Mindful Transportation: A Conceptual Framework for Enhancing Accessibility for People with Disabilities in Malaysia

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Abstract: This conceptual paper explores the integration of mindfulness principles into the development of transportation services for people with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia. Transportation plays a critical role in promoting inclusivity and enhancing the quality of life for PWDs, yet accessibility remains a significant challenge due to infrastructural barriers, lack of awareness, and limited empathy from service providers. Drawing on the concepts of mindfulness, which are rooted in awareness, empathy, and responsiveness, this paper proposes a framework that emphasizes inclusivity, respect, and collaboration among key stakeholders. The proposed framework emphasizes the need for a holistic approach that incorporates physical accessibility, staff training, and policy reforms. Inclusivity involves modifying infrastructure to meet universal design standards, while empathy requires transport providers to understand the unique challenges faced by PWDs and offer compassionate, tailored services. Responsiveness, a key element of mindfulness, calls for flexible and adaptive transport services that cater to the real-time needs of PWDs, ensuring that they can access public transportation with ease and dignity. By applying this mindful approach, the transportation system can become more accommodating and respectful toward PWDs, thereby reducing social exclusion and improving their mobility. This paper contributes to the growing body of literature on disability inclusion and provides actionable strategies for policymakers, transport providers, and disability organizations to work together in creating a more accessible public transportation system. Future research should investigate the practical application of this framework and its potential to drive policy changes that benefit PWDs across Malaysia.

Keywords: *Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Mindfulness, Inclusivity, Responsiveness, Empathy, Respect, Mindful Transportation Services.*

1. Introduction and Background

Mindful public transport services focus on the well-being and comfort of passengers, communities, and the environments they serve. This type of service aims to provide a positive and inclusive experience for all while reducing the environmental impact. The importance of creating enabling, safe, and sustainable cities is underscored by the Global Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They stress the need to ensure that all citizens have access to environmentally friendly public transport, especially by improving public transport and paying special attention to the needs of the most vulnerable, including those with disabilities. (The Global Gate, 2019). Lönnqvist (2017) commented that people with disabilities are often at increased risk of poverty and that this risk is usually associated with poor health, poor academic performance, and low personal income. The World Health Organization (2019) found that all of this is caused by a lack of accessible resources for people with disabilities and the range of problems they encounter in their daily lives. Everyday challenges can include various obstacles, such as problems using public transportation.

Disability is a lack of ability or a state that makes it challenging for an individual to act in ways that are commonly accepted in a normal society. This phrase is typically used to describe a person's special talents, including physical, sensory, cognitive, intellectual, or mental health restrictions. This application is associated with a medical model of disability (Marks, 1997). This disability may develop at birth or later in life. People with disabilities (PWDs), or more contentiously, people who are disabled or retarded. Sometimes, the term "special people" is used. Even though PWDs are so prevalent and constantly brought up in conversation by Malaysians, the majority of the citizens are not concerned about this issue. Usually, Malaysians rarely help this group. Likewise, not many people know that because of discrimination against people with disabilities. The government has enacted laws that privilege this group.

Fundamentally, public transportation is a more environmentally friendly and convenient means of transportation than driving. However, people frequently choose to drive alone rather than take advantage of the benefits of traveling with others. Perhaps, these additional arguments could persuade people to stop driving if environmental concerns are not sufficient to do so. For instance, when not focused on driving, people can be more aware of their surroundings. While surrounded by a swarm of people, the time spent reflecting while using public transportation may help people think more broadly and perceive the world objectively. This permits people to be more mindful of the environment. In addition, public transportation allows people to be socially active. Conceivably, this is one of the reasons people often choose to drive alone because they want to avoid chit-chatting with strangers in public settings due to an unjustified fear of coming out as foolish or unintelligent. Thus, being social beings, we tend to value other people's company. The ability to socialize with other passengers is greatly enhanced by using public transit. It would increase our attentiveness by conversing with a new person and finally, a great method to start the day with mindfulness is to do breathing exercises while traveling by bus, train, or subway. After a long day at work, deep breathing can also be a very effective way for the body to unwind.

The above-mentioned benefits, however, are unquestionably accessible to normal transit passengers. But would those who are classified as people with disabilities (PWDs) experience the same way? What is more, sometimes the process of getting on public transportation itself is so troublesome and complicated for them. Accessibility is an essential aspect of the survival of disabled people. This is because the emphasis on accessibility can reduce all accessibility problems, especially in enjoying services in public transport. Furthermore, transportation is a crucial policy concern for people with disabilities. The PWDs have frequently stated how significant negative effects that transportation barriers have on their life. Stjernborg (2019) signified the most prevalent difficulty experienced by PWDs when using public transportation, particularly was entering or exiting the vehicles. Stjernborg also observed certain drivers' abusive or hostile behavior. Additionally, Stjernborg also emphasized the differences in individual capacities and pre-existing societal barriers as crucial elements influencing the experiences of public transportation passengers, particularly for those who are PWDs.

Public transportation plays a significant part in society by ensuring access to jobs, education, everyday activities, and socializing, as well as by allowing people to travel further than only from point X to point Y. In general, an individual's mobility is influenced by the context in which they interact. Concomitantly, physical restrictions and environmental barriers can limit a person's ability to move, which can ultimately result in isolation and exclusion (Bianquin & Bulgarelli, 2017) and prohibit PWDs from participating in society. According to Velho, Holloway, Symonds, and Balmer (2016) as well as Jansuwan, Christensen and Chen (2013), public transportation is crucial for those with disabilities, at least if they want to move beyond point X to point Y. As a result, the concept of mobility carries a lot of weight and significance. It also takes into account things like the nature, purpose, and ramifications of movement (Stjernborg, 2019).

Avoidance of using public transport may increase the danger of marginalization and exclusion for many already vulnerable populations, namely PWDs according to Lubitow & Rainer & Bassett (2017). They conclude that any kind of obstacle may always have this consequence. Therefore, fully supporting the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in the transport system is important, i.e. examining how transport contributes to exclusion and marginalization. Offering transportation services is important. The extent to which users can use the service is also important. The diverse needs of each individual, including those with disabilities, must be taken into account by transport and facility providers. Meanwhile, Malaysians living in big cities, especially people with mobility disabilities, also suffer from the same problem. They are aware of the traffic restrictions faced in major cities, especially in the Klang Valley. Lack of parking and accessible transportation are also issues that need to be addressed. Concerns about the hazards posed by the space between platforms and train doors, and the lack of safety measures to address the risks associated with the use of escalators and stairs in transport hubs. Physical barriers cause some travelers to sacrifice safety to complete their trip. Some people take even longer because they are more aware of the dangers of the obstacles. The time required also depends on their ability to overcome obstacles along the way.

Humans have different needs based on their unique biological, psychological, and environmental aspects. One of the negative effects of the psycho-emotional aspect of the disorder is irritability and loss of security. Indeed,

both the structural deficiencies and the mental-emotional dimensions of disability point to injustice in the form of poor or inadequate environments that result in social exclusion (Harley, 2020). In addition, there are unfavorable prospects for the public and service providers. Negative attitudes, such as stigma and prejudice, are driven by a general lack of awareness of people with disabilities and underscore that the majority of people are aware of their civic obligations. People who need mobility but have limited mobility can get help from a few people. Conversely, the lack of attention to transportation services reflects the provider's negative attitude. Despite their best efforts, they fail to fully consider the views of people with disabilities when making decisions (Kamaruddin, 2022).

Regardless of the type of barrier that occurs in the public transport system, it means avoiding traveling by public transport which can increase the risk of marginalization and exclusion to the often-vulnerable group that is PWDs. Thus, this study's goals are to examine how people with disabilities (PWDs) experience utilizing public transportation and what measures the service provider of that transportation employs to help them. Lastly, to look at how these measures affect PwD's travel experience and what it takes for disabled passengers to be treated equally by the public transportation system. Eventually, one of the three main concern issues involved in enforcing the rights of people with disabilities is the hardships that both adults and children with disabilities face daily, many of which have only slightly improved over many years. Officially, the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Government of Malaysia has identified seven categories of disabilities in Malaysia namely, Blindness, Deafness, Speech Disability, Physical Disability, Learning Disability (especially children with Autism), Mental Disability and Others (Amar-Singh et al., 2021). The next paragraphs describe the elements that will influence PwDs' experiences in using public transportation in their everyday life.

This study is expected to suggest a relevant model for PWDs that can be useful in improving and constructing a transport providers' mindful service for PWD as well as addressing PWDs' access and mobility needs, to produce a safe, affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation system for PWD and to reduce barriers and challenges faced by the public transport services in establishing sustainable transportation systems. This research provides good material as guidelines and references to public transport providers and the government especially to Social Welfare Department (PWD Development Department).

2. Literature Review

Persons With Disabilities (PWDS) In Malaysia
People with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia are regarded as the most vulnerable minority group in Malaysia. According to the Disabled Persons Act 2008, PWDs include those with long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory deficiencies that when interacting with various obstacles, may restrict their full and effective participation in the community. Currently, the latest number of registered PWDs recorded by the Department of Social Welfare is 592,856 in Januari 2021 as compared to 549,554 in June 2019. The increasing number of people with disability every year influences the effort of every quarter of public and private agencies to provide relevant opportunities, access, and care for this disadvantaged group. The total number of people showed that disabled persons were able to have a significant impact on the community members. Realizing this fact, Malaysia is committed to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CPRD). It's useful as a guide to people, family, and friends who want to help disabled persons – in using their rights. It also states the actions that must be taken by the government to help all disabled persons realize their rights.

Mindfulness
The concept of mindfulness has been established by Langer (1999), which posits a situation where the cognitive integration of awareness and responsiveness occurs at the individual level. The concept, however, expanded as in the work of Weick, Suitcliffe, and Obstfeld (1999) to an organizational level that draws on high-reliability organizations (e.g. power plants and aircraft carriers). Weick et al (1999) argue that these highly reliable organizations are very vulnerable and small errors may even be detrimental. Consequently, relying on trial-and-error learning or adhering to established routines is inadequate. In contrast to a state of mindlessness, mindfulness is characterized by "a continuous examination of existing expectations, ongoing refinement and differentiation of those expectations in light of new experiences, and a readiness and ability to develop new expectations that can meaningfully address novel situations" (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001). Mindlessness, on the

other hand, is how preoccupation with perspective was built on an 'automatic pilot' to handle certain unprecedented events without realizing that things could be otherwise. (Weick et al, 1999). They also point out that the state of mindfulness is maintained by five cognitive aspects (1) preoccupation with failure, (2) reluctance to simplify interpretations, (3) sensitivity to operations, (4) commitment to resilience, and (5) under specification of structures/ deference to expertise. Mindfulness is commonly defined as the flexible allocation of attention to present experiences. Despite variations in the conceptualization of mindfulness, there is a general consensus among scholars and practitioners that it fundamentally entails a focus on the present moment (Bishop et al., 2004).

According to Langer's perspective, mindfulness is about actively noticing new things and being open to different perspectives, rather than being on autopilot or operating on preconceived notions. In the context of public transportation, this might involve actively observing the environment, the people, and the interactions around, it rather than being lost in one's thoughts or routine. For people with disabilities, the mindfulness shown by other people around them is ultimately important. At the same time, transport providers namely the terminal services and transport service providers should pay attention to the needs of this special group of passengers.

Inclusivity
Many academics have defined inclusion, notably in the field of education. The definition of inclusion depends on the individual and is not limited to any one study. Vobruba (2000) believes that the main focus of empirical study should be on people's interpretations and subsequent behaviors. However, a lot of research on inclusion focuses on social, political, and economic issues. (Good Gingrich, 2008; Richmond & Saloojee, 2005). On another perspective, Göransson & Nilholm (2014) for instance, in their studies have classified it into four different categories known as placement definition, specified individualized definition, general individualized definition, and community definition. According to them, placement definition can be described as inclusion as placement of students with disabilities or in need of special support in general education classroom, meanwhile, inclusion as meeting the social and academic needs of students with disabilities is referred to the definition of specified individualized. Specified individualized refers to inclusion as meeting the social and academic needs of students with disabilities and the fourth definition of inclusion in the perspective of community refers to inclusion as the creation of communities with specific characteristics. Among the definitions given, the last definition is used for this study as it covers the community perspective.

Social inclusion as described by Kenyon et al. (2003) is a dynamic state about a process in which an individual or group can engage in mainstream society because of good accessibility and mobility. The concept of social inclusion is concerned with providing opportunities for all individuals to participate in an equitable and impartial transportation system (Cook et al. 2017). Social inclusion also depends on the opportunities to use a transportation system and how convenient it is for a person to get to work daily or for other social activities. (Lättman et al. 2016). Therefore, Farrington and Farrington (2005) in their study mentioned the requirement to provide greater mobility and accessibility to ensure social inclusion. According to Tahmasbia, B., & Hossein, H. (2019), accessibility is defined as the simplicity with which a traveler can use a certain mode of transportation to reach any location where an activity is taking place.

In this era of modernization, the quality of life has dramatically improved in various aspects including the transportation sector. To cope with the environmental change and the mobility needs among the public and businesses, fostering an inclusive public transport system is essential. Nevertheless, Lucas (2004) is his study that highlighted the issue of inequality as modern mobility is not inclusive and many parties were affected in terms of accessibility problems to work, health care, leisure activities, and social services. Another researcher also identified the link between accessibility and social inclusion. Kenyon and Lyons (2003) and Currie and Stanley (2008) for instance believed that limited access to social opportunities influenced social exclusion in the UK and Australia respectively. Additionally, Kenyon (2011) stated that the cause of social exclusion is to lack of accessibility to social networks and opportunities in society. Another study by Stanley et al. (2010) also indicated the positive links between public transport usage and social inclusion. They believed that public transport serves as a means of assisting people to be included.

Numerous industries were impacted by the worldwide pandemic COVID-19 and were forced to cease

operations. However, the operation of public transportation networks had to continue throughout the COVID-19 outbreak due to its significance as a necessary public service. (Shibayama, Sandholzer, Laa, & Brezina, 2021). However, PWDs and other disadvantaged and vulnerable groups encounter some limitations and difficulties as a result of the widespread presence of COVID-19. These difficulties are listed by Cochran (2020) and include: a) safe and dependable transportation; b) current information; and c) inadequate help from transportation service providers. Additionally, it poses a risk of introducing new transportation hurdles that would make traveling more hesitant (Cochran, 2020; Genitsaris, Nalmpantis, Amprasi, & Naniopoulos, 2021). Therefore, there has been a request for more research into resources to increase accessibility in all modes of transportation due to PWD's high risk of social exclusion generally, which has been heightened during the pandemic (Armitage & Nellums, 2020; Cochran, 2020; Genitsaris et al., 2021).

As a result, it is necessary to review service planning and infrastructure (Jenelius & Cebecauer, 2020; Mogaji, Adekunle, Aririguzoh, & Oginni, 2022), with a focus on the provision and performance of transportation services (Wang, Shen, Abu Ashour, & Dannenberg, 2022). The difficulties in providing public transportation for people with disabilities must be overcome by creative and cooperative methods (Mogaji et al., 2022; Vickerman, 2020; Wang et al., 2022).

Social exclusion exists in a society regardless of the geographical area. According to Litman (2003), everyone in society is seriously confronted with social exclusion in all circumstances. Nevertheless, certain individuals or groups are prone to the risk of being excluded due to the exclusionary factors. Physically and mentally disabled persons are among the identified persons. Currie and Delbosc, (2011) have also identified several groups as most likely to be at risk of social exclusion due to relatively poor mobility opportunities. One of the groups is people with a disability. Additionally, Dodson, Gleeson, and Sipe (2004) have also listed several individuals or groups of people as those parties who are at risk of social exclusion regarding various issues of transportation including disabled persons.

Responsiveness

Responsiveness is the willingness of employees to help customers and provide responsive services (Tjiptono, 2016). It is a service quality dimension related to service providers' willingness to assist customers and provide services quickly. This dimension's attributes include informing customers about the certainty of service delivery times, providing prompt service to customers, being willing to assist customers, and being ready to respond to customer requests (Setiono & Hidayat, 2022). Additionally, respondents agreed that responsiveness refers to providers implementing quickly and precisely their service, besides that the officers are always ready to respond to customer requests.

As with many other people, PWDs have the right to full access to all public services (Kadir & Jamaludin, 2012). In comparison to non-disabled persons, PWDs have a high level of immobility, which has significant implications for access to urban facilities, particularly employment and health and education services. Second, the movement contributes to discrimination and exclusion in significant ways. In addition to the problems faced by the general community, those with limited mobility confront additional obstacles when utilizing the transportation system. The primary demands of PWDs relate to the problem of articulation between public areas and the transportation system, both in terms of infrastructure and the attitude and conduct of service providers and other citizens (Pinto, et al., 2020).

Given the difficulties experienced by PWDs, particularly with public transportation, responsiveness is more than just solving customer problems; it is also the desire that arises within employees to assist with problems encountered by the company's customers, for the company to leave a positive impression on customers (Martha & Jordan, 2022). Responsiveness is crucial to comprehend and attend to potential customers' demands and desires in real-time and at a faster rate than competitors (Sharma et al., 2020). Therefore, as responsive public transport providers, they have moved their focus to the establishment of long-term customer connections (Sharma et al., 2020), trying to elicit consumers' pleasant feelings and so strengthen their behavioral intentions (Cheung et al., 2020). This study supports Kadir et al. (2018) assertion that people who manage a public space or public building can be viewed as important agents in providing an inclusive environment for users. It also coincides with public transport service providers.

Customer responsiveness, employee responsiveness, service responsiveness, and competitive responsiveness all contribute to overall responsiveness (Krush et al., 2015; Salvador et al., 2014). Customer responsiveness is defined as the capacity of retail firms to react to shifting market patterns and evolving customer expectations. (Phiri & Mcwabe, 2013; Qin and Prybutok, 2009). Employee responsiveness refers to the employees' preparedness and willingness to provide a prompt response to a customer's request and specific needs. According to the seminal work of Theoharakis et al. (2009), service responsiveness is defined as the rate at which a customer-focused service is delivered with a timely solution to the customer's problems. Competitive responsiveness is exemplified by retailers' ability to respond quickly and proactively to competitors' actions (Salvador et al., 2015).

Responsiveness and sensitivity need to become a culture in organizations, especially service providers. A study by Mahr, et al. (2013) found that cultural sensitivity and responsiveness entail far more than simply understanding a client's culture. True cultural responsiveness necessitates the application of knowledge practice. Nevertheless, it must be underlined that cultural sensitivity entails more than knowledge of ethnic groups. A responsive person will have a better understanding of the circumstances and needs of others. In providing services, the providers will attempt to be mindful, comprehend the situation of the PWDs, and enhance the quality of service. Multiple benefits accrue due to the responsiveness of the client and the principal providers to economic activities. These benefits include greater operational dependability, shorter processing times, increased turnaround speed, lower costs and lead times, greater efficiency, enhanced product innovation, and superior competitive advantages (Gunasekaran et al., 2008). Individual attention will boost customer contentment, as will employee attention to client concerns; when this occurs, there will be a fundamental shift in customer satisfaction.

A poor response will leave the service recipient with a negative impression. However, service providers must put consumer requirements first (Purwati, 2016). With a positive response, a positive relationship will be established between service providers and service recipients, resulting in the dissemination of patient satisfaction through word of mouth. The utilization of services by service recipients is determined by the service recipient's requirements and the acquired experience. Therefore, a negative experience leaves a negative impression, which discourages consumers from returning because they are disappointed and their expectations of service providers are not met (Purwostuti & Walyani, 2015).

It cannot be denied that understanding the service quality component is essential for a facility manager to precisely measure and prioritize what is genuinely relevant to the building users with specific demands and to attempt to meet the PWD's needs (Awang, et al., 2021). It is equally important for public transport service providers to understand and care about the needs of PWDs. Typically, a responsive person will have a better understanding of the circumstances and needs of others. In providing services, the providers need to be mindful, comprehend the situation of the PWDs, and enhance the quality of service. People can act mindfully and yet they frequently respond in a rote, mindless manner. Langer (1999) identified that people rely on past distinctions in much of their daily lives; they overly rely on structures of situations that are representative of the underlying meaning without making new distinctions. Even though most transport services in Malaysia struggle to provide suitable accommodations for PWDs, the necessity to meet their needs must be improved considering recent situations. Responsive behavior must be applied to all providers and other passengers to show mindfulness towards the needs of the PWDs (Harian Metro, 2022). Additionally, the average level of responsiveness and service quality perceived by customers among older patients during the COVID-19 pandemic is a requirement for supportive planning among them. In the meantime, based on the effects of responsiveness on service quality, educational programs are recommended to increase the responsiveness of healthcare providers (Yusefi, et al., 2022). Likewise with public transport service providers, where education and knowledge about the response to all groups of customers, including PWDs are very important to give them awareness and at the same time improve the existing services.

Empathy
Empathy is defined as both affective and cognitive reactions that correspond to another person's emotions in response to their emotional circumstances (Davis, 1983). While both cognitive and affective empathy involve understanding another person's feelings, cognitive empathy specifically refers to the ability to recognize and comprehend another person's mental state, whereas affective empathy entails sharing another person's emotional experience without undergoing direct emotional stimulation. Empathy thus encompasses the ability to understand and feel another person's emotions, which involves adopting their perspective and seeing a situation from their point of view. Empathy is commonly understood as the ability to place oneself in another person's circumstances. However, research indicates that different forms of empathy exist, with cognitive and emotional empathy being the two primary types (Healey & Grossman, 2018). Cognitive empathy, as described by Ratka (2018), involves understanding another person's perspective, often referred to as adopting an alternative viewpoint or "putting oneself in another's shoes." In contrast, affective empathy consists of sensations and emotional responses triggered by another person's emotions.

From the contemplative mindfulness perspective, there has been a significant amount of research on how mindfulness practice can foster an improvement in empathy. It was found that training attending to one's inner experience strengthens the prefrontal cortex, front cingulate cortex, and anterior insula, the same brain regions required to increase empathy (Fan et al., 2011 & Masten et al., 2011). Through its inherent qualities of nonreaction and non-judgment, mindfulness can also influence empathy. An individual can put their tough feelings aside and focus on the suffering of others (John et al., 2016 & Wellmark, 2012)). Increased mindfulness enhances the empathy of healthcare professionals (Dean et al., 2017 & Lamothe et al., 2016)). Therefore, staying in the present moment can assist in calming the mind and emotions, which makes it easier to provide treatment for anxious patients without getting emotional contagion (Beddoe et al., 2004). As a result, those who work in this field and practice mindfulness are better able to be conscious and, in the moment, which allows them to see and understand others' experiences from a sympathetic angle and encourages critical assessment (Birnie et al., 2010).

The interaction between employees and customers is addressed by empathy in service quality. According to Zeithaml et al. (2006), empathy involves employees of the company showing concern and giving each customer their unique attention. The customer feels exceptional as a result. Employees at the company should try to learn the names of their customers, their preferences, and their requirements to foster empathy, and they should take action to satisfy them (Iddrisu et al., 2015; Kalu, 2015). Hence, loyal customers who are acknowledged by staff and given courteous treatment feel unique in the transport company.

Public transportation accessibility is essential for increasing the mobility of all individuals with disabilities in daily activities including going grocery shopping, working, learning, getting medical care, attending social events, and participating in cultural, recreational, and sporting events. Unfortunately, public transportation has not always been designed and implemented in communities to meet the wide range of needs of individuals with disabilities. PWDs Act 2008 section 27(2) states that to ensure that people with disabilities have equal access to public transportation facilities, amenities, and services, the providers of those facilities, amenities, and services shall give appropriate consideration and take necessary measures to ensure that those facilities, amenities, and services are compliant with universal design to facilitate their use by people with disabilities. Empathy is important for creating and sustaining many kinds of social connections, as well as for encouraging prosocial behavior (Roberts et al., 2014). Individual empathy, contextual comprehension, and social responsibility are the three components of social empathy (Segal, 2011).

Sharma et al. (2021) found that both men and women have negative perceptions of those who are physically challenged. Both genders also showed empathy for those who were physically disabled. Thus, there was no gender difference in the views and empathy of young people towards people with physical limitations. Additionally, the two constructs—attitude and empathy—had a significant and positive relationship with one another. These results suggested that social stigma related to disability, especially physical disabilities, is necessary. Public perceptions of disability are molded by the medical concept of individual deficit, which ignores societal constraints that translate some kind of psychological or physical damage into the social experience of disability (Watson et al., 2019).

Respect
Many studies in social and organizational psychology fail to provide explicit information about the dimensions of respect. Darwall (1977) proposed two categories of respect: recognition respect and evaluation respect. Respect is demonstrated when persons are described as being treated with civility and dignity (Simon & Stürmer, 2003; 2005). Tyler and Blader (2000) on the other hand, stated that respect is respecting a person's distinctive contribution or valuing their thoughts and accomplishments. Respect in social psychology denotes full acknowledgment as a person, with the premise that respect offers information about our position, prestige, and a sense of acceptance by others in our group and community (De Cremer, 2002). Respect among groups indicates that a person is equal to others and may be characterized as social information regarding one's relational worth for the group as expressed by others by the way they treat the other (Simon, Lucken, & Stürmer, 2006). Respect recognizes that other individuals are significant. Respect is supposedly a complex construct (Sung, 2004). Respect is a challenging notion since it is context-dependent and fluctuates depending on the perspective of the assessor/respect's target. Various respect-related connotations can be found, for instance, in the preceding pages' definitions. In philosophy, the concept of respect is significantly influenced by Kant's (1964) work, which argues that respecting others is a duty, however, in social psychology, regard is viewed as an attitude. Respect is seen as a moral necessity in nursing and is shown mostly via behavior.

When dealing with people with disabilities, one should observe respect. This is because respect is a fundamental aspect of human interactions, and it is essential to treat people with disabilities with dignity and equality. Respecting people with disabilities entails treating them as individuals with equal rights, capabilities, and value (Kocman & Weber, 2019). It entails recognizing their abilities, strengths, and contributions rather than defining them solely by their disabilities. Respect also entails being patient and understanding of their particular needs and challenges, as well as not making assumptions about their abilities or preferences. People with disabilities are more likely to have positive self-esteem and self-worth, a sense of belonging and connectedness to their communities, and better health outcomes when they are treated with respect. Respect also encourages social integration and reduces stigma and discrimination, both of which are critical in creating a more inclusive and welcoming society for all. In conclusion, the relationship between respect and people with disabilities is critical for promoting their well-being and overall quality of life.

3. Research Methodology

The conceptual framework for mindful transportation services for PWDs is based on four interconnected elements: inclusivity, empathy, responsiveness, and respect. Each element addresses a specific challenge faced by PWDs in accessing public transport and offers a strategic approach for service providers to enhance their offerings.

Inclusivity: This involves designing transport systems that are universally accessible. It includes infrastructure modifications, such as ramps, tactile surfaces, and low-floor vehicles, to ensure that PWDs can easily access public transport services. The principle of inclusivity also calls for the active involvement of PWDs in the planning and design processes (Velho et al., 2016).
**Empathy**: Service providers must develop a deep understanding of the unique challenges that PWDs face. Empathy can be operationalized through staff training programs that teach service providers how to assist PWDs compassionately and effectively (Mogaji et al., 2022).
Responsiveness: A mindful transportation system must be flexible and responsive to the needs of its users. This includes real-time adjustments to services, such as accommodating last-minute requests for assistance from PWDs or ensuring that transport schedules account for the additional time required for PWDs to board and alight.
Respect: Respectful treatment of PWDs involves recognizing their rights and dignity. This includes ensuring that transport services not only comply with legal standards but also go beyond minimal requirements to create an environment where PWDs feel valued and respected.
By integrating these elements into transportation systems, providers can create a more equitable and supportive environment for PWDs. This framework can serve as a guide for future research and policy development aimed at improving the accessibility of public transport in Malaysia.

Figure 1: Proposed Framework
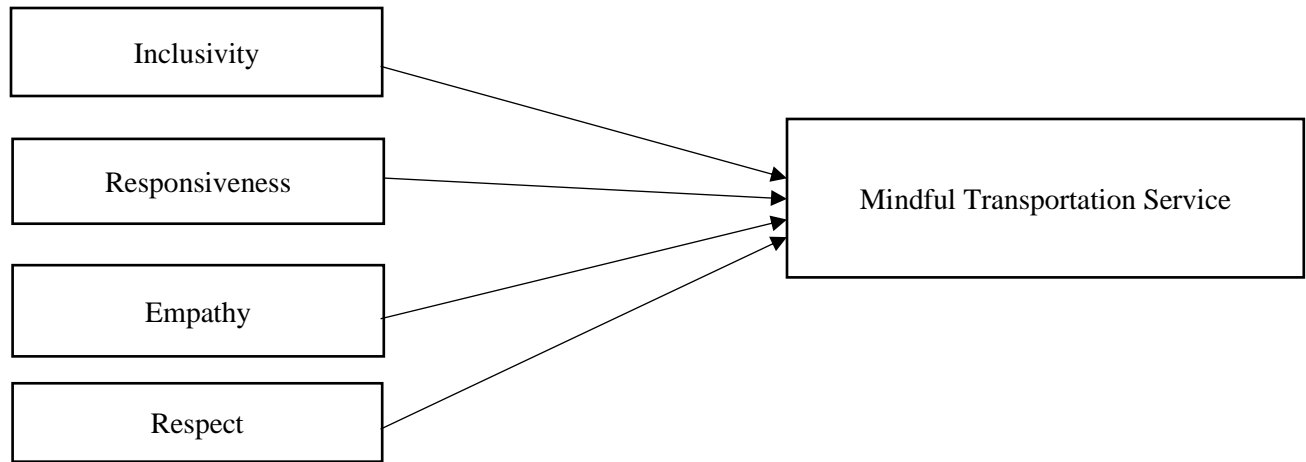
Independent Variables   Dependent Variable

This conceptual paper adopts a theoretical framework informed by a comprehensive literature review to develop insights into mindful transportation services for people with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia. The methodology emphasizes synthesizing existing research rather than conducting empirical data collection. The literature review includes a systematic exploration of relevant studies related to mindfulness, inclusivity, and the experiences of PWDs in public transportation. By analyzing recent literature from various fields, including social psychology, urban studies, and disability advocacy, the paper identifies prevailing gaps and challenges within current transportation systems. This analysis aims to highlight how mindfulness principles—encompassing awareness, empathy, and responsiveness—can be effectively integrated into the design and delivery of transport services for PWDs. The conceptual framework developed in this study outlines the key components necessary for fostering an inclusive transportation environment. It emphasizes the need for collaboration among stakeholders, including government agencies, transport providers, and disability organizations, to address systemic barriers faced by PWDs. This framework is supported by case studies and examples from countries that have successfully implemented mindful transportation initiatives. By drawing on these models, the paper proposes actionable strategies that transport providers can adopt to enhance accessibility, responsiveness, and respect for PWDs. Ultimately, the goal of this methodology is to contribute to the discourse on disability inclusion in transportation and provide a foundation for future empirical research that can validate and refine the proposed framework.

4. Conclusion

This conceptual paper has articulated a framework for developing mindful transportation services that prioritize the needs of people with disabilities (PWDs) in Malaysia. By emphasizing key principles such as inclusivity, empathy, responsiveness, and respect, the proposed framework seeks to address the systemic barriers that PWDs face when accessing public transportation. Despite existing legislation and policies, the current transportation landscape often falls short of meeting the needs of PWDs, resulting in social exclusion and limited mobility. This paper highlights the necessity for a collaborative approach that brings together government agencies, transport providers, and disability organizations to foster an environment where PWDs can navigate public transportation with dignity and ease.

The insights gathered from the literature review underscore the importance of incorporating mindfulness principles into transportation planning and service delivery. By fostering a culture of awareness and understanding among transport staff and stakeholders, the transportation system can become more responsive to the unique challenges faced by PWDs. This framework not only contributes to the ongoing discourse on disability inclusion but also serves as a guiding model for future research and policy initiatives. Transport providers must implement strategies that enhance accessibility and ensure that PWDs are

recognized as integral members of society. Further empirical studies are needed to evaluate the practical application of this framework and to identify effective methods for overcoming barriers to accessibility in public transport systems.

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