.

In each pilot school, a special education (i.e. inclusive education) teacher and a teacher from a regular class were selected. From each non-pilot school, one teacher was selected (Table 3.2). Teachers from the pilot schools were selected, based on their involvement in inclusive education. Finally, six principals were chosen from the pilot

schools.

**Table 3.2**

Sample of Schools and Teachers

Groups	(WEST MALAYSIA)				(EAST MALAYSIA)		No. of states and teachers
	Northern Eastern	Central	S.West		Sabah	Sarawak	
	Penang	Federal Territory	Malacca	Kelantan	Sabah	Sarawak	6 states
1. Traditional Teachers (pilot) (coded as tp)	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
2. Special Teachers (pilot) (coded as sp)	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
3. Traditional Teachers (coded as tnp)	3	3	3	3	3	3	18
Number of teachers	9	9	9	9	9	9	54
4. Principals (coded as pps)	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
Number of principals	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

12 states  
6 states  
6 states

### 3.5.6 Reasons for selecting the states

The writer selected the various states for her research for the following reasons. These states were the pioneers of inclusive education. They had schools that specifically offer inclusive education to serve students with special needs. These states had schools that



adopted the principles of inclusive education to a great extent while schools in other states still practise special education.

The writer had written to several schools that offer inclusive education. However, only the schools in the selected states agreed to cooperate with her in terms of data collection. Due to time constraints, it was decided that only schools that had responded to her promptly were included in the study.

It was relatively easy for the writer to travel to the selected states, as they are located next to each other. It was not practical for her to travel to inclusive schools that are located in the states further north as it would incur more time and expenses.

**Table 3.3**

Reasons for the Selection of the Identified States

<b>Selected state</b>	<b>Reason for selection</b>
Federal Territory (Central Zone)	Consists of different groups of people like the Malays, Chinese, Indians and other foreigners; city people.
Penang (Northern Zone)	Culturally different due to the influence of the immigrants from the neighbouring countries.
Malacca (South West Zone)	Multi-racial like the Portuguese, Chinese, Baba
Kelantan (Eastern Zone)	Mostly Malays and Thai influence.
Sabah	Mostly indigenous people, different culture and religion.
Sarawak	Mostly indigenous people with different culture and religion.

### 3.6 Instrument Construction

Interview schedules were developed by the researcher to investigate teachers' conceptions of inclusive education and their attitudes towards, and experience in, inclusive education. Principals' views of the implementation of inclusive education in their schools were explored. Apart from the interview schedules, a questionnaire was constructed for the purpose of obtaining background information from the teachers.

### 3.7 Research Methods

In this section, the research methods used in the study are discussed, including instrument construction, administration and data analysis.

#### 3.7.1 Phenomenography of teachers' conceptions of inclusive education

The research question, "*How did the teachers conceptualize inclusive education?*" could be answered phenomenographically, an approach described by Marton (1988, p.144). Phenomenography is, "a research method adapted for mapping the qualitatively different ways in which people experience, conceptualise, perceive and understand various aspects of, and phenomena in, the world around them."

Further, these conceptions are depicted as being relational; that is, experiences of people are strongly influenced by their intentions. The context in which the phenomena are embedded, in turn, influences that experience. In line with this idea, interpretive theorists believe that reality is not found in the universe but rather in the minds of people. According to Sarantakos (1993), "reality is internally experienced, is socially constructed through interaction and interpreted through the actors, and is based on the definition people attached to it." Further, reality is what people see it to be. Therefore, human beings can only know things as they appear as phenomena.

Data collection in phenomenographic studies includes group interviews, observations, drawings, written responses and historical documents (Marton, 1994). However, the often preferred method for collecting data is individual interview because it allows the researcher to examine participants' reflections and awareness of the phenomenon through their experiences. According to Marton (1994), awareness is seen as a person's total experience of the world at a given point of time. Interviews were an important part of this study.

### 3.7.2 Use of interviews to obtain information

The teacher interview schedule was constructed on the basis of research questions. From the research questions, probing questions were prepared by the researcher. Probing questions were used to clarify and elicit answers from the participants. Anderson (1990, p. 222) stated that in-depth probing can, “clarify questions and probe for answers from the participant, providing more elaborate information.” Open-ended questions were used during the interviews because they would allow participants to answer questions without restriction. Anderson (1990, p. 234) stated that open questions,

... ask for broad or general information. They put few restrictions on how the interviewee might answer. They give recognition to the respondent and satisfy a communication by letting the individual talk through his or her ideas while you listen. They tend to be easy to answer and pose little threat since there are no right or wrong answers.

A personal interview can be the most effective means of gathering material in these circumstances:

- When you have access to a person who has specialized knowledge about a subject and who is willing to share that knowledge, and
- When a particular person’s viewpoint will add interest and force to your study. It is more effective when it is heard “straight from the horse’s mouth”.

The present study required participants to provide qualitative data whereby the researcher could preserve chronological flow of responses while participants could state precisely which events led to which consequences, leading to fruitful explanations (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The face-to-face interview is highly flexible and allows for in depth questioning. When properly planned, structured and conducted, it can be a superb way of gathering information. However, the great drawback, of course, is the cost of time and energy.

According to Lucas (1989), interviewing looks deceptively easy but, in practice, it is a complex and demanding art, both mentally and in terms of the time involved in undertaking an interview.

One of the major drawbacks, then, of the interview technique is the cost in time and energy. Interviewing the subjects required the writer to travel extensively on land and by air. Besides, making long-distance phone calls to arrange and confirm the interview details with the subjects had cost the writer a great deal of money.

To have an effective and successful interview, a researcher has to be well prepared prior to the interview. In the case of the writer, before the interview, she prepared the questions to be asked during the interview, making sure to ask sensible, intelligent and meaningful questions.

The writer tried to overcome the weaknesses of the interview method by focusing on the purpose of the interview. To save time and energy, she tried to arrange each interview well in advance with all the respective schools.

### 3.7.3 The conducting of the participant interviews

Interviews for this case study were conducted by using a number of prepared interview questions. Since most questions would follow what the participants said, impromptu questions, constructed from the previous answers, were used to establish the phenomenon of inclusive education as experienced or perceived by participants and the different aspects of inclusive education were explored jointly and as fully as possible.

During the interviews, participants were asked to reflect on their experiences of the phenomenon. Marton (1988, p.154) stated that questions should be as open-ended as possible to let participants select the dimensions of the question they intended to address. The dimensions selected are an important source of data as they reveal an aspect of the individual's "relevance" structure. Furthermore, though we have a set of

questions at the start, different interviews may follow somewhat different courses.

#### 3.7.4 Elite interviews with principals

Principals of the selected pilot schools, listed in the left-hand column of Appendix B, were asked how and why their schools were selected for inclusive education and how they felt about its introduction. Anderson (1990, p. 223) stated that an elite interview is where,

The researcher wants to probe the views of a small number of individuals who have particular experiences or knowledge about a particular subject. The interviewer should be an expert in the subject matter under discussion and be able to apply new information to pursue new directions. Through elite interview, the respondent relates to the interviewer events and personal perspectives.

#### 3.7.5 Administration of principal interviews

Principals were interviewed in their offices after the teacher interviews. The researcher explained to them the procedure of the interview. Upon the principals agreeing to participate in the study, consent forms were given to them. The researcher began by asking each principal to talk about the school in general, including school size, number of teachers, ethnicity of school population and the aims of the school. After the principals had elaborated the general background of their schools, they were asked more specific questions related to inclusive education (Appendix T).

Principals were asked to elaborate on the process of implementation of inclusive education in their schools, especially their own involvement. They were also asked to specify how they felt about the introduction of inclusive education and what changes they would make in the future. All the principals provided the required information in spite of their busy schedules.

All the principal interviews were recorded using a tape recorder. After the interviews, the writer transcribed the information immediately.

### 3.7.6 Informant interviews with classroom teachers

In this study, informant interviews were used to investigate teachers' attitudes towards, and experiences in, the implementation of inclusive education. Teachers' understanding of the policy documents and teacher education and training were examined. The informant interview, an open-ended form of interview (Yin, 1994), was used as a means of collecting information.

Powney and Watt (1987) stated that this approach enables the researcher to gain insight into the perceptions of particular persons within a situation. The interviewer attempts to help an interviewee express concerns and interests without feeling unduly hampered. Such an interview is seen as an invitation to interviewees to explore certain issues and to impose their own structure on the session in collaboration with the researcher. Yin (1994, p. 84) supports the approach, having stated that key informants are, "persons who not only provide the case study investigator with insights into a matter but also suggest sources of corroboratory evidence, and initiate the access to such sources."

### 3.7.7 Principal interview schedules

The principal interview schedule (Appendix D) consisted of a number of open-ended questions designed to probe the views of the principals concerning the introduction of inclusive education in their schools. The questions were graded from general to specific. This technique helped develop a logical progression for responses. It allowed participants to communicate relevant pieces of information (Anderson, 1990). The principals were asked the aims of their schools in general, leading to questions on how they were involved and why their schools were chosen to participate in inclusive education. They were asked how they established inclusive education in their schools. Probing questions were also initiated by the interviewer. The closing question elicited

their final comments.

Pilot testing on the principal interview schedule was not carried out because of the time and distance constraints. The principal of the school where the teacher interview schedule was pilot-tested had a tight schedule. Further, because the time frame for interviewing the teachers was limited, extra time was available to conduct the pilot test with the principals.

### 3.7.8 How the sets of interview questions were developed

The interview questions were developed after an extensive review of literature on inclusive education and in relation to what the writer had learned from her reading and thinking about inclusive education in the literature and in the early developments in Malaysia.

To get meaningful data, the writer had to know the background of each school, the students with special needs in the school and the various aspects of the development of inclusive education in the school. Further, she needed information on how successful the introduction of inclusive education was thought to have been and how teachers, principals and parents felt about it. She tried to procure information concerning the teachers' training for inclusive education and their knowledge of the Malaysian government policy on the subject. She also attempted to get information on inclusive education in other parts of the world.

### 3.7.9 Examples of principal interview questions

Principals were required to respond to several questions that aimed to examine their perceptions towards the implementation of inclusive education in their schools. Some of the interview questions are as follows:

Would you tell me a little about this school?

What are your aims for the school?

Can you tell me about the special needs children in your school?

How does the child relate to other children in the school?

Can you tell me about the other children?

Can you take me through the process of implementing inclusive education in your school?

When did you first become involved in this?

What sort of involvement did you have initially?

How did you feel about the involvement of your school?

How did you introduce it to the school?

How successful do you think the pilot of inclusive education is in your school?

How do you feel the teachers (classroom and special education) have responded to the introduction of inclusive education?

How do you feel about the parents of special and other children have responded to the introduction of inclusive education?

What do you feel about the introduction of inclusive education in your school?

Anything else you want to say?

### 3.7.10 Why some questions in the principals' interviews were not included in the results chapter

To collect data from the principals, the writer came up with fifteen questions. However, some questions are not included in the results chapter. Some questions were used to gain background information concerning the schools and principals. Therefore, they were not specially used for data analysis. Other questions were merged in order to provide a synopsis of the findings.

Questions that were specifically used for in-depth data analysis were Questions 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14. The writer decided they were directly related to the main purpose of this study, which was to examine principals' conceptions of the successful implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. She felt that these questions were



the most relevant to solicit the information needed to fulfil the purpose of the study.

### 3.7.11 Why some questions in the teachers' interviews were not included in the results chapter

To collect data from the teachers, the writer formulated fifteen questions. Some questions are not included in the results chapter, as they were mainly used to gain demographic information concerning teachers. They were not individually analyzed to produce statistical information. Other questions in the teachers' interviews were merged in order to obtain a synopsis of the findings.

Teachers' questions that were specifically used for in-depth data analysis were Questions 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, and 14. The writer decided they were directly related to the main purpose of this study, which was to examine teachers' conceptions of the successful implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. She believed that these questions were sufficient to obtain the information essential for the purpose of the study.

### 3.7.12 Teacher interview schedule

The teacher interview schedule (Appendix C) consisted of five parts, which assessed teachers' conceptions of inclusive education, teachers' understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy, teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, teachers' experiences in the implementation of inclusive education and teachers' education and training.

Before meeting the subjects, the writer reconfirmed the interview appointments with them through cellular phone contact. Once permission was obtained, the writer went to the school and interviewed the subjects in their office or in an empty classroom. After some introductory remarks, the writer began her interview straight away. Subjects were reminded that their names and everything that they said would be strictly confidential.

Participants were asked specific questions related to their teaching routine. The purpose

was to make them feel at ease and to boost their confidence. Anderson (1990) stated that asking participant's questions, ranging in nature from the specific to the general, helps them gain confidence that would later lead to freer expression.

After the participants talked about what they had done in their teaching, the general questions related to inclusive education were asked, beginning with "*Can you tell me what inclusive education means to you?*" Probing questions were then asked. Participants were required to expand on what they had said in order to clarify their answers, opinions and feelings.

A pilot test on the teacher interview schedule was earlier conducted on three Malaysian teachers who attended Massey University. The interview schedule was pilot tested in order to examine and revise its content, flow and arrangement. According to Yin (1994, p. 74), a pilot case is used "to assist an investigator in developing relevant lines of questions, possibly in providing conceptual clarification for the research design as well."

The interview schedule had also been pilot-tested on three special education teachers and three regular teachers from Sabah. No changes were required to be made. However, the form of language used was changed from English to Malay language.

### 3.7.13 Examples of teacher interview questions

Teachers were required to respond to several questions that aimed to examine their perceptions towards the implementation of inclusive education in their schools. Some of the interview questions are as follows:

Would you tell me a little about this school and your teaching role within the school?

Can you tell me about the special needs children in your school?

How does the child relate to other children in the school?

Can you tell me about the children?

How do you organize the teaching timetable in the classroom?

Have you had any other experience of children with special needs?

Can you tell me about the children with special needs in then inclusive setting?

Have you been involved in any way with the education of special needs inclusive setting?

How do you contribute to the organization of teaching in the classroom?

Can you tell me about your usual experience of special needs education?

Have you ever had special needs children in your school in the past?

Have you had any other experience of special needs children?

Inclusive education is being introduced in other countries as well as Malaysia. Can you tell me what “inclusive education” means to you?

In your view, what is the purpose of inclusive education?

The Malaysian Government has published this policy document. Have you seen it before? What was that? Have you had a chance to read it?

Have you been involved in any teacher training for inclusive education?

Have you had any other form of special needs education teacher training? Can you tell me about this?

How do you feel about the introduction of inclusive education in Malaysia?

Is there anything else you would like to say about inclusive education?

### **3.8 Using a Questionnaire: Advantages and Disadvantages**

A questionnaire was designed to obtain general background information about the participating teachers. Anderson (1990) stated that a questionnaire is generally motivated by a need to collect relatively routine data from a large number of respondents. Two types of questions were used in the questionnaire in this study: closed-response questions and open-ended questions.

The questionnaire for this study was constructed using the *closed responses* format (Appendix E). It would give a choice of answers in which participants had to check one answer only. For example, either *yes* or *no* answers were required. If the answer was *yes*, then it had to be clarified. By limiting the possible responses, a closed response questionnaire can help solicit clear, unambiguous answers.

However, closed responses tend to yield superficial answers. They do not allow subjects to express their opinions or to justify their responses. Therefore, a few open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire. Participants had to state their names and numbers were also included. The questions solicited information on gender, age, ethnicity, religion and qualifications. Training, years of teaching experience, classes taught and number of students in the class were also asked.

Open-ended questions can help to clarify and justify teachers' conceptions and attitudes towards inclusive education. They could invite more detailed responses than closed response questions. In sum, they could give maximum latitude in responding. However, open-ended questions increase the likelihood of getting answers that do not provide the kind of information that a researcher needs.

The questionnaire used in this study had been pilot-tested to identify any ambiguities in the instructions and to clarify the wording of the questions. Based on the comments obtained from the pilot test, the questionnaire was edited and suggested changes were incorporated. Few changes were made, while the language form was changed from English to the Malay language. This change was made for the benefit of the participants whose national language was the Malay language.

The questionnaire included only items that were related to the research questions of this study. The items covered attitudes of teachers and principals towards inclusive education, community attitudes, influence of the type and severity of disabilities upon teachers' attitudes and influence of class size and placement upon teachers' attitudes. The questionnaire also included items related to teacher preparation for inclusive education and conditions for the success of inclusive education.

The writer administered 54 questionnaires and all of them were duly returned. All questionnaires were adequately completed by the subjects, which allowed the writer to obtain the necessary information required for the study.

### 3.9 Administration of the Data Collection

This section describes the way in which the research sites were obtained and how the interviews and questionnaires were administered.

#### 3.9.1 Access to the research sites

A letter asking for permission to conduct the research study in the identified schools was sent to the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Access to the research sites and the sample was addressed, based on the research guidelines of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, and those of Massey University. Persons who need to undertake research involving school populations have to obtain official approval from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, and Massey University. Such approval is required before carrying out any research.

In the present study, a standard form (Appendix F) and a letter of approval (Appendix G) to conduct research in the identified schools in the six states was sent to the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. Permission was granted and an official letter of permission (Appendix H) was subsequently received by the researcher. The Ministry of Education instructed that a copy of the thesis be sent to the Ministry of Education upon completion of the research.

Directors of Education from each of the six states were informed by the Ministry of Education concerning the research study. The researcher followed up by contacting the directors via telephone and official letters (Appendix I). Directors of Education from Sarawak, Kelantan, Penang, Malacca and the Federal Territory indicated their consent for the researcher to interview teachers and principals, through letters, (Appendixes J, K, L, M). In the case of Sabah, the Director of Education gave verbal permission when the researcher made a call on him. The researcher telephoned each Director of Education to check whether or not he or she had received the letters from the Ministry of Education concerning the research study.

Procedures of the study, including confidentiality, information sheets (Appendix N and O) and consent forms were detailed (Appendix P and Q). Use of a tape recorder during the interviews was requested. Information regarding the schedule of interviews was provided in detail.

The Directors of Education relayed all the information to the principals whose schools were selected for the study. The researcher had sent letters to the principals requesting permission to interview their teachers (Appendix R).

Upon arrival at each school, the researcher had a brief discussion with the principal to provide further details about the study. Participants were randomly chosen from the list of teachers provided by the principal during this meeting. From the staff list, teachers were identified for interview, picked by every count of three people.

### 3.9.2 Summary: Administration of interviews and questionnaire

All interviews were conducted in the schools of the six chosen states. Prior to the interviews, the researcher informed the participants of the purpose of the study and its procedures. Participants were informed that they had the right to refuse to answer any particular question and to withdraw from the study at any time. Upon agreeing to participate, participants signed the consent form and the interview began.

During the introductory part of the interview, participants were told the purpose of the interview and who the interviewer was. Confidentiality was assured and the future use of the data was clearly explained. Permission to use the recording device was obtained and the duration of the interview was stated. Participants were given the option to speak in Malay or English.

The interviewer would translate any words or questions that the participants required. Respondents were interviewed individually for approximately sixty minutes. Each

interview was audio taped and later transcribed verbatim by the writer (Appendix S). At the end of the interview, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire on their personal backgrounds. Participants were aware of the interviewer being a doctoral student as well as an education official.

### 3.9.3 Summary: Data collection

In almost all cases (ie: 75%), data were collected in the Malay language while only 25% of respondents were interviewed in English. Each respondent was given their choice of responding in the language in which they felt the most comfortable. The researcher, being able to communicate in either language, was able to meet each respondent's language preference and considered that differences in language medium was not a factor affecting the verbal responses.

### 3.9.4 A note on the role of the researcher

During the data collection process, the researcher was constantly aware of the two conflicting roles that she held. On the one hand, she was the researcher with the task of undertaking her doctoral study. On the other hand, her official role was Assistant Director of Special Education and Training in her home state. Her dilemma was to collect teachers' and principals' honest perceptions and to try to help them forget her official role and not to be threatened by it. It is not easy to resolve this dilemma which, in fact, was confounded by the researcher being officially supported in her study by national and local education officials.

However, in each data gathering situation, the writer carefully explained her role as a doctoral student and actively tried to encourage her informants to be honest in their answers. She stressed that no other person would be identified and that perceptions and data would be used only for the research. As much as possible, the researcher felt that the people answered honestly, even when being critical of government policy.

Second, because of the government-approved role of the researcher's role, subjects might be cautious in responding to the open-ended questions. As teachers, they were subject to government ethics, or to abide by government rules. However, the researcher had informed the participants that the interviews were part of a thesis and that all information would be kept strictly confidential. Besides, their identity would be kept in anonymity in any reports prepared for the study. The researcher considered that this issue did not constitute a problem in constraining informants' responses.

### **3.10 Ethical Principles in the Research Context**

All researchers have the responsibility to protect the lives and the right to privacy of their subjects. They respect and protect civil and human rights and the importance of freedom of inquiry and expression in research, teaching and publication. This ethical code provides a common set of principles on which researchers should build their professional and scientific work. The ethical code aims to provide specific standards to cover most situations encountered by researchers. It has, as its goals, the welfare and protection of the individuals and groups with whom they work and the public regarding ethical standards and discipline.

Moore (1983, pp. 333) stated that, "protecting the lives of subjects concerns their social and emotional well-being as well as their inherent dignity as human beings." According to Anderson (1990), all human behaviour is subject to ethical principles, rules and conventions that distinguish socially acceptable behaviour from that which is generally considered unacceptable. Researchers strive to benefit those with whom they work and take care to do no harm. This was the intent of the researcher in the present study.

Researchers must not distort or manipulate their finding to serve untruthful, personal or institutional ends. They must not knowingly use their research roles as covers to obtain information for other than their research. Research must not expose subjects to substantial risk or personal harm in the research process. Where risk or harm is anticipated, fully informed consent must be obtained. Confidential information provided



by the participants must be sensitively treated as such by researchers, even when this information enjoys no protection or privilege. Again, the researcher sternly sought to maintain these intents.

In this study, the researcher abided by the *Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct* (New Zealand, 1994) with respect to:

Gaining informed consent,

Ensuring anonymity with respect to individuals and institutions involved,

Minimizing harm to all research stakeholders,

Acting in a truthful manner and,

Acting in a socially sensitive manner.

For this study, the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, gave approval for the researcher to use school populations as the sample. The researcher was committed to not cause any harm to the participants although she had to abide by the requirements of the government ethical code. Consent was obtained from the teachers and principals and deceit was kept out of the way by informing respondents that the purpose of the study was to examine their conceptions of inclusive education for her doctoral study. Confidentiality was maintained by keeping anonymous the identities of the individual participants and schools and ensuring that the information gathered was strictly confidential. The researcher of the present study has consistently observed all the above rules throughout the duration of her study.

### **3.11 Difficulties of Using Two Different Languages in Data Collection**

The writer had to use both the Malay language and English in collecting data. All the teachers and principals understand the Malay language, as it is the national language of Malaysia as well as a compulsory subject for primary and secondary level students. However, the questionnaires and interview questions were written in English, as the writer's dissertation is in English. One of the major difficulties is related to the teachers' or principals' English proficiency. They might misunderstand certain words,

concepts, or questions written in English or they might require the writer to translate for them.

Besides, it was difficult for the writer to judge whether respondents were proficient in English or not. There was a possibility that some teachers or principals were reluctant to ask the writer to translate, as it would expose their lack of English proficiency. Translation is time-consuming and can be frustrating. Asking the writer to translate things could be embarrassing for some teachers or principals. If they kept quiet, even though they did understand something, they would not be able to provide accurate or truthful information. Moreover, in the process of translating something, meanings of words can be distorted since it is not possible to translate everything word for word. Nevertheless, it would be more effective if the questionnaire and interviews were conducted in both the Malay language and English.

### **3.12 Advantages of Using Two Different Languages in Data Collection**

The writer interviewed the teachers and principals, using either the Malay language or English, depending on their preference. Teachers and principals who lacked English proficiency naturally would prefer to be interviewed in the Malay language; otherwise, they would not be able to participate in this study at all. Using two different languages was advantageous as it encouraged more teachers or principals to participate in this study.

If the questionnaires or interviews were solely in English, then those who lacked English proficiency would either provide inaccurate information or simply refuse to cooperate. Hence, the writer had to use the Malay language to solicit information from some respondents. Moreover, some teachers or principals might feel more patriotic if they use the Malay language (despite the fact that they might have been educated overseas). Some teachers and principals also used *Manglish* (a mixture of Malay and English words). In sum, using both the Malay language and English in collecting data led to better cooperation from both teachers and principals.

### 3.13 A Note on the Researcher's Language Background

English is the second language of the writer. The Malay Language is the national language of her home country, Malaysia. However, her own dialect is Kadazandusun, as her ethnicity is Kadazandusun, one of the races found in Malaysia. In brief, the writer is proficient in English, Malay Language, and Kadazandusun. However, she uses English and Malay Language more often, especially for official purposes. She speaks Kadazandusun to family members and individuals with the same indigenous background.

### 3.14 Data Analysis

Data analysis of a case study consists of examining, categorizing, tabulating or otherwise recombining the evidence to address the initial propositions or concerns of the study (Yin, 1994, p. 102). In this study, data were analysed by using a phenomenographic perspective and a much simplified approach to grounded theory.

#### 3.14.1 Grounded theory

In this study, data were analysed using the principles of grounded theory, a method practiced in a variety of social science disciplines. The basic principle of this method is that a theory must emerge from, or be grounded in, the data. Hence, the approach is inductive rather than deductive. Strauss (1987, p. 22) defined grounded theory as,

detailed grounding by systematically and intensively analyzing data, often sentence by sentence. The focus of the analysis is not merely on collecting or ordering a mass of data but on organizing many ideas which have emerged from analysis of the data.

Grounded theory aims at being a rigorous method by providing detailed and systematic procedures for data collection, analysis and theorizing. It is also concerned with the quality of emergent theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967) provided four interrelated

properties for grounded theory. It should closely fit the substantive area to which it will be applied and must correspond closely to the data if it is to be applied in daily situations.

The data should fit the circumstances in which they will be used. The data must be readily understood by the people working in the area and sufficiently general to the substantive area, not to just a specific type of situation. Finally, the data must allow the user partial control over the structure and process of daily situations as they change through time. Hence, it should state the conditions under which the theory applies and provide a basis for action in the area.

The rest of the teacher and principal interview data on various topic areas were analysed. They included teachers' knowledge of policy, teachers' attitudes towards and experiences in inclusive education and principal interview data. A set of codes was developed to identify the categories of content emerging from the transcripts. Analysis of the data in this study involved three processes (Becker, 1993): open coding, where the data were broken down to identify relevant categories; axial coding, where categories were refined, developed and related; and selective coding, where the core category that tied all other categories was identified and related to the other categories.

#### 3.14.2 Examples of codes that the writer had developed

For the sake of data analysis, the writer had developed several codes. Some of the examples of the codes used in this study are as follows:

NO.	CODES	EXPLANATION
1.	Tp	Traditional pilot (teachers)
2.	Sp	Special pilot (teachers)
3.	Tnp	Traditional non-pilot (teachers)
4.	Pps	Principal pilot schools

### 3.14.3 Three processes used for data analysis

The writer had used three processes to analyze her data, which are as follows:

NO.	PROCESS	EXAMPLES
1.	Phenomenography	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data are transcribed.</li> <li>2. Analysis based on criteria of relevance.</li> <li>3. Quotes are interpreted and classified.</li> <li>4. Categories of descriptions are the main results.</li> </ol>
2.	Grounded Theory	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Data are analysed intensively and systematically-sentence by sentence.</li> <li>2. Data are easily understood.</li> <li>3. Applicable in daily situations.</li> </ol>
3.	Triangulation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Interview group of teachers.</li> <li>2. Compare data finding with other sources.</li> </ol>

### 3.14.4 Transcription and analysis of data

After the interviews, the audiotapes were transcribed and analyzed. The techniques of analyzing the data are outlined by Marton (1988, pp. 154-155) whose description is used in the following paragraphs. The first phase of the analysis is selection based on criteria of relevance. Utterances found to be important in relation to the question being investigated are selected and noted. Occasionally, the meaning of an utterance lies in the utterance itself but the interpretation must be made in relation to the context from which the utterance is derived. The phenomenon in question is interpreted in terms of selected quotes from the interviews. Subsequently, the quotes are interpreted and classified, based on the context from which they are taken. The selected quotes create the data pool that forms the basis for the next step in the analysis. Attention is shifted from the individual interviews from which the quotes are abstracted to the meaning embedded in the quotes.

Interest is focused on the pool of meanings from the data. Thus, each quote has two interpretations, based on the interview from which it was taken and the pool of meanings to which it belongs. A step-by-step differentiation is made within the pool of meanings. As each consecutive step has implications for the steps that follow and also for the preceding steps, the analysis goes through several runs in which different steps

are considered simultaneously. Utterances are categorized, based on similarities and differences. Each category is illustrated by quotes from the data. The categories of description and the outcome space (the set of categories) are the main results of a phenomenographic study.

Categories of description are a set of different understandings of a phenomenon derived from the data (Bowden, 1994). The categories are constructed in relation to the data that represent the relationships between the phenomenon and the participants' experiences of the phenomenon (Walsh, 1994). They have structural and referential aspects which are logically intertwined (Marton, Dall'Alba & Beaty, 1993).

The following description leans heavily on Marton and Booth (1997), according to whom a structural aspect is a way of experiencing something by seeing it as a whole and relating it to other parts of the phenomenon. It refers to how the outcome is arranged. The referential aspect is seeing the parts and the whole of the phenomenon and the relationship between them. It refers to what the outcome is about. The structural aspect consists of both external and internal horizons. The external horizon refers to the surrounding of the phenomenon and its contours, while the internal horizon refers to the parts and their relationships, including the contours of the phenomenon experienced (Marton, 1988).

Categories of description are the most significant outcome because the phenomenographer can discover and classify previously unspecified ways in which people think about certain aspects of reality (Marton, 1988). Marton and Booth (1997, p. 136) stated that, "the categories of description depicting the different ways in which a certain phenomenon is experienced and the logical relationships between them constitute the outcome space of the phenomenon." The categories of description in the outcome space are the qualitatively different ways of experiencing a phenomenon which forms a hierarchy (Marton & Booth, 1997), defining hierarchical structure in terms of its increasing complexity. The categories of description are arranged according to the inclusiveness and complexity of the phenomenon in question.

Referring to this outcome space, the categories of description can be compared with one another in order to judge how appropriate, in relation to specified criteria, is the understanding they represent (Marton, 1994). Thus, a category of description is a reasonable characterization of a possible way of experiencing something based on available data (Marton & Booth, 1997).

Results derived from the data, which are analyzed phenomenographically, might not be the same if the same data are examined by another person (Marton, 1994). The analysis undertaken is a discovery procedure where the researcher has to identify the qualitatively different ways of how people experience a certain phenomenon and construct the categories of description. Though the results may not be the same, the outcome space of a phenomenon should be communicated in such a way that other researchers could recognize instances of the different ways of experiencing a phenomenon.

#### 3.14.5 Content analysis of government documents and seminar report

In this study, documents and reports were analysed using content analysis (Babbie, 1992) which addressed the questions of who, why, when, what, where and how. The following questions were constructed to extract information from the documents:

Who composed the documents?

Why were they written?

What were the institutional constraints and the general organizational routines under which the documents were prepared?

How confidential were the documents?

What were the key categories and concepts used to organize the content of the documents?

On what sort of theoretical issues did these documents cast light?

What were the similarities and differences between the policy documents?

How were they related?

How did the Inclusive Education Policy develop?

The document analysis provided important background to the study and the development of its aims.

Having addressed these questions, the writer was able to construct her descriptions of events and policies of inclusive education in Malaysia.

#### 3.14.6 Triangulation of data

According to Edwards (1986), triangulation involves the identification of various sources of data and the means of gathering them by the researcher. The sources of data and methods enable the writer to gather data based on the differing viewpoints of different subjects and to crosscheck those data. Crosschecking helps establish the validity of the study as it enables the writer to check different sources of data and to test perceptions against those of subjects (Edwards, p. 160). Triangulation is an important procedure that ensures that data and ideas are valid (Edwards, p. 161). Following the guidelines on triangulation outlined by Edwards (1986), the writer constantly tried to ensure that important points were crosschecked to ensure accuracy. Several sources were used to triangulate data for this study.

The writer triangulated data on specific topics and aspects of the study by asking similar questions of different groups of people. For example, she had examined some research studies on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in her review of literature. However, most of them were conducted in other countries, especially the USA. It would be a good idea to replicate certain research topics with Malaysian subjects in order to compare and contrast things. Educational practices that are implemented in other countries, such as the USA, may not be accepted by Malaysian teachers or principals.

The writer practiced triangulation by having in-depth interviews with the teachers and principals, focusing on their conceptions on the successful implementation of inclusive education all the time. Precise questions were asked. Irrelevant questions and small talk were strictly avoided to ensure accuracy. In short, she referred to the set of



interview questions all the time to stay focused on the topic. Cross-checking was done throughout the data analysis process, especially when the writer was transcribing and analysing the data.

In her review of literature, the writer summarized some research findings on the important factors related to inclusive education as well as the planning and implementation of inclusive education. To determine the generalizability and relevance of such findings, she decided to use them as references while designing her questionnaire.

To get first-hand information, the writer talked to parents, teachers, and principals who were interested in, or were involved with, children with special needs. Further, she also examined research on the nature of inclusive education in other countries in order to undertake a study that could examine the important aspects of inclusive education in Malaysia.

To ensure accuracy, the writer carefully crosschecked her data during the transcription. Proofreading was done by one of the writer's reputable and interested academic colleagues.

### **3.15 A Further Note on Limitations of the Study**

Further to comments in Chapter One, in this study, qualitative methods were employed in order to elicit teachers' and principals' conceptions of, and attitudes towards, inclusive education. People's individual experiences and their own perspectives and interpretations of those experiences were emphasized. As explained by Marton (1992), individuals see or understand a phenomenon in different ways and the phenomenon looks or appears different to other individuals.

There were limitations that restricted the generalizability of the findings of this study. First, the small number of participants and schools made generalization to a larger

population difficult. The participants and schools were not representative of all states but the participants did not differ very much in the nature of their teacher training. Sampling did not take account of possible differences in religious or cultural beliefs.

Selection of one state per zone was to reflect the different characteristics of the participants and schools in different regions. Furthermore, the participants and schools were carefully selected to meet the specific criteria of the study. All participants were willing to express their viewpoints, positive and negative, concerning inclusive education in Malaysia.

Finally, data were collected in selected school districts within the identified states. The schools were pioneers in inclusive education. While coming from teachers and principals in only the small group of early inclusive education schools, nevertheless, the data would provide insight into the conceptions, understanding and attitudes of these teachers and principals with regard to the implementation of inclusive education.

### **3.16 Conclusion**

Having prepared her approach to the study and her data collection, as described in this chapter, the writer was ready to undertake the work that she reports in the following chapters.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINDINGS: DOCUMENTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

*In this chapter the writer analyses relevant government documents concerning the Malaysian education system, most notably the National Education Philosophy and Special Education Philosophy and how they extend and relate to inclusive education. The writer also evaluates the report on the First National Seminar of Inclusive Education organised by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, June 8 to 10, 1994, and she examines the key documents that underpinned the development of inclusive education in Malaysia throughout the early 1990s. Her own role in some of these events is explained in the chapter.*

#### 4.1 Education in Malaysia

The education system in Malaysia reflects the multi-faceted role it assumes in creating a united, democratic, just, liberal and progressive society. The overriding objectives of education are national unity and human resource development. Educational policies are also aimed at providing greater opportunity for lower income groups and for those from the disadvantaged regions of the country (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a).

##### 4.1.1 Education structure and the school system in Malaysia: A short introduction

The school system in Malaysia provides education from primary to upper secondary levels (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a). The primary level covers a period of six years while the secondary level covers a period of three years, followed by two years at the upper secondary and another two years at sixth form levels. At the end of six years of primary education, students sit for a public examination, the Primary School Achievement Test. At the lower secondary level, upon completing the three years,

students sit for the Lower Certificate of Education. The same applies to the upper secondary level and post-secondary level. Upon completing two years at both levels, students sit for the Malaysian Certificate of Education and the Malaysian Higher School Certificate, respectively.

## 4.2 The National Education Policy

The National Education Policy laid the foundation for national unity and development. The invidious effects of past colonial practices necessitated the introduction of a more positive strategy to meet new challenges as well as the needs of social, economic and political realities. This gave way to the proclamation of Rukunegara (National Ideology), an important milestone in the development of education (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a) in our country.

The Ministry of Education, Malaysia (1994a, p. 3) states that the aspirations and principles of the Rukunegara are as follows:

- achieving a greater unity of all the people;
- maintaining a democratic way of life;
- creating a just society in which the wealth of the nation will be equitably shared;
- ensuring a liberal approach to the rich and diverse cultural traditions of Malaysia; and
- building a progressive society which shall be oriented to modern science and technology.

The guiding principles of the National Ideology are as follows:

- belief in God;
- loyalty to the King and country;
- upholding of the constitution;
- upholding of the rule of law; and,
- good behaviour and morality.

The National Education Philosophy (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994b) and Special Education Philosophy (Bakar, 1990) were written by a decision-making committee at the Ministry level. The purpose of this documentation was to ensure that every individual in the system, from policy makers and planners to classroom teachers, primary and secondary school students, as well as supporting staff, understands and internalises the ultimate goals and spirit of both philosophies (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994b).

### 4.3 National Education Philosophy

According to the Ministry of Education Malaysia, (1994a) the National Education Philosophy was well reasoned. It was formulated in 1988 with the aim of preparing more dynamic, productive, caring and humanistic citizens for the forthcoming challenges in the process of attaining industrialised status. The National Education Philosophy stated that:

*Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a, p.vii).*

To ensure quality education management and delivery systems, the National Education Philosophy was used as the guiding principle in all matters pertaining to education planning and implementation. The formulation served as a framework to meet the strategy challenges of *Vision 2020*. It was disseminated throughout the entire education

system, with the following aims:

- To translate the key categories and concepts of the National Education Philosophy into educational programmes and activities.
- To provide the essential intellectual, affective and psychomotor skills in a holistic and integrated manner in order to produce balanced individuals.
- To inculcate and nurture national consciousness through fostering common ideals, values, aspirations and loyalties in order to mold national unity and national identity in a multi-ethnic society.
- To produce human power with the requisite skills for economic and national development.
- To inculcate in pupils the desired moral values and prepare them to be responsible citizens.

In the context of inclusive education, students with special needs would be taught in an integrated setting and be part of a scientific and progressive society. They should also be given the opportunity to be trained according to their abilities and offered mainstream work experience programmes.

#### **4.4 Special Education Philosophy**

The 1961 Education Act established a legal foundation for the provision of services for children with special needs in Malaysia. Based on this legal foundation, the Cabinet Committee Report 1979, known as the Mahathir Report (Bakar, 1990) made a recommendation under section 169 to provide educational and rehabilitation programmes for children with special needs, recommending the following:

*Realising that the government should be responsible for the education of children with special needs, it is recommended that the government should completely assume this responsibility of providing education from the organisations that are managing it at present. Besides, the participation of*

*voluntary organisations, improving the education of children with special needs should continue to be encouraged* (Bakar, 1990, p.8).

Based on this recommendation, the decision-making committee formulated the Special Education Philosophy, as an extension to the National Education Philosophy, which stated the following:

*Special education shares the basic purpose of all education, the optimal development of individuals as skilful, purposeful and resourceful, develop the basic skills in the technological literacy, facilitate their entry into the ranks of self-employed, able to plan and manage life and realise the highest potential as individuals and member of a contributing and well-balanced society* (Bakar, 1990, p.5).

The Malaysian Education Policy related to the education of children with special needs is found to be similar in principle and practice when compared with that of other countries. For example, the United States PL 94-142, Education for All Handicapped Children Act, 1975, ensures that educational services are provided to all students, regardless of the nature of their disabilities (Foreman, 1997). The UK Education Act, 1981, requires children with special needs to learn together with children in the traditional classroom (Ford, 1994). Many states in Australia have legislation ensuring that educational services are provided to students with special needs, for example, the Queensland Education Act (1989) and the Australian Disability Discrimination Act (1992). In New Zealand, the Special Education Act (1989) that made provision for students with special needs to gain access to education in traditional schools (UNESCO, 1995) was overtaken by more recent legislation.

The key categories and concepts of the various government documents, Special Education Policy and Inclusive Education Policy, are similar to the National Education Philosophy, which emphasises an appropriate education for all children. The National Education Philosophy requires that the traditional curriculum be modified to meet the

unique needs of children with special needs.

#### **4.5 Inclusive Education Policy**

Policy issues on inclusive education in Malaysia are focused on the stipulated goals and achievement of *Vision 2020*, which are to ensure that Malaysia becomes an industrialised nation with a caring culture and society (Bakar, 1993). Policy issues should be evaluated in the context of the Mission and Operational Achievement of *Vision 2020* to which the Ministry of Education has fully subscribed. In the context of children with special needs, there should be a full partnership between economic progress and programmes for national resources development.

The goals of *Vision 2020*, in relation to the Inclusive Education Policy (Bakar, 1993), are the pursuit of *education for all* and the pursuit of inclusive education in an integrated setting. This view is in line with the principle of inclusive education that emphasises that children are to learn together regardless of any difficulties or differences that they may have (UNESCO, 1994).

Placement of children with special needs in Malaysia should be based on their ability in coping with academic work. Since many schools have double sessions due to shortages of classrooms, it has been recommended that only the morning session include inclusive education. In the Malaysian education system, children with special needs are placed in regular classes, based on reports made by special education teachers (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994b). The Malaysian educational policy specifies that children with special needs have just as much right to enrol in any schools in their districts.

#### **4.6 Status of the Implementation of Inclusive Education**

The Inclusive Education Policy is an integral part of the education system of Malaysia (Ministry of Education, Malaysian, 1994b). It is an extension of the Special Education Policy. Thus, the stated policies and measurable objectives should be used as indicators where the planning for the delivery of services can fit within the framework of the



general education system.

According to Bakar (1993), planning and management of the education of children with special needs should be within the appropriate general educational context. They should be part of the educational system and should not be allowed to develop into an isolated instructional system. Rather, there should be shared responsibility and priority to meet the goals of educational integration towards the right to education, equality of opportunity and participation in society. Social justice and life-long education are crucial to produce self-employed individuals. In short, inclusive education should be an integral part of regular education rather than a separate form of education.

#### **4.7 The Development of Thinking which Underpinned the Implementation in Malaysia**

In this section, the writer analyses ten key documents, produced between 1990 and 1995 that provided the foundation for implementing inclusive education in Malaysia. The use of a table enabled the writer to identify the essence and contribution of each key item in a way that would succinctly illustrate the contributions and linkages of these documents.

**Table 4.1**  
Document Analysis: Summary

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	REASONS FOR DOCUMENT	CONSTRAINTS ON DOCUMENT PREPARATION	CONFIDENTIALITY OF DOCUMENT: YES/NO	KEY CATEGORIES & CONCEPTS OF DOCUMENT	THEORETICAL CONCERNS OF DOCUMENT	COMPARISON OR LINKS WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS	CONTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENT TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT
First National Workshop the Education of Children with special needs: Structure and Different Models of Service Deliveries in Congruent with the Policy Recommendations of the Mahathir Report and the Formation of the Inter-Ministry Committee. (1990)	Wan Kalthom Bte Wan Chik Bakar	To address the implementations of the various programmes within the framework of the Mahathir recommendations and the framework of the inter ministerial committee.	To look for information on the overall Malaysian education System.	No	To provide a framework for program planning and operation. To assist in promoting communication among administrators, teachers, parents and students.	The National Education Policy laid the foundation for national unity and rapid national development, the invidious effects of past colonial practices necessitated the introduction of a more positive strategy to meet new challenges as well as the needs of social, economic and political realities.	The National Education Policy and the Mahathir Recommendation 169.	<i>The Ministry of Education broadened its scope</i> to include the education of the educable, mentally retarded, children with behaviour/ communication disorders, speech and language problems, the learning disability group and the mild autistic behavioural type children
Persidangan Pendidikan Nasional – Pengisian Wawasan Pendidikan (National Education Seminar- National Education Vision) 1993	Dr. Wan Mohd. Zahid bin Mohd.Noordin	To implement the vision 2020 in accordance to the education system in Malaysia.	To look for alternatives in developing the Malaysian Education system which helps in achieving the best quality education for the people of Malaysia.	No	To improve the quality of education in Malaysia.	To guarantee quality education for the people of Malaysia.	Vision 2020	<i>Preparation for the implementation of inclusive education</i> in the Malaysian Education System.
First Malaysian National Seminar on Policy issues on Inclusive Education in Malaysia (1993)	Wann Kalthom bte Wan Chik Bakar	To review policies and practices to accommodate the implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia.	To evaluate all policies related to Vision 2020.	No	Based on the Vision 2020.	To meet the needs of the students in the inclusive education policy.	The National Education Philosophy, Special Education Policy, Vision 2020.	<i>The beginning of inclusive education</i> in the Malaysian Education System.

TITLE	AUTHOR(S)	REASONS FOR DOCUMENT	CONSTRAINTS ON DOCUMENT PREPARATION	CONFIDENTIALITY OF DOCUMENT: YES/NO	KEY CATEGORIES & CONCEPTS OF DOCUMENT	THEORETICAL CONCERNS OF DOCUMENT	COMPARISON OR LINKS WITH OTHER DOCUMENTS	CONTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENT TO INCLUSIVE EDUCATION POLICY DEVELOPMENT
Laporan Bengkel Kebangsaan Pertama "Inclusive Education" (Report on the workshop on inclusive education) 1994	Ministry of Education-School Division	To collect all reports on inclusive education.	To organize all reports from the groups.	No	For the Government to look at.	The needs and supports to implement inclusive education in the schools.	School policy	To make <u>clarification within the school policy for the introduction of inclusive education</u> in schools.
Panduan Pelaksanaan Pendidikan Inklusif (Guidance for the implementation of inclusive education) 1994	Ministry of Education School Division	To address the needs for inclusive education.	None	No	To organize the schedule for the implementation of inclusive education	The effectiveness on the implementation of inclusive education.	School policy and Vision 2020	<u>To make teachers understand about inclusive education</u>
Bengkel Kebangsaan Pertama Pendidikan "Inclusive" 1994	Winy Bosi	To inform about the supervision and monitoring of inclusive education.	None	No	Supervision and monitoring	Shared responsibility	Special education policy and Vision 2020	<u>To enlighten the needs for inclusive education in schools.</u>
Seminar Kebangsaan Pendidikan Khas Ke Arah Peluang Yang Sama dan Penyertaan Sepenuhnya. Pendidikan Inklusif :Pendidikan untuk Semua (Seminar on Inclusive Education) 1995	Kamariah bte Jalil	To inform people of the needs for inclusive education in Malaysian schools.	None	No	No segregation in schools.	Segregation makes life miserable for many disabled children and their parents.	Vision 2020	The information <u>strengthened the need for inclusive education</u> in schools.
Seminar Kebangsaan Pendidikan Khas – Kurikulum Pendidikan Inklusif (Seminar on Inclusive Education) 1995	Ministry of Education Malaysia, School Division	To inform about the curriculum for the inclusive education.	To work with the curriculum sector in the Ministry of Education Malaysia.	No	Curriculum needs for the students.	To include all aspects of education such as knowledge, discipline, and moral values.	School policy.	To make everyone <u>understand the kind of curriculum required for inclusive education.</u>
Seminar Kebangsaan Pendidikan Khas-Monitoring special education program (1995)	Ministry of Education: Inspector of Schools	To explain the role of school inspectors in the implementation of special education.	None	No	Monitoring schedules and programmes.	Shared responsibility	School policy, Vision 2020	<u>To oversee the implementation of inclusive education</u>
Seminar Kebangsaan Pendidikan Khas-Pendidikan Inklusif (1995)	Teachers Training Division, Ministry of Education Malaysia	To inform how teachers training division is involved in the implementation of inclusive education.	None	No	Shared responsibility	Shared responsibility	School policy and Vision 2020	<u>Participated in training special education teachers for inclusive education.</u>

#### **4.8 The First National Seminar on Inclusive Education at Langkawi (1994): The Writer's Presentation**

The key event in the implementation of inclusive education was the First National Seminar on Inclusive Education (1994) at which the writer was one of the participants and a presenter. This event moved inclusive education from being a policy, based on a national philosophy that was now recognizing the rights of all children with regard to educational opportunity, to “spreading the word” about inclusive education to two hundred key leaders with the result that this type of teaching for children with special needs would now begin to happen – i.e. to be implemented. As shown by closer inspection of the document analysis table, later events in Malaysia, in the 1990s, began to focus on helping teachers to understand inclusive education, to increase awareness of inclusive education, for relevant curriculum development to occur and to increase the training opportunities for people involved in inclusive education. Such key aspects of focus are noted in the final column of the table where the relevant phrases are underlined and in italics.

The writer presented a paper to participants entitled “Monitoring special education” at the First National Seminar on Inclusive Education held in Langkawi (1994). She talked about special education in Sabah and how the programme was carried out.

Many of the participants were not sure what special education was. The writer related her own experience in handling the special education programme. The writer told them about some children who were referred to her as not fit to be in their schools. The writer visited the schools and found that most of the students were physically handicapped and not slow learners. One student had no arm and the student was heavy on top. He could not move to the first level of the school. The class he had was on the first floor.

The writer explained to the participants the meaning of special education and how it could be carried out. The most important thing to do was to identify these children in their respective schools. Once it was done then the school management had to plan and

organize its programme. The things that needed to be addressed were the school's learning and teaching programme. The school management had to conduct its supervision on the teachers and the activities planned and organized by the teachers. Meetings and discussions should be held with the teachers about their progress and experience. Daily meetings were advisable so as to correct and improve their performance.

Participants were enlightened and pleased with the presentation. Other directors congratulated the Deputy Director of the Sabah Education Department on a good presentation. Since then, the writer had been entrusted with the running of special education in Sabah.

The seminar is now reported in greater detail.

#### **4.9 Details of the First National Seminar on Inclusive Education at Langkawi (1994)**

The First National Seminar on Inclusive Education, organised by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, was held at Langkawi, Malaysia from June 8 to 10, 1994. It was attended by two hundred people, including all the state deputy directors of education throughout the country, special education teachers, teachers from the pilot inclusive education schools and representatives from non-governmental organisations. The purpose of the seminar was to update and inform all those people who would be involved about the Inclusive Education Policy that the Ministry of Education planned to implement for development in this area of education.

During the First National Seminar, representatives from government and non-governmental organisations were divided into groups to discuss each of the topics presented and to report their deliberations. Subsequently, the Special Education Department compiled the group work and published the deliberations as a source of reference for all the state education departments in Malaysia. The report on the First National Seminar on Inclusive Education was compiled by the Special Education

Department and the report was the outcome of the discussion on each of the topics presented.

Papers presented during the First National Seminar covered a wide area related to children with special needs, which included the following:

- Inclusive education as an integral part of the education system;
- Special needs and the community;
- Implementation of inclusive education through the basic teacher training curriculum in teachers' training colleges;
- Examination and evaluation of the education system and national examinations.
- Monitoring and supervision of inclusive education; and
- School policies on the implementation of inclusive education.

The Special Education Philosophy, an extension of the National Education Philosophy, extended its provisions to the education of children with special needs in traditional classroom settings. Through this extension, inclusive education was introduced into the education system, incorporating the principles of the educational provisions towards effective schools for all. This development was accepted and implemented in most of the states in Malaysia where children with special needs were now learning with others in traditional classroom settings. This provision emphasises an appropriate education so that children with special needs, to the extent of their capabilities, may experience success and acceptance and develop a sense of worth.

An appropriate education for all children in accordance with the National Ideology emphasises the need to create a united, democratic, just, liberal and progressive society. Additionally, the Special Education Philosophy and the National Education Philosophy serve as guiding principles that can provide greater opportunities for everyone, especially for those in the lower socioeconomic groups and those from disadvantaged regions.

During the First Seminar on Inclusive Education, various issues related to the implementation of inclusive education were addressed, which included the following:

- More seminars, conferences and short term courses were needed prior to the implementation of inclusive education.
- Due to the shortage of trained and experienced teachers, schools that offer inclusive education would have to employ untrained, temporary teachers.
- There was a lack of commitment from parents.
- There was a lack of facilities and space to implement inclusive education.
- Children with low functioning skills (cognitive) are difficult to teach as well as having discipline problems.
- Islamic education for Muslim children is not adequately met.

However, recommendations were made for the Ministry of Education to act upon the problems associated with inclusive education. The recommendations included the following:

- Train more teachers;
- Provide on-going short term courses;
- Organize seminars and conferences for administrators, principals and teachers;
- Require teachers' colleges to prepare courses on special and inclusive education;
- Start a parent-teacher association to encourage parental involvement;
- Give the school principals the power to utilise funds;
- Provide attractive learning facilities;
- Provide more extra-curricular activities; for example, field trips;
- Employ more specialists, such as speech therapists and child psychologists;
- Train special education teachers to teach the Islamic religion;
- Develop a workable educational assessment program;
- Provide incentive payments for all teachers;
- Provide additional teaching aids such as computers and music instruments;
- Organise more seminars and dialogue with parents and the community;

- Gain community involvement;
- Avoid labelling of children and schools; and,
- Provide vocational education at the secondary school level.

In terms of the Inclusive Education Policy, representatives at the First Seminar on Inclusive Education suggested that implementation be standardised throughout Malaysia, with the Inclusive Education Policy as a guideline. At the local level, implementation should be based on individual schools and their location.

Also identified, during the First Seminar on Inclusive Education, was the role of teacher training colleges, an important factor for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Three lecturers from teacher training colleges and an officer from the Teacher Education Division were subsequently sent to Flinders University, South Australia, to undergo an intensive short-term training course on inclusive education.

The First National Seminar on Inclusive Education took place at Langkawi Island in Malaysia is summarized in the following table.

**Table 4.2**

The First National Seminar on Inclusive Education: In Summary

Target Group	Papers Presentation	Comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deputy Director of Education from all the states of Malaysia.</li> <li>▪ Special education teachers from special schools and pilot inclusive education schools.</li> <li>▪ Non-governmental organizations.</li> <li>▪ Teachers training colleges.</li> <li>▪ Local university representatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inclusive education as integral to the Malaysian education system.</li> <li>▪ Disability and the community.</li> <li>▪ Inclusive education curriculum in the Teachers Training Colleges.</li> <li>▪ Examinations and evaluations in the national examinations.</li> <li>▪ Monitoring and supervising inclusive education.</li> <li>▪ Policies on inclusive education.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Papers were presented by selected officers from the Ministry of Education Malaysia.</li> <li>▪ The writer was one of the presenters whose paper was on monitoring and supervising inclusive education.</li> </ul>



Papers on the topic related to special education and inclusive education were presented by those selected officers from the special education section at the Ministry level. After each presentation, each group was to discuss the issues related to the topic and then the outcome of the discussion was presented to all the groups. Comments and suggestions were noted so as to improve the implementation of inclusive education. The most important issues that needed to be addressed by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia were on the shortage of trained specialist teachers and the insufficient facilities.

One important outcome of this training was the development of a proposal to introduce inclusive education in the basic teacher training curriculum (MacMullin & Vaz, 1995). It was recommended that the curriculum include cooperative learning, peer-tutoring and mixed-ability teaching. The representatives also recommended that the duration of teacher training be increased to three years, with the third year as an attachment programme in an inclusive education class. Normally, teacher training in Malaysia takes two years.

Due to age and ability differences within classes, it is difficult to provide the most appropriate instruction in Malaysian schools. In Malaysia, placement is not based on age appropriateness. For example, children with special needs who are eight years old are usually placed in the Primary One class with children aged six (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994). Further, placement of children with special needs differs from country to country. In Western countries such as the USA, the UK, Australia and New Zealand, age-appropriateness is used as a criterion for placement of children with special needs (Foreman, 1996). This principle implies the need for teaching and personal interactions that reflect the chronological age of the students.

Overall attitudes of those who participated in the First Seminar on Inclusive Education were very encouraging as their positive recommendations would be implemented soon by the Ministry of Education, Malaysia. It was evident that the participants were deeply concerned and, if their concerns were addressed accordingly, acceptance of inclusive education would be increased. Therefore, the Ministry of Education began to seriously

look at the recommendations for inclusive education in order to determine its effectiveness and to ensure successful implementation.

#### **4.10 The Writer's Role Following the First Seminar on Inclusive Education**

It was at this point that the Sabah State Education Department convened a meeting with all State Education officers to explain to them about the implementation of inclusive education in the state. The writer was one of those people. After the seminar, the writer went back to Sabah and was instructed to start inclusive education in many of the schools. The writer organized seminars for special education teachers and also began to explain the implementation of inclusive education to principals of schools that were directly involved in the beginning of inclusive education. As part of these developments, the writer was sent to New Zealand for doctoral study on inclusive education.

The writer's personal views on inclusive education at the early stage of the implementation of inclusive education in the pilot inclusive schools were more of the weaknesses than strengths. The following table shows the strengths and weaknesses of inclusive education in Malaysia as assessed by the writer at the early stage of implementation.

**Table 4.3**

The First National Seminar on Inclusive Education: Strengths and Weaknesses

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The Ministry of Education Malaysia was ready to introduce inclusive education in the Malaysian school system.</li> <li>▪ State education directors were supportive on this government policy of inclusive education.</li> <li>▪ Parents from the high income groups welcomed this programme due to their needs being met.</li> <li>▪ The government had special funds for the inclusive education programme.</li> <li>▪ Selected education officers were sent to do PhD study at the selected universities abroad.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The ground root is that parents, teachers, principals and head masters/mistresses were not ready for the implementation.</li> <li>▪ Principals, headmasters and mistresses were reluctant to have inclusive education in their schools because they found it a burden to them. Managing a big number of students is not an easy task. In Malaysia every class has 45-50 students. Inclusive education would add to the load.</li> <li>▪ Parents from low income groups have problems to send their children to the pilot schools because the pilot schools were in the urban areas.</li> <li>▪ The introduction of inclusive education was very hasty and school management was not equipped with trained special education teachers.</li> <li>▪ Many of the regular teachers were not in favour of including special needs children in their classes because they were difficult to manage.</li> <li>▪ There was a lack of expertise in inclusive education.</li> <li>▪ Funding was available for the inclusive education programme but there was no space to run the programme.</li> <li>▪ For many of the trained special education officers, they were not posted to the inclusive education schools. Instead some of them were assigned to be schools principals; e.g. the writer herself.</li> </ul>

#### **4.11 Idea for Developing or Piloting Inclusive Education in Malaysia**

The idea of developing or piloting inclusive education in Malaysia came from various sources. Some of them can be found from the items summarized in the table. Others are based on the writer's observation of various schools. Every school that she visited had a certain number of students who required inclusive education. It was of great

urgency, in the writer's judgement, that all schools in Malaysia have inclusive education to ensure that students with special needs get an appropriate education. Inclusive education may help to reduce truancy, academic failure and other social problems in Malaysia, as it is of value in meeting the educational and social needs of this particular group of students while it can also help to ensure that these children remain in school until they are ready to get a job.

#### **4.12 Conclusion**

Various educational policies related to inclusive education have been developed in Malaysia to meet the needs of children with special needs. Key modifications and special provisions have been required to accommodate the wide diversity among students in their physical, intellectual, spiritual and emotional development. The main challenge is to address the unique needs of individual learners while, at the same time, creating an educationally effective environment for all students. Hence, educational policies should recognise the ability of each student as well as his or her unique needs.

Operating within the present policy parameters, programmes and strategies, together with a conducive managerial and administrative climate, the Ministry of Education is confident that the educational issues related to equity, efficiency and quality for all students could be addressed successfully for students in inclusive education programmes in the near future.

The following two chapters contain the reported data concerning teachers and principals' views and experiences of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### RESULTS: PRINCIPALS' INTERVIEWS

#### 5.0 Introduction

*This chapter describes six principals' views and experiences related to the implementation of inclusive education in their schools. The interviews are first summarized in tabular form and then they are presented in narrative form with the inclusion of selected sample quotes from the participants. A series of themes is identified from the consideration of these narratives and views.*

*At the end of each illustration, an abbreviation is used to identify the principals. The abbreviation of "pps" means principal of a pilot school. The original texts of some principals' comments in the Malay Language are included as footnotes. In this study, quotes have been written in both English (second language) and Malay Language (national language). English was used with teachers and principals who were comfortable in using English as a means of communication. However, the Malay Language was used with those who preferred to use the national language to communicate. The writer believed that it would be more effective to interact with the teachers and principals using the language that they were good at. Moreover, subjects tend to express themselves more elaborately when using the language that they prefer or are confident in using.*

#### 5.1 Purpose of the Principals' Interviews

Six principals from six pilot schools, for the introduction of inclusive education, were involved in this study. The schools (listed in the left-hand column of Appendix B) had been specially selected by their State Education Departments. Five of the schools were

Grade A primary schools and one was a secondary school.

The principals were asked to provide their views and attitudes towards the placement of children with special needs in the regular classrooms of their schools. They were also asked to relate their experiences in the introduction of inclusive education in their schools. To facilitate their views, attitudes and experiences, the writers asked them a series of questions, as indicated in Appendix D. The principals were asked to elaborate the aims of their schools; how they became involved and how they felt about inclusive education; the process of implementation in their schools; the success of the programme and what changes they would make in the future. However, a brief introduction to each of the schools will first be provided at this point.

## **5.2 A Brief Description of Each School Selected for the Study**

### **5.2.1 SK Bahang Penampang**

SK Bahang is a primary school and it has 54 teachers and 1000 students. The majority of the students are Kadazan, followed by other races like Chinese, Indonesians and Philipinos. SK Bahang Penampang is situated near a secondary school, SMK Bahang Penampang. SK Bahang Penampang is a feeder school for the secondary school. Those pupils who have completed the primary school education will be transferred to the secondary school.

The teachers in the school are mostly trained to teach primary school pupils. They come from different states in Malaysia. Most of them are local from Sabah. Some of them have wide experiences in dealing with young children.

The school is not a designed and built school. Its buildings are only two blocks and a teachers' apartment. The surrounding of the school is clean and there are flower gardens.

### 5.2.2 SK Bukit Padang Kota Kinabalu

SK Bukit Padang Kota Kinabalu is a primary school and it has been chosen to run a special education programme. It has 60 trained teachers, among whom twelve are special education teachers. It has about 1100 students. This school is situated in Kota Kinabalu district and is a neighbour to SK St. Francis and two secondary schools, SM Asrama Penuh and SMK Agama.

This school has a beautiful landscape. It has a flower garden especially built for the special children. The special children are taught gardening skills as well as to instill a caring attitude toward the plants.

This school was picked to start a special education programme where ten pupils and two teachers were chosen to be the pioneers of this programme. Since then it has expanded and by then when the writer came to the school to interview the teachers, it had more than 48 special needs children and twelve special education teachers. The special education programme was started in the year 1990. It was also the time when the writer was transferred to the Education Technology Division to take care of this programme. This division was charged with the running of special education in Sabah.

Inclusive education was introduced to this school and there were two students who were full time in the inclusive education programme. Some others were only working part time where they were integrated into the regular classes, based on their abilities.

### 5.2.3 SK Tanah Liat Bukit Matajam Penang

SK Tanah Liat Bukit Matajam Penang is situated on the mainland of Malaysia. It is a part of Penang state. It has more than 35 teachers and 1000 pupils. Most of the teachers are trained primary school teachers. It has a special education class. Most of the pupils come from average families where most of the parents are labourers in the plantations. It is a rural school.

#### 5.2.4 SK Bukit Minyak, Penang

SK Bukit Minyak was opened on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September 1995. There are 31 staff members of whom 17 are academic staff members. This school accommodates 353 students who come from nearby housing estates and village areas such as Taman Kota Permai and Kampong Permatang Tok Subuh. The majority of students who attend SK Bukit Minyak are mostly Malays and a few numbers of Indian students.

#### 5.2.5 SRK Hishammudin, Jalan Sultan Salahuddin, Wilayah Persekutuan KL

This school has 1090 pupils and is a grade A school. There are 48 teachers and the school has a double session. This school is in the Federal Territory and it is situated in the heart of Kuala Lumpur. Most of the pupils come from the families of policemen and many of them are Malays; a few pupils are Indians and Chinese. The surroundings of the school are clean with a flower garden.

#### 5.2.6 SR. Pengkalan Cepa Kelantan

This school has 1100 pupils and 51 teachers. Most of the teachers are trained primary school teachers. Many of the pupils come from the village and housing estate. Many of them are children of parents in the police and army. This school is beautiful although it is not a designed and built building. It has morning and afternoon sessions of schooling.

#### 5.2.7 SK Taman Maluri Jalan Wirawati 6, Kuala Lumpur

This school has a special education programme. Most of the teachers are new in the special education programme. They have only one or two years of teaching experience. They cannot tell us very much as they are also in the process of learning how to deal with special needs children.



#### 5.2.8 SRK Lanang Melaka

SRK Lanang is a small school with about 250 pupils and 20 teachers. Most of the pupils are Malays and few Indian children. It is an old school but it has a nice flower garden.

#### 5.2.9 SRK Datuk Hashim (1) Kota Bharu Kelantan

This school has a special education programme. This school was opened in 1972 by the former Prime Minister, Tun Hussein Onn. There are 800 pupils and about 37 teachers. The special education programme started in 1992. It was a big surprise to all the teachers to have special education in this school.

#### 5.2.10 SRK Air Baruk Melaka

This school has about 1000 pupils and 54 teachers. Most of the children are Malays and there is only one Chinese child. The school has a special education programme. The special needs pupils are placed in the class on the basis of their abilities. The special education classes are located in another block. There are 14 special needs children in this school and five special teachers. This school is an old building and it has a beautiful garden. The headmaster is very kind and supportive of the special education programme.

#### 5.2.11 SRK Astana Kuching Sarawak

This school has a special education programme. There are twenty special needs children in this school. The pupils have been screened for the purpose of placement. The pupils are able to work together and they can interact with the other pupils. This school is an old school but it has beautiful garden. Most of the pupils are Iban and Malays.

### 5.2.12 SRK Buyung Sarawak

SRK Buyung is a primary school which has about 600 pupils and 35 teachers. The teachers are mostly trained and have between two and seven years teaching experience. It is an old school with beautiful garden. It is a peaceful and quiet school.

The writer now presents the summarized answers to the questions that were posed during the interview.

## 5.3 Analysis of Principals' Interviews

Having completed the interviews, which were conducted as in Appendix D, the writer was able to conveniently summarise, in tabular form, the responses to the various questions in order to provide a succinct presentation of the answers of the principal informants. The summarized answers are useful in providing the "flavour" of the principals' responses. Some of these summarized responses are expanded to include the entire original response when the table is explained in greater detail later in this chapter.

*The use of, eg, raw numbers or %ages when reporting the data (instead of, eg, "some" or "many") would strengthen the presentation.*  
*WT*

Table 5.1

## Summary of Principal Interviews

TOPICS	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6
About the school.	Grade A school, 1072 students, 60 teachers, 50 students in a class, 10 special teachers, 47 special students.	A secondary school with inclusive education programme for 4 students, 2 special ed. Teachers.	508 pupils, 28 teachers, the pupils are mostly Malays, a few Indians and Chinese, 2 special classes with 3 teachers, 13 pupils in a class.	Grade A, 1100 pupils, 60 teachers, 2 special classes, 1 class of preschool.	1400 pupils	Started in 1988, 900 pupils, 51 % Malays, 45% Dayaks, some Chinese, few teachers specialized in teaching Mathematics. Mostly majoring in Malay language.
Topic 1: What are the aims of the school?	To achieve excellence in the academic and beautification of the school.	To see that the special pupils will be able to read, count and write.	To give good services to all special pupils.	Zero defect in the academic.	To upgrade school performance in the primary 6 govt exam	To be the best school in the primary six govt exam.
Topic 2: What about the special education needs pupils in the school?	47 pupils coming from different ethnic groups. 7-12 years old. Pupils integrate during recess. Started in 1990.	Special pupils are not qualified to be in this school because they can't follow the lesson in inclusive education. Due to the humanitarian reason, pupils are accepted.	Trained special teachers. Not a rigid programme. Education dept gives full support. 2 pupils involved in inclusive education.	22 pupils. 4 Downs syndrome, few hyperactive, autistic and slow learners and 1 deaf pupil.	Not too good.	19 pupils, 2 mongoloid girls. Age from 9-13.
Topic 3: How does the child relate to other children in school?	Special pupils mixed with other pupils during recess, before class and end of the school day. They sing during assembly, join the school sport and other activities.	Other students respect the special students. They care for them no bullying. Accept their presence in class.	Special pupils are accepted by the regular students. Before that, the regular pupils feared to go near the special pupils. They thought they were mad. But now it is ok.	Special students are treated well by the regular students. The regular students take care of them too.	Can be accepted.	It is ok.
Topic 4: Can you take me through the process of implementing inclusive education in your school?	Inclusive education started in 1995. The writer was the one who came to introduce IE in the school. The writer was the one who planned the programme. We followed the programme and it was very successful.	Inclusive education only started in March 1996. There are only 4 students. There is no special room for them so they are placed at the highest level. They are given the same opportunity as the other students in school.	There is a special class where the teachers are trained. There was no special room but only recently the Education Dept. has sent equipment needed to run the special class.	I came to know about special education and found out the teachers' problems. I studied about the problems in 1994 and, in 1995, I concentrated on the implementation and, in 1996, was the result. I really had a hard time but it seemed to be successful.	When inclusive education was introduced in this school, I was not the assistant principal but I was a parent.	Ms Gwendoline selected a few special students for inclusive education. There are nine of them.

TOPICS	Principal 1	Principal 2	Principal 3	Principal 4	Principal 5	Principal 6
Topic 5: How do you feel the teachers (classroom and special education) have responded to the introduction to inclusive education?	I feel very happy because the regular teachers are willing to teach these special pupils.	I feel very proud of the teachers because the teachers are doing their best.	The teachers are ok.	The teachers can take it.	Good idea but regular teachers do not want to be in the same class with the special teachers.	Good, though some teachers were not keen on the program.
Topic 6: How successful do you think the pilot of inclusive education is in your school?	Very good but need to train more teachers.	Successful in term of socialization but not in terms of the academic. Need to provide courses to teachers and teaching materials.	Very encouraging but need to train the teachers and make the pupils comfortable.	Tough but need to involve all the teachers so that they know and feel about it. Need to provide training to teachers.	Very discouraging because teachers are complaining that they are not trained to teach special children.	So far so good but I am worried if the numbers of pupils increase. Not easy to get teachers.
Topic 7: How do you feel about the way parents of special and other children have responded to the introduction of inclusive education?	Parents are willing to accept.	No complaint. They are willing to accept.	No complaint.	We had meeting with the parents.	No comment.	Parents have no complaint. They understand about these children.

One sample of a transcript of the six pilot school principals' interviews is included in Appendix T.

#### 5.4 The Seven Main Topics of the Principal Interviews

The main table above contains seven topics. Each topic is discussed succinctly in the following paragraphs with, where appropriate, illustrative comments taken from the principal interviews. Original Malay language quotes are used where the data were collected in this language and then translated for use in this thesis. The discussion of each topic concludes with the presentation of a summary theme on that topic.

#### 5.4.1 Topic 1: School aims

The principals were asked to tell the writer about the aims of their schools. In answering the question, concerning the aims of their school, all of the principals were very keen on seeing their schools achieve good academic results. They wanted their schools to score high percentages in such activities as the Primary School Achievement Examination. Apart from academic achievement, they also wanted their students to excel in extra curricular activities. Several comments illustrated the principals' aims:

*My aim for the school is to see that it achieves a high academic standard because the results for the Primary School Examination have not been very good. I hope to see that more pupils will score grade A results....*  
(pps1)<sup>1</sup>

*As far as I am concerned, I want the school to be one of the best in this area, if not in the state. Of course you need to be the best in this area first in terms of academic achievement as well as co-curricular achievement.*  
(pps6)

#### 5.4.2 Topic 2: Students with special needs in the school

One principal said that he wanted his school to be the best in the district with an increase in the number of passes in English and Mathematics. He indicated that the presence of children with special needs in the school might affect the overall examination results but he hoped that the special education and traditional teachers could help children with special needs to acquire basic academic skills.

Nonetheless, there was one principal who was very ambitious, aiming to achieve 100

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<sup>1</sup> Oleh kerana keputusan peperiksaan UPSR tidak begitu baik, maka saya berharap ramai pelajar akan mendapat pangkat gred A dengan adanya program inklusif....(pps1)

percent passes by the year 2020. According to him, this was a vision and aspiration in line with *Vision 2020*.

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 1: The result of the Government Primary School Examination was not good, therefore, the principals hoped that the inclusive programme would help the schools to score good grades.*

#### 5.4.3 Topic 3: How special needs children relate to others

The principals were asked how the special needs children related to the other children in the schools. Five of the principals were accepting of children with special needs in their schools. Special education classes had been in existence within the regular schools until the introduction of inclusive education. The principals claimed that interaction between children with special needs and other children was encouraging as they could socialise during breaks and during extra-curricular activities. According to one principal, special education teachers are cooperative and responsible with respect to the duties assigned to them. One principal commented:

*Children with special needs can socialise with the other children during break time and during other school activities. The same goes for the teachers of special needs teachers. They are very co-operative in handling their school duties. (pps1)<sup>2</sup>*

It was noted that these special education teachers had been involved in the teaching of children with special needs in special education classes. Since the introduction of

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<sup>2</sup> Kanak kanak yang berkeperluan khas ini bergaul dengan kanak kanak biasa pada waktu rehat dan juga masa aktiviti sekolah. Mereka bekerjasama untuk membuat kerja kerja yang telah di beri pada mereka. (pps1)

inclusive education, the responsibilities of special education teachers had been extended to help in monitoring and assisting the traditional teachers.

However, one principal found it difficult to accommodate children with special needs in the school, especially in inclusive education classes. Based on his own experience with a child with special needs, his remarks were as follows:

*They can be accepted, but there is a problem in terms of their behaviour. Sometimes, there are some children who cannot be controlled. They are very aggressive; for example, my son. He is difficult to manage. (pps5)<sup>3</sup>*

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 2: That the socializing and contact of inclusive education participants with other students is important but this is not always easy to achieve.*

#### 5.4.4 Topic 4: Implementation of inclusive education

The principals were asked to relate to the writer the process of the implementation of inclusive education in their schools. In terms of their involvement in the implementation of inclusive education, some of the principals were unprepared because they had not been given any formal instructions on this new approach of inclusive education. Most of the principals had only attended a short briefing given by the State Education Department. One principal said that he was 'dumped' into a school that was about to start an inclusive education programme. Since he did not know what inclusive education was all about, he took the initiative to find out by reading articles. Later on, he was given the opportunity to attend seminars, which enhanced his interest and knowledge concerning inclusive education. His remarks were as follows:

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<sup>3</sup> Boleh di terima. Tetapi ada masalah tingkalaku. Kadangkala ada sebilangan pelajar yang tidak dapat di kawal, contoh, anak lelaki saya. (pps5)

*I have never had any training. I was 'dumped' into this school with this programme and of course I found myself involved directly with such a programme. I began to show some kind of interest by reading some articles and attending seminars and that was when I met you [the researcher] in Langkawi. (pps6)*

One principal stated that he was not involved in the implementation of inclusive education, having been transferred to the school four months previously. Nevertheless, he had obtained information on inclusive education by examining the school files and consulting special education teachers. Many of the principals had organised a short briefing on inclusive education for the traditional and special education teachers. This was conducted during a meeting of teachers. One principal stated the following:

*Not a seminar in a sense of the word but we did have a brief talk, an introduction to inclusive education... (pps6)*

Among the six principals interviewed, four of them had attended a number of relevant seminars organised by the Ministry of Education. The seminars were held in Langkawi, Trengganu and Sabah and they were related to the introduction of inclusive education in Malaysian schools. Two principals were new to their post so they did not have the opportunity to attend seminars on inclusive education. In any case, all six principals, including those who experienced the seminars, related their involvement in inclusive education as being difficult but challenging.

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 3: That it is important for principals to be adequately prepared for implementing inclusive education in their schools.*

One of the principals revealed that the State Education Department had given strong



support to the implementation of inclusive education in her school. She was happy that the traditional and special education teachers were very cooperative. She reported that two pupils from the special education class had been placed in the inclusive education class, adding that they were able to do the academic work assigned to them. She found that one of them was making better grades than the regular pupils in the class. She had also videotaped a teacher teaching an inclusive class. The videotape was used as an aid for a presentation in an inclusive education seminar for the teachers from Datuk Peter Mojuntin Secondary School, Sabah.

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 4: That support, in the form of seminars, education officers' guidance and opportunities for sharing ideas among practitioners, was useful in assisting principals to implement inclusive education.*

Another principal said that he found it difficult to introduce an inclusive education class because the traditional teachers were not keen. However, he had tried his best, as illustrated with the following remarks:

*In August 1994, I received a letter from the Ministry of Education, Malaysia, to attend a seminar on inclusive education in Sabah. We were told to start inclusive education in our schools. I took the initiative and started the programme in 1995. I have a special education teacher to help me. But you know there was a poor response from the traditional teachers. It was because they had not been exposed to this programme and were not interested. (pps4)*

One principal had difficulty in implementing a full-time inclusive education programme due to a shortage of teachers. He said that it was difficult to find teachers who were interested in inclusive education. His remarks were as follows:

*In fact, I have tried my best since last year to recruit new teachers. I had*

*contacted the State education officer and he told me that he was not successful as well. (pps5)<sup>4</sup>*

Overall results indicated that the process of implementing inclusive education had not been easy for various principals. They did not have enough teachers to teach inclusive classes. Further, many teachers were not interested in teaching children with special needs. Moreover, many children with special needs did not meet the criteria for the programme. Children with special needs, principals considered, should acquire some basic academic skills to qualify for placement in the inclusive class. One principal made his point for not having enough teachers for this programme. His remarks were as follows:

*Only one teacher is involved in the inclusive education. She is alone and she needs another teacher to help her. (pps6)*

*But you know there is a poor response from the teachers. Further, many teachers are against inclusive education. (pps4)*

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 5: That sufficient numbers of suitably prepared teachers are important in the implementation of inclusive education. In order to meet this requirement, the education authorities should send in special education teachers to the schools.*

#### 5.4.5 Topic 5: How principals felt about inclusive education

With regard to their involvement in the implementation of inclusive education in their schools, most principals said that they were happy and proud about it. One principal

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<sup>4</sup> Sebenarnya saya cuba dengan upayanya untuk mendapat guru-guru yang muda. Saya telah berhubung dengan pegawai Jabatan Pendidikan tetapi dia tidak berjaya untuk mendapat guru. (pps5)

explained that she was happy to see the involvement of teachers in inclusive education at her school. Her remarks were as follows:

*I feel happy because of the involvement of the traditional teachers. They are very willing to teach children with special needs. We didn't need to hire new teachers. (pps 1)<sup>5</sup>*

There were some principals who revealed that they were proud of their involvement but they did experience some problems. For example, when the teachers in the traditional classrooms were told about the introduction of inclusive education in the school, their reactions were negative. One principal's comments were as follows:

*Very interesting and very discouraging too. Some of them, from their reactions, looked scared, you know. They felt that, if they were to teach a class with children with special needs, they had to do extra work. It is just their attitude and, even after telling them what inclusive education is, quite a number of them are still negative. I do not know why. (pps6)*

Another principal regretted that the type of children with special needs sent to his school were extremely low in academic ability. He elaborated that the students had multiple disabilities, including physical, emotional and intellectual aspects. He explained his disappointment, as follows:

*I am proud of this inclusive education. But I regret that I did not get those students who were able to master the basic academic skills, such as writing, reading and counting. Could you imagine that these children with special needs children could not even read! Just imagine inclusive, what*

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<sup>5</sup> Saya sangat gembira atas penglibatan guru guru biasa. Mereka sanggup mengajar kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini. Kami tidak perlu mengambil guru guru baru. (pps1)

*inclusive? (pps2)<sup>6</sup>*

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 6: That although not easily implemented, inclusive education can be a source of pride within the school.*

#### 5.4.6 Topic 6: The success of the inclusive education programme

The principals were asked how successful they thought the pilot inclusive education programme was in their schools. All the principals said that the success of inclusive education programme depended on the availability of teachers; adding that, if the shortage of teachers was addressed, only then could they see success and hope for the future. However, one principal stated that the Ministry of Education should provide training for teachers relevant to the type of children with special needs who teachers would encounter in inclusive education situations. In this context, he was referring to the type of disability that children with special needs might experience. For example, teachers should be trained to work with children with learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities or emotional problems.

Another principal suggested that the State Education Department should send trained, special education teachers to schools involved with inclusive education. He outlined his plan, as follows:

*First of all, I would like to get more children involved as well as more teachers to attend on-going inclusive education courses, seminars and conferences. I would also try to explain to the parents what is actually happening because some parents are not ready to send their children to*

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<sup>6</sup> Saya sangat bangga tentang pendidikan inklusif. Tetapi saya sangat kesal kerana saya tidak dapat pelajar yang pandai menulis, membaca dan mengira. Percayakah kita pelajar ini tidak pandai membaca! Apakah ini inklusif? (pp2)

*special education classes. (pps6)*

Another principal said that he would like to see inclusive education become a full-time programme in his school. He wanted to give children with special needs a chance to mix with other children. In this way, he could achieve his vision.

Among the six pilot schools, only two schools were practising full-time inclusive education. The other four schools practised partial inclusive education. Interviews revealed that principals had different ways of interpreting the implementation of inclusive education. Those who were more concerned with academic achievement tended to focus on children with special needs who had academic ability. These principals feared that low academic achievement would tarnish the images of their schools and lessen the possibility of their schools being the best in their districts.

One principal revealed that the success of inclusive education would depend entirely on the response of the teachers in his school. He hoped that the State Education Department would allow him to serve the school for a long period so that he could improve the performance of children with special needs and see the outcome of his efforts. He would want his school to be assigned as a centre for teaching practice for teacher trainees. His comments included the following:

*For the future, I will involve all the staff members. I would like my school to be used as a centre for teaching practice. I have discussed this with the principals of the teachers' colleges around here. They are happy with my suggestion. (pps4)*

From considering these views, the writer identified the following theme:

*Theme 7: That suitably trained teachers would play a vital role for the successful implementation of inclusive education.*

#### 5.4.7 Topic 7: Parents' attitudes towards inclusive education

The principals revealed that parents were generally receptive of inclusive education. Parents of students with special needs were willing to cooperate and send their children to school. Many parents also attended meetings with the teachers and principal of their children. They seemed to understand the special needs of their children and most of them have no comments or complaints.

*Theme 8: That parental cooperation is crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education.*

### 5.5 Summary

First, the eight themes are collected in order to provide an overview of the findings from the interviews.

*Theme 1: The result of the Government Primary School Examination was not good, therefore, the principals hoped that the inclusive programme would help the schools to score good grades.*

*Theme 2: That the socializing and contact of inclusive education participants with other students is important but this is not always easy to achieve.*

*Theme 3: That it is important for principals to be adequately prepared for implementing inclusive education in their schools.*

*Theme 4: That support, in the form of seminars, education officers' guidance and opportunities for sharing ideas among practitioners, was useful in assisting principals to implement inclusive education.*

*Theme 5: That sufficient numbers of suitably prepared teachers are important in the*

*implementation of inclusive education. In order to meet this requirement, the education authorities should send in special education teachers to the schools.*

*Theme 6: That although not easily implemented, inclusive education can be a source of pride within the school.*

*Theme 7: That suitably trained teachers would play a vital role for the successful implementation of inclusive education.*

*Theme 8: That parental cooperation is crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education.*

The eight identified themes draw attention to a number of features. Inclusive education might help school improvement (Theme 1) although the social aspects of inclusive education are not easily achieved (Theme 2). However, an important recurring theme relates to the provision of suitable training and professional development for people directly involved in implementing inclusive education – for principals, (Theme 3) teachers (Theme 5) and teacher training (Theme 7) – with varied means of training and development (Theme 4). The items included in these four themes, the writer suggests, are particularly important for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Theme 6 notes the potential pride for a school that successfully implements such programmes. In addition, the cooperation and involvement of parents is important for such successful implementation (Theme 8). Some further expansion on these ideas concludes this chapter.

Interviews with the principals were reported according to seven main topics, as shown in the main table. Interviews revealed that the principals were determined to help in whatever way they could to ensure the successful implementation of inclusive education in their schools. As a matter of fact, three principals indicated their willingness to implement full-time inclusive education in their schools. One principal would like to see his school used as a venue for teacher trainees for their practical experience.

However, all of the six principals shared a common view when it came to the effective and successful implementation of inclusive education. Generally, they viewed the chances for successful implementation of inclusive education as low and suggested that the Ministry of Education should provide adequate, qualified teachers to teach inclusive classes. They suggested that all teachers receive training in inclusive education and that there be standard criteria be set for the enrolment of children with special needs. They felt that pre-service and in-service training for teacher trainees was necessary, including teachers involved in the inclusive education programme. Pre-service and in-service training should provide teachers with a variety of teaching experiences in working with children with special needs. Teachers should be exposed to the different techniques of teaching children with special needs so that they would be able to enhance these children's performance.

Principals who were involved in the implementation of inclusive education had experienced both positive and negative attitudes from their staff members. Administrators and policy makers, the principals considered, would benefit from listening to these principals, whose experiences could be used for guiding strategies for the successful further implementation of inclusive education. Though the principals might have experienced some unpleasant aspects of the implementation of inclusive education, the learning from their experiences could be useful for future efforts. They might have reservations concerning inclusive education but at least they were willing to implement it in their schools. According to Fox and Ysseldyke, (1997. p.97), many critics of inclusive education have indicated that the implementation of inclusive education is a challenging task. Whenever people ask whether it is possible or worth the effort, the answer is that, without a fair trial, we will never know.

The presentation of data from teachers is contained in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER SIX

### ANALYSIS OF TEACHERS' INTERVIEWS

#### 6.0 Introduction

*This chapter reports the analysis of the verbatim transcripts of interviews with special education teachers, teachers from pilot schools and teachers from non-pilot schools concerning, first, their conceptions of inclusive education and, then, their understanding of the Malaysian Inclusive Education Policy. Teachers' attitudes and experiences of the implementation of inclusive education and their views on appropriate teacher education were subsequently examined.*

*In this chapter, the abbreviations of "tp", "sp" and "tnp" represent teachers from the traditional pilot, special pilot and traditional non-pilot schools respectively. A traditional pilot school is a traditional school that practises inclusive education. A special pilot school is a school that has a special class for children with special needs. A traditional non-pilot school is a school that does not practise inclusive education. Original remarks of participants are included to illustrate various points while some comments, collected in the Malay language, are included in that language in footnotes.*

#### 6.1 Teachers' Conceptions of Inclusive Education

All teachers in the sample were asked to elaborate their conceptions of inclusive education. Qualitatively different conceptions of inclusive education were subsequently identified and classified by the writer, through a phenomenographic examination of the views of the teachers. Seven categories of description of teachers' conceptions of inclusive education were derived from the transcripts and analysed in terms of their referential and structural components. Two aspects were identified from each conception: the group of children concerned (called the "structural component" in the table) and the kind of education provided (called the "referential component" in the

table). The categories of description were arranged in a hierarchy, from the lowest to the highest as indicated in the following table:

**Table 6.1**

Teachers' Conceptions of Inclusive Education

Category of descriptions	Structural component	Referential component
A	Instructional enrichment for children with special abilities in the mainstream class of a segregated environment	Achievement of academic excellence
B	Academic support through new educational technology to all students in the mainstream class of a segregated environment	Computer-enhanced learning
C	Additional academic support for slow learners in the mainstream class of a segregated environment	Catch-up for slow learners
D	Inclusion of academically screened students from the special class with mainstream students in an integrated environment	Independent learning for students with basic skills
E	Inclusion of students with physical disabilities, together with academically screened students, in an integrated environment	Intellectual rights for students with physical disabilities
F	Inclusion of all students, regardless of disabilities, in an integrated environment for social learning	Socialisation students with special needs
G	Inclusion of all students, regardless of disabilities, in an integrated environment for academic and social learning	Educational opportunity for all

An analysis of the seven conceptions in terms of their structural and referential components is shown in Table 6.1, which highlights logical ordering of the categories. They are based on the responses made by the participants.

#### 6.1.1 Range of conceptions: Lower to higher ends

A range of conceptions was produced to describe teachers' attitudes towards the successful implementation of inclusive education in Malaysian schools. The

conceptions were arranged from the lowest to the highest, A to G.

Teachers with Conception A (Achievement of academic excellence) perceive inclusive education as an education that provides instructional enrichment for children with special abilities in a segregated environment. They consider inclusive education as being tailored to include children who are gifted and talented; that is, children who have special abilities and who require special forms of teaching and learning.

Teachers holding Conception B (Computer-enhanced learning) state that inclusive education should provide academic support through modern educational technology to all students in the mainstream class.

Teachers holding Conception C (Catching up for slow learners) see inclusive education as an education that provides additional academic support for learners with special needs in the mainstream class.

Conception D (Independent learning for students with basic skills) perceives inclusive education as the inclusion of academically screened students from the special class in an integrated environment.

Conception E (Intellectual rights of academically screened students who are physically challenged) sees inclusive education as the inclusion of students who are physically challenged, together with academically screened students, in an integrated environment.

Teachers holding Conception F (Socialisation for students with special needs) see inclusive education as an education that enables all children with special needs to socialise with regular children.

Teachers of Conception G (Educational opportunity for all) suggest that children with special needs should be given the educational opportunities to achieve and to maintain an acceptable level of learning in the traditional classroom setting.

The range of conceptions in this study, from Conceptions A to F, was produced by the writer as she evaluated the teachers' attitudes towards the successful implementation of inclusive education. It is based on the degree of positivity, Conception G being the most positive, while Conception A the least. For example, teachers with the most favorable attitudes towards inclusion are placed in Conception G.

Those who exhibited the negative attitudes towards inclusive education were placed at the lower end, for example, Conceptions A to C. For instance, teachers who considered inclusive education as unimportant or do not understand its principles were placed in Conception A.

Table 6.2, which appears later in this chapter, contains the numbers of teachers, from the various school types, whose responses were categorized under each conception.

Verbatim, illustrative quotes from respondents are placed throughout this section of the chapter in which the range of conceptions is presented.

#### 6.1.2 Conception A: Achievement of academic excellence

Conception A is the lowest category, identified by the researcher as a concept category held by some teachers about inclusive education, because this view provides educational services only to children who have high abilities. Teachers with Conception A (Achievement of academic excellence) perceive inclusive education as an education that provides instructional enrichment for children with special abilities in a segregated environment. They consider inclusive education as being tailored to include children who are gifted and talented; that is, children who have special abilities requiring special forms of teaching and learning. Such programmes would help sharpen the intellect and widen the children's knowledge in relation to subjects under investigation. These teachers are interested in children who excel in the academic field but they fail to appreciate children who do not make the grade, seeing them as incompetent. It denies children with special needs the opportunity to learn. Sample comments include:

*Inclusive education helps to develop children's cognitive ability to the fullest potential. (tp12)<sup>7</sup>*

*Inclusive education is meant for children who have the ability and potential in learning. The main function of inclusive education is to provide educational enrichment to smart children who are gifted. These children are specifically chosen, based on their good performance. They are placed in schools that provide special programmes. (tnp6)<sup>8</sup>*

*...the express class system is where the regular students have six years of primary studies and when they are in the third year, if they are found to be achieving excellent results, they will be placed in special programmes. (tnp13)*

*Inclusive education is a programme which allows students, for example, those who are good in science, to explore and experiment. (tnp9)<sup>9</sup>*

Conception A focuses on external requirements, such as having a special school that provides enrichment programmes for children with special abilities, whereby adequate facilities are available for teaching and learning. A special school, in this context, refers to one that caters for children who are high achievers. Teachers in this category believe

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<sup>7</sup> Pendidikan inklusif membantu dalam mengembangkan pancaindera kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas pada tahap yang berpotensi. (tp12)

<sup>8</sup> Pendidikan inklusif adalah untuk kanak-kanak yang mempunyai kebolehan dan potensi dalam pembelajaran. Fungsi utama pendidikan inklusif adalah untuk memberi pengajaran dan pembelajaran pada pelajar bistari. Pelajar ini telah dipilih atas pencapaian mereka. Mereka ditempatkan di sekolah yang mempunyai program tersebut. (tnp6)

<sup>9</sup> Pendidikan inklusif adalah program yang membenarkan pelajar yang pandai dalam mata pelajaran sains untuk membuat menjejajah dan menyelidik. (tnp9)

that proper facilities, including teaching aids and sports equipment, should be provided by the government to enhance these students' performance. One teacher noted:

*My understanding of inclusive education is that it is a special school whereby you get the new facilities, for example, teaching aids and sports equipment, to enhance both the special and regular students' performance. (tnp4)*

One teacher suggests that a special school with hostel facilities should be built to accommodate children with special needs who are academically able.

*Inclusive education means placing all the children with special needs who show excellence in their studies in a special school. By doing so, we can help them enhance their academic skills. If they are left in the special education class, they will not benefit and also the teachers cannot give full attention to their needs. (tnp 15)*

### 6.1.3 Conception B: Computer-enhanced learning

Teachers holding Conception B (Computer-enhanced learning) state that inclusive education should provide academic support through modern educational technology to all students in the mainstream class.

This conception includes children with special needs. Unlike Conception A which focuses on high achievers, Conception B focuses on all children in the inclusive education class. In this context, all children are provided with additional resources, such as instructional enrichment and technological facilities. These facilities help enhance the children's learning in order for them to become productive students and effective citizens in future. The comment of one teacher was:

*Besides being part of formal education, computer facilities provide*

*enhancing activities which help produce well-rounded pupils, the fast and slow learners. We have to progress and develop our country for the coming generation. We should not be left behind by other countries. (tnp14)*

#### 6.1.4 Conception C: Catching up for slow learners

Teachers holding Conception C (Catching up for slow learners) see inclusive education as an education that provides additional academic support for learners with special needs in the mainstream class. These children do not have physical disabilities but do have learning problems. Unlike Conception A, which focuses on students with high abilities and Conception B which focuses on all children, including those children with special needs, Conception C focuses on learners who are slow but who have the potential to learn. However, these students are in need of a lot of help and attention. Sample comments included:

*I feel that inclusive education is meant for children who are slow in learning. They are not physically challenged but I think they do have learning problems. (tp8)<sup>10</sup>*

*Inclusive education is meant for children who do not have serious disabilities. Those who cannot manage themselves, for example, going to the toilet, are not considered. It is because the teacher has to take them to the toilet. This will affect the teaching and learning situation. (sp8)*

*Inclusive education is meant for learners who are slow. Because not all the students are capable of learning at the same level, it does not mean that learners who are slow are stupid. They do have the ability to*

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<sup>10</sup> Bagi saya pendidikan inklusif ini adalah untuk kanak-kanak yang lemah dalam pelajaran mereka. Mereka itu bukannya cacat anggota tetapi saya fikir mereka itu mempunyai masalah pembelajaran. (tp8)

*learn. (tp1)*

Teachers holding Conception C believe that inclusive education is also meant for those who can, at least, hold pencils and perform tasks assigned by the teacher. They refer to those children who are slow in grasping academic knowledge. Besides improving the basic academic and motor skills of students, inclusive education, in this conception, helps eradicate illiteracy, as noted by one teacher.

*Inclusive education helps eradicate illiteracy. Before, many children with special needs were kept at home. (tp17)*

If children have serious disabilities, their placement in traditional classes would affect effective teaching. Children with special needs who have the ability to learn but require additional help in their learning should be placed in the mainstream classroom, as illustrated by the comment:

*The pupils who are being sent to the inclusive education class are those who are not so seriously challenged. This means that the children can listen, do simple tasks and be responsive. (sp8)*

Interestingly, some students with special needs from the special education classes are found to be more academically able than the children in the traditional classroom, as noted by one teacher:

*Some learners who are slow from the special education class are found to be smarter than children in the traditional classroom. They feel very happy and this helps build their confidence. (sp10)<sup>11</sup>*

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<sup>11</sup> Ada pelajar yang lemah dalam pelajaran mereka yang dari kelas pendidikan khas didapati pandai daripada pelajar biasa. Mereka sangat gembira dan ini akan membina keyakinan mereka. (sp10)



### 6.1.5 Conception D: Independent learning for students with basic skills

Conception D (Independent learning for students with basic skills) perceives inclusive education as the inclusion of academically screened students from the special class in an integrated environment. These children, who have acquired basic academic skills, are to learn alongside children in a traditional classroom setting. They should be provided with the same academic instructions and facilities as those children in the traditional class. These children, who have been screened academically, should receive not only academic instruction but also living skills training. The teachers indicate that it is the fundamental right of these children to have the chance to learn with children in the traditional classroom setting. Sample comments included:

*Inclusive education is meant for children with special needs who have overcome their behaviour and emotional problems. It is a way to prepare them to be integrated into the community. (sp12)<sup>12</sup>*

*It prepares children with special needs to learn with children in the traditional class so that they could cope outside the special education class. (sp4)*

*In order to encourage children with special needs to live independently, they should be trained like children in the traditional class. (sp5)<sup>13</sup>*

*The community should not view children with special needs as being helpless. They have special needs, but they are capable of competing with children from the traditional classes. They can also contribute to the*

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<sup>12</sup> Pendidikan khas adalah untuk kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas yang telah mengatasi masalah tingkahlaku dan emosi. Ini adalah satu jalan untuk menyediakan mereka untuk di integrasikan kepada masyarakat. (sp12)

<sup>13</sup> Untuk mendedahkan kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini untuk hidup berdikari, mereka harus di latih hidup berdikari didalam kelas seperti kanak kanak biasa. (sp5)

*prosperity of the country. (tp3)<sup>14</sup>*

Children placed in inclusive education classes are expected, at the very least, to be able to read, write simple sentences and do basic mathematical calculations. Children should be screened for placement with reference to these academic requirements as they are expected to learn the same lessons, use the same educational facilities and be taught by the same teachers as children in the traditional classroom. Sample comments include:

*I think children with special needs must be able to read, maybe a few simple sentences or simple passages. For mathematics, they can do some simple addition and subtraction. But I do not know about multiplication. (sp15)*

*Inclusive education is for children with special needs who are slow in grasping academic skills. If they were left in the special education class, they might be left behind and would not be able to lead an independent life. (tp1)<sup>15</sup>*

#### 6.1.6 Conception E: Intellectual rights of academically screened students who are physically challenged

Conception E (Intellectual rights of academically screened students who are physically challenged) sees inclusive education as an inclusion of students who are physically challenged, together with academically screened students, in an integrated environment.

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<sup>14</sup> Masyarakat sepatutnya tidak melihat kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas seperti yang tidak berdaya. Mungkin mereka ini adalah kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas tetapi mereka berupaya untuk bertanding dengan kanak kanak biasa. Mereka juga dapat menyumbang kepada negara. (rp3)

<sup>15</sup> Pendidikan inklusif adalah pendidikan untuk kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas yang lemah dalam kemahiran akademik. Jika mereka di biarkan belajar di kelas pendidikan khas, mereka akan ketinggalan dan tidak dapat hidup berdikari. (rp1)

Regardless of their physical needs, these children should be given the same opportunities to learn in the same environment as children in the traditional classroom. One teacher has adopted the view of a special education officer who sees inclusive education as providing opportunities for children with special needs to acquire academic and socialisation skills in the traditional classroom setting:

*The special education officer said that inclusive education is an education provided for children with special needs, regardless of their abilities, in the traditional classroom. This will help develop their potential to become intellectually, spiritually, physically and emotionally well-balanced individuals. (sp4)*

Although the children have special needs, they have the right to stay in the traditional classroom and learn with the other children. If they are not given equal educational opportunity, they would be left behind and other children would recognise their weaknesses.

Teachers described instances whereby children who are physically challenged have been rejected by the traditional schools. They indicated that some school principals believe that students who are physically challenged are mentally incapable of learning.

Comments included:

*In my former school there is a boy who is weak and has epilepsy but he is good at mathematics. To me, he should be learning together with other children. Although some children have special needs, they can be very clever. Their ideas are often better than ours...we must tap everybody's skills. (sp6)*

*Education is for all. Children have their rights. If they are clever and can follow the lesson, they have the right, even though they have special needs. They have the right to stay in the class and learn together with their peers*

*from the traditional classes. (sp7)*

One teacher revealed that inappropriate classification by doctors tends to limit the educational opportunities of students. Being wrongly diagnosed with a questionable label could cost a fulfilling life for a child with special need. Placement for children with special needs is often based on the diagnoses of medical practitioners and the education department relies on the medical reports received. One teacher explained:

*There was one student who was being diagnosed as a moron. That was the word written in the enrolment form from the doctor. Well we are not a factory for labelling things. We only classify these children because of certain factors. It used to be this way but now the terms "mentally retarded" or "moron" are no longer used. There is a more proper term such as "lack of ability". However, it seems that some doctors still label children in the "wrong" way. (sp6)*

#### 6.1.7 Conception F: Socialisation for students with special needs

Teachers holding Conception F (Socialisation for students with special needs) see inclusive education as an education that enables all children with special needs to socialise with regular children. Their comments include the following:

*Children with special needs should be given a wider space, that is, to socialise with children in the traditional classroom. (tp1)<sup>16</sup>*

*If children with special needs were isolated, they would feel inferior and unhappy. Why aren't they allowed to socialise with children in the traditional classroom? They should be given the same opportunity as those children who do not have special needs. (tp11)*

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<sup>16</sup> Kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini harus diberikan tempat yang luas untuk bergaul dengan kanak kanak biasa. (rp1)

Teachers holding Conception F believe that children with special needs should interact with the children from the traditional classes in order to be “like them” rather than feeling inferior. They refer to children in the regular class as “normal” children, implying that the children have average or above average academic ability. One teacher has summed up a common interpretation of the word “normal” as follows:

*Normal means the children are above average in their academic skills. The difference between the normal children and those with special needs is that the latter are very slow. As for the normal children, they have above average ability and they can follow lessons well. (sp14)*

Interacting with children from the traditional settings would motivate children with special needs to think positively and lead a better life. Because of this, it is beneficial for children with special needs to socialise with children in the traditional classroom rather than with ‘their own kind’. Furthermore, it enables children in the traditional class to understand their peers with special needs. Some teachers have indicated that children in the traditional class tend to underestimate children with special needs. Placing children with special needs in their class would make them realise that they are not much different except that children with special needs are slower in grasping academic knowledge, as illustrated by one comment:

*Inclusive education enables these children with special needs and other children in the traditional class to mingle so that they treat each other as equal. Because some of these children from traditional settings, when they see the latter, they are scared. They think that they are “mentally retarded”.... After getting to know them, children in the traditional class would see that children with special needs are just like them. (sp14)*

Another view expressed by teachers of Conception F is that children with special needs could gain experience by socialising and learning with children in the traditional

classroom. They see inclusive education as a way to teach children with special needs to cooperate with others. They are exposed to real life situations, enabling them to communicate with others and to live more independently. Further, teachers have indicated that inclusive education enables children in the traditional class to gain awareness of the existence of children with special needs and to accept their strengths and weaknesses.

#### 6.1.8 Conception G: Educational opportunity for all

Teachers of Conception G (Educational opportunity for all) suggest that children with special needs should be given the educational opportunities to achieve and to maintain an acceptable level of learning in the traditional classroom setting. Children with special needs should learn alongside children in the traditional class so that they would be treated the same and feel good about themselves. Teachers of Conception G are confident that inclusive education would provide the necessary instruction to meet the needs of children with special needs. In an inclusive environment, children with special needs can acquire academic and social skills by learning together with children in the traditional classroom. It would be an effective way to train children with special needs to be self-reliant and independent within and outside the school environment. Some of their comments are as follows:

*My understanding of inclusive education is that, apart from promoting a caring society, we are preparing children, regardless of their disabilities, to contribute towards Vision 2020. (sp6)*

*My opinion is that the government does not want to integrate these children with special needs, regardless of their abilities in the traditional class. (sp1)<sup>17</sup>*

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<sup>17</sup> Pendapat saya adalah kerajaan tidak mahu mengasingkan kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas daripada kanak kanak biasa. (sp1)

*I have a child who is autistic in my class. So it is her right to be educated in the traditional classroom setting and be treated the same way as the other children. If the child is left in the special education class, she will be left behind in terms of academic and social skills development. (tp14)*

*The administration in school usually informs children in the traditional class at the school assembly about the existence of children with special needs, those who are intellectually and physically challenged. They are told to treat them as one of the family of the school. (sp8)*

*I think it is a wonderful programme - wonderful in such a way that they are helping children with low ability to interact with the normal stream and to be like them rather than feeling inferior. You know, they are young. What will happen when they become adolescents? They will feel inferior, which may lead them to exhibit negative behaviour. But now, being positive in their thinking, in their studies...I think they will lead better lives...I get feedback from teachers teaching in the traditional class. They do have positive attitudes towards learning. Knowing this, I feel they will become good citizens....(sp17)*

According to one teacher of Conception G, one administrator informed the children, during an assembly concerning the presence of children with special needs in the school, that she believes that it is an effective way of reminding the other children that every child, regardless of his or her ability, has the right to education. Another teacher has commented that, in an inclusive class, children with special needs could interact with other children and learn to cope academically and socially. Sample comments include:

*To promote a caring society, they should get along, take care of each other and also help one another...(sp6)*

*Inclusive education means providing an appropriate education and taking care of everybody, including children with special needs, such as the*

*intellectually and physically challenged. These children are good at certain skills and will improve as they go on. Inclusive education will allow them to be stand on their own two feet when they finally finish school. They don't have to depend on others and be looked down upon.*  
(tnp13)

#### 6.1.9 Conceptions A-G: A summary

Based on the interviews, seven categories of description were identified, by the writer, and they fall into two distinct groups. The first group, that is, Conceptions A to C, are the physical and materialistic category. This category emphasises the building or physical and instructional facilities for learners. The second group, Conceptions D to G are the acquisition and transmission category. This category focuses on the educational and social needs of children with special needs.

Conception G is ranked, by the writer, as the highest level in the hierarchy, of teachers' conceptions of inclusive education, since it provides for all aspects of education and includes all children regardless of their abilities. Teachers holding this conception believe that the ultimate goal of inclusive education is to provide children with special needs with the opportunity to learn alongside children from traditional settings and to be treated the same as their peers in school and, thus, to feel positive about themselves. Unlike Conception G adherents, teachers holding Conception F see inclusive education as fostering socialisation skills for all categories of children with special needs. Teachers are more concerned about the social aspect of these children and, unlike Conception G, they are looking at inclusive education as a prerequisite for independent living.

Teachers holding Conception C are mainly concerned with the academic skills of slow learners who are slow and, unlike Conceptions F and G, they are concerned with all the children with special needs. Conceptions A, B, C and D show that teachers are academically oriented who focus basically on the acquisition of academic skills. Holders of the two Conceptions A and B see inclusive education as a vehicle for providing a



sophisticated and enriched education. They focus on the acquiring of a high level knowledge rather than on how inclusive education relates to children with special needs. Conception A emphasises the need of having a special school to cater for the diverse needs of all children with special needs.

#### 6.1.10 Teachers' conceptions of inclusive education: A summary

When discussing their conceptions of inclusive education, those teachers holding Conceptions A, B, and C were mostly teachers from the regular non-pilot schools and those teachers holding Conceptions D, E, F, and G were mostly special and regular teachers from the pilot schools. This is shown in Table 6.2 where inspection shows that the higher the level of teachers' conceptions of inclusive education then the greater are the number of teachers with experience and understanding of inclusive education; particularly among the inclusive education pilot school teachers.

**Table 6.2**

Number of Teachers in Different Category of Descriptions

Category	Referential components	Special needs teachers in pilot schools n(18)	Classroom teachers in pilot schools n(18)	Classroom teachers in non-pilot schools n(18)	Number of teachers n(54)
A	Achievement of academic excellence	0	0	5	5
B	Computer-enhanced learning	0	2	2	4
C	Catch-up for slow learners	4	6	5	15
D	Independent learning for students with basic skills	7	2	1	10
E	Intellectual rights for students with physical disabilities	2	4	1	7
F	Socialisation of students with special needs	15	7	3	25
G	Educational opportunity for all	18	15	6	39

Teachers holding Conceptions A, B and C, mostly from the non-pilot schools, consider that inclusive education should cater for children who have special and learning needs. Special education and traditional teachers from the pilot schools tend to hold Conceptions D and E. They believe that children with special needs and children who have been academically screened should be educated in an integrated environment. Conceptions F and G are held by most of the special education and traditional teachers from pilot schools.

## 6.2 Teachers' Understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy

Special education teachers and teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools were asked to describe their school's policy concerning inclusive education and to explain the relationship between the National Philosophy of Education and the National Inclusive Education Policy. Table 6.3 contains the numerical data from teachers in the various school types in response to this issue. Verbatim, illustrative quotes from respondents are placed throughout this section of the chapter.

### 6.2.1 Understanding of inclusive education

Teachers' knowledge of the philosophical principles and educational policies associated with inclusive education was limited. Those who were involved in inclusive education classes were not familiar with the philosophical principles and educational policies as they revealed that they had "not much" heard nor read about them. Overall results of teachers' understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy are shown in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3**

Teachers' Understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy

Groups of teachers	Had seen, read, heard and understand the policy	Had seen, read heard, but did not understand the policy	Had read about the policy in newspapers and magazines	Had not seen, but have heard about the policy	Had no knowledge of the policy
Special teachers in pilot schools	3	3	-	-	12
Traditional teachers in pilot schools	2	1	1	1	13
Traditional teachers in non-pilot schools	-	-	1	-	17
All teachers (n-54)	5	4	2	1	42
%	9	7	2	4	77

As can be seen in Table 6.3, 77% of the teachers had not seen, read nor heard about the Inclusive Education Policy. They reported that they were not aware of its implementation in the education system. Typical comments were as follows:

*I have heard of special education but not inclusive education. (sp11)<sup>18</sup>*

*Just as I have explained to you. I have not heard about it. I have not read about inclusive education. For that matter, I do not know. (sp3)<sup>19</sup>*

*...government policy? I do not know. (sp14)*

Only five teachers from the pilot schools have a good understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy, seeing it as providing an educational opportunity for all children to become individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced. They explained that the Philosophy of Education is well regarded and has been used as a guide in all matters pertaining to education planning and implementation (The Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994b). They understand the intention of the National Education Philosophy, which is to develop the potential of all individuals as balanced human beings in intellectual, spiritual, emotional and physical aspects. They agreed that it could be achieved through inclusive education. Further, they believe that inclusive education was a well thought out policy that could bring about development and educational excellence in Malaysia.

Four teachers from the pilot inclusive schools revealed that they had seen or read about the Inclusive Education Policy but they did not understand it. On the other hand, special

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<sup>18</sup> Saya pernah dengar tentang pendidikan khas tetapi tidak ada dengar tentang pendidikan inklusif. (sp11)

<sup>19</sup> Seperti yang saya terangkan pada puan. Saya tidak pernah dengar tentang pendidikan inklusif atau membaca tentangnya. Kerana perkara ini, saya tidak tahu. (sp3)

education teachers and teachers from the pilot schools and non-pilot schools revealed that they have either seen or heard about inclusive education but they do not understand or think of it seriously. Teachers' comments included the following:

*I have read about it but not in depth.... (sp1)*

*I have seen the document but I did not think of it seriously. (tp1)*

*I am not sure because it is a new thing...inclusive? Does it mean special education only or...? I do not know. (tnp15)*

Two teachers, one from a pilot school and one from a non-pilot school, mentioned that they come to know more about inclusive education by reading national newspapers and magazines. Teachers' statements included:

*I have read about it in the newspaper but not in depth. I just scanned through the article. (tp5)*

*At the moment, this school has not received the policy document but I have read it in the "Berita Harian" newspaper. That is all. (tnp6)<sup>20</sup>*

Generally, many of the teachers from the seven categories had neither read about nor heard of the Inclusive Education Policy. Neither had they heard about inclusive education from other sources, such as special education teachers, until they were interviewed. Hence, they lacked the knowledge to relate inclusive education to the National Philosophy of Education. Further, they could not link the National Philosophy of Education to the formulation of the Inclusive Education Policy. They tended to see the Philosophy of Education as a separate policy.

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<sup>20</sup> Pada masa sekarang, sekolah ini tidak ada menerima policy itu tetapi saya ada membacanya melalui kertas khabar "Berita Harian". Itu sahaja. (tnp6)

### 6.3 Teachers' Attitudes Towards the Introduction of Inclusive Education

To examine teachers' attitudes towards the introduction of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system, all teachers in the sample were required to state how they felt about the introduction of inclusive education. Their responses were analysed in terms of "general to specific attitudes". "General attitudes" were those related to the introduction of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system while "specific attitudes" were those related to the accommodation of children with special needs in the traditional classroom. Sub-sections addressed whether the teachers were accepting or rejecting of children with special needs in a traditional classroom setting. Table 6.4 contains the numerical data from teachers in the various school types in response to this issue. Verbatim, illustrative quotes from respondents are placed throughout this section of the chapter.

**Table 6.4**

Teachers' General Attitudes Towards the Introduction of Inclusive Education

Group of teachers	Good Idea					
	Yes		No		No comment	
	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)	(n)	(%)
Special teachers (pilot – sp)	15	83	3	17	0	-
Traditional teachers (pilot – rp)	18	100	0	-	0	-
Traditional teachers (non-pilot - rnp)	11	61	4	22	3	17
<b>Total (N=54)</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>81.5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5.5</b>

#### 6.3.1 Attitudes towards inclusive education in the Malaysian school system

Teachers' attitudes towards the introduction of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system are presented in Table 6.4. About 81.5% of the teachers in the sample

demonstrated a high level of approval of the introduction of inclusive education. All the traditional teachers (100%) from the pilot schools indicated their approval. About 83% of the special education teachers from pilot schools showed approval of inclusive education while 61% of the regular teachers from non-pilot schools showed approval. All of these teachers believed that inclusive education could provide equal educational and social opportunities for children with special needs in a regular classroom setting.

Selected comments from these three groups of teachers contained the following:

*Inclusive education is good because it provides children with special needs the opportunity to learn in the traditional classroom. They should not just be left to learn in the special education classroom all the time but should be given the chance in the traditional classroom. (sp9)<sup>21</sup>*

*Inclusive education prevents children from being isolated from children from the traditional settings. The parents will be very happy to see that their children have a place in the traditional classroom. (tnp5)<sup>22</sup>*

*It is good because these children with special needs, in the inclusive class, will learn more than those who are in the special education class. If they remain in the special education class, they will not progress. (sp14)*

Nevertheless, 19% of teachers had reservations concerning inclusive education. About

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<sup>21</sup> Pendidikan inklusif adalah baik kerana program ini memberi peluang pada kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas untuk belajar dikelas biasa. Mereka tidak seharusnya dibiarkan belajar dikelas pendidikan khas sepanjang masa. Mereka harus di beri peluang belajar di kelas biasa. (sp9)

<sup>22</sup> Pendidikan inklusif dapat membantu kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas daripada diasingkan daripada pelajar lain. Ibu bapa kepada mereka ini akan merasa gembira untuk melihat anak-anak mereka belajar bersama-sama dengan kanak-kanak lain di dalam kelas biasa. (tnp5)

13% of them considered inclusive education unfavourably while about 6% said they were unable to comment due to their own limited knowledge of inclusive education. Many special education teachers from the pilot schools and regular teachers from the non-pilot school exhibited such attitudes. Special education teachers from the pilot schools commented that they were not in favour of the introduction of inclusive education because of the impromptu nature of its introduction. They felt that there was no proper pre-planning or organization. For example, there were not enough qualified teachers to teach in inclusive education programmes. One teacher's comments were as follows:

*Inclusive education has been introduced in a hasty manner. I do not know where it is going. As I see it, even the special education programme has not shown good results and here comes inclusive education. So, for me, I feel that inclusive education has caused confusion among teachers and parents. Further, there are not enough qualified teachers to handle this programme. (sp18)<sup>23</sup>*

Negative attitudes towards the introduction of inclusive education could be attributed to the inability of children with special needs to learn together with regular children because of their lower levels of academic ability and social skills. Special education teachers from the pilot schools showed their negative attitudes by making such comments as the following:

*Children who are extremely weak in terms of their academic and social skills cannot be in inclusive education. They are better off in the special*

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<sup>23</sup> Pendidikan inklusif ini telah dimulakan dengan tergesa-gesa. Saya tidak tahu dimanakan ara ditujukan. Seperti apa yang saya lihat, program pendidikan khas pun belum menunjukkan hasil yang bekersan. Dan tiba tiba munculnya progam pendidikan inklusif. Bagi saya, program pendidikan inklusif ini telah menimbulkan kerliluan diantara guru guru dan ibu bapa. Selain daripada itu, guru guru yang terlatih dalam bidang ini pun tidak mencukupi. (sp18)



*education class because the special education teachers can help them individually. (sp9)*

Although traditional teachers from the non-pilot schools had not experienced inclusive education, they commented that children with special needs would feel out of place among regular children. One teacher's explanation was as follows:

*I feel that these special needs children with special needs would feel inferior among the regular children. Further, they would be teased by the regular children due to their slowness in grasping what was taught to them. (trp17)<sup>24</sup>*

Several teachers believed that children, who are emotionally, mentally or physically challenged, would not be able to cope in the regular class, so they would be better off in a special education class. The following comments illustrated this attitude:

*I do not agree that all children with special needs should be placed in an inclusive education class, especially those who are seriously challenged. These children would cause a lot of problems to the teachers. Traditional teachers will find it difficult to teach them. (tp8)<sup>25</sup>*

*If children who are spastic are combined with the regular children, they will be facing a problem in their learning. They have different attitudes and abilities. I think it is not necessary to put them together in one class.*

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<sup>24</sup> Saya fikir bahawa kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini merasa rendah diri. Lagi pun, mereka di usik oleh kanak kanak kelas biasa kerana kelemahan mereka dalam pembelajaran mereka. (trp17)

<sup>25</sup> Saya tidak bersetujuk yang kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini ditempatkan di kelas inklusif terutamanya kanak kanak yang teruk kecacatan mereka. Kanak kanak ini akan menimbulkan masalah kepada guru guru. Guru guru kelas biasa akan mendapat kesulitan dalam pengajaran mereka. (tp8)

*(tnp12)*<sup>26</sup>

A few other teachers from the non-pilot schools said that they could not comment due to their limited knowledge on inclusive education. One teacher's explanation was as follows:

*I cannot tell you whether inclusive education is a good idea or not. I do not have a good knowledge of inclusive education. For this reason, I find it difficult to give you any comments. (tnp8)*<sup>27</sup>

### 6.3.2 Attitudes towards children with special needs in traditional classrooms

To examine teachers' attitudes towards the accommodation of children with special needs in traditional classrooms, teachers were asked how willing they were to accept and teach children with special needs. This question was presented to teachers from the pilot and non-pilot inclusive education schools. Table 6.5 shows teachers' expressions of acceptance of children with special needs in their classes. About 83% of the three groups of teachers endorsed a positive response while about 17% gave negative responses. About 89% of the special education teachers from the pilot schools were willing to include children with special needs in their classes. This finding was not very encouraging because a number of special education teachers did not want to include children with special needs in their classes. They should be ready for the integration of

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<sup>26</sup> Jika kanak kanak spastic di masukkan ke dalam kelas biasa, mereka akan menghadapi masalah dalam pembelajaran mereka. Mereka mempunyai sikap yang berlainan dan juga kebolehan. Saya fikir mereka tidak perlu dimasukkan ke dalam kelas biasa belajar bersama-sama dengan kanak kanak biasa. (tnp12)

<sup>27</sup> Saya tidak dapat memberitahu kepada puan jika pendidikan inklusif ini idea yang baik atau tidak. Saya tidak mempunyai pengetahuan tentang pendidikan inklusif ini. Oleh kerana ini, saya susah hendak memberi komen tentang perkara tersebut. (tnp8)

children with special needs in traditional classroom settings. However, teachers from the pilot schools, who were involved in inclusive education classes, showed an 83 % acceptance.

Both special education teachers and teachers from pilot inclusive education schools demonstrated positive attitudes towards the inclusion of children with special needs in traditional classes. Although teachers from the non-pilot schools had not experienced teaching students with special needs in their classes, 77 % of them had expressed willingness to include students with special needs in their classes. One teacher's explanation was as follows:

*I am very interested in teaching children with special needs because of my own experience. During my schooling time, I used to see some students who were experiencing difficulties in their studies. But they did not get the attention from the teachers. The teachers during that time were concerned about finishing their syllabus rather than helping the students. My past experience motivated me to want to help these children. (tnp2)<sup>28</sup>*

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<sup>28</sup> Saya sangat berminat untuk mengajar kanak-kanak yang istimewa kerana pengalaman saya dahulu yang mana ada pelajar yang mengalami masalah pembelajaran tidak di bantu oleh guru. Guru itu hanya pentingkan menghabiskan sukatan pelajarannya. Pengalaman memberi motivasi pada saya untuk berkhidmat untuk kanak kanak demikian.(tnp2)

**Table 6.5**

Teachers' Attitudes about Children with Special Needs in the Traditional Classroom

Groups of teachers	Accommodation for special needs children in the regular classroom				
	(N)	Attitudes			
		Positive		Negative	
	(N)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Special teachers (pilot - mp)	18	16	89	2	11
Traditional teachers (pilot - rp)	18	15	83	3	17
Traditional teachers (non-pilot - rnp)	18	14	78	4	22
<b>Total number of teachers (N-54)</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>17</b>

## (i) Positive attitudes

Traditional teachers who expressed their willingness to accept and teach children with special needs in their classes have compassionate, religious and supportive views. They believe that children with special needs require special attention and individualized instruction in order to survive in the real world. They tend to show great interest in having children with special needs in their classes by interacting with them and providing them with individual help as much as possible. Personal feelings of compassion and support are the reasons given by some teachers for accepting children with special needs unconditionally, teaching them with the other children in their classes. The following comments illustrated these attitudes:

*I am interested in having them in my class. I am willing to have more of them because they should be helped and given attention. (tp16)<sup>29</sup>*

*I enjoy listening to this child with special needs when she relates stories about the movies she has watched. I pity to see them. I used to visit the special education class to interact with children who are autistic and those with Downs Syndrome. Who knows, we may have our own child with special needs in the family. It is better to learn more about them so that we can deal with them in our traditional class. (tp14)*

Several teachers had begun to accept and teach children with special needs after they had made personal contact with them. Having the experience of working with children with special needs, these teachers were willing to include them in their classes. They tended to appreciate the children and expressed delight about having them as class members. The following extracts illustrate their acceptance and willingness:

*I feel good about having a child with special needs in my class. It has given me the opportunity to get to know about special children with special needs and to help them as well. (tp2)<sup>30</sup>*

*I could not picture how to teach them until I have experienced having them in my class. (tp6)<sup>31</sup>*

*I feel negative towards them because I have not had any experience teaching them. After having experience being with them, I feel*

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<sup>29</sup> Saya berminat yang mereka belajar didalam kelas saya. Saya sanggup mengajar mereka kerana perlukan bantuan dan perhatian. (tp16)

<sup>30</sup> Saya suka yang ada kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas dimasukkan di kelas saya. Ini akan memberi saya peluang untuk mengetahui dan membantu mereka. (tp2)

<sup>31</sup> Saya tidak dapat membayangkan bagaimana mengajar mereka sehingga saya mengalami mengajar mereka. (tp6)

*comfortable. I have found that their world is different from ours. We have our own "normal" world but theirs is a unique one. I will try to help them as much as I can. (sp2)<sup>32</sup>*

Some of these teachers indicated that teachers who have experienced inclusive education and learned about children with special needs tend to become more supportive and willing to help make a better world for these children. One teacher's explanation follows:

*I hope that the other teachers will experience inclusive education and will be willing to give their cooperation. If every teacher knows a little bit about children with special needs then there will be more children with special needs who will be successful in life. (sp13)*

Some teachers from the pilot schools were reluctant initially to teach children with special needs in their classes because they lacked the specialised knowledge. However, after interacting with these children, they felt more confident and were willing to have them in their classes. Generally, this change of attitude was related to personal feelings of compassion. Several other teachers found it an obligation to help children with special needs because of their strong religious convictions, believing that special needs are God's doing. One teacher summed up these feelings:

*My husband has told me that when I see something unique with the children with special needs, I should think it is God's doing. I should be thankful to God that I am fine. So when I see them, I must be sympathetic.*

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<sup>32</sup> Saya merasa negatif terhadap mereka kerana saya belum ada pengalaman mengajar mereka. Tetapi selepas saya mengajar mereka, saya rasa selesa. Saya nampak yang dunia mereka ini adalah istimewa daripada yang lain. Kita ada dunia yang normal tetapi dunia mereka adalah istimewa. Saya akan cuba membantu mereka dengan sepenuhnya. (sp2)

(tp2)<sup>33</sup>

Although children with special needs are not expected to perform as well as other children, teachers have found it deeply satisfying to see the small progress made by these children in the inclusive class. One teacher explained that teaching them is a challenge but the accomplishment achieved by these children with special needs has been a great fulfillment for her:

*As I have said, it is a challenge to me. Whenever these children are able to do something, even though it is something very little, I feel very happy. The way they show their joy at having achieved little things makes me happy. And that itself is rewarding. (sp4)*

Mainstream class teachers, who are parents of children with special needs, reported that they are positive in including children with special needs in their classes. These teachers are able to relate to the needs of children with special needs because of their own experiences. Having children with special needs in the family does not embarrass them. In fact, they do not mind being observed interacting with their children. They strongly believe that these children should be given the chance to learn with other children, finding children with special needs delightful to be with. The comments of one teacher-parent of a child with special needs are as follows:

*I like to interact with children with special needs. They are like my friends. Being a parent of a child with special needs, I know how it feels. These children should be given the chance to learn with the other children in a traditional classroom. I am proud to tell people that I have a child with*

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<sup>33</sup> Saya telah diberitahu oleh suami saya jika saya melihat sesuatu yang ganjil dengan kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas, saya harus fikir itu adalah kerja tuhan. Saya harus bersyukur bahawa saya sempurna. Apabila saya melihat ganjil itu, saya mesti kesihan padanya. (tp2)

*special needs. (tp12)*

(ii) Negative attitudes

However, some teachers are not interested in having children with special needs in their mainstream class, let alone teaching them. They prefer to teach children in traditional classes because they have been trained as primary school teachers. There were several others who felt that children with special needs were better off in a special class. They made it clear that the number of students in the class with different ability levels would affect their teaching and that they could hardly cope. Teachers were reluctant to admit this openly, as they felt required to demonstrate their obedience to the law and practice of government policies. These teachers with negative attitudes were those who had no training in inclusive education. They either held strong cultural or religious beliefs or simply found themselves too old for new endeavours.

*Due to cultural belief which emphasises on the dos and don'ts of certain things, like touching a person with physical disability, may affect my future child; it does scare me. (tnp5)<sup>34</sup>*

*I am not interested in teaching special needs children because I have no patience. The last eight months of teaching these children made me lose hope. Even though I don't like it, I have to keep it to myself for humanitarian and compassionate reasons. (tp11)*

*I find it difficult to teach special needs children because some of the children in the regular class are also weak in their studies. Further, I am not interested. (tp15)*

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<sup>34</sup> Oleh kerana kepercayaan budaya seperti menyentuh seorang yang mempunyai kecacatan anggota, seseorang akan takut yang bakal anaknya akan dilahir seperti yang itu. Perkara ini sangat menakutkan saya. (tnp5)



Reactions to the suggestion that teachers should attend courses on inclusive education were not favourable, especially from the veteran teachers from the non-pilot schools. They claimed that they were too old to attend courses and suggested that younger teachers be given this opportunity. Teacher's comments were as follows:

*I am not interested in attending special education or inclusive education courses as I am about to retire. It would be better if younger teachers were given the opportunity. (tnp4)*

*I don't think I would like to attend any courses because I am already fifty years old. (tnp16)*

*I am not interested in attending courses on inclusive education because, if we want to teach these children, we have to be interested. I am not interested because I have been teaching regular classes and my interest is in teaching regular classes. (tp18)<sup>35</sup>*

Teachers who tended to reject having children with special needs in their classes were those who were set in their personal feelings or preconceived ideas of what children with special needs were. They feared the consequences of including children with special needs in their classes. They feared that having children with special needs in their classes would affect their health, especially those female teachers who were pregnant. Others revealed that their fear was related to what they had heard or been told concerning children with special needs. Remarks of teachers holding this attitude included the following:

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<sup>35</sup> Saya tidak berminat menghadiri kursus tentang pendidikan inklusif kerana jika kita hendak mengajar kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas, kita kena berminat. Saya tidak berminat kerana saya telah mengajar kanak kanak biasa dan saya lebih berminat mengajar kanak kanak biasa. (tp18)

*I have negative feeling because of what I heard, for example, being close to a handicapped person when one is expecting a child may affect the baby. Nevertheless, when I thought about it and realised that it's God's doing, I feel better... (tp3)<sup>36</sup>*

*When I was small, my father told me that, if I behave inappropriately, I would have a child in that same manner. At that time I believed what my father told me. During that time, children were not allowed to ask questions. Nevertheless, that feeling is hard to get rid of. I am still fearful about it. (tnp5)<sup>37</sup>*

Several teachers claimed that many parents of children with special needs were ashamed of having children with disabilities, claiming that the public tended to associate the child to a sinful act in the past. One teacher said:

*Parents are ashamed to have children with special needs because people would say that they have such children because they had done something sinful and this, I think, is God's punishment. Many Malay people think this way. (tp17)<sup>38</sup>*

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<sup>36</sup> Saya merasa negatif kerana apa yang saya dengar iaitu jika kita dekat kepada orang yang cacat semasa kita mengandung, anak yang kita kandung itu akan terpengaruh. Tetapi apabila saya fikir, saya terasa yang semuanya adalah kerja tuhan. Dan ini membuat saya selesa. (tp3)

<sup>37</sup> Semasa saya kecil, bapa saya memberitahu saya jika saya berkelakuan yang tidak baik, saya akan mempunyai seorang anak yang berkelakuan yang sedemikian. Pada masa itu saya percaya apa yang dikatakan oleh bapa saya. Masa itu juga, kanak-kanak digalakkan menyoal soalan. Walau bagaimanapun perasaan itu susah dihapuskan. Saya masih merasa takut tentang ini. (tnp5)

<sup>38</sup> Ibubapa malu apabila mereka mempunyai anak yang cacat kerana orang lain akan mengatakan mereka telah membuat perkara yang tidak baik. Atas kelakuan ini tuhan telah menghukumnya. Kebanyakan orang Melayu berfikiran seperti ini. (tp17)

In a status-conscious society, having a child with special needs is an embarrassment for parents. Teachers reported that parents who held important positions in their work place felt ashamed of having children with special needs. The teachers added that parents generally kept their children at home to prevent others from knowing that they had such a child, as expressed in the comments:

*Parents of special needs children who work in high positions are ashamed of having special needs children. The parents fear that it would affect their status. (tp8)<sup>39</sup>*

*Many children with special needs are kept in the house because parents are ashamed of them. It is a social problem. They cannot face the fact that they have these children while their neighbour has a normal child. (tp18)<sup>40</sup>*

### 6.3.3 Teachers' attitudes towards the introduction of inclusive education: A summary

In summary, most teachers expressed their willingness to work with children with special needs in their classes. Their positive attitudes were related to their religious beliefs as well as to their experiences in working with children with special needs. Many had found fulfillment and satisfaction in such teaching. In general, teachers were confident that, with time and preparation, they would be able to deliver their best in meeting the diverse needs of children with special needs.

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<sup>39</sup> Ibumama kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas yang berpangkat tinggi adalah malu mempunyai yang sedemikian. Ibumama ini takut akan menjejaskan status mereka. (tp8)

<sup>40</sup> Kebanyakan kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas adalah disimpan didalam rumah kerana akan memalukan mereka. Ini adalah masalah sosial. Mereka tidak dapat menerima yang sebenarnya dengan adanya anak anak seperti ini dibandingkan jirannya yang mempunyai anak anak yang normal. (tp18)

Teachers who held negative attitudes towards inclusive education were those who were not given sufficient preparation time to implement the inclusive education programme. Others said that they were not interested in having children with special needs in their classes because they were not ready, had no patience or preferred to teach children in the regular classes. There were several other teachers who expressed their reluctance to include children with special needs in their classes for fear of being affected by the disabilities of the children. This was largely due to superstitions or myths associated with disabilities handed down from generation to generation.

Nevertheless, most teachers suggested that the Ministry of Education provide them with training before introducing inclusive education into the education system. With a good understanding of inclusive education, they would learn to appreciate the children with special needs and the programme itself.

#### **6.4 Teachers' Experiences in the Implementation of Inclusive Education**

Teachers from the six pilot schools were asked to describe their experiences in the implementation of inclusive education. They were also asked how it was carried out and what their roles were as teachers of inclusive education. Significant factors that affected the implementation of inclusive education were identified, including the lack of preparation, size of the regular classes and duration of the inclusive education program. Levels of students' abilities, partial implementation and the role of special education teachers were also identified as other factors. Verbatim, illustrative responses are placed throughout this section of the chapter.

##### **6.4.1 Lack of preparation**

Teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools gave a similar pattern of responses, claiming they were not prepared for the introduction of inclusive education. They were unsure of their responsibilities because of the lack of instruction concerning their duties as teachers of inclusive education. The teachers stated that they only learned of the

implementation of inclusive education from the principals who had been asked to attend a briefing given by the State Education Departments. During these briefings, the principals were instructed to inform their teachers and to organize seminars on inclusive education in their schools. In most cases, teachers reported that the principals, after one day of briefing, were expected to give seminars on inclusive education to all teachers in their schools. According to several teachers, principals asked the special education teachers to brief other teachers and to help those teachers involved in the inclusive education programme. The briefing for teachers also took one day. The one-day briefing for the principals and teachers, which, for some, lasted only an hour, was insufficient to allow principals and teachers to grasp the concept of inclusive education. Teachers' comments were as follows:

*When my school was picked to start an inclusive education class, the principal attended a briefing at the education department. The next day, the principal asked me, as the special education teacher, to give an hour briefing on inclusive education to all the teachers in my school. I found out that not all the regular teachers wanted to teach these children or accept special needs children in their classes. (sp1)<sup>41</sup>*

*We, the regular teachers, were told by the school principal that children with special needs would be sent to our class to learn with the regular children. There was no seminar on inclusive education other than an hour of briefing about the program. (tp1)<sup>42</sup>*

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<sup>41</sup> Apabila sekolah saya dipilih untuk memulakan pelajaran eksklusif dalam kelas, pengetua telah hadir semasa ceramah di Jabatan Pendidikan. Pada hari yang berikutnya, pengetua bertanya kepada saya sebagai guru kepada keperluan khas, untuk memberi ceramah selama sejam termasuk pelajaran kepada semua guru-guru disekolah saya. Saya mendapati tidak semua guru-guru yang biasa akan mengajar kanak-kanak sedemikian atau menerima mereka didalam kelas mereka.(sp1)

<sup>42</sup> Kami, guru-guru biasa, diberitahu oleh pengetua sekolah bahawa kanak-kanak sedemikian akan dihantar ke kelas kami untuk belajar dengan kanak-kanak yang

As previously mentioned, many of the regular teachers were not sure of their role as teachers for inclusive education because of their lack of knowledge about the programme. They did not know how to teach and what to do with the children with special needs in their classes. Several others asked the special education teachers how to teach the children. The teachers were told to continue teaching in the same manner they used to teach children in regular classes. However, the teachers found it difficult because the children, generally, had low academic ability.

A few teachers summed up this common concern:

*I find it difficult and a burden to teach special children in my class. This is because they have lower IQ compared to the regular children, who are weak themselves. (tp10)<sup>43</sup>*

*I am not experienced in inclusive education. That is why I don't know what I am supposed to teach them. I asked the resource special education teacher whether this child with special needs is going to have a different kind of exercise from the "normal" children. She said not to mind; it is okay for the child to follow my class. But I don't think she can follow my class, because she is an inclusive child, isn't she? (tp15)*

Several other teachers claimed that they had to teach despite the fact that they were not given any form of presentation about inclusive education. As teaching professionals, they could not go against the directive of the principal. Given the responsibility, they had to act on it. Teachers' comments were as follows:

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biasa. Tidak ada seminar yang berkenaan dengan pelajaran inklusif selain daripada taklimat singkat tentang program tersebut. (rp1)

<sup>43</sup> Saya dapati susah untuk mengajar kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas dalam kelas saya. Ini adalah kerana mereka mempunyai IQ yang rendah berbanding dengan kanak-kanak biasa dimana mereka sendiri lemah.(tp10)

*I felt uncomfortable. It was a burden to teach children with special needs. But given the responsibility, I am forced to teach. (tp10)<sup>44</sup>*

*I do not know the concepts of inclusive education. I was only told that children with special needs would come into my class. Since they are in my class, I accept them. That is it. (tp13)<sup>45</sup>*

Several special education teachers from the pilot schools felt that the implementation of inclusive education was premature. These specialist teachers were still in the process of learning more about children with special needs in the special education classes. They stated that they were not ready for a new programme. One teacher summed up a common concern:

*...suddenly inclusive education was introduced in the school. It is confusing for the teachers and parents. (sp18)<sup>46</sup>*

Special education teachers were not only concerned about the lack of preparation on their part but also they were worried about the responses of the teachers in the pilot schools. They said that the teachers were not prepared to teach children with special needs. Teachers' comments were as follows:

*The regular teachers refused to accept the children with special needs in their classes. They asked the children to leave their class. I told the*

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<sup>44</sup> Saya rasa kurang selesa. Ia adalah sesuatu yang membebankan untuk mengajar kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas. Tetapi apabila diberi tanggungjawab, saya terpaksa untuk mengajar.(tp10)

<sup>45</sup> Saya tidak tahu konsep pendidikan inklusif. Saya hanya diberitahu bahawa kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas akan belajar di dalam kelas saya. Semenjak mereka berada di dalam kelas saya, saya menerima mereka. Itu sahaja. (tp13)

<sup>46</sup> ...tiba tiba pendidikan inklusif telah diperkenalkan kepada sekolah. Kejadian ini mengeliruhkan guru guru dan ibubapa. (sp18)

*principal about it. He had to send the children to the inclusive class himself. (sp9)<sup>47</sup>*

*The regular teachers were not happy. Probably they did not understand. (sp10)<sup>48</sup>*

#### 6.4.2 Size of class

Special education teachers complained that the teachers in the pilot schools were reluctant to teach children with special needs because of the large numbers of children (between 35-50) already in their classes. One teacher's explanation was as follows:

*The regular teachers found them a burden. They complained that they already had 35 to 40 regular children and to add another child with special needs would be impossible. (sp1)<sup>49</sup>*

Some teachers from the pilot schools mentioned that they already had children who were academically slow in their classes, who were already making it difficult for them to teach. To add another child, who had special needs, would create more problems. Some teachers said that some parents of children with special needs complained that the teachers were not teaching their children properly in the inclusive education class. The

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<sup>47</sup> Guru guru biasa menolak untuk menerima kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas didalam kelas mereka. Mereka meminta kanak kanak itu meninggalkan kelas itu. Saya beritahu kepada guru besar tentang perkara itu. Dia kena menghantar kanak kanak itu ke kelas. (sp9)

<sup>48</sup> Guru guru biasa itu tidak gembira. Ada kemungkinan yang mereka tidak memahami apa itu pendidikan inklusif. (sp10)

<sup>49</sup> Guru guru biasa mendapati kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ini membebankan. Mereka mengadu bahawa yang mereka mempunyai seramai 35 hingga 40 kanak kanak biasa didalam kelas mereka. Jadi dengan memasukkan Kanak kanak dengan kerpeluan khas ini ke dalam kelas mereka adalah mustahir. (sp1)



teachers subsequently told the parents that, with a large number of children in the class, it was difficult to give special attention to their children. One teacher's explanation was as follows:

*A mother of a child with special needs complained that I did not teach her child. She made this accusation because she found that her child had not written any words in her exercise book. All the child did was to write the date. I said that I was sorry about that and told her I have 44 children in my class. (tp15)*

#### 6.4.3 Importance of student ability

According to some teachers, because regular children had different levels of ability, the arrival of children with special needs increased their teaching load. Not only had teachers to cope with teaching the existing children with low academic skills but also they now they had to deal with children with special needs who had very low academic ability. Some teacher s' explanations included:

*I found it difficult because the class is already a very weak class. When I am teaching them English Language it is difficult for me to give attention to a child with special needs alone. (tp15)*

*Yes, it is a burden because there are already slow learners in the regular class. (tp10)*

Although the teachers from the pilot schools found it difficult to teach children with special needs in their classes, they somehow had to teach them. They said that, while the method of teaching would remain the same, they had to be especially sensitive to the needs of children with special needs. For example, they would try to teach these children according to their level of ability. Teachers' explanations were as follows:

*I would teach the class as a whole and then divide them into groups according to their abilities. Each group would have different task levels.*

*(tp17)*<sup>50</sup>

*In my class, I have to teach these children with special needs without following the syllabus. Because of their different levels of ability, I have to teach them from their levels and then build up to the next level. (tp10)*<sup>51</sup>

Children for inclusive education were chosen according to their abilities and not according to age-appropriateness. The teachers strongly believed that placing children, based on their chronological age, would do more harm than good. For example, a child with special needs with a chronological age of twelve, but functioning at a mental age of nine, would not be able to cope in a Standard Six class. Moreover, this class has to take a government exam at the end of the year. Some teachers' comments were as follows:

*These children are placed according to their ability. We cannot place them according to their chronological age. For example, a boy who is 12 years old should be in Standard Six. But his functioning level is just like a 9-year-old; he cannot possibly cope with the lessons in Standard Six.*

*(sp1)*<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Saya akan mengajar pada keseluruhan dan kemudian bahagikan mereka dalam kumpulan mengikut kebolehan mereka. Tiap tiap kumpulan akan membuat kerja yang berlainan tahap. (tp17)

<sup>51</sup> Dalam kelas saya, saya mengajar kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas dengan tidak mengikut syllabus. Kerana mereka mempunyai tahap yang berlainan maka saya akan mengajar mereka dari tahap pengetahuan mereka dan binakan untuk ke tahap yang berikut. (tp10)

<sup>52</sup> Kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas adalah ditempatkan ke dalam kelas inklusif mengikut kebolehan mereka. Mereka tidak dapat ditempatkan di dalam kelas mengikut umur mereka. Contoh: seorang budak lelaki yang berumur 12 tahun sepatutnya belajar di darjah enam. Tetapi tahap pencapaiannya adalah seperti budak berumur 9 tahun. Dia tidak dapat mengikut pelajaran tahap tahun enam. (sp1)

*Children are placed according to ability because, in Malaysia, we find children with special needs, who have the same chronological age as the regular children, could not learn in a regular class. It is because their abilities are far below compared to the regular children. For example Miss X. She is 18 years old but her mental age (MA) is equivalent to a 13-year-old child. We cannot adopt the Western concept of inclusive education which places children according to age-appropriateness. So what is wrong if Malaysia modifies the criteria for placement which is based on ability and performance. The government should not adopt the Western concept totally. It cannot be applied to our situation. If we do, we cannot achieve our objectives. (sp6)*

A teacher in the pilot school who taught a music class commented that a child with special needs in her class could follow a music lesson, such as playing the recorder. She noticed that the child had a keen interest in playing the musical instrument. However, he was not academically oriented as he had difficulty in understanding academic work. This teacher had this to say:

*A boy, who is a child with special needs, can follow a music lesson like playing the recorder. But when it comes to answering subjective questions, he is not able to. He needs help from the teacher. (tp3)<sup>53</sup>*

#### 6.4.4 Partial implementation

Some special education teachers and teachers from two pilot inclusive schools reported that their schools were practising full-time inclusive education. The other special education teachers and teachers from four inclusive education schools reported that their schools were operating inclusive classes on a part-time basis.

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<sup>53</sup> Seorang budak lelaki yang berkeperluan khas boleh mengikuti pelajaran muzik dengan pandai bermain alat muzik. Tetapi apabila menjawab soalan subjektif, dia tidak dapat menjawabnya. Dia perlukan bantuan daripada cikgunya. (tp3)

The teachers from the four inclusive education pilot schools said that children with special needs, who attended on a part-time basis, would study a few subjects, such as Malay Language, English, mathematics and religion. Malay Language and mathematics were taught five times a week while English and religion were taught three times a week. Once the students had finished their lessons in the regular class, they would return to their special education class. The special education teachers would help them if they did not understand what they were taught in the regular class. A teacher's comments were as follows:

*In my school, inclusive education is carried out as a part-time basis. These children with special needs will go to inclusive class for Malay Language and Mathematics. After the lessons, they return to the special class where they will be helped with their lessons. (sp7)*

According to the teachers, children with special needs in the two inclusive education pilot schools attended full-time inclusive education. They indicated that children with special needs learned from different teachers and that there was only one student being integrated in the inclusive education class. Teachers' comments were as follows:

*I thought that, for the inclusive education class, the student with special needs will be in a class for one or two periods and then return to special education class. But then I found out that she will stay in the class for the whole day, full time. (tp15)*

*I have a girl integrated in my class. She is 12 years old, whose mental age is equivalent to a standard four pupil, 10 years of age. She is attending a full time inclusive education programme. (tp14)*

*All the children with special needs are attending full time inclusive education classes. There are 14 of them. They are integrated into 14*

*different classes. (sp14)*

#### 6.4.5 The role of special education teachers

Special education teachers in the six pilot inclusive education schools reported that their roles were varied. In the five pilot schools, (one with full-time and four with part-time inclusive education programmes) the special education teachers were not involved in the teaching of the inclusive class or involved in the program. However, some of them said that they had communicated with the subject teachers with regard to the children's levels of academic ability. By doing this, the classroom teachers would be able to plan the child's lesson accordingly. One teacher explained:

*I discuss with the subject teacher about the student's academic ability so that she can prepare her lesson to meet the need of this student. I will ask the teacher about the student's performance. If the student finds it difficult then I will help him in the special education class. (sp10)<sup>54</sup>*

The teachers in one pilot school, that practised full-time inclusive education, reported that they had a full-time special teacher involved in the inclusive class as a teacher's aide. Another school had a special education teacher whose role was to coordinate the inclusive education programme as well as to deal with parents. One teacher explained:

*My role as a special education teacher is to coordinate the programme and to deal with parents, teachers and to look after the welfare of the children with special needs. (sp14)*

The other schools did not involve any special education teachers other than providing

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<sup>54</sup> Saya telah berbincang dengan guru subjek tentang kebolehan akademik pelajar tersebut supaya pengajaran dan pembelajarannya dapat di buat mengikut keperluannya. Saya juga akan bertanya tentang pencapaiannya. Jika pelajar itu dapati pembelajaran itu susah maka saya akan bantu dikelas pendidikan khas. (sp10)

guidance to the regular teachers. As for the pilot schools that practised part-time inclusive education, no special education teachers were involved in the regular classrooms, so the traditional teachers were left on their own. One teacher summed up this common role:

*My role as a special education teacher is to take the children with special needs to the regular class when it is their time to have inclusive lessons. After the lessons, they return to the special class where I help them if they have not understood what has been taught. (sp18)<sup>55</sup>*

#### 6.4.6 Suggestions for future development

Both special education and regular teachers strongly believed that, in order to have a successful and effective implementation of inclusive education, the government and Ministry of Education should examine the feasibility of the programme. For example, the teachers stated that the Ministry of Education should ensure that all administrators have a good knowledge of inclusive education. They maintained that inclusive education had been introduced in a hasty and unsatisfactory manner. Teachers' comments were as follows:

*I would like the education department to understand the concept of inclusive education so that they can explain to the special education teachers and teachers in the pilot and non-pilot schools what it is all about. Normally the teachers complain. I hope the education department will look into this matter. (sp2)<sup>56</sup>*

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<sup>55</sup> Peranan saya sebagai guru pendidikan khas adalah membawa kanak kanak dengan keperluan khas ke kelas inklusif. Selepas pembelajaran mereka di kelas inklusif, mereka akan balik ke kelas pendidikan khas dimana saya akan bantu mereka. (sp18)

<sup>56</sup> Saya berharap Jabatan Pendidikan dapat memahami konsep pendidikan inklusif untuk menjelaskan kepada guru guru pendidikan khas dan guru guru daripada sekolah inklusif dan bukan inklusif. Biasanya guru guru ini mengaduh. Saya berharap jabatan ini akan

*Probably we need to have someone who is an expert in inclusive education. This person may be able to help in planning the programme well. (sp3)<sup>57</sup>*

*It is a good idea but all teachers should understand it. It should be explained to teachers; especially those who are involved in the programme. (sp6)*

Teachers would like to be included in the planning and implementation of inclusive education.

However, their teaching situation should be modified with the provision of trained teachers and resources. Teachers mentioned that commitment, support and cooperation of the administrative staff at Ministry of Education, State Education Departments, principals and teachers at large, were critical in order to achieve a successful and effective implementation of inclusive education.

#### 6.4.7 Teachers' experiences in the implementation of inclusive education: A summary

In summary, examining teachers' experiences of inclusive education highlighted the importance of them understanding the task of inclusive education and their role in it. They also noted the extra demands made on teachers who already have to cover a wide range of abilities in their classes while some teachers reported that part-time inclusive education provision might be useful. Some schools involved special education teachers in classrooms and coordination while others did not. Teachers tended to suggest that the feasibility and understanding of inclusive education programmes should be examined and that suitably trained teachers and suitable resources should be provided in order that inclusive education programmes might be successfully implemented

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mengambil berat tentang perkara ini.(sp2)

<sup>57</sup> Ada kemungkinan kita perlukan orang yang mahir dalam bidang ini. Orang ini akan dapat membantu dalam perancangan program tersebut. (sp3)

## 6.5 Teacher Education and Training for Inclusive Education and Its Implementation

Teachers' professional qualifications and backgrounds were obtained by asking the sample to fill in a questionnaire. This was done after the interviews. To explore factors underlying teachers' expectations of training on inclusive education, the sample was asked what sort of education and training courses they had attended and would like to attend. Results indicated that most of the teachers were professionally trained as primary school teachers except for one who had a bachelor's degree. Tables 6.6 and 6.7 contain the numerical data from teachers in the various school types in response to this issue. Verbatim, illustrative quotes from respondents are placed throughout this section of the chapter.

### 6.5.1 Qualifications

Table 6.6 shows the type of qualifications held by special education and regular teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools. Forty-two teachers had teaching certificates only. Eleven teachers had teaching and special education certificates while one teacher had a teaching certificate and a bachelor's degree. Based on this information, many of the teachers were not qualified to teach children with special needs. Further, only 20% of the teachers had special education qualifications. These teachers were special education teachers from the pilot schools.



**Table 6.6****Teacher Education and Training**

Groups of teachers	(N)	Education and training							
		Teaching certificate only		Teaching certificate and diploma		Teaching certificate and university degree		Teaching certificate and special educ. certificate	
		(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Special teachers (pilot - sp)	18	7	39	0	-	0	-	11	61
Regular teachers (pilot - rp)	18	17	94	0	-	1	6	0	-
Regular teachers (non-pilot - rnp)	18	18	100	0	-	0	-	0	-
Totals number of teachers	54	42	78	0	-	1	2	11	20

**6.5.2 Training for inclusive education**

Teachers were asked whether they had received any training in inclusive education and to elaborate such training, if they had attended any. They were also asked to stipulate what form of training they would prefer, if they wanted to attend courses on inclusive education. As Table 6.7 shows, relatively few teachers had received any form of training in inclusive education. About 67% of the teachers had not received any form of training, seminar instruction or briefing; 26% had attended an hour of briefing on inclusive education; and 7% of the teachers had attended a seminar. None of the teachers from the non-pilot schools had received any form of training in inclusive education. Due to the small number of teachers who had received some form of training in inclusive education, it was not surprising that the introduction of inclusive education had been negatively perceived.

**Table 6.7**

Numbers of Teachers who had Received Training of Inclusive Education

Group of teachers	(N)	Form of training					
		Seminar		Short course/briefing		Neither	
		(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)	(N)	(%)
Special teachers (pilot)	18	4	22	9	50	5	28
Traditional teachers (pilot)	18	0	0	5	28	13	72
Traditional teachers (non-pilot)	18	0	0	0	0	18	100
Totals: number of teachers	54	4	7	14	26	36	67

Many of the teachers were neither happy nor satisfied with the introduction of inclusive education. They expressed concern about the lack of training and exposure to inclusive education, which made it difficult for them to teach children with special needs. One teacher, who had a limited understanding of the characteristics of children with special needs, described one student in a negative manner. She related that she had a “strange” student who liked to look at herself in the mirror and laugh. Consequently, this teacher assumed that the student had a mental problem. Her comments were as follows:

*There is this child with special needs, who likes to look at herself in the mirror. I find it very strange. But if I have been told of the different behavioural characteristics of a child with special needs, I may not be shocked. For this naive reason, I need to be trained to understand and handle these children with special needs. (tp5)<sup>58</sup>*

<sup>58</sup> Ada seorang budak dengan keperluan khas yang suka melihat diri di dalam cermin. Saya nampak ini adalah kelakuan yang ganggil. Tetapi jika saya di beritahu tentang

### 6.5.3 Suggestions for teacher education

Reactions to the suggestion that teachers attend courses on inclusive education were not favourable. Veteran teachers from the non-pilot schools claimed that they were too old to attend courses and recommended that younger teachers be given this privilege.

Teachers' comments were as follows:

*I am not interested in attending special course as I am about to retire. It would be better if younger teachers were given the opportunity. (tnp4)*

*I don't think I would like to attend any course because I am already 50 years old. (tnp16)*

Nevertheless, there were special education teachers and teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools who were willing to attend short courses on inclusive education.

Because they were not adequately prepared to teach children with special needs, they believed that attending short courses on inclusive education would be beneficial. They felt the need to learn about handling children with special needs in regular classroom settings as well as to obtain a good knowledge on inclusive education. Most of the teachers had expressed the need to attend courses related to teaching and learning strategies, managing children with special needs and identifying children with special needs. One teacher's statements were as follows:

*Teachers should be sent to attend courses on inclusive education.*

*Teaching and learning strategies should be taught. This will help the*

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kelakuan kanak-kanak dengan keperluan khas yang ganggil ini, saya akan tidak terkejut. Oleh kerana pengalaman seperti ini, saya perlukan latihan untuk memahami pelajar yang demikian. (tp5)

*teachers in their teaching. (tp1)<sup>59</sup>*

Teachers asserted that such training would help them teach and guide children with special needs in achieving their potential. Some suggested that teachers who were teaching inclusive classes should share their experiences and relevant teaching techniques with others:

*I suggest that those teachers involved in teaching inclusive classes be sent to attend courses. They could then form a committee to share their experiences and techniques of teaching inclusive education. At least we would have their views and how far they have gone on the positive side. (sp8)*

*It would be a good idea to bring in all the teachers involved in teaching inclusive education so that they can share their teaching techniques. A guide book on inclusive education should be published as a teacher reference. Without it, teaching is made very difficult. (sp10)<sup>60</sup>*

Some teachers claimed that many principals and education officers were not sure of the meaning of “inclusive education” and, therefore, they were unable to resolve the problems related to the program. Some teachers’ comments were as follows:

*To ensure that inclusive education will be successful, the education department should know what inclusive education is. The officer-in-*

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<sup>59</sup> Guru guru patutnya dihantar menghadiri kursus tentang pendidikan inklusif. Strategi untuk mengajar harus di dedahkan kepda guru guru. Kursus yang sedemikian akan membantu guru guru dalam pengajaran mereka. (tp1)

<sup>60</sup> Adalah idea yang baik untuk melibatkan semua guru dalam pengajaran pendidikan inklusif supaya mereka dapat berkongsi pengalaman dan teknik mengajar. Buku panduan tentang pendidikan inklusif harusnya di keluarkan untuk kegunaan guru. Jika buku panduan ini tidak diterbitkan maka kesulitan mengajar akan timbul. (sp10)

*charge of state special education should know about it. He or she should try to solve the shortage of teachers and not just give directives. In most cases, the officer does not know what inclusive education is and problems faced by teachers. The principal should have a good knowledge of it too and must be able to solve problems related to inclusive education. To overcome this problem, teachers, administrators and principals should attend courses on inclusive education. (sp13)*

*In order to have a successful inclusive education program, the education department people should know what inclusive education means. They should know the pros and cons of the implementation, especially the shortage of qualified teachers. The school principals should also know about it and problems faced by the teachers involved in teaching inclusive classes. He or she should arrange for courses for all teachers. (sp14)*

#### 6.5.4 Teacher education and training for inclusive education and its implementation: A summary

Both special education teachers and teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools opined that they should be given adequate preparation to teach children with special needs. Pre-service preparation and in-service training for all teachers should be organised. Administrators at the Ministry of Education and State Education Departments should be fully knowledgeable about inclusive education.

## 6.6 Summary

Overall results revealed that the special education teachers and teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools were in favour of the introduction of inclusive education programmes in their schools. The seven categories of descriptions that emerged from the data showed that the teachers' conceptions of inclusive education were very complex

with regards to inclusive education. The lack of a common definition for inclusive education had caused confusion and misunderstanding among the teachers. Their conceptions of inclusive education implied that administrators at the Ministry of Education and State Education Departments should take steps in making inclusive education work in all schools.

Many teachers were found to be “in the dark” when it came to the National Education Philosophy. They were not able to relate the National Education Philosophy to special education and the Inclusive Education Policy. Teachers were not familiar with the Inclusive Education Policy due to the lack of knowledge and information. Lack of knowledge could be attributed to their “couldn’t-care-less” attitude. They believed that their prime responsibility was to teach. They might not be motivated or inspired to gather information concerning educational policies.

Overall results indicated that the teachers were in favour of the introduction of inclusive education but they had some reservations. Their reservations might be due to the lack of knowledge and understanding concerning inclusive education. A considerable number of teachers were unwilling to get involved in inclusive education. This might be due to the lack of preparation, large class size or lack of motivation to teach children with special needs. There were teachers who were concerned about their heavy workloads and teaching effectiveness. The presence of children with special needs in their classes might affect their teaching effectiveness and other children’s learning.

Nevertheless, most teachers believed that, with positive attitudes and adequate preparation to meet the diverse needs of children with special needs, successful implementation of inclusive education could be achieved. They stated that this could be achieved by providing pre-service and in-service training to those involved in inclusive education. Interestingly, teachers who had reservations concerning inclusive education were willing to give suggestions and recommendations for its successful implementation. They believed that inclusive education would offer many advantages to children with special needs.

Having presented her findings concerning teachers and principals' views and experiences of inclusive education in the pilot implementation, the writer now turns to a discussion of the study.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### DISCUSSION

#### 7.0 Introduction

*In this chapter, the writer discusses the findings of the study and how such findings relate to previous studies. Next, she sums up the views and experiences of principals and teachers on the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. A theoretical discussion is then provided on the process of change and important theoretical issues in inclusive education. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the writer's theoretical model and propositions for understanding an approach to the further implementation of inclusive education.*

#### 7.1 Principals' Data: An Introduction

Analysis of results showed that principals from the pilot schools and special education and traditional classroom teachers from pilot and non-pilot schools believe that the chances for the successful implementation of inclusive education are poor unless a number of issues are resolved by the policy makers. Conceptions held by teachers have serious implications for the development and implementation of a successful inclusive education programme in the Malaysian education system.

#### 7.2 Teachers' Conceptions of Inclusive Education

Findings clearly support the need for pre-service teacher training and in-service training in order to modify principals' and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Responses to questions on inclusive education suggest that principals and teachers do not really understand the Inclusive Education Policy. Nor are they familiar with the concept of inclusive education. Since they have not been given enough information



concerning inclusive education, they suggest, therefore, that seminars and conferences on inclusive education should be organised to increase the understanding of inclusive education that teachers and principals need. However, lack of understanding is not solely their fault as it has more to do with the authorities concerned. Basically, inclusive education has been introduced into the Malaysian education system on a pilot basis, which has caused misinterpretations of the programme. Inclusive education, at the time of the study, was still in its early stage, so there are important issues to be resolved.

With reference to teachers' conceptions of inclusive education, seven categories of descriptions have been identified. They are qualitatively different and fall into two distinct groups. The first group can be considered as a *physical and materialistic* category while the second as an *acquisition and transmission* category. The former consists of Conceptions A to C while the latter consists of Conceptions D to G. The physical and materialistic category focuses on the need for buildings and instructional materials for learners. The acquisition and transmission category focuses on the basic education and social needs of students with special needs.

Teachers holding Conceptions A to C focus on students who have special abilities and the potential to learn. They believe that buildings equipped with technological facilities and instructional materials would enhance students' learning. Teachers holding these conceptions regard inclusive education as an education that fosters academic excellence with the use of information technology among children with special abilities. On the other hand, teachers who hold Conceptions D to G believe that inclusive education provides an appropriate education to children with special needs.

Conceptions D to G correspond with the Philosophy of Education which emphasises "education for all" (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994b). They encompass the idea that children with special needs should learn together with other children in the traditional class. Teachers holding these conceptions tend to adhere to one of the strategic challenges of Vision 2020, which emphasises the development of a caring society and culture. Having acquired the basic academic and social skills, children with

special needs will have a better opportunity to integrate and live harmoniously in their communities. Their contributions in bringing prosperity and harmony to the country will be appreciated.

Teachers' views also correspond to the international legislation and policies that mandate the rights of children with special needs to learn alongside children in the traditional classroom settings. Recently, UNESCO (1994) has called on all governments to adopt an inclusive education policy by enrolling children with special needs in traditional schools (Foreman, 1996). It has proclaimed that the fundamental principle of inclusive education is to allow all children to learn together, whenever possible, regardless of any difficulties or differences they may have. All children, through effective and positive learning, could learn to face the real world confidently. Children with special needs can do as well as the children in the traditional schools with positive expectations and appropriate support. Emphasising positive teaching and learning, inclusive education can enhance the academic and social skills of children with special needs.

Teachers who focus on students' fundamental needs tend to see inclusive education in terms of educational opportunity, socialization, rights and independence. Those who discuss inclusive education in terms of infrastructure (special schools) and instructional facilities (instructional enrichment) see inclusive education as a programme that provides external resources to students. Teachers holding Conceptions A to C argue that children with special abilities should be given instructional enrichment and academic support through the application of educational technology. They suggest that procedures for achieving these expectations be set in place. Malaysia is in the process of becoming an industrialised country by the year 2020. Based on *Vision 2020*, the Government expects to establish a scientific and progressive society that can contribute to the scientific and technological civilization of the future. Findings of this study indicate that teachers perceive inclusive education as supportive of the strategic challenges of *Vision 2020* (Aziz, 1993). Teachers have maintained that inclusive education would help groom children with special needs to become productive citizens who can contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country.

Teachers holding Conceptions D to G tend to focus on students' basic needs and see inclusive education as a means of providing educational training and opportunities for the socialisation of children with special needs. Undoubtedly, the ultimate goal of both groups of teachers is to ensure that children with special needs are well integrated in society as well as fulfilling their potential. However, the former category consists of teachers who are interested in children with high abilities while the latter category consists of teachers who are interested in children who need help in acquiring academic and social skills. The latter category of teachers believes that academic and social skills are crucial for children with special needs since such skills would enable them to survive in the real world. They believe that a classroom environment with a positive learning climate is conducive for children with special needs to learn and to socialize with others (Carpenter & Higgins, 1996).

### **7.3 Principals' and Teachers' Views of Inclusive Education**

Principals' and teachers' views of inclusive education could be articulated in relation to the ideas held by principals, special education teachers and traditional classroom teachers from the pilot and non-pilot schools. According to them, what children with special needs require in a community is partly determined by the idea of a decent life. In addition to a decent life, the demands of a particular way of life determine whether they are able to participate fully in its common activities. Negative attitudes held by the community at large should be reduced. Findings indicate that teachers believe that children with special needs could contribute to the socioeconomic development of the country just as well as children in the traditional classes. Further, positive attitudes would help reduce the stress of many parents of children with special needs. Parents would have experienced less stress if traditional teachers value the presence of their children in their classrooms (Ryndak, Downing, Morrison & Williams, 1996). Inclusive education could help reduce the negative attitudes of traditional classroom teachers towards children with special needs. This conclusion is supported by a study on children with special needs in traditional classroom settings conducted by McIntosh, Vaughn,

Haager and Lee (1993) in a large southern school district in Florida.

Attitudes seem best modified when the shift is generated from within the individual as a consequence of environmental events. The acquisition of new knowledge and new experiences have been identified as effective factors in changing attitudes. Wade and Moore (1992) found that teachers' attitudes towards children with special needs tend to change after they have worked with these children. Attitude change may also result from interactions with peers, colleagues and members of one's professional group who may serve as facilitators of change. Results of this study suggest that teachers' attitudes tend to be influenced by their cultural and religious beliefs. They are the determining factors in teachers' reservations concerning children with special needs learning in traditional classroom settings.

Negative attitudes of teachers may be subject to reinforcement on a day-to-day basis. Hence, planners of inclusive education should include components that are designed to modify the attitudes of teachers. Training programmes for teachers should address what they perceive as most difficult to manage when working with children with special needs.

Attitudes of principals and teachers towards the introduction of inclusive education are favourable. However, they have strong concerns about the impact of such practice upon them. Their reservations concerning inclusive education are due to a lack of knowledge of children with special needs and the Inclusive Education Policy. They have indicated that they need pre-preparation as well as short-term courses whenever possible. The extent and quality of support, such as adequate teacher preparation, strong administrative leadership and sufficient planning time should be considered. Teacher preparation must train all teachers to work with all children. This finding is supported by Bunch and Valeo (1995) who suggested that adequate teacher training be given strong consideration for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Malaysian teachers, as government employees, are unlikely to show their displeasure or

disagreement when it comes to government laws and practice. Every government employee has to abide by the principles of the Rukunegara (National Ideology) and to uphold the constitutional laws of the country (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994). As law-abiding employees, 82% of the teachers in the sample favour the introduction of inclusive education in the schools while 83% are willing to have children with special needs in their classrooms.

A majority of the teachers have shown willingness to have children with special needs in their classrooms. However, teachers who are willing to accept these children are mainly those special education and traditional classroom teachers from the pilot schools. Although many of the teachers have indicated that they are willing to teach children with special needs, they have expressed apprehension that their teaching effectiveness might be affected. Unfavourable attitudes towards inclusive education are clearly due to teachers' concerns. They do not have the time to work with children with special needs because of a heavy current workload ( Bunch, Lupart, & Brown, 1997) or they have not been adequately trained to work with children with special needs. Unfavourable attitudes of teachers can be modified through adequate preparation and professional support that, in turn, can enhance their confidence (Sears & Cummings, 1996).

Further, cultural beliefs, large class-size, lack of personnel and preparation, as well as lack of relevant instructional materials, have contributed to unfavourable attitudes. The government should be seriously committed to providing appropriate education to children with special needs in traditional classroom settings. It should consider such factors as class size, additional teachers and in-service training for all teachers. Further, it should allocate more funding for instructional resources, especially multimedia materials, for the instruction of children with special needs (Lyons, 1992).

#### **7.4 Cultural and Religious Beliefs**

Cultural and religious beliefs tend to influence people's attitudes towards children with special needs (Bosi, 1987). In Malaysia, disability is often associated with perceptions

of wrongdoing. Such beliefs are also found in Zimbabwe, where disability is associated with supposed wrongdoing of the mother or with witchcraft. For instance, the mother of such a child maybe is assumed to have been bewitched or to be a witch herself (Barnartt & Kabzems, 1992). Furthermore, many people believe that they should not laugh at a person with a disability or touch him or her; otherwise, the “curse” may be transferred to them. Negative attitudes of teachers towards children with special needs could be a reflection of cultural and religious beliefs. In short, acceptance of inclusive education may be influenced by the cultural and religious beliefs of teachers and training should aim to counter such beliefs.

### **7.5 Teachers’ Experiences in the Implementation of Inclusive Education**

Teachers’ experiences in the implementation of inclusive education tend to be negative. Many teachers are concerned about the fixed aspects of the educational setting, including teacher preparation, classroom size, children’s ability and duration of the programme. Class size could make a difference in a teacher’s performance. For instance, having a large class could affect their teaching effectiveness. Moreover, the students’ learning abilities in the class tend to vary. Teachers often face difficulty in controlling students’ behaviour as the classes in Malaysia are often already large. The average class size is between 35 to 50 children. Findings indicate that modified activities and smaller class sizes are necessary for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Bennet, Deluca & Bruns, 1997). The experienced teachers in this study have found it difficult to cope with any additional child in their class, whether or not this child has special needs. They maintain that having a child with special needs in their class is a burden. Finally, some teachers are not interested in teaching children with special needs.

Findings indicate that teachers lack confidence in their ability to work with children with special needs, giving inadequate training as the major reason. They perceive inclusive education as requiring significant changes in classroom procedures, instruction and curricula, which many are unwilling to make. Training efforts, therefore, should

address these issues, especially in relation to children with special needs. Most teachers have concluded that such children are difficult to instruct, if not impossible to manage, within the traditional classroom. However, with strong administrative support and sufficient time for planning and collaboration, teachers would be able to experience successful inclusion of children with special needs in their classes. According to Traill, Colombo, Deshler, and Schumaker (1996), although change is not easy, inclusion can be successful if those involved collaborate and if support is provided.

Teachers' understanding of the Inclusive Education Policy is extremely low. About 78% of the sample lacked knowledge of the policy. This finding indicates that the Inclusive Education Policy has not been adequately presented to the teachers. Lack of knowledge would make it difficult for teachers to express their views on inclusive education and to relate it to the Philosophy of Education. Karge, McClure and Patton (1995) suggested that teachers' roles and expectations be clearly laid out and that clear policy objectives are essential for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Success in inclusive education is not simply a matter of adding children with special needs to traditional classrooms. Careful planning and good teaching are as necessary as in traditional classrooms as they are in any situation where teachers work with children with diverse abilities.

Attitudes towards inclusive education held by principals and teachers are related to their interpretations of the Inclusive Education Policy itself. Basically, the policy is not explicit enough in describing which category of children with special needs is to be included in the traditional classes. Nor has it mentioned the duration that these children are to be in such classes. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of the schools practising inclusive education are not consistent in their implementation.

Findings indicate that teachers perceive inclusive education as an education for all, including children with special needs. This view corresponds with the National Philosophy of Education which emphasises "education for all." Teachers are often seen as adhering to one of the strategic challenges of *Vision 2020*, which is to foster a caring

society and culture (Aziz, 1993). Teachers believe that all children, whether or not they have special needs, should be given the best education possible. It is clearly understood that all children are equally valuable and have the right to the same educational opportunities. Needless to say, each human being is entitled to a certain basic dignity, regardless of individual capacities and, therefore, no one should be degraded, exploited, or subjected to biggoted contempt. Further, the aims of inclusive education are to provide better opportunities for development as well as better educational and social stimulation (OECD, 1994). Once again, training and development should stress these important values for all teachers.

An important factor that has made teachers from pilot schools reluctant to have children with special needs in their classes is the different ability levels of the children. In the Malaysian education system, children with special needs are selected for placement, based on the reports of their performances made by the special education teachers and medical practitioners (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994). Placement of a child with special needs in the traditional classroom is determined by those people who know the child very briefly and who may have nothing to do with the child after they have made the decision. In this situation, Lyons (1992) suggested that the classroom teachers could refuse to accept the diagnostic statements that they consider inaccurate. This is perhaps the most important step to ensure that children with special needs are integrated accordingly and appropriately to meet their diverse needs.

Due to differences in age and ability levels within the classes, teachers maintain that it is difficult to provide the most appropriate instruction for all students. For example, children with special needs who are eight years old are often placed in the Primary One class, although the actual admission age to Primary One is six years of age (Ministry of Education, Malaysia, 1994a). Teachers have indicated that children in the traditional classes tend to have different levels of ability, ranging from low level to high level academic skills; so, adding another child, especially one who has special needs, would definitely affect their teaching effectiveness. Further, teachers find it inappropriate to place children with special needs based on their chronological age since the children are



not always able to perform at their chronological level. Therefore, teachers are required to make adaptations to the curriculum for their benefit. As aforementioned, large class size and different levels of ability, already existing in the traditional classes, make it difficult for teachers to teach effectively. Most teachers prefer to place children with special needs in classes based on their functional academic level.

This finding is similar to that of a previous study conducted in a school district of Philadelphia where the teachers expressed an unwillingness to accept students with special needs who were far below their peers from the traditional settings in skill development (Goodman & Miller, 1980). Students with special needs often function as much as four, five and, in some cases, six years below their peers from traditional classes. Hence, it might be more appropriate to place children with special needs in a class where the other children are several years younger.

Findings indicate that the period of time for inclusive education in the six pilot schools tended to vary. Only two of the six pilot schools had been practising full-time inclusive education, whereby children with special needs studied all the subjects taught. On the other hand, schools that practised part-time inclusive education instructed children with special needs in only two or three subjects. These children returned to their special education class after the lessons. Teachers from the pilot schools view this kind of arrangement as inconvenient. Many of the teachers believed that it would be better for children with special needs to learn in the special education class only. This view is not surprising because most teachers believe that children attend school mainly for academic knowledge. However, they should understand that the goals of learning for children with special needs should be multi-faceted (Cole & Chan, 1990). They should use methods that best reflect the needs of these children.

The length of time for inclusive education, whether full-time or part-time, should not affect the goals of learning. According to Singer (1988), full-time traditional class placement is not necessarily better for *all* students with special needs, especially those who are intellectually challenged. Traditional classroom teachers may be unwilling or

unable to serve all of these children. Nevertheless, at the minimum, all children, with or without special needs, should be given opportunities for meaningful interactions of a reasonable duration (Putnam, 1992).

Findings indicate that the degree of special needs of the child is a crucial factor influencing the successful implementation of inclusive education. For example, children who have management needs, such as using the toilet or adaptive equipment, would pose problems to teachers in the traditional classrooms. Policy makers, therefore, should seriously examine this matter. If inclusive education is to become a successful part of the school system then planners should compile a handbook that could guide principals and teachers.

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, and their confidence in teaching children with special needs, may affect the successful implementation of inclusive education. Teachers who have been educated many years ago tend to exhibit negative attitudes. This finding indicates the need for on-going training for teachers. Indeed, several teachers in this study indicated their intention and desire for in-service courses, seminars and conferences related to inclusive education. In-service training should enhance teachers' knowledge concerning special needs, highlight the benefits of inclusive education and pinpoint the factors that promote successful inclusive education.

To sum up the findings of the research on the pilot inclusive education implementation, the writer found that the problems came, to a large extent, from the lack of understanding of the theories, assumptions and principles of inclusive education.

## **7.6 Theories, Assumptions and Principles of Inclusive Education**

### **7.6.1 Problems related to inclusive education**

Inclusive education is based on various theories, assumptions and principles (Clark, Dyson, Millward, & Robson, 1999). It requires schools to develop new structures and

practices to accommodate children with special needs. They should develop a workable technology of inclusion that encourages teachers to work together as problem solving teams. In short, inclusive education requires schools to develop appropriate responses to even the most problematic students. However, it is difficult for a school to become totally inclusive.

Many teachers reject inclusive education, as they do not like the new demands made upon them and perceive inclusive education as being bureaucratic. They often feel that they are less flexible in their teaching. They also believe that inclusive principles cannot be applied to students with serious behavioral problems (Clark et al., 1999).

The technology of inclusion may not be fully available in every school that practises inclusive education. For instance, there may not be enough support for every class or the class teacher may resent the presence of the supporter. Very often, effective planning of the support partnership is lacking and roles of the supporter are not clearly specified (Clark et al., 1999).

Ability grouping still exists in the schools that practise inclusive education. Students with special needs are often placed in the bottom classes, segregated from their regular peers. In fact, some schools even have classes specifically for students with the greatest difficulties. Many schools still have a separate curriculum for students with special needs, especially in terms of basic skills of literacy and numeracy (Clark et al., 1999).

Many schools that practise inclusive education still uphold the outmoded principles of special education by having special educators whose roles are rather unclear. The special educators often provide expert advice to regular teachers who have to teach students with special needs. Further, they are also required to deal with students who have been excluded from the regular classroom (Clark et al., 1999).

### **7.7 Impact of the Policy Environment on Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education is often influenced by the educational policy environment within which the school functions. Schools are often limited by a prescriptive national curriculum and the need to compete against each other. Such constraints, in turn, reduce their ability to meet the diverse needs of students. The national curriculum is highly inflexible, making it difficult to implement inclusive education. Inclusive schools tend to be less attractive to the public, as they enrol a greater number of problematic students. Schools, therefore, may resist inclusive education, as they want to have a better reputation. They may not enrol students who are disruptive, as they threaten the school's reputation for academic achievement or good discipline (Clark et al., 1999).

### **7.8 Vagueness of Principles**

Although many schools are committed to providing an inclusive education, it is difficult to see what they actually practise. They may espouse the ideals of inclusive education but they still exclude students with extreme difficulties. Some schools still practise ability grouping, remedial classes and other forms of segregation, all of which contradict the principles of inclusive education (Clark et al., 1999).

### **7.9 Theories of Change**

The pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia can also be considered as a case of educational change and the writer considers that it is important to reflect on some aspects of change about which she became aware in her study. Inclusive education is a socially complex phenomenon that requires individuals to actively construct their own meaning for the change (Clark et al., 1999). Teachers should not only be committed to inclusive education but also they must be willing to explore the meaning of the change and share their meanings with others. They must construct the meaning of inclusion for themselves in order to transform their schools.

Inclusive education is a process that might be either badly managed or incompletely

implemented. Administrators have to be assertive in articulating and implementing inclusive education. However, it is difficult to persuade recalcitrant staff when principals are attempting to implement inclusive practices. Moreover, consensus around inclusive principles does not necessarily permit a wide diversity of practices; special education practices may appear in other forms in inclusive schools (Clark et al., 1999).

In her reflections on the data collected and reported in this study, the writer came to the realisation that the process of change, in fact, was an important part of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. At this point, she focused her attention to thinking about the process and relating these thoughts to some of the wide range of literature that provides advice on undertaking successful change. A selection of texts (eg Owens 1995, Hoy and Miskel 1991, Kemp and Nathan 1989, Everard and Morris 1990), Senge 1990 and Hopkins, Ainscow and West 1994) was consulted that give advice on undertaking the process of change but a review of these resources is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, Neville (1996) and Fullan (1991) were found to provide useful advice to readers who want to discuss change but knowing that this aspect, while being significant, is not the major focus of this piece of research.

### **7.10 The Process of Change in the Malaysian Pilot Implementation of Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education is an educational process that is constantly changing. According to the way that Mollie Neville (1992) theorises the process of change, a successful change programme depends on a number of factors which the writer agrees should also be considered when reflecting on the implementation of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. The writer developed fourteen items from Neville's work which are now discussed in turn as the change aspect of the implementation is reviewed. The writer takes each theoretical idea and considers what happened in the inclusive education implementation for each idea.

**Collaboration** should be occur at all levels and at all stages of implementation.

**Objectives** for inclusive education should be clearly stated. They should be operationally defined, realistic, and attainable.

Staff should be encouraged to develop professionally by having **in-service training**.

**Timing** is another important variable for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Neville, 1992).

**Parents, teachers and students must be ready to actively participate** in any inclusive activities. They must be knowledgeable and accepting concerning the objectives of inclusive education. Successful implementation of inclusive education depends on their support and commitment.

**Senior administrators should be supportive** of the change. They should show willingness to modify the school curriculum and make special adjustments for the implementation of inclusive education. For instance, they should be willing to train regular teachers and special education teachers to collaborate in order to make their school more inclusive in nature. In short, they need to be willing to consider making any necessary structural changes in the school to meet the needs of students with special needs through inclusive education.

**Support from the majority of the staff and community members** is crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education (Neville, 1992). Many regular education teachers, and even special education teachers, are threatened by the concept of inclusive education. They still believe that certain categories of students, especially those with profound behavioural difficulties, should be educated separately as they are highly disruptive. Others feel that students who are gifted and talented should not be learning alongside students with special needs, as it would affect their standards of performance.

**Support from expert teachers** leads to the successful implementation of inclusive

education. Many special education teachers have vast experience in working with students with special needs. However, they have only taught students with special needs in special education classes whereby the latter are not mainstreamed. Many special education teachers seldom associate with the regular class teachers. Hence, successful implementation of inclusive education will depend on the willingness of special education teachers to share their knowledge and skills with regular classroom teachers, while regular classroom teachers should be enthusiastic in consulting their special education counterparts.

**Smooth transition** from a special education class to a more inclusive setting requires a lot of flexibility.

**Teachers should demonstrate flexibility** by changing their attitudes and teaching styles. They should also be willing to adjust their class schedules, grading schemes and instructional materials in order to make their classrooms more inclusive. In brief, they should be flexible while working with special education teachers and students with special needs by showing the willingness to change any aspect of their classroom or teaching style.

**Rewards and encouragement** from the school administration are crucial for the successful implementation of inclusive education. The efforts and contributions of teachers and other staff towards inclusive education should be recognized. Praise, certificates of recognition and monetary rewards can be highly motivating for those who have worked diligently for the sake of providing a more inclusive kind of education to students with special needs.

Regular education, special education and inclusive education have both similarities and differences. **Acceptance of differences** is critical in the successful implementation of inclusive education (Neville, 1992). Teachers, be they regular, special or inclusive, should acknowledge that differences in opinions will always exist. Besides, differences tend to exist between average students and students with special needs in terms of

behavior, intellectual ability and other characteristics. However, they should be willing to treat such differences with respect rather than perceiving them as threatening to their status. They should overcome differences through collaboration and problem solving rather than each trying to defend his or her ground.

**A non-judgmental attitude** makes it easier to implement inclusive education (Neville, 1992). Teachers should demonstrate positive attitudes towards inclusive education and students with special needs. They should collaborate with special education teachers, without perceiving inclusive education as a threat or stumbling block. They should give students with special needs a chance to be integrated or to learn together with peers who are gifted and talented. They should see inclusive education as a process that would enhance the academic standards and status of their school in the community.

Inclusive education involves the **use of suitable intervention strategies** in order to bring successful change. Every student with special needs is a unique individual who requires a highly individualized educational plan. A wide array of intervention strategies, especially in terms of behavior modification, is available in the professional literature. However, teachers should be judicious when it comes to selecting intervention strategies for students with special needs. Different students require different instructional techniques and learning resources. For instance, certain students respond very well to verbal praise, while others still need a more tangible type of reinforcement. Intervention strategies for children with emotional disorders may not be effective with those with learning disabilities. Hence, teachers should not only know various intervention strategies, but also know which ones to use with what kinds of students.

The following table provides a summary of the writer's general overall observations of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia in relation to each of the key points taken from Neville's (1992) work together with her general suggestions for any future implementation of inclusive education.



**Table 7.1**

Observations on Neville's (1992) Features of Effective Change

<b>Neville's Features</b>	<b>What happened during the pilot implementation</b>	<b>What might be done to improve future implementation</b>
Collaboration should occur at all levels and stages	Collaboration occurred at all levels – Ministry of Education, State Directors of Education and officers, principals and teachers (in pilot and non-pilot schools) although teachers sometimes knew less than the people at higher levels in the system.	Collaboration involving full discussion must continue at all levels.
Objectives should be clear	Objectives were suitably designed and understood although probably less so amongst teachers	Clear objectives must be communicated. The pilot objectives were satisfactory but might give more attention to making adjustments to meet needs of individual students.
Staff should have in-service training	During the implementation process, some staff (teachers, principals, Education Officers) were sent overseas for short courses and degree studies in special education (including this researcher's doctoral study). Local seminars on the pilot were of rather short duration.	Opportunities for scholarships for further study in this area must be extended for teachers and Education Officers who are directly involved. Local training by in-service programmes must be well planned and delivered.
Timing should be available	Timing was right because parents were becoming better informed about the rights of special education children and inclusive education. Implementation seemed to be done fairly quickly in schools.	Careful planning in terms of implementation and timing must be done to ensure the best possible implementation with the full understanding of all people involved.
Senior administrators should be supportive	The vision was developed by the Prime Minister and included care of family and society. Senior administrators, at State and national levels, were very positive and supportive.	This top level support and attitude must be continued and this is also very important in the case of principals.

Neville's Features	What happened during the pilot implementation	What might be done to improve future implementation
Community and staff should be supportive	While school staff and parents were generally supportive of the idea and implementation of inclusive education, some people did not know enough about it and were not sure that it worked.	Gaining full support by increased information and understanding is very important.
Expert teachers should be supportive	While teachers with knowledge and ability in inclusive education were supportive, perhaps there were too few of them.	Increasing the number of expert teachers must continue and they must also be encouraged to work in inclusive education in rural areas.
Transition from special education to the inclusive class should be smooth	Although key leaders (Education Officers and some principals) were well informed about the pilot programme, there were quite a few differences in the implementation.	This transition must be based on full understanding of inclusive education and its place in the school for the student's benefit.
Teachers should be flexible	Some teachers were reluctant but tried to accommodate and adjust to the new pilot programme.	Teachers should be well prepared for inclusive education, interested and committed to it, keen to try new approaches (and willing to serve in rural areas).
Rewards and encouragement should be suitable	Many Education Officers and teachers were sent for further studies in special education.	Opportunities to learn about special and inclusive education in successful countries should be provided. Inclusive education should provide clear promotion and career opportunities.
Differences should be readily accepted.	While people were generally positive, some teachers and parents were less so due to their existing beliefs.	The emphasis on developing a caring family and society must continue plus education about the basis and goals of inclusive education.
Attitudes should be non-judgemental.	The majority of teachers, principals and administrators were open minded and keen on the implementation.	The positive attitude should not be allowed to decline and education about inclusive education must continue.

Neville's Features	What happened during the pilot implementation	What might be done to improve future implementation
Teaching strategies should be suitable.	Schools and their teachers developed a range of strategies and approaches to use inclusive education to meet the needs of their special education students with different degrees of success.	There must be more extensive and better development of teaching approaches, curriculum materials and assessment procedures to meet the needs of students placed in inclusive education situations. Pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development must be provided in this regard.

Neville's (1992) guidance on the process of change was useful to the writer in gaining an overview of the effectiveness of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. In summary, the overall message from the above table is that providing suitable and effective pre-service teacher education and in-service professional development programmes is vital in any future implementation of inclusive education in the country. The pilot programme was at least moderately successful when features of change were considered but some aspects were quite hastily implemented and sometimes without full understanding of the philosophy and intent of inclusive education, particularly amongst some teachers and parents. Teachers, who will implement inclusive education at the classroom level, need to be prepared in a suitable professional manner. Education of professionals and parents should be undertaken in order to advise people in the wider community and in the education field of the basis and nature of inclusive education.

### **7.11 Advice on the Process of Change in Implementing Future Inclusive Education**

Fullan's (1991) theoretical approach to successful change takes a different view from Neville. For Fullan, the successful initiation of a change in education depends on three major factors. They are:

- (a) relevance of the improvement in terms of need, quality of provision and practicality,
- (b) readiness of staff to be involved, and
- (c) resources and support to make the change succeed. All these factors are inter-related and, in the case of the pilot implementation, they can play an influential role in moving schools towards more inclusive classroom practice.

The writer takes each of Fullan's theoretical ideas in summarizing advice on the process of change that might be used in the future to help ensure successful further implementation of inclusive education in her country.

**The relevance of the improvement.** Before inclusive education can be implemented in a school, administrators and teachers must determine whether it is necessary or not. Students with special needs should be identified and their individualized educational programmes properly drawn up. New staff will be needed to collaborate with the regular classroom teachers. More funding will also be needed. Schools must find it practical before they agree to make the necessary changes.

**The readiness of the staff.** All staff should be ready to face changes for the successful implementation of inclusive education. They must be knowledgeable concerning its importance and ready to work with students with special needs. Regular classroom teachers need in-service training in applying the principles of inclusive education.

**The availability of resources and support.** The school must have sufficient resources and support to implement inclusive education. Resources needed included various kinds of learning materials, classrooms, and most importantly, adequately trained teachers who can meet a wide range of student needs. Financial support from the government and non-governmental organizations is needed to implement inclusive education. Teachers also need moral support, as working with students with special needs can be a daunting task for regular classroom teachers who lack experience or

enthusiasm.

Fullan (1991) also maintained that successful implementation of a change, especially in terms of inclusive education, depends on several other factors. They include **clear responsibility for the change, shared control of the implementation, a mixture of pressure and support to make the change succeed, and suitable staff development** for the teachers who are involved. Further, in terms of inclusive education, **the change needs to become institutionalized**; it should be accepted and be treated as part of the school system. Educational change requires the support and commitment from the government, principals and teachers.

Turning a change into classroom practice requires the acceptance and commitment from staff members. Key staff members, particularly teachers, must be equipped with the knowledge and skills needed for the successful implementation of inclusive education. Their talents and skills must be tapped to enhance the educational opportunities of students with special needs in the mainstream.

As change is a constant process in the field of education, teachers need further training to cope with new ideas and teaching methods. They need time to catch up with the latest information concerning the development of inclusive education worldwide. Further, they need motivation to learn welcome fresh ideas in order to work with students with special needs more effectively. They also need support from the school, parents, and other authority figures who have influence over their job performance. Most importantly, they need to be re-educated in order to familiarize themselves with the principles of inclusive education.

Evaluation is important in every aspect of the educational process in order to determine both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths of inclusive education should be upheld and reinforced, while any weaknesses should be identified and rectified. Evaluation can provide feedback to administrators and teachers concerning the development of inclusive education in their school. For instance, it helps them decide whether more

learning resources or staff are needed. It helps to promote good teaching practices and to eradicate the impractical ones. It also enables teachers to determine the effectiveness of inclusive education on each student with special needs. In short, evaluation of inclusive practices enables staff to make further changes for the betterment of students with special needs.

## 7.12 Theorising about Inclusive Education

To become inclusive, schools need to be reorganized. Teachers have to function as collaborative problem-solvers; class teachers and special needs specialists have to pool their expertise and solve teaching problems in a creative manner. However, the management style, organization and values of many schools does not always permit teachers to work together, leading to tensions.

In trying to think about her study in a theoretical way, the writer turned to the work of Clark, Dyson, Millward and Robson (1999) who reported a study of four comprehensive schools, in the United Kingdom, which were seeking to develop as becoming more inclusive places. These writers recognized that theories of change, inclusive education and micro-politics were not enough to explain what happened in the four schools. Clark et al argued that a number of dilemmas arose when the schools in their study tried to respond to the diversity that is part of becoming more inclusive. They also thought that, "... movement towards inclusive schooling is likely to be more problematic than we have supposed." The work of Clark et al was useful in getting the writer's mind to reflect about theoretical aspects of inclusive education and her commentary of their work, in relation to the wide field of inclusive education and in preparation for her own final theorizing.

### 7.12.1 The theoretical work of Clark et al (1999)

Clark et al (1999) used the dilemma of "commonality versus difference" to explain their view. They meant that education tries to offer something that is the same (ie teaching

and learning) to learners who are different. Separate special education tries to do this by placing some learners in different places from other learners. However, when learners from special education are brought together, they still present differences for teachers and school organization in the same way that this happens when special education learners are placed in inclusive schools. Again, teachers and school organization have the challenge of meeting the needs of all their learners. Clark et al (1999) suggest that the issues of inclusive education are very complex and that understanding this complexity is possibly, “the most practically relevant contribution we can make.” The writer’s own study also highlights this complexity in the implementation of inclusive education.

Moreover, some schools that emphasize collaborative problem solving still reject problematic students. There are instances whereby teachers fail to devise an inclusive response from their collaboration. Special education teachers may find themselves collaborating with mainstream colleagues in one class and teaching students in isolation in another. Efforts directed to remove rigid boundaries and to pool expertise may also create barriers between special education teachers and regular teachers (Clark et al., 1999)

Inclusive education can be influenced by conflicts that arise from competing interest groups. Conflicting interests often occur in schools, making it difficult to implement a more inclusive kind of education at school and classroom level. Inclusive policies are subject to interpretation, subversion or replacement, depending on those who are involved in turning policy into practice. Commitments to inclusive policies may result in non-inclusive practices (Clark et al., 1999).

Inclusion may threaten the interests of certain groups of individuals, including teachers. It often involves a political struggle between supporters and opponents of inclusive education. The endemic nature of resistance can even be found in schools that have been practicing inclusive education for a long time. As mentioned before, some inclusive schools still practise special education, such as in their continued use of ability grouping. Supporters of inclusive education often debate with the advocates of more

traditional responses of diversity. Many class teachers resent the additional demands made on them and, therefore, they pressure their school to have alternative provisions for students with serious behavior difficulties (Clark et al., 1999).

### 7.13 The Dilemmatic Perspective

The above discussion and examples highlight the dilemmas that are posed in implementing inclusive education and that require the choosing between courses of action. An important contribution of Clark et al (1999), to our understanding of inclusive education, is their emphasis on the dilemmas that are raised by its implementation. Inclusive education poses several complexities for schools, largely associated with **change, organizational problem solving, conflict and dilemmatics**. The writer provides an explanation of the work of Clark and colleagues at this point in an endeavour to illustrate some of the complexities, of a theoretical kind, that arise when inclusive education is considered.

Schools are sites in which complex processes are at play. Schools that are committed to inclusive education tend to be oriented towards problem solving. They have micro-political conflicts between different interests. They have to construct and reconstruct their resolutions of the dilemmas of education they face (Clark et al., 1999). Inclusive education is based on the school effectiveness model of schools. It tends to exclude the alternative models that may help overcome the kinds of complexities and contradictions faced by inclusive education itself (Clark, et al, 1999). Endemic dilemmas may appear in different forms at different times and places, making it difficult to practise inclusive education wholly (Clark et al. 1999)

One of the major dilemmas that schools face is commonality versus difference. It is difficult to offer students, who are different from each other, an education that is the same for all. To resolve this dilemma, many schools have tried separate tracking of students within a common administrative framework and mixed-ability teaching based on a common curriculum (Clark et al, 1999).



Schools that try to implement inclusive education have to reject other alternatives.

While emphasizing commonalities between students, they also have to face the fact that differences exist between them. Systems, structures and practices that maintain a wide range of students in mainstream schools and classrooms will be destabilized as certain groups want a more differentiated type of education for students. In short, inclusive education is influenced by the dilemmas caused by the interplay of history, knowledge, interest and power (Clark et al., 1999).

Endemic dilemmas that exist in every school make it difficult for a school to become totally inclusive. Since dilemmas cannot be solved; inclusiveness cannot hope to remove the dilemma of commonality versus difference. Schools that seek to develop more inclusive practices would definitely have to confront the real differences that exist between and among students. Ignoring such differences would lead to the exclusion of students by offering them experiences from which they have been alienated. On the other hand, responding to such differences would lead to the provision of different forms of education for different students, which is less inclusive. A school may be more inclusive in some aspects for some students and yet less inclusive in other respects for other students. Schools cannot simply be described as inclusive or not inclusive; instead, the processes of inclusion or exclusion that operate in them should be examined (Clark et al., 1999).

Educational principles, including inclusive education, are relatively simple and unidimensional. However, there is a difference between those educational principles and their realization amidst the complexities and contradictions of particular situations. Inclusion, as a principle, can be advocated simply but the realisation of inclusion involves a lot of complexity and contradiction. The reality of inclusive education is often partial and compromised due to the endemic dilemmas faced by schools (Clark et al., 1999)

Inclusion is not the only principle that promotes education. Other important principles

also exist, such as the entitlement of every student to an appropriate education, maximization of the attainments of every student or the subservience of education to broader socioeconomic policy. Advocates of other principles often discredit inclusive education to promote their preferred principles. The success of inclusive education depends on the school's handling of the implications of varied principles (Clark et al, 1999).

Inclusive education should complement the micro-political perspective on schools. What is actually happening in the classrooms is more important than the surface policy rhetoric of inclusion. Inclusion should be examined within its historical context and as a resolution of the dilemmas related to diversity (Clark et al., 1999).

Inclusive education will be halting and problematic. Problems will arise from the management of change and micro-political conflicts. Individuals and groups that want to maintain their status quo will resist it. Dilemmas of diversity will constantly arise due to students with behavioral difficulties, the future role of special education and the relationship between the inclusion agenda and the standards agenda. Principled, well-informed and sophisticated debate is essential to address the complexities and dilemmas of inclusive education (Clark et al., 1999).

#### 7.13.1 A recent application of the work of Clark et al (1999)

A later study, by Balshaw and Lucas (2000), described a study of a group of schools trying to become more inclusive in their classrooms and their schools in the London Borough of Harrow where the local education authority was keen to support the schools in developing their inclusive approach in the late 1990s. This report was very helpful for the present writer in explaining and summarizing the ideas of Clark et al (1999) in a way that linked theoretical ideas with practice. Balshaw and Lucas drew on the work of Clark et al (1999) to explain and theorise their work and they considered four aspects:

1. The **process of change** which they saw as complex and incomplete. They described the process in the following examples: *“Journey matters ... not aiming to arrive. Don't just see change as a burden. Never reach long term goals, nothing ever complete.”* They concluded with the question, *“Do we see the process of change as a ‘journey,’ where the journey itself matters?”*
  
2. The **task of organizational problem solving** which they saw as staff members collaboratively solving the problem of how to meet the demands of diversity. They described the task in the following examples: *“Push on and take most people with you. Tensions between over-communicating or consulting vs not consulted enough.”* They concluded with the question, *“Is the organisational problem solving process developed in such a way that it takes account of those staff who see themselves as ‘outside’ this collaboration?”*
  
3. The **conflict between different interests** which they saw as people having different positions and wanting to defend their positions. They described this difference in the following examples: *“School are full of differences. Letting people have their say raises other problems, so let discussions take place. The conflict of interest between children with difficult behaviour and other children's needs.”* They concluded with the question, *“Has the school developed the strength to deal with this flexibility ... and draw differences of opinion into the debate?”*
  
4. The **need to resolve dilemmas** which they saw as endemic in education. They described this idea in the following examples: *“Dilemmas will always be present. Make the best of them when you come across them. Focus, be selective on what's important for your school.”* They concluded with the question, *“Are the wider dilemmatics handled with an acceptance of their inevitability, but with a selectivity that has importance from the school's own perspective?”*

With an understanding of some challenging ideas, as put forward by Clark et al (1999)

and Balshaw and Lucas (2000), the writer addressed the question of making her own contribution to theory about the implementation of inclusive education.

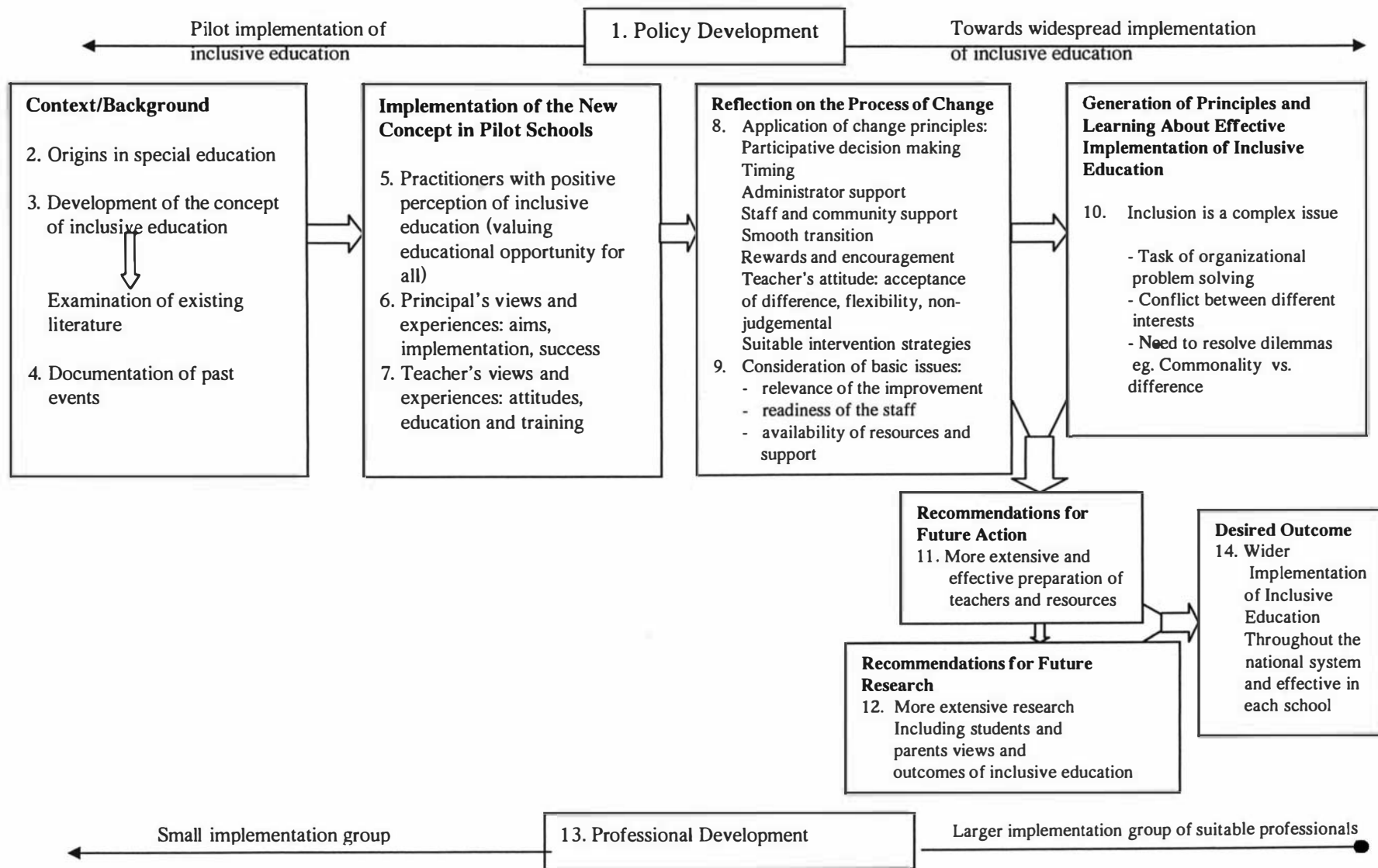
### 7.13.2 Towards a theory of effective inclusive education

“What is the use of theory?” This question is important to all doctoral students. Edwards (1986: 381) considered, “... that theoretical ideas should have four qualities: explanation, predictability, testability and scope for further development.” In her present study, the writer has tried to bring together the various parts of her research into a theoretical model that might help people to understand inclusive education and that might help in bringing better (or more effective) inclusive education. The writer set out to develop her theory from her study itself. In this sense, the theory is “grounded” in, and emerged from, the study in that it was developed as an outcome of the whole research process. The theory is shown in the form of a model that can be used to explain what happened in the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia and to predict what could be done in the future if the model is used as a guide to further action. It is also possible to think about inclusive education in other settings and to relate the model to these settings. Of course, most models are imperfect and further experience and research will enable such a model to be improved and further developed.

The writer’s theoretical model is now presented as the conclusion to this chapter.

**Table 7.2**

Towards a Theoretical Understanding of an Approach to the Further Implementation of Inclusive Education in Malaysia



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The above model is expressed as a series of propositions:

1. That sound policy development for inclusive education extends from the early steps to the widespread implementation of inclusive education. (This proposition was developed from Chapter Two.)
2. That inclusive education has its origins in special education. (Chapter Two)
3. That existing literature ensures understanding of the nature, challenges and development of inclusive education. (Chapter Two)
4. That the documented story of the move towards inclusive education provides understanding of the way in which the practice began its early implementation. (Chapter Four)
5. That practitioners who value inclusive education, as educational opportunity for all, are an important group to develop inclusive education. (Chapter Six)
6. That principals' views and experiences are important for developing inclusive education – with their understanding of aims, implementation and success they are an important group in developing inclusive education. (Chapters Five and Six)
7. That teachers' views and experiences are important for developing inclusive education – with their attitudes and understanding of training needs. (Chapter Six)
8. That basic change issues must be considered early in the implementation of inclusive education: ie relevance of the improvement, readiness of staff and availability of resources and support. (Chapter Seven)
9. That the consideration of change principles make a basis for successful implementation of inclusive education: eg participative decision making, administrative support, smooth transition, rewards and encouragement, suitable timing, teachers' attitudes of acceptance of difference, flexibility, suitable intervention strategies. (Chapter Seven)
10. That inclusive education is a complex theoretical issue that involves the task of organizational problem solving, conflict between different interests and the need to resolve dilemmas (eg commonality versus difference). (Chapter Seven)

11. That more extensive and effective preparation of teachers and resources is important in the further development of inclusive education. (Chapter Eight)
12. That more extensive research, including views and experiences of parents and students, is important in the further development of inclusive education. (Chapter Eight)
13. That suitable professional development must be ongoing to build a larger group of suitable professional people for the wider implementation of inclusive education. (Chapter Eight)
14. That wider implementation of inclusive education, at national and school levels, should result from this set of propositions.

The theoretical model and its propositions highlight the importance of sound policy development (Proposition 1) and professional development (13) throughout the whole implementation process. The context and background of the implementation is shown in Propositions 2-4 which stress the importance of understanding origins (2 and 3) and past events (4) in the development of inclusive education. The implementation of inclusive education in the pilot schools is shown in Propositions 5-7 which highlight the importance of practitioners who value inclusive education as “opportunity for all” - for students(5) and of teachers’ (6) and principals’ (7) views and experiences of inclusive education. The importance of reflecting on the process of change in the implementation of inclusive education is shown in Propositions 8-9 which divide the consideration of issues of basic importance (9) and practical change principles (10). The identification of principles and learnings about inclusive education are shown in Proposition 10 which draws on the work of Clark et al (1999) to note the complexity of inclusive education , the task of organizational problem solving, the recognition of conflicting interests and the need to resolve important dilemmas when inclusive education is being implemented. Recommendations for future action (11) largely involve the better preparation of teachers and resources while more extensive future research (12) should largely add to our knowledge of students and parent’s views and experiences of inclusive education. The final target, or outcome, in the model is the wider implementation of inclusive education (14) that should result from the use of the earlier steps in the model.

In defending her theoretical model and its propositions, the writer asked herself a series of questions. First, *“Can the model explain the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia?”* (ie the explanatory aspect of the theory) Her answer is positive as the model follows the chronology of the study and highlights the main sections and learnings of the study that emerged in the fourteen propositions. Second, *“Can the model be used to predict what might happen in a future implementation of inclusive education?”* Her answer is positive as the model provides guidance on the main steps and tasks that need to be undertaken in this situation. This guidance was determined from the writer’s research study. Third and fourth, *“Can the model be tested and further developed?”* Her answer is positive on both aspects of the question. The model can be applied and tested by other people in other implementation situations and, as a result of this further study, the model can be developed further or modified when other findings are taken into consideration. Therefore, the theory should be useful for understanding inclusive education and for its more effective implementation.

#### 7.14 Summary

In this chapter, the writer summarized and discussed some of the important features of the views and experiences of principals and teachers in relation to the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia. She then provided a discussion of some theoretical aspects of the study before considering some aspects of change theory that she believes have relevance to understanding the pilot implementation. In the final section of the chapter, the work of Clark et al (1995 and 1999) was reported and discussed prior to the presentation of the writer’s own theoretical model that was developed to explain the pilot implementation and to provide a guiding framework for the examination of similar future activities.

The final chapter, that follows, draws this study to a close.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 8.0 Introduction

*In this chapter, the writer summarises the six aims of the study, states the implications and recommendations that arise from the study and suggests the place of her study in relation to the literature on inclusive education. The methodology of the study is reviewed and the implications for further research are suggested. Finally, the writer revisits the concept of inclusive education in Malaysia, some time after the end of the study, and suggests steps that might be taken in the future for the more effective development of inclusive education in her country in the future.*

#### 8.1 The Six Aims of this Study: A Summary

The purpose of this study was to gather information that would be useful for planning successful and effective implementation of inclusive education by examining teachers' and principals' conceptions of the pilot implementation of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system. The aims were as follows:

- **1. To describe and critique the policy for inclusive education:** To describe and critique the policy for inclusive education, the writer tried to be as thorough as possible while working on the review of literature. Research published in Malaysia, the USA, New Zealand, etc, was used to establish the background of this study and to justify the significance of this study. The writer used the study to develop a theoretical overview and explanation of the pilot inclusive education implementation and to make recommendations for better implementation of inclusive education.
- **2. To identify teachers' knowledge of the inclusive education policy:** Inclusive education is still a relatively new educational concept in Malaysia. Most Malaysian teachers and principals still need to gain further knowledge and skills concerning

inclusive education. Research evidence is essential to convince educational authorities to pay greater attention to the importance of inclusive education in educating students with special needs so that the latter can realize their full potential.

- **3. To compare and contrast the conceptions of special and traditional classroom teachers of inclusive education:** This study, in particular, examined the differing perspectives on inclusive education that were held by teachers and principals. Such research evidence, concerning the conceptions of special education teachers and traditional classroom teachers, would help encourage them to adopt a more positive attitude towards the implementation of inclusive education. It is essential to find ways to foster greater collaboration between special education and traditional classroom teachers in meeting the needs of students with special needs.
  
- **4. To identify the attitudes of teachers, in terms of their beliefs and values concerning the placement of children with special needs in traditional classes:** Attitudes of teachers have an impact upon the successful implementation of inclusive education. Many regular classroom teachers are skeptical about having students with special needs in their classes, as they believe that it would affect the overall performance of the classes. They may even fear that students with special needs may cause behavioural problems in their classes. Research, therefore, is critical in order to find out if teachers have positive or negative attitudes towards having students with special needs in their classes. It is counterproductive to have teachers who oppose inclusive education to teach students with special needs.
  
- **5. To investigate teachers' perceptions of the adequacy of educational and social provisions made for children with special needs:** Based on the research findings, educational and social provisions can be made to help students with special needs to achieve to their fullest potential. Teachers can provide useful information as to what resources and services are needed in order to implement inclusive education in Malaysian schools.

- **6. To examine teachers' preferences for training in the education of children with special needs:** Most teachers in Malaysia require further training to upgrade their knowledge and skills due to changes in technology, social values and other important aspects of society. Research in this area helps to shed light on the types of teacher training most appropriate in the Malaysian context. For example, it is crucial for the government to know the number of teachers who prefer in-service training, degree programs or long-distance learning in order to allocate funding for teacher training.

## 8.2 Implications of the Findings of the Study

While there are many obvious research needs identified from this study, there are also several specific implications for practice that can be derived from the findings.

*Implications for the government* include the clarification of government policy documents related to inclusive education, consideration of the issue of the condition of disability to inclusive placement and the need for adequate funding.

*Implications for the school system* focus on effectively meeting the needs of children with special needs and teachers' preparation for the implementation of inclusive education with these pupils.

*Implications for the teachers' colleges and universities* are the development of pre-service and in-service courses and teaching practice experiences in inclusive settings.

Most of these implications relate directly to the needs of educators, principals and teachers, as well as pupils' needs that can be looked at in order to achieve successful and effective implementation of inclusive education in the Malaysian education system.

Structural changes in Malaysia are developed by the policy-makers guided by the *Vision 2020* document which sees Malaysia as a fully developed nation by the year 2020, developed not only economically but also politically, socially and spiritually (Hamid,

1993). In the context of education, this means providing educational opportunity to all children, regardless of their disability (Aziz, 1993).

These structural changes in the education system have come about without an understanding of 'why' the change is important (constant reference to the policy documents is necessary) and without clarity as to the desired outcomes. Inclusive education has created confusion among educators, especially principals and teachers. Data from this study suggests that principals and teachers feel the need for support and information from the State Education Departments and the Ministry of Education. Particularly, teachers feel that they need better preparation when confronted with children with special needs in their classrooms. They require further training to prepare them for the implementation of inclusive education in their schools. There is also a suggestion that the degree of disabilities for inclusive education should be clearly indicated for placement in the traditional classrooms and principals and teachers should be informed of the mainstreamed students' strengths and needs. As Nielsen (1997) argues, creating a positive and comfortable environment is essential if the educational experience is to be successful and rewarding for all students. The finding of a variety of benefits of inclusion suggests that, if teacher concerns are addressed in adequate fashion, resistance to inclusive education will be reduced and acceptance of the practice will increase.

### **8.3 Recommendations**

For many educators, principals and teachers, the prospect of educating children with special needs in traditional classes, is daunting when the number of students in a class is large, behavioural problems are present and there are inadequate instructional materials coupled with a shortage of teachers and a lack of preparation for teachers to handle the diverse needs of their students. From this perspective, it is recommended that the government seriously examine the situation of these children with special needs facing further implementation of inclusive education.

Those principals and teachers involved in the study embraced the underlying value of inclusive education but with the condition that the government provides the necessary training and educational facilities. Further recommendations are expressed as follows:

- ***To provide teachers with opportunities to develop the disposition, values, knowledge and skills for collaboration for successfully implementing inclusive education:*** Results of this study imply that teachers working with children with special needs must possess the appropriate knowledge and attitudes concerning inclusive education. Principals, teachers, and those who intend to get involved in inclusive education, should receive adequate training in terms of theory and practice.
- ***To develop a handbook of guidelines for the implementation of inclusive education:*** Based on the results of this study, the writer can help the Department of Special Education to produce a handbook on inclusive education. Such a resource is currently not available in Sabah.
- ***To provide in-service training to all teachers:*** Findings of this study imply that many teachers and principals in Malaysia require in-service training with regards to inclusive education, which is still a relatively new concept in Sabah. The writer is qualified to help provide such training in Malaysia.
- ***To organize seminars and short-term courses:*** Seminars and short-term courses should be organized for teachers and principals who are involved in the education of children with special needs. The writer is capable of, and willing to help, in organizing seminars and short-term courses on inclusive education, as she has vast experience as a special educator in Sabah.
- ***To organize meetings with professionals who work with children with special needs:*** Principals, teachers, and parents who require knowledge and skills on inclusive education should have regular meetings with professionals in this particular area. The writer has conducted several meetings on special education

while working in the Department of Special Education in Sabah.

#### **8.4 The Place of the Study in Relation to the Literature**

The writer's review of literature on inclusive education indicated that there is clearly a lack of research done in this particular area in Malaysia. Although the writer was able to assemble items that traced the developments that led up to the implementation of the inclusive education pilot programme in Malaysia, currently, not many educators in Malaysia are knowledgeable about the theories and practices of inclusive education. Inclusive education is still at the beginning stages in Malaysia; a developing country that has a tremendous lot to catch up with its western counterparts as far as inclusive education is concerned. However, it is encouraging to note that the Malaysian government is now paying greater attention towards the implementation of inclusive education in the country. The field of inclusive education in Malaysia will be a fruitful area for further investigation in the future.

The present study, in which actual professional participants' views were collected and analyzed, could help to promote and better understand inclusive education in Malaysia. This study should increase awareness concerning the status and importance of inclusive education in Malaysia. It should encourage Malaysian educators to conduct more research concerning inclusive education and to find complementary strategies and resources that will enhance the intellectual, psychomotor, social and emotional development of students with special needs.

Finally, this study should provide empirical data and insights regarding not only the attitudes of teachers and principals towards inclusive education but also guidelines to promote the development of more effective inclusive education in our country so that planners and educators will be better at accommodating special needs students in suitable learning environments which pay attention to the unique ways in which these students with special needs learn best.

## 8.5 The Methodology of the Study Reconsidered

Reviewing the methodology used to gather data for this study enables the writer to tell what worked well and what might be improved if the research was being done again.

Based on a thorough review of literature, she came up with a set of interview questions and a questionnaire that were suitably reliable and valid to collect data on teachers' and principals' conceptions of inclusive education in Malaysia. The reliability of the interview questions and questionnaires in this study, however, could be improved by the use various statistical techniques although these were not thought necessary in the present study. Such techniques might include: (a) retesting, (b) using equivalent or parallel forms (inter-scorer reliability), (c) establishing internal consistency by using Spearman-Brown and Kuder-Richardson formulae, and (d) using standard error of measurement statistic. The validity of the interview questions and questionnaires could be improved by determining the degree that their responses are systematically related to the judgments made by observation of behaviors.

It was relatively easy for the writer to travel to the various schools to seek the cooperation from the teachers and principals. The schools are accessible by car while all subjects could be contacted through telephone. However, there were constraints of the time available in the field and the challenges of collecting data in the field for this study but the writer did her very best and she considers that her research is worthwhile.

The methodology used by the writer to collect data was primarily based on interviews and surveys. The writer managed to find a suitable sample of teachers and principals that was large enough to yield useful data for a dissertation study. Statistically, the data were useful enough for analysis to yield significant findings and to derive relevant conclusions needed to make recommendations. Subjects were secondary school teachers and principals, obtained from six inclusive schools in various states of Malaysia. Both English and Malay Language were used as a means of communication. Steps were taken to ensure reliability and validity of the study. To triangulate data, the writer used

both primary and secondary research related to inclusive education in Malaysia and other countries while her data were collected from principals and teachers with both experience and no experience in the pilot programme of inclusive education in Malaysia.

Through the interviews with the teachers and principals, the writer successfully answered the research questions of the study. Seven useful themes were derived about respondents' perspectives on education and more extensive detail of their experiences was able to be reported in the dissertation. Based on the examination of the information that was gained from following her planned research methodology, useful conclusions concerning conceptions of inclusive education in Malaysia were able to be drawn and recommendations made for its future development.

To increase the generalisability of this study, more research on inclusive education should be conducted with a bigger sample; that is, with more subjects or schools.

### **8.6 Implications for Further Research**

Whereas the present study was largely concerned with the views of teachers and principals, a potentially fruitful area for investigation would be that of students' experiences of inclusive education as was done by Allan (1999) who developed eleven case studies of pupils with special needs who were actively seeking inclusion in mainstream schools. Allan made extensive use of the direct voices of the students in the form of quotes as she explored aspects of power and knowledge that were important in the students' educational experiences.

Interviews combined with observations of actual performance would bring further understanding of the complexities involved in the implementation of inclusive education. Such studies would provide a better understanding of principal and teacher experiences and involvement in the process of successfully creating an inclusive classroom. It would be important to understand how people come to believe deeply in



the capacities of children, how people come to embrace life-long learning, and how people are able to work effectively with others to create important change (Barr, Schultz, Doyle, Kromberg and Crossette, 1996).

The methodology of this study can be easily replicated to validate what the writer has written while the interviews and surveys used in this study can be adapted for future research in the area of inclusive education in Malaysia.

To generalize findings of this study, more research on inclusive education should be conducted with a bigger sample; that is, with more subjects or schools.

Future research on inclusive education should include students with special needs. Their attitudes and learning styles should be examined in order to make their education more inclusive. Research on inclusive education should also consider the socioeconomic levels, exceptionalities and other unique characteristics of students with special needs, as they tend to have an impact upon the successful implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia.

Future research on inclusive education should involve the public, especially parents of students with special needs. Their perceptions concerning inclusive education may provide educators with insight in determining the options, alternatives and instructional techniques to facilitate learning and to tap hidden talents of students with special needs.

## **8.7 The Concept of Inclusive Education Revisited**

Since the writer did this study, the concept of inclusive education is gaining greater attention from the government and non-governmental organizations in Malaysia. Meeting the needs of students with special needs is gaining greater attention as the public is becoming increasingly aware of the importance of inclusive education. Inclusive education in Malaysia is being carried out nationally as planned by the government, including its provision in the State of Sabah. The writer observes that

inclusive education needs to be extended in the rural areas, including her own State of Sabah, as children in these more widespread areas also need the benefit of such services.

Moreover, the population of students with special needs has also increased through the years. Recently, the Minister of Education indicated that there is a need to train more teachers to teach students with special needs. Unfortunately, most secondary school graduates in Malaysia are not interested in pursuing a bachelor's degree in special education.

### **8.8 What Should Happen in the Future to Make Better Inclusive Education in Malaysia**

At this final point of the study and after the passing of time since her work on examining the pilot implementation of inclusive education in Malaysia, the writer offers her view of what might be done in the coming years to make inclusive education a more effective part of education in her country.

In the future, several steps should be taken by the government to enhance inclusive education in Malaysia. The government should allocate more funding in order to promote inclusive education in Malaysia. Funds are needed to better equip schools with facilities that are needed for the implementation of inclusive education. If possible, more inclusive schools should be built in each state to meet the needs of the increasing student population.

The Malaysian government should also provide study loans and scholarships to individuals who are interested in studying for their bachelor's degree in inclusive education. This would encourage more secondary school graduates to study at home or to go overseas to get training in inclusive education. It is more practical to encourage Malaysians to take up inclusive education rather than recruiting expatriates from other countries to teach in Malaysian schools.

Non-governmental organizations in Malaysia should help to generate public awareness concerning the importance of inclusive education. Currently, Sabah, the writer's home state, has two welfare homes that cater to the needs of students with special needs. One of them is Sekolah Sri Mengasih that enrolls students with Down Syndrome, autism and other special needs. These organizations might be linked with developments in inclusive education.

Non-governmental organizations should encourage parents to send their children with special needs to inclusive schools rather than "hiding" them at home. It is a fact that a number of Malaysian parents are so ashamed of having children who are physically or mentally challenged that they refuse to enrol them in school.

Finally, an increasing number of Malaysian higher institutions of learning will be offering courses in special education. For example, Universiti Malaysia Sabah and Universiti Malaya currently offer bachelors' degree programmes in special education. Some teacher training colleges in Malaysia also offer special education courses. These are very useful developments.

## 8.9 Conclusion

This study found that structural changes made in the education system without preparation and clarity could jeopardise successful and effective implementation. It is hoped that, in the near future, the government will organize seminars and conferences for administrators, principals, teachers and parents that lead to a better understanding of the inclusive education policy and its implications. No doubt implementation, as stated by Hasazi, Johnson, Liggett and Schattman (1994, p. 506) is a condition, "(that is) chameleonlike, constantly changing its character. Sometimes it shows the rational face of knowledge and values; at other times, it is the reflection of the forces of structure and politics". It is hoped that the writer's work, in studying her dissertation topic, will make at least a modest contribution to the future development of the challenging field of inclusive education for the benefit of young people whose needs might be met in such schools, especially in her homeland of Malaysia.

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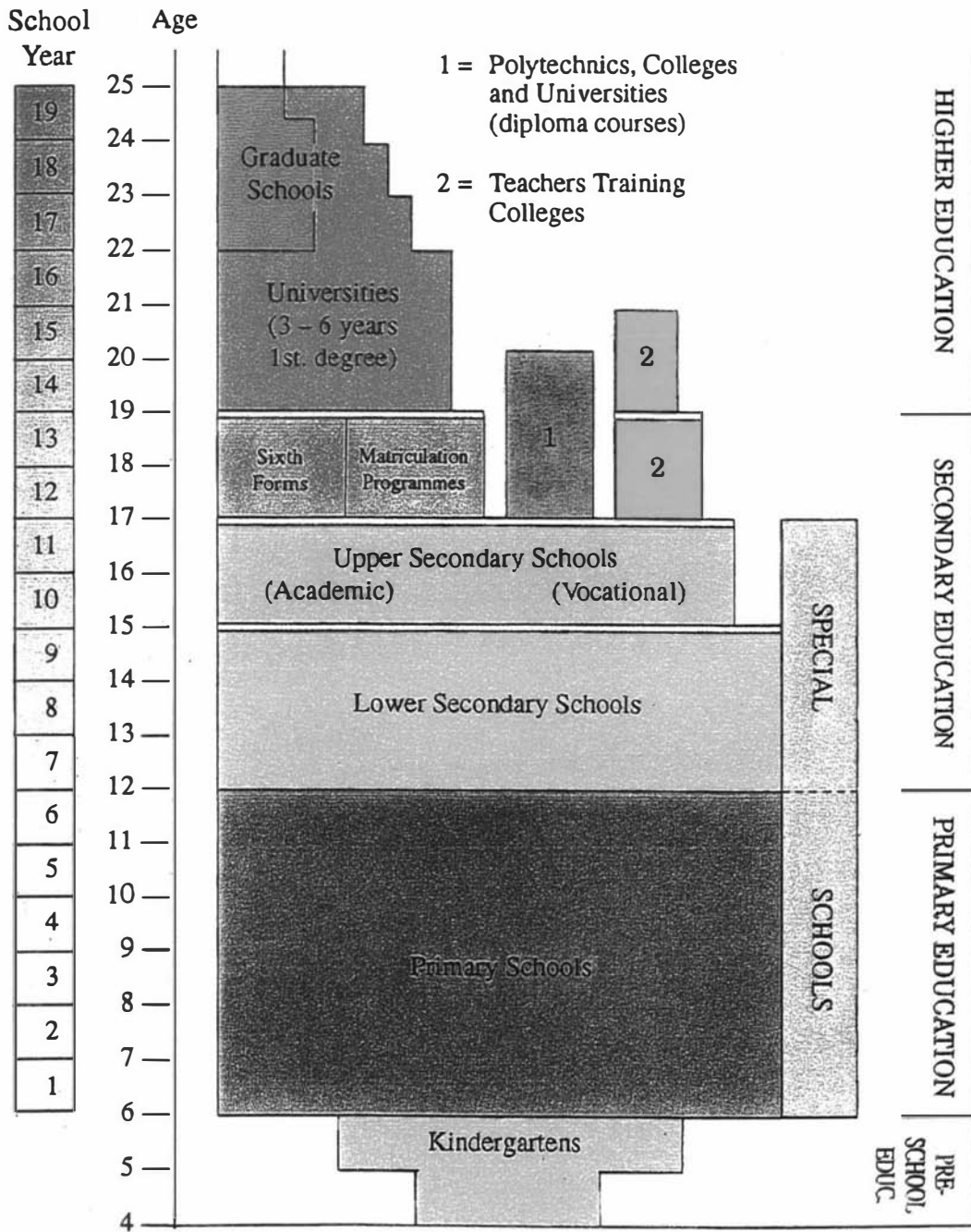


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### APPENDIX A

#### STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM IN MALAYSIA



Source: Ministry of Education Malaysia, 1994

## APPENDIX B

## SCHOOLS INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

Non-Pilot Schools		Pilot Schools	
<b>A</b>	<b>SABAH</b>		
1	SRK Bukit Padang Kota Kinabalu	2	SRK Bahang Penampang
<b>B</b>	<b>SARAWAK</b>		
1	SRK Astana, Jalan Bako Petra Jaya, 93050 Kuching	2	SRK Encik Buyung Kuching
<b>C</b>	<b>MELAKA</b>		
1	SRK Air Baruk 77000 Jasin	2	SRK Sri Lanang, Melaka
<b>D</b>	<b>KELANTAN</b>		
1	SRK Datuk Hashim (1) Kota Bharu SMK Tanjung Emas	2	SRK Pengkalan Cera Kelantan
<b>E</b>	<b>PULAU PINANG</b>		
1	SRK Tanah Liat Bukit Matajam	2	SRK Bukit Minyak Bukit Matajam
<b>F</b>	<b>FEDERAL TERRITORY</b>		
1	SRK Taman Maluri Jalan Wirawati 6 55100 KL	2	SRK Hishamuddin Jalan Sultan Salahuddin Wilayah Persekutuan

*Pilot**Non pilot*

## APPENDIX C

### TEACHER INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### Teacher interview schedule

The Malaysian government has recently introduced a policy for 'inclusive education' in Malaysian schools. I am interested in principals' views of inclusive education; and I will be talking to teachers in primary schools around Malaysia as part of doctoral research study that I am carrying out through Massey University in New Zealand.

You have been chosen because your school has been involved in the pilot programmes of Inclusive education/in the research study. All that is said in the interview will be confidential to me and my research supervisors, and you will be anonymous in the thesis I will write and in any future publication.

This interview is expected to take about an hour, and I understand you are willing to have the interview taped? You know that you may stop the interview at any time and withdraw from the research if you wish, and you may turn the tape recorder off if there is something you would prefer not to have recorded.

I am interested in the variety of views of inclusive education which teachers hold, and I would like to ask you about your view. Is there anything you would like to ask me before we start?

#### **Teaching situation - non - threatening, to get them talking**

#### **1. Would you tell me a little about this school and your teaching role within the school?**

{school - size, students (ethnicity, ability, streaming by ability),  
{philosophy (progressive/traditional)}

- Teaching role-classroom teacher in inclusive education situation.(1)
- Special needs teacher in inclusive education situation (2)
- Special needs teacher (3)

- Classroom teacher (4)

### **Experience of inclusive education (natural/naturalistic context)**

#### 2. (version 1)

- **Can you tell me about the special needs children in your school?**

prompts: what special needs, abilities  
age, gender, ethnicity

- **How does the child relate to other children in the school?**

prompts: How do they relate to her/him?

- **Can you tell me about the other children?**

prompts: age, gender, ethnicity, ability

- **How do you organize the teaching timetable in the classroom?**

prompts Is anyone else involved?  
How does teaching take place for the children with special needs?

- **Have you had any other experience of children with special needs?**

#### 2. (version 2)

- **Can you tell me about the children with special needs in the inclusive setting?**

prompts: Do you go around to see how the teaching is ?

- **Have you been involved in any way with the education of a special needs inclusive setting?**

prompts: Can you tell me about this?

- **How do you contribute to the organization of teaching in the classroom?**

Prompts: How does teaching take place for the child with special needs?

- **Can you tell me about your usual experience of special needs education?**

prompts: [probe in order to sharpen your understanding of any experience of they might have had of IE]

2. (version 4)

- **Have you ever had a special needs children in your school in the past?**

prompts: Can you tell me about this?

- **Have you had any other experience of special needs children?**

### **CONCEPTIONS OF Inclusive Education**

3. **Inclusive education is being introduced in other countries as well as Malaysia. Can you tell me what 'inclusive education' means to you?**

prompts: What do you mean by 'inclusive/ by special needs child'?

- **In your view, what is the purpose of inclusive education?**

prompts: What is the point of ....?

What is to be achieved by...?

Who will benefit from...?

- **Why do you believe it is being introduced?**

prompts: What are the reasons for/ rationale for its introduction?

### **KNOWLEDGE OF GOVERNMENT POLICY**

4. **The Malaysian government has published this policy document. Have you seen it before? When was that ? Have you had a chance to read it?**

- **What are the main points of the policy?**

- **How does IE relate to the Natinal Education Philosophy?**

### **Teacher education: inclusive education**

**5. Have you been involved in any teacher training for inclusive education?**

Yes: When was that? Can you describe the training?

How valuable did you find it? What did you learn from it?  
 What more would you like to learn about inclusive education?  
 What form of training would you prefer? Can you describe this?

No: What would you like to learn about inclusive education?  
 What form of training would you prefer? Can you describe this?  
 What else would you like to know about inclusive education?  
 What form would you like training in inclusive education to take?  
 When in your teaching career would it have been best to receive training in inclusive education?

**Teacher education: Special needs**

**6. Have you had any other form of special needs education teacher training? Can you tell me about this?**

**ATTITUDES**

**7. How do you feel about the introduction of inclusive education in Malaysia?**

prompts: Do you think it is a good idea? In what way?

How does it compare with existing forms of special needs education?

What advantages/disadvantages do you see?

**8. Is there anything else you would like to say about inclusive education?**

## APPENDIX D

### PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The Malaysian government has recently introduced a policy for inclusive education in Malaysian schools. Your school has been chosen because of its involvement in the pilot programmes of inclusive education. I am interested in the way in which inclusive education has been implemented in your schools. All that is said in the interview will be confidential to me and my research supervisors, and you will be anonymous in the thesis I will write and in any future publication.

This interview is expected to take about an hour, and I understand you are willing to have the interview audio-taped. You know that you may stop the interview at any time and withdraw from the research if you wish, and you may turn the tape recorder off if there is something you would prefer not to have recorded. I am interested in the variety of views of inclusive education which teachers hold, and I would like to ask you about your view. Is there anything you would like to ask me before we start?

1. **Would you tell me a little about this school?**  
(school-size, students(ethnicity, ability, streaming by ability))
- **What are your aims for the school?**
- **Can you tell me about the special needs children in your school?(what special needs, abilities, age, gender, ethnicity)**



- **How does the child relate to other children in the school?**
  
- **Can you tell me about the other children?**
- 2. **Can you take me through the process of implementing inclusive education in your school?**
  
- **When did you first become involved in this?**
  
  
- **What sort of involvement did you have initially?(any courses/meetings with the Ministry?)**
  
- **How did you feel about the involvement of your school?**
  
- **How did you introduce it the school? (What meetings/training courses did you organize?; when did this take place?;how successful did you think the courses were?)**
  
- **How successful do you think the pilot of inclusive education is in your school?(What changes would you make in the future?)**
  
- **How do you feel the teachers(classroom and special education) have responded to the introduction of IE?**
  
- **How do you feel about the parents of special and other children have responded to the introduction of IE?**

- **What do you feel about the introduction of IE in your school? (How does it compare with the usual special education?)**
- **Anything else you want to say?**

APPENDIX E

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

TEACHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Please complete the questions by ticking a box, or boxes or filling in the space provided.

1. Are you female
- male
  
2. What is your age to the nearest whole year?(eg. 34 years 9 months = 35)
  
3. What ethnic group (or groups) do you feel you belong to? (You may tick more than one box)
  - Malay
  - Chinese
  - Indian
  - Kadazan
  - Bajau
  - Dusun
  - Murut
  - Iban
  - Bidayu
  - Kenyah
  
4. What is your religion?
  - Islam
  - Christian
  - Budhist
  - Hindu
  
5. Please indicate whether or not you hold each of the following qualifications.
 

	Yes	No	
Trained Teachers Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(please specify)_____
			_____
Diploma in teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	(please specify)_____
			_____

University Degree   (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Other tertiary qualification   (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Please indicate whether or not you have had any of the following types of special education training.

	Yes	No
Education of the deaf course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Education of the blind course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other relevant courses	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> (please specify) _____

7. a. Have you attended any inservice course or workshop between 1994-1996 on children with special needs?

1 = yes 2 = no

b. If yes, please specify \_\_\_\_\_

8. Number of years of teaching experience: \_\_\_\_\_

9. What class level do you presently teach? \_\_\_\_\_

10. a. What is your present teaching situation?

1 = regular class teacher

2 = special class teacher

3 = other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Number of pupils in your present class ? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Which do you think is the most desirable way of providing teacher training in each of the following aspects of special education?

1 = optional pre-service

2 = compulsory pre-service

3 = in-service before teaching children with special needs

4 = in-service during experience with children with special needs

5 = should not be included in training

6 = don't know

Instruction about the psychological, social and physical characteristics of children with special needs. \_\_\_\_\_

Information about support services and resources available. \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX F

## RESEARCH APPLICATION TO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MALAYSIA

Research Form EPRD 1  
(To be completed in duplicate)

Director,  
Educational Planning and Research Division,  
Ministry of Education Malaysia,  
Level 2, Blok J,  
Pusat Bandar Damansara,  
50604 Kuala Lumpur.  
Malaysia.

Application for Conducting Research in  
Schools, Teacher Training Colleges,  
Education Departments and Divisions in  
the Ministry of Education

Section A: PARTICULARS ON RESEARCHER AND THE RESEARCH

1. Name of Researcher: WINNY BOSI
2. Nationality: MALAYSIAN Passport No: H4772170
3. Permanent address: P.O. Box 39, 89507, PENAMPANG  
SABAH MALAYSIA Telephone No: 088-712730
4. Present occupation: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION
5. Information on institution where you are presently studying/working:
  - i. Name of institution: MASSEY UNIVERSITY
  - ii. Address: FACULTY OF EDUCATION, MASSEY UNIVERSITY  
PALMERSTON NORTH, NEW ZEALAND 5301 Telephone No: 06-3506228 (0)  
06-3552804 (H)
  - iii. Faculty/Department and year of study: EDUCATION, 3 years.
  - iv. Place of work: .....
  - v. Address: \* .....
  - ..... Telephone No: \* .....
  - vi. Other details: .....
  - .....
6. Degree to be taken M.A./M.Ed/M.Sc./Ph.D/etc.  
PhD

- 2 -

7. Topic of research/study: A PHENOMENOGRAPHIC STUDY OF TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN THE MALAYSIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM
8. Sample of study: (List of institutions/schools and the level and number of classes, pupils or students involved in this study. The list must be in duplicate and attached to the application).
9. Date of pilot study: from 1.5.1996 to 24.6.1996
10. Date of actual research: from 17.6.1996 to 16.8.1996
11. Expected date of completion of Thesis/Dissertation/Report:  
NOVEMBER 1997

I, WINNY BOSI hereby declare that I will abide by the conditions set by the Ministry of Education, of Malaysia. I promise that a copy of my Dissertation/Thesis/Report will be submitted to the Ministry of Education through my Head of Department/Faculty upon completion.

Date: 9/4/1996

WINNY BOSI  
Signature of Applicant

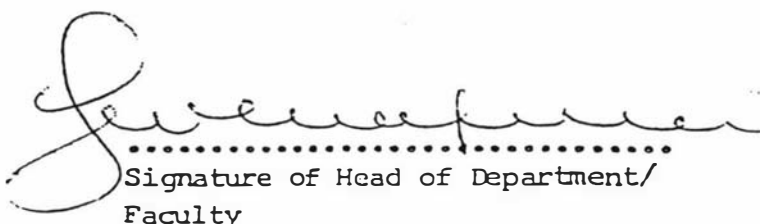
- To be filled only by those researchers who are presently working/~~self-employed~~.

SECTION B: TO BE FILLED BY THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT/DEAN OF FACULTY OF THE RESEARCHER

The researcher is recommended/~~not recommended~~ because: .....

The researcher has agreed to submit a copy of the Dissertation/thesis/ Report to the Ministry of Education upon completion.

Date: ..30.6.96.....

  
Signature of Head of Department/  
Faculty

Name: J. W. Chapman

Official Seal: EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY  
Massey University  
Private Bag 11-222  
Palmerston North  
New Zealand

\*Please delete  
whichever not applicable

SECTION C: FOR OFFICIAL USE BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

Note:

The Ministry of Education has the right to reject any application for research in schools/Institutions without giving any explanation.



## APPENDIX G

### RESEARCH APPLICATION (PRIMARY SCHOOLS): MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MALAYSIA

House 6, Atawhai Village,  
Keiller Place,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand 5301

Date: 14.05.1996

Director,  
Educational Planning and Research Division,  
Ministry of Education Malaysia,  
Level 2, Blok J,  
Pusat Bandar Damansara,  
50604 KUALA LUMPUR  
Malaysia

Sir,

#### APPLICATION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

With reference to the Research form-EPRD 1 which I have successfully completed with the relevant information required by your division. I hereby attach a list of schools and number of teachers involved in the study.

The pilot inclusive schools that I would like to involve in the study are:

1. SK. Tanah Liat,  
14000 Bukit Matajam,  
Sungai Perai, PULAU PINANG

2. SK. Taman Maluri,  
Jalan Wirawati 6,  
55100 KUALA LUMPUR

3. SRK. Air Baruk,  
77000 Jasin,  
MALACCA

4. SRK. Dato' Hashim (1),  
Kota Bharu,  
KELANTAN

5. SK. Bukit Padang,  
Kota Kinabalu  
SABAH

6. SRK. Astana,  
Petra Jaya, Kuching,  
SARAWAK

Copy to:

1. Professor James Chapman (Adviser)  
Head of Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education,  
Massey University,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand 5301
2. Dr. Janet Burns (Chief Supervisor)  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education,  
Massey University,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand 5301
3. Dr. Roy Shuker (Second Supervisor)  
Department of Educational Psychology  
Faculty of Education,  
Massey University,  
Palmerston North,  
New Zealand 5301
4. Encik Azmi b. M. Saman  
Director,  
Malaysian Students Department New Zealand,  
10, Washington Avenue,  
Brooklyn, P.O.Box 9422,  
Wellington,  
New Zealand 5301

## APPENDIX H

RESEARCH APPLICATION REPLY:  
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MALAYSIA

BAHAGIAN PERANCANGAN DAN  
PENYELIDIKAN PENDIDIKAN,  
KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN,  
PARAS 2, 3 DAN 5, BLOK J,  
PUSAT BANDAR DAMANSARA,  
50604 KUALA LUMPUR

177

Telefon: 2556900  
Kawat: "PENDIDIKAN"  
Faks: 03-2554960

Ruj. Tuan:

Ruj. Kami: KP (BPPP) 13/15

Jld. 46 (270)

Tarikh: 6 Jun 1996

• Winny Bosi,  
P.O. Box 39,  
89507, Penampang,  
Sabah.

Tuan,

Kebenaran Bagi Menjalankan Kajian Ke Sekolah-Sekolah,  
Jabatan-Jabatan Dan Institusi-Institusi Di Bawah  
Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia

Adalah saya diarah untuk memaklumkan bahawa permohonan puan untuk  
menjalankan kajian mengenai

"A Phenomenographic Study Of Teachers' Conceptions Of  
Inclusive Education In The Malaysian Educational System".

diluluskan.

2. Kelulusan ini adalah berdasarkan kepada hanya apa yang  
terkandung di dalam cadangan penyelidikan yang puan kemukakan ke  
Bahagian ini. Kebenaran bagi menggunakan sampel kajian perlu  
diperolehi daripada Ketua Bahagian/Pengarah Pendidikan Negeri yang  
berkenaan.


3. Puan juga dikehendaki menghantar senaskhah hasil kajian puan  
ke Bahagian ini sebaik sahaja selesai kelak.

. Sekian.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

"CINTAILAH BAHASA KITA"

Saya yang menurut perintah,



(DR. ABD. KARIM B. MD. NOR)

b.p. Pengarah Perancangan dan Penyelidikan Pendidikan,  
b.p. Pendatar Besar Sekolah-Sekolah dan Guru-Guru,  
Kementerian Pendidikan.

s.k.

Pengarah Pendidikan,  
Jabatan Pendidikan P. Pinang.

Pengarah Pendidikan,  
Jabatan Pendidikan Wilayah Persekutuan

Pengarah Pendidikan  
Jabatan Pendidikan Melaka.

Penagarah Pendidikan,  
Jabatan Pendidikan Kelantan,

Pengarah Pendidikan,  
Jabatan Pendidikan Sabah.

Penagarah Pendidikan,  
Jabatan Pendidikan Sarawak.

**APPENDIX I****INTERVIEW CONSENT REQUEST**

(University letter head has been used for this letter)

Date: 15.06.1996

Pengarah Pendidikan Sabah  
Jabatan Pendidikan Sabah  
Kota Kinabalu  
Sabah, Malaysia`

Sir,

**REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO INTERVIEW PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I am carrying out a study of developments in special education in the Malaysian educational system. As part of this research I will be interviewing principals and 54 teachers selected at random from throughout Malaysia.

I would appreciate it if you would allow me to interview a sample of the principals, classroom teachers and special education teachers in primary schools about this issue. This interview is expected to take about an hour and I request your permission to have this interview audio-taped.

All the information that the principals and teachers give in the interview will be completely confidential and used for research purposes only. The research is under the supervision of Dr. Janet Burns, the chief supervisor, Dr. Roy Shuker, the second supervisor and Professor James Chapman, the adviser. This research is also undertaken with the approval of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

The principals and the teachers are requested to complete the consent forms if they are willing to be interviewed.

I thank you for your kindness and cooperation with this study.

**“BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA”**

Saya yang menurut perintah,

**(WINNY BOSI)**

## APPENDIX J

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN FEDERAL TERRITORY

JABATAN PENDIDIKAN  
WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN,  
JALAN RAJA MUDA ABDUL AZIZ,  
50300 KUALA LUMPUR

Telefon: 2919044

Ruj. Tuan:

Ruj. Kami:

Tarikh:

Bil.( 4 ) JPWP. 03-1293/Jld.13

25 Jun 1996

Puan Winny Bosi,  
P.O. Box 39,  
89507 Penampang,  
Sabah.

Tuan,

**KEBENARAN BAGI MENJALANKAN KAJIAN DI  
SEKOLAH-SEKOLAH WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN**

Adalah saya diarah memaklumkan bahawa permohonan tuan untuk menjalankan kajian mengenai:

“ A Phenomenographic Study Of Teachers’ Conceptions of Inclusive Education  
In The Malaysia Educational System. “

telah diluluskan tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat berikut:

- a) Kelulusan ini adalah berdasarkan kepada hanya apa yang terkandung di dalam cadangan penyelidikan yang telah diluluskan oleh Kementerian Pendidikan dan sampel kajian yang telah diluluskan oleh Jabatan ini sahaja.
- b) Tuan/puan dikehendaki mengemukakan senaskah hasil kajian tuan/puan ke bahagian ini sebaik sahaja selesai kelak.
- c) Sila kemukakan surat kebenaran ini ketika berurusan dengan Guru Besar/ Pengetua sekolah yang berkenaan.
- d) Surat kebenaran ini berkuatkuasa hingga 31.7.1996 sahaja.

Sekian, terima kasih.

“BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA”

Saya yang menurut perintah,

(HAJI MOHD SALLEH BIN HJ HUSIN PPN)

Ketua Penolong Pengarah,  
Perhubungan & Pendaftaran,  
b.p.Pendaftar Sekolah dan Guru  
Wilayah Persekutuan.

KajiandocAd25 061996

## APPENDIX K

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN SARAWAK



JABATAN PENDIDIKAN SARAWAK,  
 BAHAGIAN PERHUBUNGAN & PENDAFTARAN,  
 BANGUNAN TUN DATUK PATINGGI  
 TUANKU HAJI BUJANG,  
 JALAN SIMPANG TIGA,  
 93604 KUCHING, SARAWAK

Telefon : 082-233201  
 Fax : 082-246750 181  
 Katut : PENDIDIKAN

*Ruj. Kami* : 49/JP/HD/0043

*Tarikh* : 15 Julai 1996

Puan Winny Bosi  
 P.O. Box 39  
 89507 Penampang  
 Sabah.

Puan,

**KEBENARAN UNTUK MENJALANKAN KAJIAN DI  
 SEKOLAH RENDAH KERAJAAN ASTANA, PETRA JAYA, KUCHING**

Merujuk kepada surat puan bertarikh 15.6.1996 dan salinan surat kebenaran daripada Bahagian PPP, Kementerian Pendidikan bil. KP(BPPP)13/15 Jld. 46(270) bertarikh 6 Jun 1996, adalah saya diarah memaklumkan bahawa pejabat ini tiada halangan di atas cadangan puan untuk menjalankan kajian mengenai:

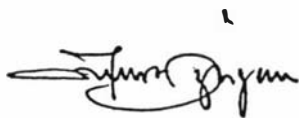
“ A Phenomenographic Study Of Teachers’ Conceptions Of Inclusive Education In The Malaysian Educational System”.

2. Walau bagaimanapun, kelulusan ini tertakluk kepada syarat-syarat berikut:-
  - 2.1 Persetujuan pihak Guru Besar untuk meluangkan serta menetapkan tarikh, masa yang sesuai serta cara kajian hendaklah dijalankan bagi tujuan ini;
  - 2.2 Sampel yang digunakan hanyalah seperti yang diluluskan oleh Jabatan Pendidikan Sarawak (seperti salinan yang dikemukakan ke pejabat ini);
  - 2.3 Kajian tidak akan menjejaskan perjalanan pengajaran-pembelajaran di sekolah tersebut.
3. Sila berhubung dengan Guru Besar, SRK. Astana, Petra Jaya, Kuching tentang perkara 2.1.
4. Sayugia diingatkan bahawa puan hendaklah menghantar senaskhah hasil kajian puan ke pejabat ini, Jabatan Pendidikan Bahagian Kuching serta SRK. Astana, Petra Jaya, Kuching apabila siap kelak.

Sekian, untuk makluman dan perhatian.

“ BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA ”

Saya yang menurut perintah,



(NIK AZIZAN ABDULLAH)  
b.p. Pengarah Pendidikan  
Sarawak.

s.k. Ketua Penolong Pengarah  
Sektor Pengurusan Sekolah

Pegawai Pendidikan Bahagian  
Bahagian Kuching.

Guru Besar  
SRK Astana, Kuching.

} Surat daripada BPPP,  
} Kementerian Pendidikan  
} bil. KP(BPPP)13/15 Jld. 46  
} (270) bertarikh 6.6.1996  
} adalah berkaitan.

NAA/zh/kajian/0043



## APPENDIX L

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN MALACCA



JABATAN PENDIDIKAN MELAKA  
 BUKIT BERUANG,  
 PETI SURAT No. 62  
 75450 MELAKA (Sambungan Tel:

Pengarah: 06-23237  
 Timbalan 1 & 2: 06-23237  
 Pejabat Am: 06-23237  
 183 06-23237  
 Fax: 06-232050

Ruj.Kami: JPM.0003/Pt.66/Jld.15(89)

Tarikh : 11 Julai 1996.

Windy Bosi,  
 P.O.Box 39,  
 89507 Penampang,  
 Sabah.

Tuan,

Kebenaran Bagi Menjalankan Kajian Di Sekolah

Adalah saya diarah merujuk surat tuan bertarikh 15.06.1996 dan sukacita dimaklumkan Jabatan ini tiada halangan tuan menjalankan penyelidikan tentang perkembangan pendidikan khas di dalam sistem pendidikan Malaysia di Sekolah Rendah Kebangsaan Air Baruk Jasin dan di sebuah lagi sekolah rendah yang berdekatan.

2. Sila hubungi terus guru besar sekolah-sekolah yang berkaitan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan tersebut.

Sekian, terima kasih.

“BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA”  
 Cintailah Bahasa Kita

Saya yang menurut perintah,

(HAJI ABD. RAHIM BIN HAJI HUSIN)  
 Ketua Sektor Pengurusan Sekolah,  
 b.p. Pengarah Pendidikan,  
 Melaka.

s.k. Fail Penyclaras  
 UPPS/HCCHA/mas.

(Sila catatkan rujukan Jabatan ini bila berhubung)

JABATAN PENDIDIKAN MELAKA  
BUKIT BERUANG.

Pengarah: 06-2323782

Timbalan 1 & 2: 06-2323777



JABATAN PENDIDIKAN MELAKA  
BUKIT BERUANG,  
PETI SURAT No. 62  
75450 MELAKA (Sambungan Tel: )

184

Pengarah: 06-232378  
Timbalan 1 & 2: 06-232378  
Pejabat Am: 06-232377  
06-232377  
06-232377  
Fax: 06-232050

JFM/UPK: 01421/20/J1d.1(23)

Tarikh: 8 Ogos, 1996  
23 R.Awal, 1417

Kepada,

-----  
Guru Besar,

1. Sek.Ren.Keb.Air Barok, Jasin.
2. Sekolah Kebangsaan Ujung Pasir, Melaka.

Tuan,

Kajian Pendidikan Inklusif Oleh  
Pelajar Peringkat Doktor Falsafah

-----  
Merujuk kepada perkara tersebut di atas, dengan hormatnya di maklumkan bahawa Jabatan Pendidikan Melaka (JFM:0003/Pt.66/Jld.5 (89) bertarikh 11 Julai, 1996) telah membenarkan Cik Winny Bosi dari Sabah menjalankan kajian Pendidikan Inklusif di Negeri Melaka.

2. Oleh itu, sekolah Tuan telah dinamakan untuk pelajar berkenaan menjalankan kajian tersebut. Semoga pihak Tuan dapat memberikan kerjasama sepenuhnya kepada pelajar berkenaan apabila hadir di sekolah Tuan pada awal bulan September, 1996

Sekian. Terima kasih.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

"CINTAILAH BAHASA KITA"

Saya yang menurut perintah,

(BAHARUDDIN BIN BURHAN)  
Penolong Pengarah Unit Pendidikan Khas,  
b.p. Jabatan Pendidikan,  
Melaka.

- s.k.
1. Pengarah Pendidikan Melaka.
  2. Ketua Sektor Pengurusan Sekolah.
  - 3. Cik Winny Bosi,  
P.O.Box 39, 89507 Panampang,  
Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.
  4. Fail Penyelaras.

BB/as/winny.A

## APPENDIX M

## PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN PENANG

JABATAN PENDIDIKAN,  
BANGUNAN TUANKU SYED FUTRA,  
10900 FULAU PERANG.

No. Telefon: 04-625339/625448  
624532/625340

Ruj. Tuan:

Ruj. Kami: ( 20 ) dlm. Pel. P.P.0051-2. Jld. 13

Tarikh : 1 Ogos, 1996.

Cik Winny Bosi  
P.O. Box 39,  
89507, Penampang,  
SABAH.

~~Bea~~/Puan,

Penyelidikan Pendidikan

Permohonan Menggunakan Sampel Penyelidikan  
Dan Melibatkan Sekolah-sekolah Di Pulau Pinang

Cik Winny Bosi

Nama Penyelidik: .....

No: Kad Pengaliran: .....

28 Ogos 1996 hingga 30 Ogos 1996

Tarikh Penyelidikan: .....

Tajuk Penyelidikan: "A Phenomenographic Study Of Teachers' Conceptions  
Of Inclusive Education In The Malaysian Educational System".  
.....

.....

Saya adalah diarah merujuk kepada permohonan ~~bea~~/puan tersebut di atas.

2. ~~Bea~~/puan adalah dimaklumkan bahawa permohonan ~~bea~~/puan untuk menggunakan sampel penyelidikan seperti yang dikemukakan ke jabatan ini dan juga untuk melibatkan sekolah-sekolah seperti dalam senarai yang di-kepilkan adalah diluluskan.

3. Kelulusan ini hanya diberikan berdasarkan kepada apa yang terkandung dalam alat pengukur atau instrumen yang ~~bea~~/puan kemukakan ke jabatan ini.

4. Untuk merentukan kerja-kerja biasa sekolah tidak terjejas ~~bea~~/puan adalah diminta menghubungi guru besar/pengetua sekolah untuk menentukan tarikh, masa dan kelas (bukan kelas peperiksaan rasmi kerajaan) yang akan dilibatkan dalam penyelidikan ~~bea~~/puan.

5. ~~Bea~~/puan adalah diminta menunjukkan surat kelulusan ini apabila menghubungi guru besar/pengetua sekolah.

6. ~~Dua~~ <sup>Tuan</sup>/puan adalah juga diminta menghantar senaskah hasil penyelidikan ~~dua~~ <sup>dua</sup>/puan ke jabatan ini sebaik sahaja ianya siap.

"BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA"

Saya yang menurut perintah,



( AHMAD FAROUK BIN ABDUL MAJID )  
 b.p. Pengarah Pendidikan/Pendaftar Sekolah-sekolah,  
~~AHMAD FAROUK BIN ABDUL MAJID~~  
 Ketua Sektor  
 Pengurusan Sekolah  
 b.p. Pengarah Pendidikan  
 Pulau Pinang

s.k.

1. Pengarah,  
 Bahagian Perancangan Dan Penyelidikan Pendidikan,  
 Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia,  
 Paras 2, 3 & 5, Blok J,  
 Pusat Bandar Damansara,  
50604 Kuala Lumpur.

(u.p. Dr. Abd. Karim bin Md. Nor )

- Surat tuan KP(BPPP) 13/15/Jld.46(270)  
 adalah berkaitan.

bertarikh 6 Jun, 1996.

2. Pegawai Pendidikan Daerah  
 Pulau/Utara & Tengah/Selatan,  
 Pulau Pinang.
3. Pengetua/Guru Besar,  
 sekolah-sekolah berkenaan.

Guru Besar,  
 S.K. Tanah Liat,  
 Jalan Tanah Liat,  
14000 BUKIT MERTAJAM.

Guru Besar,  
 S.K. Bukit Minyak,  
 Bukit Minyak,  
14000 BUKIT MERTAJAM.

## APPENDIX N

### TEACHER INFORMATION SHEET

A study of developments in special education in the Malaysian educational system

#### **Teacher Information Sheet**

The Malaysian government has recently introduced a new policy for special education in Malaysian schools. I am interested in teachers' views and I will be talking to teachers in primary schools around Malaysia as part of a doctoral research study that I am carrying out through Massey University in New Zealand.

You have been chosen at random from among the classroom teachers and special education teachers in a random sample of schools. These schools have been selected from those involved in the pilot programme of special education in Malaysia and from nearby schools that are not involved. You will be part of a sample of fifty-four(54) teachers. This interview is expected to take about an hour and it will be audio-taped.

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- refuse to answer any particular question, and to withdraw from the study at any time.
- ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential to the researchers. All information is collected anonymously, and it will not be possible to identify you in any reports that are prepared from the study.
- be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded.

If you would like any further information please contact  
Winnie Bosi, telephone number: 088-712730 or Dr.  
Janet Burns, email: [J.R.Burns@massey.ac.nz](mailto:J.R.Burns@massey.ac.nz)

**APPENDIX O**  
**PRINCIPAL INFORMATION SHEET**

A study of developments in special education in the Malaysian  
educational system

**Principal Information Sheet**

The Malaysian government has recently introduced a new policy for special education in Malaysian schools. I am interested in teachers' views and I will be talking to teachers in primary schools around Malaysia as part of a doctoral research study that I am carrying out through Massey University in New Zealand.

You school has been chosen at random from among schools which are involved in the pilot programme of special education in Malaysia. As part of the selected schools, you are part of a sample of six(6) principals. This interview is expected to take about an hour and it will be audio-taped.

If you take part in the study, you have the right to:

- refuse to answer any particular question, and to withdraw from the study at any time.
- ask any further questions about the study that occur to you during your participation.
- provide information on the understanding that it is completely confidential .
- to the researchers. All information is collected anonymously, and it will not be possible to identify you in any reports that are prepared from the study.
- be given access to a summary of the findings from the study when it is concluded.

If you would like any further information please contact Winny Bosi, telephone number: 088-712730 or Dr. Janet Burns, email: J.R.Burns@massey.ac.nz

**APPENDIX P**  
**TEACHER CONSENT FORM**

A study of developments in special education in the Malaysian educational system.

**Teacher Consent Form**

I have read the Information Sheet for this study. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers on the understanding that it is completely confidential.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out on the Information Sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**APPENDIX Q**  
**PRINCIPAL CONSENT FORM**

**A study of developments in special education in  
the Malaysian educational system.**

Principal Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet for this study. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researchers on the understanding that it is completely confidential.

I wish to participate in this study under the conditions set out on the Information Sheet.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX R**  
**INTERVIEW CONSENT REQUEST**

Date:

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Sir/Madam,

**REQUEST FOR CONSENT TO BE INTERVIEWED**

I am a PhD candidate in the Department of Educational Psychology, Faculty of Education at Massey University, Palmerston North, New Zealand. I am carrying out a study of developments in special education in the Malaysian educational system. As part of this research I will be interviewing 54 teachers selected at random from throughout Malaysia.

I would appreciate it if you could allow me to interview a sample of the classroom teachers and special education teachers in your school, about this issue. This interview is expected to take about an hour and I request your permission to have this interview audio-taped.

All the information that you and the teachers give in the interview will be completely confidential and used for research purposes only. The research is under the supervision of Dr. Janet Burns, the chief supervisor, Dr. Roy Shuker, the second supervisor and Professor

James Chapman, the adviser. This research is also undertaken with the approval of the Ministry of Education, Malaysia.

If you and the teachers are willing to be interviewed for this study, please complete the attached consent form and return it to me when I visit your school.

I thank you for your kindness and cooperation with this study.

**“BERKHIMAT UNTUK NEGARA”**

Saya yang menurut perintah,

**(WINNY BOSI)**

## APPENDIX S(i)

SAMPLE: TEACHER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION  
(PILOT SCHOOL)

- W Can you tell me a little bit about this school and what is your role as a teacher in this school?
- K Actually I am from this school also. I just came last year December 1995. So this is the first time also I am having a inclusive children..students in my class you see. I am surprised also because they put inclusive children in normal class. At first I thought they have own special teacher you see. But then when I start teaching dua maju English, I found out they have one girl there lah in the inclusive.
- W ...so you have one girl in your class.
- K Ya...
- W What class is that?
- K ...dua maju.
- W ...oh dua maju...
- K Ya...
- W So ...
- K ...because I am teaching them English lah.
- W Prior to this you have no experience teaching ...
- K ...no..I have no experience teaching because in KL we don't have many schools...inclusive class...
- W How do you feel about it that when you came here then you have to teach this students?
- K At first I asked some other teachers alsolah...what should I do with them you see...but what they say is just I teach normally, and then maybe give some extra attention to the particular child lah. But I found it very difficult because that class is already a very weak class. And then I am teaching them language so it is more difficult for me to give attention to her alone you know.
- W So to speak you don't have training to teach these children?
- K No, I don't have training because I am just a normal class teacher....teaching them English.
- W You have not even been given some kind of exposure about IE?
- K No. That is why I don't know what I am supposed to teach them. I ask about the penyearas lah. Is she going to be have different kind of exercise from other normal children? She said never mind. It is ok that she follows my class. But I don't think she can follow my normal class you see. Because she is an inclusive child, isn't it? So for me like from the beginning also I found it is ok because from beginning I just teach them a very simple English you know. You teach them good morning and then objects. That is easy lah. But after when I am coming to this maybe after half a year already, then I found it difficult for her to follow my English. Because she is slower than other children. Although they are slow lah..that class is

weak already. But compare to others children, she is more slower. Although that the child can speak English. She can speak English. The written is different. She can speak very good English actually. But I don't think she can pay too long attention to me you see. Then she can just pay maybe 5-10 attention and then she doesn't care what I am talking about. And then she starts to play...talk to other children. Sometime it is quite disturbing also lah. Because she disturbs other child.

W So what do you understand by what IE now?...meaning of IE?

K ...(laugh)... Inclusive...because I thought they have some maybe some mentally....very much slower than normal children you see. So I thought that they are going to have a different class lah...just like permulihan class, isn't it? They were just a permulihan class to me. But then I found out it is very much different from the normal class.

W So how do you interpret? What is your definition for IE?

K I don't know how to define that you see. Because this is the first time I found this type of children.

W .....and you have had no exposure...

K Ya. I don't have any exposure. also. At first it is ok but after that I found...because for me it is always a weak class. So if it is a very good children, then I can give a enrichment..different exercises from the weak one you see. So she is different you know. She can't even concentrate on writing...writing only you know. It means you ask her to write maybe two sentences, is also difficult for her. You must ask her to sit right in front of you. Then you have to look at her. Then only she can write it out. Not that she can't do it...she can. But she needs a lot of attention...a lot.

W A teacher teaching 40 students will not be able to give that attention...

K Ya. I don't think I can give that much attention to her you know. So at first I thought that for inclusive children maybe they will be in a class for 1 or 2 periods after that they will go back to their own class. But then I found out, no..She will stay in the class for the whole day you know.

W ...full time..

K Ya, it is a full time.

W So are you happy with that?

K Sometime..no you see. Actually..ya..it is true. It is not that I am trying to say that because she is an inclusive child or that..because sometime she disturbs my lesson also. Because she disturbs other children. She is trying to play with other children. You know the other children will play with her.

W ..so they are not learning..

K ...ya, they are not learning you see. They are already slow. I can't concentrate. Because the mother also comes and sees me you see. But I told her straight to the face, I am sorry about that lah. I got 44 students in one class.

W What does the mother expect?

K The mother expects me to pay attention to her lah.

W How does the mother know that you are not paying attention to her?

K Because she can't finish my work you see. Because whenever she does some exercises, she just writes the date..the date only you know. And then she leaves it blank. So she did that. She is not doing any homework lah. So she asked me ..why? I said, I am sorry also because I can't..everyday I can't ask her to sit right in front of me and then make sure that she is doing something you see. Maybe once in awhile when other children can do their work then I can pay attention to her. But not everyday I said. I am sorry about that lah...

W Are you interested to have this kind of children your class?

K No...(laugh)...For me it is very difficult.

W So how about the other children the normal children relate to her. Are they happy to have her in the class?

K Sometime I think they found her quite disturbing also you know. Because she likes to...she is more very active you know. She doesn't care what other people do you know. What she wants to do she will do. On the spot, she will shout you know. Sometime she makes situation very embarrassing lah. So you try to control her.

W To you, when you want to implement IE, what sort of criteria would you prefer?

K If we can put them in normal class but I don't think we can put them in one whole day you see. We can try them..make her mix with other children. But make sure the time is just a short time you see. Maybe she will be in my class for half an hour only. After that she can go back to inclusive class...where the teacher can pay more attention to her. Because we can pay attention to her you know. Because we have already three types of children. A good one average one and a very poor one. Then we are trying to give the same amount of attention to them you see. So for us is very difficult lah. For normal class and then is different if we have maybe 20 children in one class.

W So prior to this, have you had experienced when you were in teaching these children?

K No, this is the first time.

W It is more like a cultural shock to you.

K Ya...that is right.Because I heard about this inclusive class also. This is quite a new school. Nowadays all the new schools also have inclusive class. But like what I said, I thought there will stay in their own class. They have a specialist teacher there. So I think that is good, isn't it?

W You preferred it that way.

K Ya. that is good I think . At least they can learn something you know. They are learning. But like for me, if they stay in my class for one hour, I don't think that she will follow whatever I teach on that day. Maybe just for 5 minutes. After that she won't be paying any attention to me. She will do her own work. She will be dreaming, she will be singing. She will do that. That is why...

W ...she is in her own world....

K Ya.in her own world. I can't blame her also.

- W ...because that is her weaknesses...
- K Ya...that is her weaknesses you see. Because for normal children .you look at them...to pay attention to me for more than half an hour also they are restless you see. For inclusive children, they like to play again. That simple sentence is ok but now it is getting more and more difficult you know. At the beginning of the year is ok. She follows whatever I do. Because she likes English also. She follows the simple words. She is learning colours, objects, good morning...greetings. But afterward, I am getting to more difficult part, she won't be paying any attention at all.
- W So when your class was chosen to have this child in your class, were you given some kind of information or courses to attend before this?
- K No.
- W So you are just like in the dark...
- K They just tell me that you have inclusive child in your class. I didn't say anything.
- W At that time do you know what is inclusive then?
- K Ya, I know what it is.
- W You knew what it was.
- K They have problems in ...problems in teaching and learning. ...all that.
- W So to you, you thought that...
- K ..but ya when I asked them what I am supposed to do with them when I am having them...so they said ..nothing you just teach as normal, so I thought that is the only way. So I just teach as normal as I can.
- W So have you seen any kind of document or philosophy of PK? Have you ever seen or read?
- K Ya I have read about it..
- W ..you have read about it. And the policy of IE what the gov't wants, have you read something about that?
- K ..not that very detail you see. What I heard is just a ...maybe a draft...
- W ...you mean you just heard...
- K ...ya you just heard and then we just don't pay attention to it you know because for me I said, I am not teaching them I thought. So it doesn't affect me...That is the only way because I am teaching a normal class you see...
- W You never know you will be involved..
- K Ya, I never know until I came to this school. They have a inclusive child in my class you know....normal class you see. So it is difficult because I am teaching other class also. I have two other children also...inclusive....They are worse because they didn't speak English at all. - So they can't do anything at all.

- W So you are a trained teacher.....
- K Ya for the college ya...
- W ...but regular children?...
- K Ya for normal children.
- W Have you ever attended courses on IE?
- K No.
- W So if you are offered, what would you like to learn from the course? Would you want to attend if you are given?
- K I think I have to take advantage. Because the personality of a teacher is very important to teach this type of children you know. They must be very patience. They must be very creative also to make them to pay more attention to you, you know.
- W So that is what you want to learn from the course lah.
- K Ya I think that should be the waylah, isn't it? Should learn more way to teach them you see so that they are more interested in you and whatever you teach. Like regular classes, I don't think it is needed.
- W ...you don't need that...
- K Ya we don't need that.
- W ...because they know that they are there to pass the exam.
- K Ya. They have to study. They have to learn what I teach them. I don't think there is any problem.
- W But do you think it is a good idea that the gov't implement this IE?
- K It is good I said. It is good you know.
- W In what way?
- K We have quite a lot...like my former school, we have quite a lot of few students that they have this type of problem lah. And then we asked the parents to send them to this inclusive classes lah. because it is no use that they stay in the normal class where they don't learn anything. Just like when one inclusive child in my class you see. Pity her also because she can't catch up with me. What she can learn is just in the beginning. Maybe I am just giving a very simple word. But afterward when I go to more difficult sentence., she won't pay any attention. Because it is wasted, isn't it? Wasted also she stays in the class one whole day and then she is not learning anything at all. She is just following the normal class you see. It is good that she mixes with other children lah but not for too long. One whole day is a very long day you see.
- W Well thank you ..puan or miss?...
- K Miss Khoon.
- W Before we finish, do you have anything to add about IE?
- K No lah. I think I have said it all.
- W Ok thank you much.



## APPENDIX S(ii)

SAMPLE: TEACHER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION  
(NON-PILOT SCHOOL)

W Thank you catherine for allowing me to interview you...

C Thank you also to give me the privilege to talk on this...

W You are welcome. So I would like you to tell me a little bit this school and what is your role in this school?

C In fact we actually just want to borrow this school for six months but since we have already moved here so it is already past the time that was given allocate to us for six months, so naturally we are ...become SK Bahang , no more ST.Joseph.

W Have you ever had a special need child in your class?

C Special child ..to look after the weak one or the good one?

W Before that what do you understand by special needs child?

C I think...so far I have been teaching for thirty years I come across children that come from broken families and these are the children that really need our attention you know. They need our attention... sometime they feel very sleepy in the class and then you have to find out from them...why they are sleepy in the class?

W In many cases these children come from what ethnic groups?

C Normally the children that come from broken families are children...their parents are alcoholic.

W ..and what race are they belonged to?

C They are mostly Kadazan also.

W Are they living in the urban areas or from the rural areas?

C ..rural...

W What are their ages?

C Well, I have been teaching all the time primary six ...so I l plus.

W What do you do when these children have this problem?

C I have to assist them sometime if you need that the class extra reference book, like workbook , I do spend some money to these children...maybe two or three children that amount to \$12.00...\$4.00 for one book. I normally pay for them...just to make them to be in that group. Even though they are far behind from the others, they are weak.

W Are they boys or girls?

C ...equal...

W ...because normally people will think that more of girls instead of boys...

C ...but mostly boys are the one that really ...when they feel they have not enough love from the family the boys normally go astray...go out...go on their own. They go out normally with groups that are the same category with them...

W So since your school is just catering for regular children , so don't you send ...give recommendation that these children that you find having this problem be sent to special school?

C They are normal children but when we come to children that are very low IQ, we send them to class permulihan because we have one special teacher taking care of that.

W What normally does class permulihan do?

C To start with the basic education like teaching the very basic because these children normally cannot read in primary six. Guide them with their basic...make them know how to read.

W So have you ever heard that in Sabah itself have this special school to cater for these children, the slow learners or those who have problem?

C What I have heard is the Sekolah Putri Nanas...this school cater for children who are very naughty you know..that have minor criminal life..all that and then they are playing truant.

W But have you ever heard about the special school in Sk Bukit padang?

C I have heard about that one but that one cater for children who are very good, aren't they?

W No, I think you are very confused with the sekolah berasrama penuh. Special education in Sabah has started since 1990.

C Oh...that mean I am far behind.

W Well no because maybe you are not aware of it.

C I am not aware, what I know is Bukit Padang is the asrama penuh.

W No...so what you can do now if you have identified any children in your school who have this problem as you said slow learners ok they cannot read...then what you advice the parents to do is to go and see this speacial education officer in bahagian sekolah. His name is En. Ghazali. So that he will give you a form to fill whereby..this parent has to bring the child to be checked by doctors..to be registered with the welfare dept and then will be assessed by the education dept and placement will be given like he or she is ellegible to be placed in Bukit Padang. There is a special school.

C That is very good.

W IE has been introduced all over the country, in Malaysia and other part of the world. So can you tell me what IE means to you? Or have you ever heard of the word IE?

C This is very new to me actually. That is what I was asking encik Lazarus....I said do you know about this IE. I think this is then new to me. But inclusive to my understanding is a it is a special school whereby you get the new facillities, is it? like for example, teaching aids...they are provided with teaching aid, isn't it? Are we provide with teaching aids all that?

W Well..definitely.

C From the gov't. For example the gov't schools, they are all given various special facilities. For example, the sports. If you ask this, they will give you whereas the aided schools we have to look for...they will provide but not as much as the gov't schools. And that I feel is IE.

W Your understanding of IE as such what you explained just now. But prior to this, have you ever heard of it?

C No.

W So to speak even the policy of IE, have you ever seen it before?

C No.

W Have you ever seen the document on the policy of falsafah pendidikan negara?

C well you know....I think I am very far behind...

W So all these are very new to you...

C Very new to me....that is why it is a privilege for me to have such a conversation with you. To find out also from you.

W As I explained just now..special education has been there but it becomes under the ministry as of the day 1990 you know. But then it has been there but it was only like the school for the deaf, the school for blind has been on its own. But recently in 1990 they have this school .a program for children with special needs. Children having a what they call bermasalah pembelajaran ...having learning problems. That is where in SK Bukit Padang they started the program. Initially they started with 10 children, now the recent enrolment is 48. Special education system is such that five students per teacher. If you teach special school you will also get incentive, additional of \$60.00. Since you have not heard about special education, that is basically what is all about. So as I have told you that you have any students here that you feel need this kind of services then you just have to contact En.Ghazali. He is the supervisor of special education in Sabah.

C These 48 children they have started there, what age do the range from?

W We take children as of age of six. Do you know that there is a special integration class in SMK Bahang?

C No.

W They started last year. They are form one now. There are fourteen of them.

C What difference does it between this integration class and the one in Chinese school?

W ....Bridge class...no..no it is different. These children are special children those slow learners. But because of their ages they are already above 12 years old ok so now they are put in the secondary school. So they have a special class in SMK Bahang. They are partially integrated that means to say in music, or in lukisan or PJ. Something that they don't require any mental process. When it come to mental process then we have to be some kind like tutored by special teachers.

C That is very good. The gov't is really putting their effort for this type of children.

W Since the new minister of education took over Datuk Najib, they have even started the rang undang-undang pendidikan .... this is a new concept of pendidikan.....education law of 1995...so one of the factors that they stress on is that in this ....pendidikan khas akan diberi perhatian yang lebih dengan adanya peruntukan yang cukup bagi pendidikan tersebut....so the gov't is really putting a stress on this. So it is already in the law..pendidikan law 1995. This is part of the some of the policies that they have already formulated. And in the special education this is what they have ok...section 41,

...membolehkan menteri mengadakan pendidikan khas di sekolah khas atau di mana mana sahaja sekolah rendah atau menengah....so this one formally, they do take care of this children but not 100% but now is 100% whereby.....

C ....under their hands....They will look into that and it is very good that the minister of education is very.....

W The ministry is really...now ...that is why formally special education is only part of a unit in the bahagian sekolah in the kementerian. Now it is a jabatan. Now like in Sabah special education is under the pengurusan sekolah....the sektor...and they have a penolong pengarah but the supervisor showed me..you see no penolong pengarah yet...ah...mau tunggu puan Winny lah ini he said. I said bukan saya duduk di sana....I was just teasing him...so this is what it is all about lah. Well Catherine, you are not very aware of the existing of special education and also it is hard for you to talk about what is IE. ...

C It is very new to me...

W So to speak ..should there be a ...you are a trained teacher?...

C Ya...

W You are trained teacher as a ...

C ...trained teacher on all subjects...general...

W You are a trained teacher...

C ....27 years ago....

W You must be a very experience teacher...

C ...which should be retired already....

W If you are given the opportunity to attend any training or attend some kind of workshop on special education , would you like to ....

C ....to take the challenge?...

W Yah...

C Well, in what way, is it full time kursus??

W Normally they run a short term courses...

C ...to attend this special....I think puan Winny for me I am not that....I don't want to reject this opportunity but it would be better if the younger teachers should be given ....(laugh....)

W Why are you so biased? In education Catherine there is no limitation.....

C I don't mind attending.... maybe next time when I retire I am still...

W ..maybe after you have retired you can even start a program on this to help out this children you know. If you have been exposed to this you may find it...wow....what a waste that I was not exposed to this much earlier.....

C ...that's right. Even the music, I feel regretted..I did not really take it up. I like now I can feel ...the children reaction when you sing with them during this instant. ....

W What would you like to learn from...if should you attend the course or the training on IE?

C .On which part?

W What would you like to learn from it? What would you want to learn....

C ...from attending this..I am very interested in learning the ...how to impart our knowledge to them like reading for example...if this child...if the children are too low IQ...how...in what way can we ...what is the best method that we can teach them?....

W So you would like to learn about that....

C I feel very sorry for the children that really can't read then no matter how you ask them you know..to get... by heart the abc... it is so hard for them to by heart ...no matter how many times you ask them to read . When you asked..they have forgotten already. I don't know what type of child. ....very low IQ...abc...abc...then you ask..

W Do you have these children here?

C We have a few..every year we have a few.

W So should you come across to this child, don't forget to contact ...

C ...even last year in my class...primary six I have one...very very low IQ...

W ...because as I have told you they have integrated 2 children in Bukit Padang..primary five..instead of them getting last, they are even doing better than the average one....they can read..infact last Saturday they have a farewell party for one teacher who opted for earlier retirement..but one of the students representing the special children you know, before that he was an autistic child..he can't read, he can't ....believe me Catherine I was extremely amazed that he could read just like the regular children.

C Ya ..How did the teacher teach?

W Well, so that is what I am saying that this thing really work...

C ...that method...

W Now the boy, he could read well. He could just read. I am sure the normal kid...regular kid will not be able to read as that child ..I was so impressed.

C If I be able to handle 5 children that could not read and make them read, I feel very happy and I feel the satisfactory...

W So probably one of the factor that cause you not to achieve what you expect of the children is the number of the children .

C That is right.

W How many children you have?

C We have 50 in the class. You cannot pay full attention to one or two children..

W ..special class is five students per teacher...but this child has intervened...early intervention so now he is ready for integration.

C How old is this boy?

W What is the age of primary five? ...11...

C ....11...so he is 11...Now he would be able to be in normal class..

W He is there..that is IE. That means IE means to say that every child has the right to study with normal children.

C Oh..I see....that is IE...

W Do you think that this IE that the gov't has implemented is a good idea?

C That is very good. You have already proven that it works you know. Why not...have such a class but then if the education have the financial means of giving the chance to all the schools to have one class or one special teacher to look into that ..that would be very nice.

W So hopefully this study that I am doing will bring some kind of recommendation to the ministry that it will not only be confined to selective schools but if possible try to put in every school..primary schools.

C In every school ...grade A schools especially whereby we have an enrolment of 1000 surely there are about five or even ten children of this kind we will find in the school. And then if we have ten children this kind it would be nice if the gov't ...education can provide one special teacher to look into this one. Not only class permulihan teacher..this special teacher...trained especially to look into this.

W So Catherine is there anything else you would like to say about IE?

C And that is very ....I wonder who initiated this one I really praise her...person who initiated this sort of idea..method...really had taken that research of how to look into this special children. So I congratulate that person. Who started this IE?

W Well in the ministry they have started quite sometime. It is in the ministry but only that it has to ...what I said that..when you are in the upper hand they always be changing guards..so when you start changing guards they next person may not be sensitive to the needs of this special schools or they may not have the knowledge about it..you see. That is the problem. So in my case, my role is such if I can get the information about this and to see how the need is required throughout the country os that may help in promoting this special school and IE in the country. Otherwise if we don't find out what are the strengths or weaknesses of this program, we may be just like wasting fund...investment..which may have channel to something else you see. But as for me because I am a strong advocate of this,so I believe that this is the program that we should try to promote ..to look into because it really cn help the children.

C You are giving the unfortunate children of this sort...

W We believe in education for all anyway...so there is no restriction whether you are physically handicapped, emotionally handicapped or mentally handicapped.

C What about the blind that was ...became a lawyer...

W He is physically handicapped but her mental is in good process. If no one saw this, the person may never had been a lawyer.

C Ya...never been given the opportunity to be a lawyer...

W Well thank you Catherine for allowing me to interview you. I hope you have gained some insights about what IE is all about and also in special education.

## APPENDIX S(iii)

### SAMPLE: TEACHER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION (PILOT SCHOOL SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER)

- W Do you have any question? Maybe before we start you may have some question for me.
- C I don't think so I have any question. I answer whatever you ...what you talk about puan winny.
- W Would you tell me about this school, and what is your teaching role within this school?
- C Actually I came here the third year when this school is quite new. I think it is about let me see, 8 years old. So formerly I was teaching in another school right in kampadan. I taught there for 19 years and asked for a transfer over here. When I came here, I was put into normal classes. I taught year six English. So last year, 1994, I applied to this class khas. So I managed to get a place here lah. So I have only taught for one and half years in the kelas khas....special education.
- W So have long have you been teaching in your teaching career?
- C About 28 years..
- W ...quite so sometime ago. So I am sure you have so many experiences with regards to teaching and how to deal with children. All the while you were teaching in primary school?
- C ...primary school ...yes.
- W ...so just only about a year + you were transferred in this school. So now that you are in this school, so what is your role?
- C Actually I was just a normal kelas khas teacher but when the penyelaras of kkbp, she was transferred Yakob Latip, so I was appointed by the head to take over her post as a penyelaras kkbp.
- W So now you are the penyelaras, so what is your role as a penyelaras?
- C My role as a penyelaras, I have to look...deal with the parents, with the teachers and the jadual waktu of the teachers then I have to look after the welfare of the children...kelas khaslah. And of the parents kan, and then I have to do the time table for the teachers.
- W So do you get the cooperation from the teachers?
- C ...my admin...
- W ...no your khas....
- C ...yes...
- W ...how about the administration?
- C ...they do give a full cooperation to us.
- W How about the regular teachers who are teaching the children that you put them into inclusive?
- C They are cooperating also because we do sometime bring these inclusive children down and then we ask them how they are doing in the classes and so on. There is cooperation between kelas khas teachers and the inclusive teachers.

W Before you came over here, when you were in the regular school, have you had experience teaching children who are special or having problem in their learning in the normal class?

C Yes. We have this what you call that permulihan group whereby we have to ...the work that we give them is a bit lower than the average...I mean those with higher you know...more intelligent pupils.

W So how do you plan your lesson when you teach these different groups or level of performance that children have in your class?

C ...you mean that permulihan...

W ...now you have grouped them right? So how do you organize your lesson with them?

C Lets say we have two groups right. One is pengkayaan and the other is permulihan. So when we deal with the permulihan then the pengkayaan will have different sets of work to do lah. So once we finished with the permulihan, then we give them another sets of worksheet, and when they start doing their written work, we come to these set of children lah.

W So now in your class, there are ...how many groups of children?

C ...normally we put them two groups..

W ...two groups. One is the more advance and the other one is slow. SO how do they children who are slow feel to be among the children smarter?

C Well, I feel that they can integrate with the children. But sometime I do that, those who are in the A group, we call them A group, so these children when they have finished their work, normally they will come and help these B group children. So it is peer...

W ...peer tutoring...

C ....yes, peer tutoring. That is what I encourage them to do lah..

W So how is the result? Is it very effective?

C Yes. I find it very effective. Because these group children, this is the permulihan children. You know when their friends teach them, not to teach them just to guide them. They follow.

W So apart from this experience that you have in your former school, do you have any other experience beside that where you deal with slow learners?

C Actually in every class, there are slow learners....every class.

W ...only that they were not being labelled.

C ...that is right.

W So I am sure you have heard about this IE. Because in our country we have already implemented it but just on the pilot basis and in other western countries, it is being practiced. So do you ...puan chong, what do you understand by IE?

C From what I have read up from this handouts, I find that this IE mixed these children you know..like these normal children, they get to mix around with these inclusive children. So that ..you know, don't look down on them. Because some of these normal children, when they come to this class khas, they are so scared you see. Because they thought that these children are mentally retarded and so on..and so on. So when we put these inclusive children into these normal classes, so they get to know



that these inclusive children kelas khas children are also what shall I say?...a level with them you see. They are also children like them. The only thing is that they are slow in their studies.

W Just now I recalled you mention about normal children, to you what does that mean when you say normal children?

C ...well, that means that they are above average.

W So how do you compare them that the normal children and these children with special needs?

C ...in what way ...

W ...you see you have normal children and of course we have special children right, PK children. So how do you compare between these two, what is the difference or similarity between the two group of people?

C ...the difference is only that they are slow. Kelas khas children are slow. They are slow, whereas the normal classes, they are a bit. above average. They can catch up with lessons well.

W So now that we have introduced IE, So how is it compared with the existing special education classes? Now we have existing special education classes...kelas khas..and now we have also introduced IE program. How do you compare between these two programs?

C ...this IE and kelas khas...

W Yes...

C ...every year you make a survey of these class khas children. We asked the class teachers...let say the tahap of pengajaran. Whether the child can be included in the IE you see. Lets say maybe the child is developmental age year six but his mental age is year one, but he can still follow ..he is good in BM and maths and he can socialize with other children, and then we encourage them to be in the IE.

W So in your group puan chong, what is the purposed for the gov't to implement IE?

C Oh...they want the normal children to feel that these kelas khas children are also human beings. What I mean is they are like them.. it is only that they are slow...that's all. So that they can get to socialize with each other ,help each other.

W So now that you have...how many children are being put into IE class?

C ...14.

W ...14 children. So being the penyelaras, how do you see the children ...these special children who are now in this class learn with the normal children? Are they able to catch up, to be able to cope with ..learning with the normal children?

C ...yes. They are able to cope. because we do get feedback from the normal class teachers. So we ask them whether these children can cope or not...they say..yes..

W So can you tell me how your process of putting these children into the IE?

C ...how do we select them?

W ..ya. you have 14 right...how do you select them? what is the process you take whereby they are put into the IE class?

C actually I am not very clear about IE yet. So I hope to get more information and then I will be able to answer your questions well.

W So right now you don't know how the process of selecting the children to be placed in the inclusive class?

C ...selecting yes. we...

W How do you do that?

C ...we ...as I said just now, we need to ask the class teachers who are the pupils they think can be put into IE. And from there, then we assess the child to see whether she is mentally...her mental age is suitable for which year..year one or year 2, or 3.

W In the process of putting these children in the IE, what are you basing on? Are you basing on their age appropriateness or chronological age or are you placing them based on their mental age?

C ...mental age.

W So why do you choose to have mental age as the yardstick to measure their placement in the class?

C Lets say their developmental age is year 6, if we put this child in year six, then definitely won't be able to catch up the lessons in the class. Because his mental age is year 1 mental age.

W Based on western ...from the literature that I read, there are some countries, they use their developmental age to place the child in IE because they believe it is more of the social aspect that they need to focus rather than their academic achievement. So do you think that this such of approach is relevant to our children in Malaysia?

C If we put them according to their developmental age then when they cannot catch up with the lessons, they may feel inferior. But of course if we put a year six child, according to his mental age in year one, he will feel out of place in the year one class. Because the children are so small in size and he is already grown up.

W So how would we solve this problem of year six child placed in the year one, and all this....How would we deal with this?Are you referring to year six of the normal child?

C ....no..no . of class khas.

W ...so do you think she will feel inferior to be in year one?

C ...sometimes they do. There is one boy. We put ...the ex-penyelaras, cikgu siti, cikgu siti put him in year one class. His developmental age is year six. So because he feels inferior there, he refuses to continue with the classes. So cikgu siti, brought him back to kelas khas.

W ...so rather he doesn't attend the class.

C ...yes. otherwise he will come back to kelas khas. he refuses to go to year one class.

W Are these children placed in the iE as a full time or part-time?

C ....full time.

W ...oh full time..they follow all the classes that is being taught in the class...

C ...that is right. All the lessons in that class. It is full time. We had this integrasi separuh masa...maybe bring them back every now and then. But now we are doing inclusive which is a full time inclusive.

W .....now it is a full time. So there are 14 from this school of different classes.

C .....that is right...of different classes.

W ...any children in the same class..I mean more than one or only one one each?

C ...one one each.

W ...oh one one each. That is nice to hear. At least this is the second school that I came to whereby they are practicing full time inclusive.

C ...actually this is a pioneer school.

W Initially it was just integration, wasn't it?

C ...integration....

W ....so now it is a full inclusive. You can tell me also...how are the children now they are being integrated in the inclusive class with the other normal children? How are they learning with them? Are they able to cope?

C ....they can. But according to the mental agelah.

W ...yes. Are they able to cope?

C ..they are able to cope.

W ...and they can also function the way...I mean do the work as the other children.

C Yes.

W Do they integrate very easily among each other, those normal children and the special children?

C As far as I have seen..yes they are integrating quite normally with them.

W So how does the regular teachers feel about this where there is a special child in their class. Are they happy about it or are they not happy about it?

C So far I have not heard any complains. They manage to handle the children well lah.

W ...they manage to. Apart from that one boy all these other children are able to be in...when they are supposed to be year six and now they are in year one?

C ....only that one boy cannot accept..

W ....only that particular boy. Well probably he was not really that we call have some mental problems...that is why he understands.

C He is quite a tall boy. So he finds that you know...because of his size.

W Is there anything else you could tell about your experience in IE, apart from what you have read or what you have experience now that you are the penyelaras of this program?

C ...experience....

W ...experience whether you find it..do you find it taxing , taking so much of your time, whereby you don't get cooperation from teachers, from the special teachers or regular teachers, or the children having all these problems. So what is your experience to that?

C I think there are no problems., no complains, and all the teachers are cooperative. The normal class teachers, they accept the children. Although , it is sort of a burden to them but they still accept the child in their class lah.

W So as the penyelaras, how do you contribute to the organization of the teaching of the classroom. Do you discuss it with the regular teachers first? Do you...whereby how do they go about in teaching the children in the IE?

C ...in the IE? Actually I won't be able to answer that question because I was..I had not experience yet of putting these children into inclusive. Because cikgu Siti has been doing it. I have just took over a month ago only as the penyelarass.

W Ok. I am sure...now we are going back about the gov't policy. And just like our normal education system we do have a philosophy of education. So in special education we do have too. Have you seen or read that philosophy of special education?

C I may have read it and then I am not able to recall.

W ...but have you seen or read by chance?

C Yes.

W So have you seen anything coming from the gov't with regard to the policy of implementing IE?

C ....what the objectives of implementing IE...

W Ya..I mean just like the FPN you have, and falasafah PK, now we are implementing IE right, have you seen or read anything of gov't policy with regard to the implementation of IE?

C ...gov't policy? I don't know.

W ...you don't know. So now that the IE is in our school. So how do you know that it was coming from the gov't?

C ...how do we know?...

W ..ya. Since you have not seen something coming from the gov't to say ..ok we are starting IE in the school? So you are thinking of it as a just some kind of instruction from the top, isn't it?

C ...that is right.

W ....so we are just implementing...

C...implementing what we are instructed to do.

W ...so you know that the gov't required the school to implement IE in the school. and we are just to follow the instruction and to implement it. So you have not really seen or read the actual document that says that we have to introduce IE in the school?

C Yes ...not yet.

W I believe puan chong you are a trained teacher.

C I am.

W .....regular teacher?

C ...I am trained already. Normal classes.

W Have you ever been involved in any training or courses that is related to IE?

C No, I haven't.

W Should you be offered to attend course on IE, what would you like to learn from the course?

C Of course I would like to know how to go about in detail how do we go about selecting children, why do we place in IE and so on lah. In more detail, I mean.

W Would you accept the offer at any time in your teaching career or you have a specific time that where you can only go for the course?

C I don't mind. Any time.

W If they choose to have it during the holiday, you don't mind attending?

C I don't mind. As long as I can know more about what is IE.

W Since your school is practicing IE, so do you think that it is a good idea that the gov't has implemented IE in the school system?

C Well, I find that it is good..

W ..in what way?

C ...in that sense that in the way that this children..if they are put in the kelas khas, if they are not in the inclusive, they are better than the kelas khas pupils. They may not be able..what shall I say...mentally they are not able to follow the lessons of the normal classes. Otherwise, they will be following the lessons with the kelas khas children..very slow.

W Before we end our interview, is there anything that you would like to say more about IE? Maybe something you would like the gov't to do in order to have a successful and effective IE program.

C Well, since I don't know much about IE yet, so I won't be able to give my views.

W Thank you puan chong.

## APPENDIX T

## SAMPLE: PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTION

- W Do you have any question before we start?
- S No, we can go on.
- W Would you like to tell me about this school?
- S Actually this school has been started in 1965 at the former place which is about 800 m from this site, present site, it was a wooden block. It was only started in this place in 1988. It was declared opened by the Deputy Prime minister of Malaysia, Datuk Sri Anuar Ibrahim. And as years go by the school of course it became bigger and bigger in size and now we have 900+ children plus the pre school class. And then about the ethnic groups going to this school, 51% are Malays, 45% dayaks, and the rest can be Chinese, Javanese and so on. The majority of our students, here are Malays followed by the dayaks, the Chinese. And then about the teachers I think everyone of them is a bumi, unfortunately we have very few...none of them are specialised in the teaching of mathematics. We have got two teachers specialised in teaching of English, the rest pengajian bahasa melayu. So from there you can see what type of teachers and what type of output we have every year after the end of year six.
- W How many teachers do you have in the school?
- S There are 37 teachers.
- W Are the children being placed in the class according to their abilities or are they streamed?
- S Mix..we have mixed abilities.
- W So what are your aims for this school?
- S As far as I am concerned I want the school to be one of the best in this area, not in the state. Of course you need to be the best in this area first in term of academic achievement as well as co-curricula achievement. That means in co-curriculum we so far been able to lead in other schools in this area. ..two successful years we have been leading. Academically we are still trying our best to improve the present standard which is quite low especially in English and mathematics but BM no problem. English and mathematics we still have hard time to improve. So we have embarked on an interesting program to improve the standard achievement of our students. The result is yet to be seen in the near future. I don't think we are able to see it this year maybe next year.
- W So what is your strategy because you said you don't have maths teachers?
- S Currently we try to have in house training by inviting some mathematics specialists from the dept, teachers from other schools, and guru pakar and we have workshop and apart from that we have exchanged of papers between schools. Sometime I got papers from semenanjung.

S ...because they feel malu..ashamed of sending their children to school. They are more prepared to let their children stay at home without getting any education rather than sending them to school letting people see...

W Do you think that it is just basically ashamed or some kind of other thing that contributed to the ashamed?

S I think it is more of their attitude, the way of thinking, the way looking at their children. There are such society at large...just look at children as such and of taboo no...but they accept the students and so do the teachers especially the 3 teachers. They work on any of these children...mentally retarded..they are willing to help. One daughter of our pemimpin masyarakat has been with us for one week and withdrew...

W Why was that?

S I don't know. According to him this is not a school for my daughter...so he transferred his daughter to another school next door,SRK Gitak and the headmaster found it difficult to deal with his daughter because she is the only one with such a problem...eh...the daughter should be here!

W Why do you think he withdrew his daughter from this school?

S I think he is thinking that his daughter is capable to be in regular class without knowing she has learning and socializing problem because the early part of the year the special class needs to be taken care of. That gentleman when he saw this he was scared himself without even asking me why?..for having such a manner.

W Have you organized any kind of forum or seminar for the parents?

S We are going to organize a session..forum..I think sometime in August or early September this year mainly for IE. We intend to invite parents who have such children to attend the forum so that everybody is well informed of what is happening in my school. I don't want any parents to come over to the school being scared at first sight. Because they do not know what actually is going on in the classroom. This is happening to that gentleman....was scared like what ...and apart from that one politician also do send his daughter and the same thing happened. It is not that he is scared but his daughter needs more individual attention from our teachers. I suggest if that is the case he might as well get a teacher to come over to his place. He has got a teacher for his daughter after he can afford it.

W So far En.Sapawi do you have received some kind of complain from the parents of regular children for having special children in regular class?

S No...so far. I received none. Maybe they find it interesting you know to look at these children down there.But quite a number do understand. Unfortunately I see the location of the classroom down the hill.

W Why do you isolate them from the regular class?

S Very interesting and very discouraging. Some of them when you look at their reactions, some of them look scared you know...some of the young teachers look scared...mind you each and everyone will undergo an in-service -training for this IE in the near future I said. Don't try to avoid. And then I went as far as to say I would want to see hands of those who are interested in IE and to assist pn.Gwen. A few did put up their hands and then I interviewed them and only one was really interested and that was pn.Anna Sibul.

W Why are they afraid to be involved in this?

S They are looking at the unfortunate handicapped children who are down there. They feel that if they are attached to such as a class they may find it a little bit more doing extra work. It is just their attitude and even after having exposed to them what really is IE, a quite number of them are still not possessive...I don't know really. Maybe when the time comes when IE is fully implemented nobody will be able to have the chance avoiding it because they have to. But now if you ask for voluntary service it seems almost none show positive reaction towards that.

W So when you introduce IE in your school, did you organize seminars or training for your regular teachers and special teachers?

S Not seminar in a sense of the word but we did have brief talk, introduction on IE. After having exposed to them of IE, that was the time I could identify Anna Sibul...there were two more but eventually they withdrew saying that "I don't think I can involve with IE yet". That show that they maybe interested in the near future but not now. So but then we are still short of one teacher.I don't know when will I get him/her.

W So at this stage En.Sapawi, Do you think your program is successful?

S So far so good but I am not sure whether I will be successful when the number of students increase from what they are now as I said the main problem now is to get a teacher. There were a few teachers being sent for one year course to Cheras, but when I made a request nobody came. Maybe the dept. was looking at the teachers quota in my school now according to them we are over staff by 2 teachers. There were some excess trained teachers last year but I was not aware of that so I accepted those extra teachers.So when I intended to look for another teacher to help pn.Gwendoline and then they said, " You have more than enough teachers." So here I am here stuck.

W So En.Sapawi what changes would you make in the next future for this program?

S First of all, I would like to get more children involve as well as more teachers involve by sending them to this one year IE and apart from that I try to explain to parents what actually is happening here...some parents are not really to send their children to in this class...

W Why is that?



W Can you tell me the special needs children in your school? How old are they, their abilities...?

S We have 19 of them. We have two Mongoloid children, both of them are girls...not a serious one but some characteristics of Mongoloid, and age ranging from 9-13 years old. So far they are under the care of Puan Gwendoline and I think she has been successful bringing them up academically through a lot of patience and endurance all this sort of qualities she has. And I think we are able to promote 7 of them to the mainstream.

W So that mean to say that your school is practicing IE..

S Yes...yes...

W Is it a full time or partial?

S Partial in a sense that they are withdrawn from the class and then when it is time for them to go to the mainstream they will be sent to the mainstream to start with. But now when they have already learnt some basic skills they are put in the mainstream as any normal children but the teachers concerned need to pay a visit to them every now and again...say everyday must visit the classes concerned.

W Will she be with the children during the class?

S Yes. The purpose is to give a moral support to the teachers in the classroom and as well as to help them to build up their confidence being together with the mainstream children. So the module we have is not like the one we have discussed in Langkawi. We have the a,b,c isn't it? But then we are going through with these three modules. We are practicing the withdrawal module.

W It is not as what we have discussed that we put a child full time in regular class. So why didn't you choose to adopt the module?

S It was a bit difficult because the children are not yet able to manage themselves and furthermore the learning skill is not there yet. So after having discussion with pn. Gwendoline we arrived at trying to have our own module that is having the withdrawal approach and the dept. does agree with such an approach. Since then we have been implementing this approach.

W So like in the future plan would you be thinking of integrating these children as a full time in IE?

S Yes. Now having succeeded in that approach we try to go back to the approach that we have discussed at Langkawi. Because this is just a preliminary approach. I think now we are back to full time except the teachers at least have to pay a visit to the various classes. If upon visiting she finds the children having problems she might take the children away from the classroom and back to the

special class. It is some kind of much care is given. I really appreciate of what she has been doing all this while.

W So to speak she is a very dedicated teacher...

S Yes she is. If every teacher is like her I think it is a good start of IE in this school.

W So how do these special children relate to the regular children?

S It is ok. I mean they are doing very well except one thing we are short of equipment unlike the one I found in a school in Kota Kinabalu, SK Bukit Padang. I visited the school and I was impressed. When I came back I thought of asking some items but it is not there. We are given \$50,000/- I don't know but let us not talk about it.

W So I am sure you were involved in the process of implementing IE in your school? Maybe you can tell me how did you go about..how did it start?

S Actually we have got already 14 kkbp children and out of the 14, pn.Gwendoline selected a few of them the less able are still attached to kkbp and the able ones selected for this IE. So she brought them up until what they are now. Now there are 9 of them. One is a very severe one because the father requested to have her daughter to be with the able one. Otherwise she is with cikgu Amir in the next class. So talking about her, I still see little improvement. As days go by we hope to get everybody promoted to the mainstream by next year. We don't intend to get a big number for this IE children. And then the process of the enrolling these children is just as I said earlier on we are actually taking those kkbp children into our classroom, not selected just merely for IE. In other word we are having two programs, kkbp and IE. But in many cases pn.Gwendoline is taking care of the IE who are earlier on part and parcel of kkbp.

W That mean to say the children from that class are the one being integrated in the normal classroom.

S Yes..we don't have the children send for IE. We have now class 1 and class 2. Class 2 is with pn.Gwendoline and class 1 which is a severe one, which is dealt by pn.Anna and En.Amir. Pn.Gwendoline is alone. She needs another teacher.

W Is it easy to get teachers?

S Not easy because not many teachers are interested. In fact I have tried my best already since last year to recruit young teachers especially. I have been telephoning to various schools but no response. Then I seek help from the dept, Rick. So he told me that he was not successful. So I said if that is the case then pn. Gwendoline has to be alone until next year.

W So what do you think was the problem that the teachers were not interested to be the special teachers?

S That they see in the children is that they are difficult to manage and another factor is they don't want to get involved because these children need a lot of involvement...personal involvement and need to spend a lot of time, a lot of patience...so a lot of young teachers do not have these qualities. Even pn.Gwendoline is elderly teacher...shè is not a young teacher, she is almost 50 now.

W So there must be someone to take over from her then....

S ...except for one male teacher next door...but what I see I do not know if he will be there be there forever because a male teacher does not have much patience. I am afraid he will quit when the time comes.

W Initially what sort of involvement have you got in the process of implementing IE in your school?...you attended seminar or training...

S I never have any training. I was some kind dumped into this school having this program and of course when I find myself involve directly with such a program I begin to create some kind of interest by reading some articles and attend seminar and that was the time I met you in Langkawi. Apart from that I did go to Kuala Trengganu for another seminar of IE and apart from that I think we did also meet in KK. I do not know if you were still there or not? Three times I attended seminars and resulted in creating interest.

W So did you learn anything from the seminars?

S Yes of course..very useful indeed and that encourages me to pertuate some young teachers to get involve and eventually I get one teacher, Anna and I advice her to apply for a year course but so far no result...I don't know why.

W How do you feel about the involvement of your school in this IE?

S First and foremost I feel very proud of it but nobody knew in Sarawak that my school is a pilot school .

W How come that nobody knows about it?

S ..you knew it already....

W I knew it from the ministry that is why when I chose this school, they were asking me..."why do you want to go to that school when it is so far away?"...but I said, "This is the school that is practicing IE and that is my interest. If I go to the nearby school I won't be getting what I want you see."

S I think we discuss about the structure of the school...but so far no result yet. However, it is very interesting.

W I am sure when you started to implement IE in your school, it has to involve the teachers, how did they react to that especially the regular teachers?

S It was my predecessor who made such a decision and when I came over I was not very happy. Now I am thinking of putting up wall down here to bring them up so that they can be with the rest of the society.

W What is IE means to you?

S To be fair to who is born to this world because every child is educable in their own right of course you cannot expect too much from these children to compete with the normal children but we must prepare them for the future and give them some level of education so that they can enjoy their lives in the mainstream so that they can appreciate their lives so that at least they can hold the magazines or newspapers right before their eyes. I think this is excellent so in view of that I really support the move made by the kemeterian to start this IE. While living in this world is quite enjoyable.

W Well, I agree with you for that...so before we end do you have anything to add?

S I think I would like to see this IE be implemented soon at phase by phase ..not too sudden because we cannot afford it...it is expensive but at least we implement it by phase by phase. So maybe this year we have 3 schools involved in IE and maybe another 3....after 10 years or so we get every school is involved in IE. That is my expectation of the future.

W Thank you