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## INVESTIGATION OF PRESCHOOL THE APPROACHES OF TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSION, INCLUSION COMPETENCIES AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS

*Research article*

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# INVESTIGATION OF PRESCHOOL THE APPROACHES OF TEACHERS TOWARDS INCLUSION, INCLUSION COMPETENCIES AND CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT SKILLS

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## Abstract

The aim of the study is to analyse the link between the approaches of preschool teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies as well as classroom management skills. The study is characterized by a correlational model. It was conducted with preschool teachers working in public schools selected by a simple random method in Malatya Province. 453 teachers participated in the study. Data were collected with the Attitudes towards Inclusion Scale, the Teacher Inclusion Competencies Scale and the Classroom Management Competence Scale. The collected data were evaluated with arithmetic average, Correlation Analysis and Structural Equation Modelling. At the end of the study, the approaches of preschool teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management skills were found to be “*Generally High*”. The relationship between these variables were positive and medium. It was concluded the approaches of preschool teachers towards inclusion predicted their inclusion and classroom management competencies in a positive and significant way.

*Keywords:* Inclusion competency, attitude towards inclusion, preschool, classroom management.

## 1. Introduction

With the expansion of education all over the world, an approach to popularise education to all individuals in a way that no one is left behind has been adopted. In this spirit, significant progress has been made in terms of teacher, school, equipment and programme needs. However, one of the biggest challenges in popularisation of the education to all individuals is the disabled individuals. In this matter, various approaches at different times have been discussed all over the world. Previously, the disabled individuals were receiving education in private schools with the individuals with the same disabilities (Antebi, 2005). Afterwards, an approach has emerged to give education to those without severe special needs together with their peers with normal development, taking into account their social and psychological development (Sucuoğlu, 2004). Considering that one of the general aims of education is to prepare individuals for life, it will be easier to understand that the whole world considers inclusive education indispensable.

The most important way for disabled individuals to live as autonomous and self-efficient individuals in all areas of society depends on the adequacy of their social development (Çıkılı,

Karaca, 2019). This adequacy depends on the socialisation of disabled individuals by receiving inclusive education in the same atmosphere with their peers (Kıcaali İftar, 1998). Given the emergence of inclusive education as an indispensable value in the education of disabled individuals almost everywhere around the world, some new issues have come to the agenda. Some of these issues are: What preparations should be made for disabled individuals to be among individuals showing normal development? How should the individuals showing normal development adapt themselves for the disabled individuals who will join their class? How should the disabled individuals receive education in regular classrooms? Which programme should be used? How should the teachers of individuals showing normal development be prepared for the disabled individuals who will join their class? How are the approaches of teachers towards inclusive education? Are teachers capable of giving education to the disabled individuals along with the individuals showing normal development? What is their level of competence in this regard? What is the level of their ability to manage the changing classroom balance with the newly joined individual with special needs? These and hundreds of other questions and problems have arisen with inclusive education.

One of the first conditions to prepare a healthy educational environment is an effective classroom management. It is clear that the education in environments with inadequate classroom management cannot be effective and sufficient. Especially in inclusive classrooms, classroom management is slightly different than in classrooms with only individuals showing normal development. Because of this difference or difficulty, teachers may have different attitudes towards inclusive education. There are multiple studies to prove that the self-efficiency on a matter affects the attitude towards that matter (Kılıç, 2022; Özgenel, Deniz, 2020; Tekin, 2019). With this research, it is aimed to determine the relationship between preschool teachers' inclusion competencies and their inclusion attitudes, and the relationship between these two variables and classroom management skills. Before the study, it was evaluated that inclusion competence would positively affect the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and these two conditions would positively affect teachers' classroom management. The real equivalent in the field of this study, of which is assumed to be the main purpose, to be determined.

It is highly important for the disabled individuals to receive education in terms of the popularisation of education to all individuals in society in a way that no one is left behind (Karaca, 2018). The education of disabled individuals with their peers showing normal development in regular classes via the inclusion method is essential. The teachers' attitudes, self-efficacies towards the inclusion and the management of inclusive classrooms are regarded as crucial in the way of success of the inclusive education. Thus, this study is highly important for researchers in terms of preschool teachers' levels of these variables, the relationship between themselves and the potential prediction of each other variable. A brief review of the place of these variables in the literature also indicates the importance of the study.

### **1.1. Attitude towards Inclusion**

The attitudes teachers show to the inclusion students and inclusive education are important (Brophy, Good and Nedler, 1979). An attitude can be described as the way of feeling and behaviour that a person shows in the face of a situation, event, or phenomenon (İnceoğlu, 2010). When considered in the context of attitude towards inclusion, it is the teacher's feelings and behaviours towards the education of students with special needs in regular classrooms. A large number of teachers show negative attitudes towards inclusion because of the lack of knowledge and incompetency to provide this service (Diken, 1998; Familia-Garcia, 2001; Gözün, Yıkmış, 2004). According to a study conducted with teachers who had inclusion students in their class, 66% of them stated that they did not want inclusion students. In the same study, the majority of teachers

also indicated that the education they received at university and in-service training after the university was insufficient (Metin, 2018; Ünal and İflazoğlu Saban, 2014).

The approaches of teachers towards inclusion students are considered to be related to knowing how to behave them, having worked with inclusion students before and having communication skills with disabled individuals and their families. In the literature, it is observed that teachers lack the conditions that will positively affect their attitudes towards inclusive education. According to Metin (2018) Metin, Çakmak-Güleç (1999), Ünal and İflazoğlu Saban (2014), it is noted that the majority of the teachers have not worked with the inclusion students before, thus they do not know their educational necessities and how to identify them. They also do not have enough knowledge on preparing and implementing the IEP (Individualised Education Programme).

Other factors that affect the the approaches of teachers towards inclusion students can be listed as the type of special need seen in the student, the degree of these disabilities, the support services that the teacher can receive at school, and the relationship of students with special needs with other students (Guralnick et al., 2007; Kuzu, 2011; Tunalı et al., 2022). Teachers show much more positive attitudes towards inclusion students that have the special need and its degree they have the knowledge of, while those who do not believe to support them in a positive way show more negative attitudes. Similarly, it can be stated that they have a more positive view of inclusive education when they can receive adequate support services in their schools. However, the most important thing in teachers' developing positive attitudes towards inclusion is considered to have enough competency in inclusive education.

## **1.2. Teachers' Inclusion Competencies**

Competency means that someone is able/has enough knowledge and skill to do something. The self-competencies of preschool teachers towards inclusive education are crucial. It is thought that there would be a difference in the quality of education between the teachers believing in themselves to give an inclusive education and those who do not believe. According to Bandura (1997), having competency in a field is not limited with having knowledge and skill in that field. Even if someone has enough knowledge and skill, the confidence in self-competency is also required for success.

When the teachers' thoughts on their self-competency are examined, they do not consider themselves competent to a great extent (Babaoğlu & Yılmaz, 2010). Considering the fact that the teachers' regarding themselves capable are likely to be more successful than those who do not see themselves that way, teachers' competency and self-competency can be regarded as crucial. It is stated that teachers' self-competency is influenced by their own experiences, what other people around them can do, the narratives of others that they are successful, and teachers' own emotional states (Bandura, 1997). As seen from the studies in the literature, being aware of oneself and one's environment increases self-competency. When the teacher's self-competency on an educational programme is examined, classroom management and cooperation come to the fore.

In the study of preschool teachers' self-competencies towards inclusive education in the literature, education, classroom management along with cooperation are highly important. Sharma, Loreman and Forlin (2011), in their study, examined the teachers' competencies towards inclusion in three dimensions. These dimensions consist of "Teaching Competency, Cooperation Competency and Classroom Management in the Inclusive Education". Given that the inclusive education is a field which requires a different teaching method than normal preschool education, the teacher should have special teaching competence for inclusive education. Cooperation is also crucial since it is a field that the parent of the inclusion student, the school administration and special education teacher need to be in cooperation, thus requiring the teacher to have cooperation competency. Inclusive education teachers should also have a classroom management competency. Classroom management is special in managing the relationship between the inclusion students and students with normal development and helping the inclusion student participate in the class.

## **1.3. Classroom Management Skills**

Classroom management and inclusive education are the fields that are one within the other. Relationship, education, and behaviour management are among the dimensions of classroom management. These variables are also among the inclusive education. Education management in the context of classroom management can be defined as controlling students' behaviours and creating an appropriate learning environment by organising the classroom according to the characteristics of the students and the course (Çelik, 2002). Creating an appropriate learning environment is highly important. Considering the fact that inclusion students will also be in the regular education environment, the importance of creating an appropriate learning environment becomes clearer. Preparing the teaching environment in such a way that the inclusion student can benefit from it at the highest level can be considered in this context. In the instructional management, a dimension of classroom management, teachers should address teaching correct behaviours as well as teaching numbers and literacy (Kameenui & Darch, 1995). Especially teaching correct behaviours instead of wrong ones of the inclusion student to other students and the other way should also be addressed within the scope of education management.

Behaviour management, another dimension of classroom management, is more crucial in classes with an inclusion student. This aims to construct correct behaviours rather than reacting to wrong ones (Emmer and Stough, 2001). A teacher should try to teach correct behaviours and ensure that students behave correctly instead of preventing wrong behaviours. In these cases, it can be an important preventive behaviour management for a teacher to make decisions to implement positive behaviours with students within the scope of classroom rules by predicting the behaviour problems that may arise (Müller, 2010). Inclusion students should be especially preferred in teaching correct behaviours. They may not know which behaviours are expected from them and which behaviours are appropriate in the classroom. In this respect, behaviour management and inclusion education seem to be related to each other.

Physical order management in classroom management should be reconsidered in terms of inclusion students. The classroom should be restructured according to the needs of inclusion students. However, according to the study of Diken and Sucuoğlu (1999), it has been revealed that unfortunately teachers do not make the necessary adaptations for inclusion students in terms of physical layout. The classroom should be arranged in such a way that the inclusion student can easily access each learning centre. Additional materials should be brought to the classroom in line with the needs of the inclusion student or materials that may pose a danger should be removed (Acarlar, 2013). If there is a danger of harm that the inclusion student may cause to others or if there is a possibility of harm that other students may cause to the inclusion student, the teacher may need to keep the inclusion student close to him/her in the classroom and in a safe place. In short, the classroom should be organised to meet both the educational needs of the inclusion student and those of other students (Kale et al., 2016). Again, the classroom should be organised in a way to meet both the safety needs of the inclusion student and other students.

Time management in the class is a very important element of education. When the teacher cannot manage the time, either he/she will not be able to finish his/her lessons, or he/she will go too fast and will have extra free time. Both situations may cause problems in the class environment. Teachers that have inclusion students in their class have serious concerns that they will not be able to complete the lesson. However, it is seen in the studies that effective time management will emerge with the lesson planning adapted according to the characteristics of the inclusion student and other students in the class (Kayhan, 2016). Two important elements emerge in time management. The first is to know the students to be taught in the classroom well (including the inclusive student), and the other is to make a good planning before the lesson.

In this study, the following model will be tested in order to examine teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the relationship between their inclusion competencies and their classroom management skills.

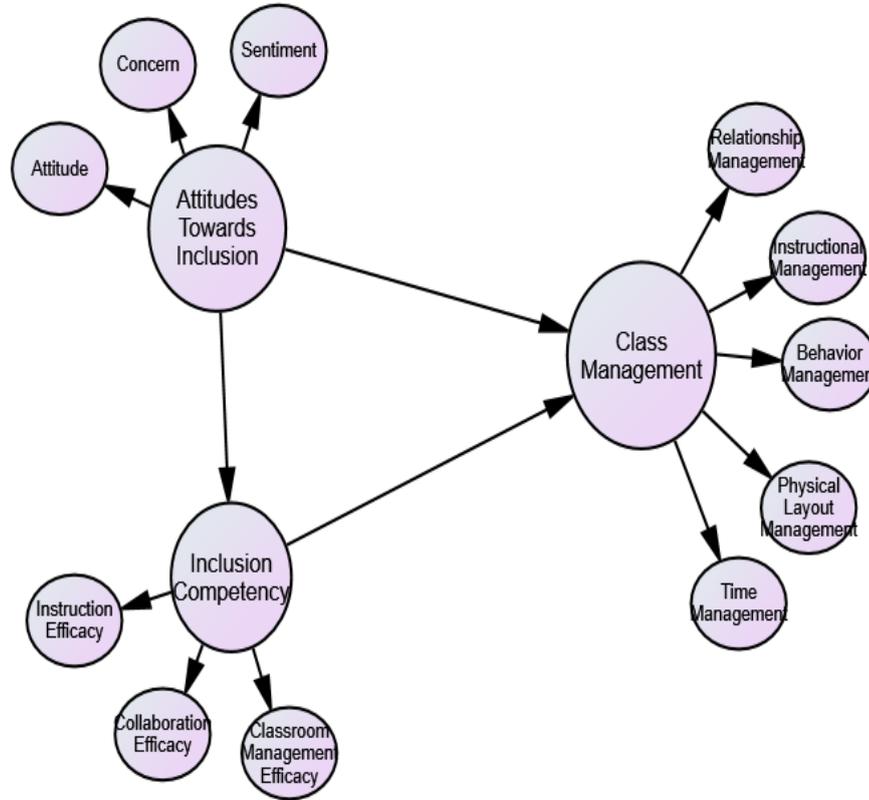


Figure 1: Structural Model to Test

#### 1.4. Problem Statement

What is the relationship between preschool teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, their inclusion competencies and classroom management skills?

##### 1.4.1. Sub Problems

The following sentences were formed regarding the sub-problems that aim to explain the main problem statement in detail. Regarding the inclusive education of preschool teachers;

- What level of inclusion attitudes are in which direction?
- What are the inclusion qualifications?
- What is their level of classroom management skills?
- What is the relationship between their attitudes and competencies towards inclusion and their classroom management skills?

#### 1.5. Aim and Importance

Classroom management competences of teachers who have disabled individuals in their classrooms are more prominent. It seems difficult for a teacher who cannot cope with the uncontrolled behaviours that may occur in the classroom, who cannot plan and implement his/her teaching well, and who cannot plan the physical order and time in the classroom well, to provide a healthy education and training. In this study, firstly, teachers' thoughts, attitudes and concerns about inclusive education, teacher competence in inclusion practices and classroom management competences of teachers will be determined. Then, it is aimed to evaluate the link between the approaches of teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management competencies.

## **2. Method**

### **2.1. Study Model**

This study consists of a correlational design that analyses the relationship between at least two variables. A relationship analysis is conducted on the values of these variables obtained by measuring them with scales. In the relationship analysis, the values obtained as a result of the examination of the variables and the relationship of these values with each other are given without any intervention and change (Büyüköztürk, 2012). The relationship between variables is mostly explained through their change characteristics. In other words, it is analyzed whether their positive or negative changes move together. While one variable increases, the status of the other is analyzed. Does one variable increase while the other increases, or does it decrease, or is there a significant change (Karasar, 2012)? In this study, the relationships between preschool teacher's inclusion competences, attitudes towards inclusion and classroom management competences are examined. A data collection set consisting of scales was created to obtain data in the study. The first part includes demographic information of the participants, and the second part includes scales to determine the approaches of teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management competencies.

### **2.2. Universe and Sample**

Malatya Province was determined as the universe. Teachers working in public preschool institutions in Malatya represent all teachers in the population. The number of teachers working in preschool education in Malatya is 888 (MEB, 2022). Data were collected in December 2022. Since it was not possible to reach all the teachers in the universe due to geographical and seasonal conditions, as many teachers as that could represent the universe were taken as a sample. The fact that all schools in the population were public schools ensured the characteristics of teachers and schools to be generally similar. In addition, the schools being free public schools are expected to ensure that there is no differentiation in terms of the socioeconomic status of students and their families. The students of these schools generally consist of children from families living close to the school. Due to all these general characteristics, it was considered that it would be more appropriate to use the random method to determine which teachers would be included in the sample. Based on the formula for calculating the number of samples for groups with a certain population size, 340 teachers were found to be sufficient for a study to be conducted among preschool teachers in Malatya (Balçı, 2010). However, 453 teachers were reached and sampled in this study.

Table 1 shows the demographic status (seniority, gender, age) of the teachers participating in the research.

**Table 1. Demographic Status of the Sample**

Variables	Sub-dimensions	f	%
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Gender	Male	79	17.34
	Female	374	82.66
Age	20-29 years old	124	27.32
	30-39 years	132	29.13
	40-49 years	122	26.87
	50-59 years old	65	14.45
	60 years and older	10	2.23
Seniority	0-10 years	178	39.27
	11-20 years	157	34.73
	21-30 years	80	17.65
	Over 30 years	38	8.35

### 2.3. Measurement Tools

A form consisting of four separate sections is used in the research. The first part consists of the scales to determine the demographic information of the participants, the second part consists of the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, the third part consists of the scales to determine the teachers' inclusion competencies, and the fourth part consists of the scales to determine the teachers' classroom management competencies. The scale of the approaches of teachers towards inclusion is a four-point Likert scale. Scores between 1.00-1.75 are considered as strongly disagreeing with inclusion education, between 1.76-2.50 as disagreeing with inclusion education, between 2.51-3.25 as agreeing with inclusion education, between 3.25-4.00 as strongly agreeing with inclusion education. The inclusion competencies scale is a six-point Likert type. Scale scores between 1.00-1.83 are considered as strongly disagree, between 1.84-2.67 as disagree, between 2.68-3.49 as partially disagree, between 3.50-4.32 as partially agree, between 4.33- 5.16 as agree, between 5.17-6.00 as strongly agree that I am adequate in inclusive education. The classroom management competence scale is a five-point Likert-type scale. Scores of the scale between 1.00-1.80 are considered as I think I am very inadequate in classroom management, between 1.81-2.60 I think I am inadequate in classroom management, between 2.61-3.40 I think I am at a moderate level in classroom management, between 3.41-4.20 I think I am adequate in classroom management, between 4.21-5.00 I think I am very adequate in classroom management.

*Attitude Towards Inclusion Scale:* Cansız and Cansız (2018) adapted the scale developed by Loreman, Earle, Sharma, and Forlin (2007) to Turkish. The scale consists of three dimensions and 19 items. The scale consists of attitude (8), thought (4) and concern (7) dimensions. The credibility value (Cronbach's Alpha) obtained in the adaptation study of the scale by Cansız ve Cansız (2018) is .88. As a result of the factor analysis performed on the scale, it is seen that the total variance explained by the three factors is 63.4%. In the reliability analysis conducted for this study, the reliability coefficients obtained for the dimensions of attitude, thought and concern towards inclusion and the whole scale were .87, .92, .92 and .89, respectively. As a result of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) performed with the data collected for this study with this scale, it was found to have a good fit ( $\chi^2 = 2.064$ ,  $df = 468$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.41$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $NFI = .92$ ,  $IFI = .96$ ,  $TLI = .97$ ,  $CFI = .96$ ,  $RMSEA = .07$ ).

*Teachers' Inclusion Competencies Scale:* The original scale was developed by Umesh Sharma, Tim Loreman and Chris Forlin (2011). The scale was adapted into Turkish by Bayer (2015). The scale consists of three dimensions and 18 items. The first dimension of the scale is *teaching competence in inclusive education* consisting of six items, the second dimension is *collaboration competence in inclusive education* consisting of six items, and the third dimension is *classroom management competence in inclusive education* consisting of six items. The reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) obtained in the Turkish adaptation of the scale is .89. The total variance explained by the scale, whose three-factor structure emerged as a result of the

analysis, is 57,94. In the reliability analysis made for this study, the reliability coefficients obtained for the dimensions of teaching efficacy, cooperation efficacy and classroom management efficacy in inclusive education and the whole scale are .89, .90, .87 and 90, respectively. It was seen that this scale and the data collected for this study had a good fit as a result of DFA ( $\chi^2 = 3.122$ ,  $df = 776$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.02$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $NFI = .91$ ,  $IFI = .97$ ,  $TLI = .96$ ,  $CFI = .97$ ,  $RMSEA = .07$ ).

*Classroom Management Competence Scale:* The scale was developed by Elçiçek, Kinay, and Oral (2015). The scale consists of 30 items and five dimensions. The first dimension of the scale is relationship management competence consisting of nine items, the second dimension is instructional management competence consisting of seven items, the third dimension is behaviour management competence consisting of six items, the fourth dimension is physical order management competence consisting of five items and the fifth dimension is time management competence consisting of three items. The reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) obtained by Elçiçek, Kinay, and Oral (2015) is .87. Factor analysis was performed on the scale and a five-factor structure was observed. The variance explained by all dimensions of the scale in total was 52. In the reliability analysis conducted for this study, the reliability coefficients obtained for the classroom management competence sub-dimensions, relationship management, instructional management, behaviour management, physical order management and time management, and the whole scale were .86, .87, .68, .77, .66 and .88, respectively. It was seen that this scale and the data collected for this study had a good fit as a result of DFA ( $\chi^2 = 2.653$ ,  $df = 642$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 4.13$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $NFI = .91$ ,  $IFI = .96$ ,  $TLI = .97$ ,  $CFI = .97$ ,  $RMSEA = .07$ ).

#### 2.4. Data Analysis

The study's data were analysed with SPSS and AMOS programs. Before starting the data analyses, it was examined whether the distribution was normal or not. Before the analysis, normality test was performed and it was seen that the skewness and kurtosis values of the collected data were between "+1" and "-1". These values show that the distribution of the data to be analyzed is normal (Tabachnick ve Fidell, 2014). While analysing the data, t-test, ANOVA and correlation analyses were performed with SPSS software. If the tolerance value is greater than .20, the VIF value is lower than 10 and the CI value is lower than 30 in the data set of a study, it shows that there is no multicollinearity problem between the independent variables (Büyüköztürk, 2012). In this research data, before the regression analysis, the Tolerance value was found to be .76, the VIF value was 2.02, and the CI value was 28.22. These values show that there is no multicollinearity problem between the variables and that regression analysis can be done. Regression analysis was performed with the Structural Equation Model (SEM) method in AMOS programme. Firstly, arithmetic averages of the approaches of teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management competencies and their sub-dimensions were calculated separately. Then, ANOVA and t-tests were conducted to determine whether there was a significant difference in the opinions of the teachers in the sample based on their gender, age and seniority. Afterwards, a regression analysis was conducted through the AMOS program to look at teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their inclusion competencies predicting classroom management. The values given in Table 2 were taken into consideration in interpreting the values that would emerge as a result of regression analysis as *good fit* or *acceptable values* (Arbuckle, 2009; Kline, 2011).

**Table 2.** Structural Equation Modelling Values Table

Good Fit Values	Acceptable Fit Values
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$\chi^2 / df < 2$	$2 < \chi^2 / df < 5$
RMSEA < 0.05	0.05 < RMSEA < 0.08
0.95 < CFI=IFI=NFI=TLI	0.90 < CFI=IFI=NFI=TLI < 0.95

## 2.4. Ethical Aspect of Research

Before the research was conducted, permission was obtained from the Social and Human Sciences Research and Publication Ethics Committee of İnönü University with the decision numbered 20 in the session numbered 21 on 17.11.2022.

## 3. Findings

The mean score and standard deviation values of preschool teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and inclusive education competencies and classroom management skills are given in Table 3.

Table 3. Means Score, Standard Deviation and Standard Error Values of The Approaches of Teachers Towards Inclusion, Inclusion Competencies and Classroom Management Skills

Variables	M	SD	Std. Error
Inclusion Attitude	3.13	0.46	.02
Integration Concerns	2.64	0.65	.03
Inclusion Thinking	3.10	0.40	.02
INCLUSION ATTITUDE SCALE	2.96	0.33	.01
Inclusion Teaching Competence	4.99	0.55	.02
Inclusion Cooperation Competence	5.01	0.53	.02
Inclusion Classroom Management Competence	5.05	0.53	.02
INCLUSION COMPETENCE SCALE	5.02	0.43	.02
Relationship Management in Classroom Management	3.44	0.70	.03
Teaching Competence in Classroom Management	3.90	0.58	.03
Behaviour Management in Classroom Management	3.78	0.74	.03
Physical Order Management in Classroom Management	3.96	0.56	.03
Time Management in Classroom Management	3.42	0.74	.03
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE SCALE	3.70	0.39	.02

According to the values in Table 3. the average attitude towards inclusion is 2.96. The meaning of this value shows that preschool teachers agree with the necessity of inclusion education. When the sub-dimensions of the attitude towards inclusion scale are analysed, it is seen that there is a similar situation. The necessity of inclusion education is expressed in all sub-dimensions. It means that the teachers' anxiety levels are low and that they consider inclusion education as necessary.

Table 3 shows the level of inclusion education competencies according to preschool teachers' opinions. It is seen that inclusion education competencies are 5.02. This value shows that teachers are competent in inclusion education (4.33-5.16). When the sub-dimensions of inclusion education competencies are analysed, teachers stated that they were competent in all teaching, cooperation and classroom management competencies.

Teachers also consider themselves competent in terms of classroom management skills in inclusive classrooms. In general, they gave 3.70 points to classroom management skills. Scores between 3.40 and 4.20 mean that they are sufficient. When the sub-dimensions of classroom management skills are analysed, it is seen that they are adequate in all sub-dimensions. However, it is seen that they gave low scores in time management and relationship management sub-dimensions compared to other dimensions.

The t-Test and ANOVA test were performed on the research data. There was no significant difference separating the participant teachers from each other in terms of age, seniority and gender characteristics. Since there was no significant difference, the analysis results and interpretation were not included in the article.

The correlation analysis results, which determine the relationship between preschool teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, their inclusive education competencies and classroom management skills, are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Correlation Values of Attitude towards Inclusion, Inclusion Education Competence and Classroom Management Skill

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1.Inclusion Attitude	1												
2.Integration Concern	.65**	1											
3.Integration Idea	.74**	.72**	1										
4. INCLUSION ATTITUDE SCALE	.66**	.73**	.61**	1									
5.Inclusion Teaching Competence	.33**	.34**	.40**	.37**	1								
6.Inclusion Co-operation Competence	.38**	.25**	.40**	.35**	.60**	1							
7.Inclusion Classroom Management Competence	.24**	.20**	.18**	.32**	.50**	.53**	1						
8. INCLUSION COMPETENCE SCALE	.31**	.34**	.26**	.44**	.79**	.79**	.84**	1					
9.Relationship Management in Classroom Management	.29**	.31**	.34**	.37**	.30**	.31**	.50**	.35**	1				
10.Teaching Competence in Classroom Management	.19**	.11*	.10*	.15*	.26**	.32**	.52**	.43**	.56**	1			
11.Behaviour Management in Classroom Management	.31**	.34**	.37**	.41**	.44**	.43**	.51**	.47**	.54**	.58**	1		
12.Physical Order Management in Classroom Management	.31**	.31**	.38**	.37**	.46**	.41**	.55**	.49**	.55**	.54**	.52**	1	
13.Time Management in Classroom Management	.31**	.35**	.32**	.42**	.41**	.41**	.53**	.51**	.52**	.58**	.62**	.65**	1
14.CLASS MANAGEMENT COMPETENCE SCALE	.33**	.31**	.33**	.43**	.41**	.40**	.55**	.55**	.77**	.81**	.71**	.83**	.78**

\*\*p<.01 / \*p<.05

The relationship between the variables examined in the study is given above. While interpreting these values, Büyüköztürk's (2006) interpretation method was used. Büyüköztürk (2006) states that if the values of the correlation relations of the variables are below .30, there is a weak relationship, if between .30-.70, there is a medium level relationship, and if above .70, there is a high-level relationship. If Table 4 is analyzed considering these values, it can be seen that preschool teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are related to their own inclusion competencies (.44) and classroom management skills (.43). There is also a medium level relationship between pre-school teachers' inclusion competences and classroom management competences (.55).

The structural equation model showing the direct effects of preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies on classroom management competencies and the indirect effects of attitudes towards inclusion on inclusion competencies is given in Figure 2.

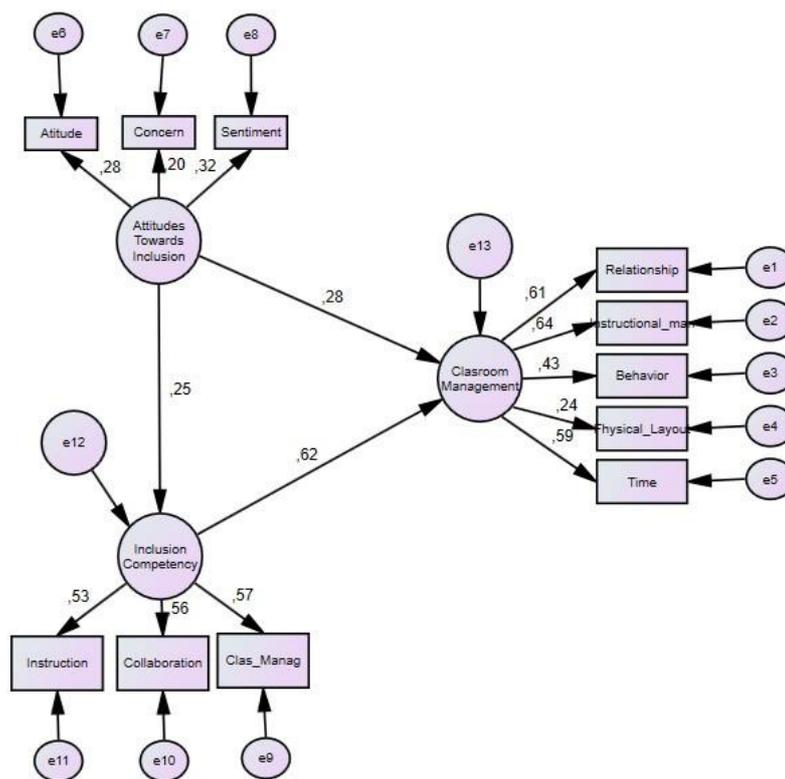


Figure 2. Structural Model Showing the Effect of Teachers' Inclusion Attitudes and Inclusion Competencies on Classroom Management Skills with Standardised Coefficients

Fit indices of the model of teachers' inclusion attitudes - inclusion competencies - classroom management skills:  $\chi^2 = 1742.37$ ,  $df = 492$ ,  $\chi^2/df = 3.54$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $NFI = .91$ ,  $IFI = .97$ ,  $TLI = .95$ ,  $CFI = .97$ ,  $RMSEA = .07$ . When the fit indices are examined, it is seen that the  $\chi^2/df$  ratio is between 2 and 5 and the RMSEA value is between .05 and .08. These values are within the accepted limits for the structural model. Since the other values ( $.90 < CFI = IFI = NFI = TLI$ ) are also within the accepted limits, it can be said that the model resulting from this analysis has a good fit. Unstandardized (b) and standardized coefficients ( $\beta$ ), standard error (SE), critical value (CR) and significance values (p) of this model showing the effect of preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies on classroom management skills are given in Table 5.

Table 5.  $\beta$ , p and CR (t) Values for the Effect of the Approaches of Teachers towards Inclusion and Inclusion Competencies on Classroom Management Skills

	b	$\beta$	SE	CR	p
Inclusion Attitude - Inclusion Competence	.312	.254	.084	1.985	<0.01
Inclusion Attitude - Classroom Management Skills	.319	.282	.078	2.443	<0.01
Inclusion Competence - Classroom Management Skills	.694	.623	.042	5.783	<0.01

The regression values of the structural model showing that preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies predict classroom management skills are given in Table 5. As can be seen in Figure 2, preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion positively predicted teachers' inclusion competencies ( $\beta = .25$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $CR = 1.985$ ). This finding in the analysis confirms the first (H1) hypothesis of the study. Considering the

" $\beta$ " value, it is seen that a 1 unit increase in the approaches of teachers towards inclusion will provide a .25 unit increase in teachers' inclusion competencies.

When the path analysis between preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and classroom management skills is analysed, it is seen that the approaches of teachers towards inclusion positively predict classroom management skills ( $\beta=.28$ ,  $p<0.01$ ,  $CR=2.443$ ). This finding in the analysis confirms the second (H2) hypothesis of the study. When the " $\beta$ " value is analysed, it is seen that a 1 unit increase in the approaches of teachers towards inclusion will provide a .28 unit increase in teachers' classroom management skills.

The findings in Figure 2 and Table 5 show that preschool teachers' inclusion competencies predicted teachers' classroom management skills ( $\beta=.62$ ,  $p<0.01$ ,  $CR=5.783$ ). These findings in the analysis confirm the third (H3) hypothesis of the study. When the " $\beta$ " value is analysed, it is seen that a one unit increase in teachers' inclusion competencies will provide a .62 unit increase in teachers' classroom management skills.

When the model given in Figure 2 is examined, it is seen that teachers' inclusion attitudes have a direct effect on their classroom management skills, as well as an indirect effect on teachers' inclusion competencies. In the structural model, the approaches of teachers towards inclusion indirectly predicted teachers' classroom management skills through their inclusion competencies ( $\beta= .16$ ). In order to find the indirect prediction of the approaches of teachers towards inclusion through teachers' classroom management skills, the path coefficient between attitudes towards inclusion and inclusion competencies was calculated by multiplying the path coefficients between inclusion competencies and classroom management skills. This prediction value shows that the fourth hypothesis (H4) expressed in the study was also confirmed.

#### 4. Conclusion and Discussion

This research was carried out with the aim of examining the relationship between preschool teachers' inclusion attitudes and their inclusion competencies with classroom management. Firstly, the levels of pre-school the approaches of teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management competencies were measured according to their opinions. The approaches of teachers towards inclusion, which were calculated by taking the arithmetic averages of their opinions, were found to be at the level of "I agree with the necessity of inclusion education". When the literature was examined, similar results were obtained in the studies on the approaches of teachers towards inclusive education. In a study conducted in Romania, teachers generally agreed that students with special needs should be included in general education classes (Unianu, 2012). According to the study obtained from the data collected by telephone interviews with 2000 parents in Germany, parents' perspectives on inclusion are similar (Paseka & Schwab, 2020). While the parents were highly positive about the inclusive education of students with physical disabilities or learning disabilities, they expressed a moderate positive attitude towards the inclusive education of students with intellectual disability and behavioral disorders. Another study trying to determine preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusive education was conducted in Kosovo (Zabeli, Gjelaj, Ewing, 2020). In this study, it is stated that preschool teachers find inclusive education very important and strongly believe in its necessity. These results indicate that studies conducted in different parts of the world and this study conducted in Turkey point to similar results.

In this study, the arithmetic mean of the scores given by the teachers to their self-efficacy was calculated to determine the level of inclusion education competencies of preschool

teachers. According to the findings, preschool teachers' inclusion competencies are at the level of "sufficient". Teachers evaluated their own inclusion competences as adequate. In a study conducted in Zimbabwe, the inclusion competencies of primary school teachers were examined with the dimensions of differentiated instruction, collaboration and classroom management (Majoko, 2019). When the findings obtained in this study were evaluated, it was seen that teachers' inclusion competencies were "generally high". A study evaluating the inclusion education competencies of preschool teachers was also conducted in Kosovo (Zabeli, Gjelaj, Ewing, 2020). In the study, preschool teachers found inclusive education very important, but they stated that they lacked competencies to work with children with special needs (they did not have adequate teaching methods, necessary knowledge and skills).

The other variable analyzed in this study was preschool teachers' classroom management skills. According to the findings obtained in the study, preschool teachers stated that their classroom management skills were "adequate". When the literature is analyzed, similar and different study results are found. In a study conducted in Turkey by Bay (2020), it was stated that preschool teachers stated that their classroom management competencies were at a "high level". In another study conducted in Turkey, it is seen that teachers' classroom management competencies are above the medium level (Buyuktaskapu Soydan et al. 2018). In another study conducted by Karakaya and Tufan (2018), it was found that preschool teachers' classroom management competencies were at a high level. In general, when the results of the study are evaluated, it is seen that teachers' classroom management competencies have a value above the medium level.

Another result obtained in this study is that there is a positive and moderate relationship between preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion, inclusion competencies and classroom management competencies. At the same time, there is a moderate relationship between inclusion competences and classroom management competences. In a study conducted with 909 pre-service teachers in Germany, the relationship between attitudes towards inclusion and inclusion competencies was discussed and a positive relationship was obtained (Miesera, DeVries, Jungjohann, Gebhardt, 2018). Özcan (2020) conducted a similar study. He examined the relationship between pre-school the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion self-efficacy and found a moderate positive relationship. It is similar to the result of this study.

Another result obtained in the study is the relationship between the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and classroom management skills. In this study, a positive and moderate relationship was obtained between preschool teachers' inclusion attitudes and classroom management skills. In a study conducted by Usta, Çetin, and Arıkan (2022), the approaches of teachers towards inclusion students were examined within the scope of classroom management. In this study, an important relationship between classroom management and attitude towards inclusion is emphasized. It is emphasized that there is a heterogeneous structure in the classroom, especially when inclusion students and other students are considered, and that attitudes towards inclusion students and classroom management are in an important relationship in this heterogeneous environment. In a study conducted by Akbulut and Aküzüm (2021), the relationship between classroom teachers' professional self-efficacy and their attitudes towards inclusion was examined. The relationship between classroom management, a sub-dimension of self-efficacy, and attitudes towards inclusion was also examined and it was emphasized that there was a positive relationship between them.

In this study, the relationship between preschool teachers' inclusion competencies and classroom management skills was also examined. According to the results obtained in this study, a positive and moderate relationship was found between teachers' inclusion competencies and classroom management skills. When compared with similar studies in the

literature, it is seen that the results are similar. In a study examining the thoughts of pre-service teachers (Gürsoy, 2020) on inclusion education, it is stated that teachers with low inclusion competencies will experience anxiety and anxiety, and this anxiety and anxiety will lead to problems in classroom management. For this reason, it is stated that inclusion competencies in teachers are related to classroom management. Özyaydın and Çolak (2011) conducted a study in which preschool teachers' thoughts about inclusive education were examined. In the study, various suggestions were made regarding the relationship between classroom management and teachers' inclusion competencies. The relationship between classroom management and inclusion competencies such as teaching social skills, managing the adaptation process, and providing problem behaviours in the education of inclusion students who will be educated in preschool teachers' classrooms was stated.

One of the issues examined in the study is the prediction of preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies for teachers' classroom management. According to the results of the study, preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies positively predict classroom management competencies. When the literature is examined, no completely similar research was found with the variables of this research, but it is seen that there are similar studies in some aspects. Akbulut and Aküzüm (2021) conducted a study on the prediction of classroom management skills by the approaches of teachers towards inclusion. In this study, the relationship between classroom teachers' professional self- efficacy and their attitudes towards inclusion was examined. The predictive status of classroom management, which is a sub-dimension of self-efficacy, was also examined and it was concluded that classroom the approaches of teachers towards inclusion predicted their classroom management skills. In the study conducted by Özcan (2020), it was found that preschool the approaches of teachers towards inclusion predicted their inclusion competencies. In the regression analysis, it is seen that positive attitude towards inclusion predicts inclusion competence positively and moderately. In another study examining the relationship between preschool teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and classroom management skills, a similar conclusion was reached (Hero, 2022). In the study, teachers evaluated their self-efficacy and it was found that their self-efficacy predicted their classroom management skills in a positive and significant way.

## 5. Recommendations

Suggestions for educational organizations:

It is suggested that inclusion education should be included more in the teacher training curriculum and in-service trainings should be received from the special education departments of universities related to inclusion education. In addition, it is recommended that more expert support (psychologist, child development and education specialist, physiotherapist, special education teacher, audiologist, occupational education teacher) should be provided to the teachers of inclusive classes in schools, more opportunities should be provided for them to prepare special education activities, and the number of students in their classes should be reduced.

Suggestions for educational science researchers:

The relationship between the approaches of teachers towards inclusion and inclusion competencies and their classroom management can be repeated with different study methods and techniques at different levels of educational organizations (primary, secondary, and university). The results obtained in this study can be analyzed with qualitative study methods for comparison.



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