Exploring Teachers’ and Parents’ Perceptions on Social Inclusion Practices in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This article outlines the findings from a contemporary study on the development of social inclusion practices in primary and secondary schools in Malaysia. Recent inclusive education policy in Malaysia has increased schools’ accountability for the inclusion of students with SEN into mainstream schools. This article draws on recent empirical evidence related to social interaction development among students with special educational needs and their typically developing peers thus providing an insight into Malaysia’s efforts in developing an inclusive education system. The research findings will provide contemporary information on the social interaction development among SEN and mainstream pupils, as perceived by teachers and parents in the country. The article also highlights what is required to enhance the social interaction development of students with SEN and their more abled peers.

Keywords: Inclusive education, social inclusion, social interaction

INTRODUCTION

Developed and developing nations are progressing at different rates in their implementation of inclusive education (Toran et al., 2016; Schwab et al., 2015; Schwab et al., 2013; Helldin et al., 2011; Lee, 2010). Inclusion for students with special needs into the mainstream classroom has become an international agenda since the 1990s (UNESCO, 1994; 1999; Smeets, 2007; Yeo & Teng, 2015).

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