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The Self-Efficacy of Special and General Education Teachers in Implementing Inclusive Education in Greek Secondary Education

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Abstract: Teachers' self-efficacy is important as it affects their views on their ability to teach. In special education, self-efficacy is particularly critical because it helps teachers understand and assist students with special educational needs (SEND). The main objective of the current study was to examine special and general education teachers' self-efficacy for inclusive practices at Greek secondary education schools and how teachers' age, gender, teaching experience, and training affect their self-efficacy for inclusive practices. The current research is primary, quantitative, correlational, between and within groups, and has a non-experimental design. A sample was conducted by 265 general and special education teachers. The Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale was used to measure teachers' perceived self-efficacy to implement inclusive classroom practices. Results indicated that teachers of special education presented higher efficacy in using inclusive instructions, collaborating, and dealing with disruptive behaviors. The training was considered a significant factor that affected attitudes of self-efficacy towards inclusive practices. Demographic characteristics, such as age and gender, do not seem to be significant factors in the formation of self-efficacy towards inclusive practices, while the effect of teaching experience in special education was statistically significant on all components of the self-efficacy scale.

Keywords: self-efficacy; teachers; inclusive practices; Greek secondary schools; special education; general education



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1. Introduction

Self-efficacy refers to an individual's perception of his or her power to bring about the desired outcomes and circumstances in life. A person's beliefs affect their thinking and behavior, as well as the decisions they make, the objectives they pursue, and the actions they perform [1]. According to the above definition, the self-efficacy of educators is critical for effective teaching. It is defined as a teacher's set of beliefs regarding his or her ability and capacity to educate and influence students' conduct and goals, regardless of external influences or impediments [2,3].

The self-efficacy of teachers in implementing inclusive education is a complex subject. It is a multidimensional phenomenon with a range of dimensions [4,5]. Thus, depending on the studies, the measuring instrument, and the focus of the research, it usually ranges from three to six dimensions [6]. The dimensions are related to classroom management, teaching, motivation, student participation, and collaboration with colleagues and parents [7–9]. Teachers' self-efficacy is shaped by four main sources of influence: personal experiences, role models, verbal or social persuasion, and physical and emotional stimulation [1,2,10–13]. Teachers' self-efficacy is also related to external factors, such as wage, job benefits, professional development, employment status, safe work environment, and inherent rewards, such as satisfaction with meeting goals, recognition of their abilities, prosperity, and commitment to their stay in teaching [14].

Teachers with high self-efficacy beliefs can plan and organize effective teaching, set specific, attainable goals, and have high expectations [13,15,16]. When teaching, they use body language, are more expressive, avoid teacher-centered teaching, and guide their classroom successfully, adopting student-centered methods while providing appropriate feedback and guidance to their students. They form positive relationships with their immediate work environment (colleagues, school principal, parents) so that the school, as a whole, through a positive communication framework, contributes to the promotion of learning [17].

Teachers with a low sense of self-efficacy, on the other hand, are pessimistic, have low self-esteem, experience stress, are unable to fulfill their teaching tasks, are less organized and systematic, are strict, critical, and impose external control over the classroom [8]. Furthermore, the aforementioned teachers believe that they can only make a limited number of interventions to include a student with special learning needs in a conventional classroom. At the same time, a situation of low self-efficacy can lead teachers to a state of avoidance, i.e., to prefer to place the child in a special school [18].

Teachers' perceived self-efficacy in managing students with disabilities is closely related to teachers' knowledge of specific disorders, physical or mental, and their attitudes toward students with SEND [12]. It is also related to the knowledge of learning theories, the curriculum, the subjects, the use of supervisory material, the correct use of time, the self-evaluation and feedback of the teaching practice, but also to the successful management of the classroom liquidity [19]. Still, it is strongly related to Rotter's control theory [20] for the internal (TLC) versus external (RSA) control point. Teachers with internal control believe that they can effectively teach students with reduced motivation (teaching effectiveness), while teachers with external control believe that the environment exceeds their teaching abilities (general teaching effectiveness) [3].

The global drive for inclusive education has influenced research into the self-efficacy of inclusive classroom teachers [5,18,21,22]. This increases the interest in what is required of the teachers of these classes and tries to measure their self-efficacy through specific questions, which can be factored in predicting self-efficacy [7].

As for possible predictors for inclusive education teachers' self-efficacy, Sharma et al. [23] found that majoring in special education is a significant predictor. The Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices (TEIP) scale, developed by Sharma et al. [24], was used to measure teachers' perceived self-efficacy to implement inclusive classroom practices. The TEIP scale (18 items) includes three domains that measure efficacy in managing behavior (EFMB subscale), efficacy in inclusive instruction (EFII subscale), and efficacy in collaboration (EFC subscale). The analysis showed that teachers' perceptions of self-efficacy can affect students' learning in an inclusive learning environment. The interesting research of this study is that the main result did not focus so much on the pedagogical approaches nor on the ability to manage students' behavior, but mainly on the sense of effectiveness in working with other teachers, professionals, and parents.

2. Objectives

The main objective of the current study was to examine special and general education teachers' self-efficacy for inclusive practices in Greek secondary education and how teachers' age, gender, teaching experience, and training affect their self-efficacy for inclusive practices. The research questions are formulated below:

- (1) What is special and general education teachers' self-efficacy for inclusive practices in Greek secondary education?
- (2) How do teachers' age, gender, teaching experience, and training affect their self-efficacy for inclusive practices?

3. Method

3.1. Research Design

A primary, quantitative, correlational study between groups in a non-experimental design was accomplished. Primary research is appropriate to examine the perceptions of participants, while quantitative research is chosen because concepts of teachers' efficacy in inclusive practices are measurable [25]. In addition, according to research questions, comparisons between groups are examined, which are accomplished in quantitative research, using statistical methods on numerical data [26]. In quantitative research, results can be generalized to the population of the study if the sampling error is small [27]. The non-experimental design was chosen because research aims to examine differences between groups, without considering the effects of other factors [28].

3.2. Sample

According to Table A1 (see Appendix A), the sample was conducted by 265 teachers, almost equally distributed to teachers of general (49.4%, $n = 131$) and special education (51.6%, $n = 134$) as well as permanent (45.3%, $n = 120$) and deputy teachers (54.3%, $n = 144$). The majority of the sample are females (74.3%, $n = 197$), over 35 years old (79.2%, $n = 210$), and who do not have a child with special educational needs living at home (9.4%, $n = 25$). Almost half of the teachers (51.9%, $n = 111$) have up to 10 years of experience in general education, while most of them (79.7%, $n = 157$) have 0–5 years of experience in special education. In terms of the employment region, 20.4% ($n = 54$) teach in Central Greece, 15.8% ($n = 42$) in Attica, 11.3% ($n = 30$) in Central Macedonia, and 10.6% ($n = 28$) in the Southern Aegean.

According to Table A2 (see Appendix A), 39.6% ($n = 105$) are philologists, 20.0% ($n = 53$) are science teachers, and 15.1% ($n = 40$) are mathematicians. Considering training, 43.40% ($n = 115$) are holders of a master's degree in special education, 37.70% ($n = 100$) have attended a seminar of at least 300 h in special education, 35.80% ($n = 95$) have attended other seminars, and 38.50% have participated in a conference. A total of 37.4% ($n = 99$) have attended seminars on students with special education needs in undergraduate studies.

3.3. Questionnaire

The questionnaire for the current study consisted of 29 questions and 2 sections. The first section refers to demographic characteristics and, in particular, gender, age, the existence of a child with SEND at home, education level, specialty, and training, employment status, region of teaching, years of teaching experience in general and special education, as well as if they have attended, as part of their undergraduate studies, a course or seminar on the education of students with SEND. The second section involves 18 Likert-type questions from 1 to 6 (1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Disagree somewhat, 4 = Agree somewhat, 5 = Agree, 6 = Strongly agree) of the Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice (TEIP) scale [24]. TEIP includes 3 factors with 6 questions for each factor, which refer to the efficacy of using inclusive instructions, collaborating, and dealing with disruptive behaviors. Teachers needed approximately 5 min to complete the questionnaire. Data were collected using Google forms via random sampling in general administrations of secondary education in Greece [25].

3.4. Data Analysis

IBM SPSS 24 was used to analyze the data. Likert variables were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation M (SD), while nominal variables used percentages and frequencies. An independent sample t -test was used to compare mean differences between two large ($n \geq 30$) independent samples. A one-way ANOVA was used to compare mean differences between 3 or more independent samples that are normally distributed. Post hoc analysis Bonferroni or Games–Howell were used in cases where the one-way ANOVA test indicated statistically significant differences. A Kruskal–Wallis test was used to compare mean ranks for 3 or more independent samples that are not normally distributed. Post hoc

analysis Bonferroni was used in multiple comparisons of cases where the Kruskal–Wallis test was significant. Normality was checked using the Shapiro–Wilk test. Significance was set at 5% [29].

3.5. Reliability

The reliability of data was tested using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient where satisfying values are those greater than 0.7 [30]. According to Table 1, each factor has satisfying reliability ($\alpha \geq 0.773$).

Table 1. Reliability analysis of factors.

Factor	Questions	Cronbach's Alpha
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	5, 6, 10, 14, 15, 18	0.773
Efficacy in collaboration	3, 4, 9, 12, 13, 16	0.780
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	1, 2, 7, 8, 11, 17	0.848

3.6. Ethical Issues

The researcher confirmed all the necessary ethical issues that are related to the nature of research and the psychology of participants [31]. The current topic was accepted by the university of the researcher while the professor supervised the procedure. Teachers were informed about the research aim, that they were to participate voluntarily and anonymously, and that they had the right to withdraw from the procedure or 1 week after the collection of data. The researcher gave his details to the participants in case they wanted to communicate.

4. Results

4.1. Teacher's Efficacy toward Inclusive Education

According to Table 2, teachers presented high efficacy to use inclusive instructions ($M = 4.78$) and in particular to provide an alternate explanation when students are confused ($M = 5.27$) and in particular to provide an alternate explanation when students are confused ($M = 5.27$) and appropriate challenges for very capable students ($M = 4.95$). In addition, they are confident to encourage students to work together in pairs or small groups ($M = 4.86$) and accurately gauge student comprehension of what they have been taught ($M = 4.65$). Furthermore, they can use a variety of assessment strategies ($M = 4.59$) and design learning tasks to accommodate the individual needs of students with disabilities ($M = 4.38$).

Table 2. Efficacy to use inclusive instructions.

Statements	M	SD
I can provide an alternate explanation, or example when students are confused	5.27	0.63
I can provide appropriate challenges for very capable students,	4.95	0.79
I am confident in my ability to get students to work together in pairs or small groups	4.86	0.77
I can accurately gauge student comprehension of what I have taught	4.65	0.72
I can use a variety of assessment strategies (e.g., portfolio assessment, modified tests, performance-based assessment, etc.)	4.59	0.90
I am confident in designing learning tasks so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated	4.38	1.13
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.78	0.57

According to Table 3, in the factor “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions”, the mean value of teachers of general education ($M = 4.58$) was statistically significantly lower ($t(263) = -6.233, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers of special education ($M = 4.99$).

Table 3. Independent sample *t*-test for the factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education between teachers of general and special education.

Factor	General (n = 131)	Special (n = 134)	t	df	p
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.58 (0.57)	4.99 (0.50)	−6.233	263	<0.001
Efficacy in collaboration	4.33 (0.68)	4.75 (0.57)	−5.502	263	<0.001
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.32 (0.64)	4.58 (0.54)	−3.543	263	<0.001

According to Table 4, teachers presented high efficacy in collaboration ($M = 4.54$) and in particular with other professionals in designing educational plans for students with disabilities ($M = 5.07$) as well as working jointly with other professionals and staff to teach students with disabilities in the classroom ($M = 5.06$) and make parents feel comfortable coming to school ($M = 4.82$). In addition, they stated that they can assist families in helping their children do well in school ($M = 4.54$).

Table 4. Efficacy in collaboration.

Statements	M	SD
I can collaborate with other professionals (e.g., itinerant teachers or speech pathologists) in designing educational plans for students with disabilities	5.07	0.78
I can work jointly with other professionals and staff (e.g., psychologists, and other teachers) to teach students with disabilities in the classroom	5.06	0.77
I can make parents feel comfortable coming to school	4.82	0.76
I can assist families in helping their children do well in school	4.54	0.85
I am confident in my ability to get parents involved in school activities for their children with disabilities	3.91	1.16
I am confident in informing others who know little about laws and policies relating to the inclusion of students with disabilities	3.86	1.31
Efficacy in collaboration	4.54	0.66

According to Table 5, in the factor “Efficacy in collaboration” the mean value of teachers of general education ($M = 4.33$) is statistically significantly lower ($t(263) = -5.502$, $p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers of special education ($M = 4.75$).

Table 5. Independent sample *t*-test for the factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education between teachers of general and special education.

Factor	General (n = 131)	Special (n = 134)	t	df	p
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.58 (0.57)	4.99 (0.50)	−6.233	263	<0.001
Efficacy in collaboration	4.33 (0.68)	4.75 (0.57)	−5.502	263	<0.001
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.32 (0.64)	4.58 (0.54)	−3.543	263	<0.001

According to Table 6, teachers presented high efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors ($M = 4.45$) and in particular encouraging children to follow classroom rules ($M = 4.73$), making their expectations clear about student behavior ($M = 4.71$), controlling disruptive behavior in the classroom ($M = 4.51$) and calm a student who is disruptive or noisy ($M = 4.35$).

Table 6. Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors.

Statements	M	SD
I can get children to follow classroom rules	4.73	0.69
I can make my expectations clear about student behavior	4.71	0.74
I can control disruptive behavior in the classroom	4.51	0.75
I can calm a student who is disruptive or noisy	4.35	0.75
I am confident in my ability to prevent disruptive behavior in the classroom before it occurs	4.24	0.83
I am confident when dealing with physically aggressive students	4.19	1.01
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.45	0.60

Finally, according to Table 7, in the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors” the mean value of teachers of general education ($M = 4.32$) is statistically significantly lower ($t(263) = -3.543, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers of special education ($M = 4.58$).

Table 7. Independent sample *t*-test for the factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education between teachers of general and special education.

Factor	General ($n = 131$)	Special ($n = 134$)	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i>
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.58 (0.57)	4.99 (0.50)	-6.233	263	<0.001
Efficacy in collaboration	4.33 (0.68)	4.75 (0.57)	-5.502	263	<0.001
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.32 (0.64)	4.58 (0.54)	-3.543	263	<0.001

4.2. Effect of Demographic Factors and Teaching Experience on Self-Efficacy toward Inclusive Practices

The use of ANOVA and Kruskal–Wallis test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with age (see Table A3 in Appendix A) revealed that the effect of age was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($H(5) = 4.713, p = 0.452$), “Efficacy in collaboration” ($F(5,259) = 0.652, p = 0.660$), and “Efficacy in dealing disruptive behaviors” ($F(5,259) = 1.071, p = 0.377$).

An independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with gender (see Table A4 in Appendix A) revealed that the effect of gender was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($t(263) = -0.203, p = 0.839$), “Efficacy in collaboration” ($t(263) = 1.000, p = 0.318$), and “Efficacy in dealing disruptive behaviors” ($t(263) = 1.633, p = 0.104$).

ANOVA and Kruskal–Wallis tests for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with teaching experience in general and special education (see Tables A5 and A6 in Appendix A) revealed that the effect of teaching experience in general education was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($F(5,208) = 1.652, p = 0.104$), “Efficacy in collaboration” ($H(5) = 10.328, p = 0.066$), and “Efficacy in dealing disruptive behaviors” ($F(5,208) = 1.0215, p = 0.303$). Furthermore, the effect of teaching experience in special education was statistically significant on the factor “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($F(3,193) = 5.794, p = 0.001$). In particular, the mean value of teachers with 0–1 years of teaching experience in special education ($M = 4.71$) was statistically significantly lower ($p < 0.001$) than the mean of those with 6–10 years of teaching experience in special education ($M = 5.13$).

In addition, the effect of teaching experience in special education was statistically significant on the factor “Efficacy in collaboration” ($H(3) = 25.464, p < 0.001$). In particular, the mean rank of the participants with 0–1 years of teaching experience in special education ($M.R. = 78.95$) was statistically significantly lower than the mean rank of those with 2–5 ($M.R. = 108.48, \text{adj. } p = 0.008$), 6–10 ($M.R. = 126.08, \text{adj. } p < 0.001$) and 11–20 years of experience ($M.R. = 140.60, \text{adj. } p = 0.007$). Finally, the effect of teaching experience in special

education was statistically significant on the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors” ($F(3,193) = 2.832, p = 0.040$). In particular, the mean value of the teachers with 0–1 years of teaching experience in special education ($M = 4.41$) was statistically significantly lower ($p = 0.007$) than the mean value of those with 6–10 years of teaching experience in special education ($M = 4.74$).

4.3. Effect of Training on Self-Efficacy towards Inclusive Practices

In this section, we used an independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with training (doctorate or master’s degree or attending a seminar at least 300 h or participation in a conference) in special education, in educational sciences, or another scientific field (see Tables A7–A11 in Appendix A).

More specifically, for the factor “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” the mean value of teachers who are trained in special education ($M = 4.92$) is statistically significantly higher ($t(263) = 4.830, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers who are not trained in special education ($M = 4.59$). In addition, in the factor “Efficacy in collaboration” the mean value of teachers who are trained in special education ($M = 4.70$) is statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 4.746, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers who are not ($M = 4.32$). Furthermore, in the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors” the mean value of teachers who are trained in special education ($M = 4.55$) is statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 3.213, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers who are not ($M = 4.32$).

The effect of training in educational sciences was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($t(263) = 0.855, p = 0.393$), “Efficacy in collaboration” ($t(162.961) = -0.115, p = 0.909$), and “Efficacy in dealing disruptive behaviors” ($t(263) = 0.228, p = 0.820$). Moreover, the effect of training in another scientific field was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($t(263) = 0.360, p = 0.719$) and “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors” ($t(263) = 1.076, p = 0.283$). However, in the factor “Efficacy in collaboration” the mean value of teachers who are trained in another scientific field ($M = 4.67$) is statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 2.017, p = 0.045$) than the mean value of teachers who are not ($M = 4.49$).

The effect of training in another seminar was not statistically significant on factors “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” ($t(263) = 0.779, p = 0.437$) and “Efficacy in collaboration” ($t(263) = 1.200, p = 0.231$). However, in the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors”, the mean value of teachers who are trained in another seminar ($M = 4.57$) was statistically significantly higher ($t(263) = 2.369, p = 0.019$) than the mean value of teachers who are not ($M = 4.39$). In addition, in the factor “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions” the mean value of teachers who have participated in a conference ($M = 4.95$) is statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 3.716, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 4.68$). In addition, in the factor “Efficacy in collaboration”, the mean value of teachers who have participated in a conference ($M = 4.70$) was statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 3.075, p = 0.002$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 4.45$). Furthermore, in the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors”, the mean value of teachers who have participated in a conference ($M = 4.65$) was statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 4.331, p < 0.001$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 4.33$).

Finally, according to Table 8, in the factor “Efficacy to use inclusive instructions”, the mean value of teachers who have at least one kind of training ($M = 4.80$) was statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 2.234, p = 0.026$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 4.31$). In addition, in the factor “Efficacy in collaboration”, the mean value of teachers who have at least one kind of training ($M = 4.56$) was statistically significant higher ($t(263) = 2.114, p = 0.035$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 4.02$). Furthermore, in the factor “Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors”, the mean value of teachers who have at least one kind of training ($M = 4.47$) was statistically significant higher ($t(7.568) = 4.523, p = 0.002$) than the mean value of teachers who have not ($M = 3.95$).

Table 8. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with at least one kind of training.

Factor	Training Yes (<i>n</i> = 258)	Training No (<i>n</i> = 7)	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.80 (0.57)	4.31 (0.61)	2.234	263	0.026
Efficacy in collaboration	4.56 (0.66)	4.02 (0.40)	2.114	263	0.035
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.47 (0.61)	3.95 (0.28)	4.523	7.568	0.002

5. Discussion

The current study aimed to examine the special and general education teachers' self-efficacy for inclusive practices in Greek secondary education schools and how teachers' age, gender, teaching experience, and training affect their self-efficacy for inclusive practices. Current research is primary, quantitative, correlational, between and within groups, in a non-experimental design. The sample was conducted by 265 teachers, almost equally distributed to teachers of general or special education and permanent or deputy teachers. The majority of teachers are females, over 35 years old, have 0–5 years of experience in special education, and are currently working in Central Greece, Attica, Central Macedonia, or Southern Aegean as philologists, science teachers, and mathematicians. Almost 4 out of 10 are holders of a master's degree in special education, have attended a seminar on students with special educational needs in undergraduate studies or a seminar of at least 300 h in special education or another seminar, and have participated in a conference. Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice Scale presented satisfying reliability ($\alpha \geq 0.773$). An independent sample *t*-test, one-way ANOVA, and Kruskal–Wallis test were used with a significance of 5%. The necessary ethical issues were observed.

Teachers in the current study presented high efficacy to use inclusive instructions. In particular, they were capable of providing an alternate explanation when students are confused and appropriate challenges for very capable students. In addition, they indicated high capability to encourage students to work together in pairs or small groups and accurately gauge student comprehension of what they have been taught as well as to use a variety of assessment strategies and design learning tasks so that the individual needs of students with disabilities are accommodated.

Due to the fact that teachers must be prepared for inclusive classrooms, teacher educators often question if potential professional teachers demonstrate a high level of efficacy when it comes to using inclusive teaching to adopt inclusive practices. Thus, teachers need to have skills in managing proper classrooms where the needs of all students can be met to successfully teach in inclusive classrooms [32]. Modern teacher education programs aim to prepare teachers to teach in inclusive diverse classrooms. Teacher educators work to enhance the curriculum by including theoretical underpinnings, methodology, and content, in addition to genuine and practical experiences [33]. By using, properly, inclusive instructions, teachers can manage the inclusive classroom by motivating and engaging students [9].

Furthermore, high levels of efficacy in collaboration appeared. Teachers stated that they can collaborate with other professionals in designing educational plans for students with disabilities, work jointly with other professionals and staff to teach students with disabilities in the classroom, make parents feel comfortable coming to school, and assist families in helping their children do well in school. According to several studies [34,35], there is a favorable association between self-efficacy and collaboration. Tschannen–Moran and Hoy [3] indicated that cooperating with colleagues and parents provides the right motivation both to students and their parents and makes the teachers feel efficient about the educational practices they use. They must also have the competence to work with adults such as parents and allied health professionals, to achieve the best learning outcomes [36].

However, collaboration is often described in terms of instructors' propensity to cooperate rather than actual cooperation [5].

Teachers indicated a high ability to deal with disruptive behaviors. In particular, they expressed the capability to get children to follow classroom rules, make their expectations clear about student behavior, control disruptive behavior in the classroom, and calm a student who is disruptive or noisy. Nougaret et al. [32] support that teachers need not only to have skills in managing proper classrooms where the needs of all students can be met, but also to create classes where all students feel safe and do not display any disruptive behavior.

The main research aim of the study was to compare the self-efficacy towards inclusive education among teachers of general and special education. Results indicated that teachers of special education presented higher efficacy to use inclusive instructions, collaborating, and dealing with disruptive behaviors.

Similarly, Sarıçam and Sakızlı [37] agree with the view that the sense of self-efficacy is higher in special educators compared to teachers of general education. In addition, according to Sharma et al. [24], special education teachers are supposed to present higher self-efficacy to use inclusive instructions, collaborate, and deal with disruptive behaviors, since special education teacher programs have the main responsibility to ensure that new teachers are properly prepared to manage inclusive classes. In addition, Gebhardt et al. [4] demonstrated that special education teachers, teaching in special schools, have higher self-efficacy than regular teachers in mainstream settings.

The study revealed that age, gender, and teaching experience in general education were not significant factors in shaping self-efficacy towards inclusive practices. Teachers, regardless of age, gender, and teaching experience in general education, presented similar levels of self-efficacy towards inclusive practices. However, teachers with 0–1 year of experience in special education presented lower efficacy to use inclusive instructions, collaborating, and dealing with disruptive behaviors than teachers with higher experience in special education.

Many types of research have revealed that demographic characteristics do not seem to be significant in self-efficacy toward inclusive practices [8,21,38,39]. According to Tschannen–Moran and Hoy [8], "*demographic variables have typically not been strong predictors of the efficacy beliefs of teachers*" (p. 952). More specifically in their research which included teachers who taught reading and spelling lessons, no difference was found between the gender and the degree of self-efficacy of the trainers. Regarding the age of educators, research [21,38,39] has found no correlation between age and self-efficacy.

In addition, Tschannen–Moran and Hoy [3] and Wilson et al. [40] showed that gender has no significant effect on teachers' self-efficacy. Similarly, in a study by Shaukat and Iqbal [41] was found that there is no gender correlation in the scales of teaching strategies and student involvement while male teachers tend to manage the classroom better. Similar results were revealed by a recent study in Greece [21] where researchers found that there is no statistically significant difference, regarding the effect of gender, on the averages of the subscales of didactic self-efficacy.

Nevertheless, higher self-efficacy is related to experience and education, and it is empowered by the contact they have with the children, which means that the more they have worked with children with special educational needs, the more self-efficacy they present [42]. A study by Tschannen–Moran and Hoy [8] showed differentiation between young teachers and teachers with more teaching experience. In particular, newly appointed teachers had lower teaching self-efficacy than more experienced teachers who had four or more years of service. Similarly, a study by George et al. [43] conducted on teachers in the first year of teaching and later in the same sample of teachers in the sixth year of service in schools found an increase in teachers' beliefs about their effectiveness.

The training was considered a significant factor that affected attitudes on self-efficacy towards inclusive practices. Teachers who are trained in special education, have at least one kind of training, or have participated in a conference presented higher levels of efficacy

to use inclusive instructions, collaborate, and deal with disruptive behaviors. This is also supported by Sharma et al. [23], who strongly believe that the educators of special education teachers should implement all the practices the teachers need to manage an inclusive class. In addition, training in pedagogical sciences has been found to play a significant role in teachers' perceptions of inclusive education. Training programs that facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills for inclusive education, increase their positive perceptions of inclusive education, and thus the levels of their self-efficacy [44–46].

6. Limitations—Future Research

Results of the current study can be generalized for teachers that are females who have 0–5 years of experience in special education and are currently working in Central Greece, Attica, Central Macedonia, or Southern Aegean as philologists, science teachers, and mathematicians. In addition, results can be generalized for teachers who are holders of master's degrees in special education or have attended a teaching seminar for students with SEND during their undergraduate studies, or have attended a seminar of at least 300 h in special education. Another limitation of the study is that there was low concept validity in the TEIP questionnaire using factor analysis. Furthermore, the sample size was not appropriate to use parametric tests in each case. It is recommended that new research uses stratified sampling to generalize the results for the population of the study. In addition, the sample size should be calculated according to the population size, using mathematical formulas [25].

7. Conclusions

Teachers in the current study presented high efficacy to use inclusive instructions to collaborate and deal with disruptive behaviors. Self-efficacy was higher for teachers of special education, who are trained in special education, have more than 1-year experience in special education, have at least one kind of training, and have participated in a conference. Demographic characteristics, such as age and gender did not seem to be significant factors in the formation of self-efficacy towards inclusive practices, while the effect of teaching experience in special education was statistically significant on all components of the self-efficacy scale. Finally, teachers who are trained in another scientific field presented a higher ability to collaborate, while teachers who have trained in another seminar are more capable to deal with disruptive behaviors. This finding reinforces the need for more teacher training and the development of their confidence in the implementation of inclusive practices in secondary schools. In addition, policymakers could consider developing more training programs for in-service teachers to help them get acquainted with the most effective inclusive teaching practices [3,5,47]. More organized research is recommended for proper generalization of the results.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Demographic and job characteristics.

Variable	Category	N	f%
Gender	Male	68	25.7
	Female	197	74.3
Age	22–30	11	4.2
	31–35	44	16.6
	36–40	55	20.8
	41–45	45	17.0
	46–50	37	14.0
	51 plus	73	27.5
	Having a child with special educational needs living at home	Yes	25
	No	240	90.6
This year I teach at	General Education	131	49.4
	Special Education—Parallel Support	86	32.5
	Special Education—Integration Class	48	18.1
	Eastern Macedonia and Thrace	12	4.5
	Central Macedonia	30	11.3
	West Macedonia	21	7.9
	Epirus	12	4.5
	Thessaly	10	3.8
	Ionian Islands	9	3.4
	West Greece	11	4.2
	Central Greece	54	20.4
	Attica	42	15.8
	Peloponnese	21	7.9
The region in which you work	North Aegean	5	1.9
	Southern Aegean	28	10.6
	Crete	10	3.8
	Permanent	120	45.3
	Deputy	144	54.3
	Hourly wage	1	0.4
	0–1	62	29.0
Years of teaching experience in General Education	2–5	28	13.1
	6–10	21	9.8
	11–15	26	12.1
	16–20	24	11.2
	Over 20 years	53	24.8
Years of teaching experience in Special Education (Parallel Support, Integration classes, Special schools, KESY)	0–1	92	46.7
	2–5	65	33.0
	6–10	30	15.2
	11–15	8	4.1
	16–20	2	1.0

Table A2. Specialty and training.

Variable	Category	N	f%
Specialty	PE01 Theologian	11	4.2
	PE02 Philologist	105	39.6
	PE03 Mathematician	40	15.1
	PE04 Science teacher	53	20.0
	PE05 French language teacher	3	1.1
	PE06 English language teacher	7	2.6
	PE07 German language teacher	2	0.8
	PE08 Art's teacher	1	0.4
	PE09 Economist teacher	1	0.4
	PE10 Sociologist teacher	5	1.9
	PE11 Sports teacher	10	3.8
Seminar on students with special educational needs in undergraduate studies	Other (PE12.01—PE91.02)	27	10.2
	Yes	99	37.4
Training	No	166	62.6
	Doctorate in Special Education	2	0.80
	Doctorate in Educational Sciences	6	2.30
	Doctorate in another scientific field	7	2.60
	Master's degree in Special Education	115	43.40
	Master's degree in Educational Sciences	41	15.50
	Master's degree in another scientific field	54	20.40
	Seminar \geq 300 h in Special Education	100	37.70
	Seminar \geq 300 h in Educational Sciences	61	23.00
	Seminar \geq 300 h in another scientific field	33	12.50
	Other Seminar-Training	95	35.80
Participation in a conference	No Training	102	38.50
		7	2.60

Table A3. ANOVA and Kruskal–Wallis test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with age.

Factor	22–30 (n = 11)	31–35 (n = 44)	36–40 (n = 55)	41–45 (n = 45)	46–50 (n = 37)	51 Plus (n = 73)	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	176.55	134.78	126.85	136.02	122.78	133.32	0.452 **
Efficacy in collaboration	4.88 (0.45)	4.55 (0.56)	4.54 (0.65)	4.55 (0.85)	4.55 (0.66)	4.49 (0.64)	0.660 *
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.41 (0.43)	4.44 (0.59)	4.33 (0.63)	4.41 (0.79)	4.51 (0.62)	4.56 (0.46)	0.377 *

* Based on the ANOVA test, using M (SD). ** Based on Kruskal–Wallis test using mean rank.

Table A4. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with gender.

Factor	Male (n = 68)	Female (n = 197)	t	df	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.77 (0.64)	4.79 (0.55)	−0.203	263	0.839
Efficacy in collaboration	4.61 (0.66)	4.52 (0.66)	1.000	263	0.318
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.56 (0.52)	4.42 (0.63)	1.633	263	0.104

Table A5. ANOVA and Kruskal–Wallis test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with teaching experience in general education.

Factor	0–1 (n = 62)	2–5 (n = 28)	6–10 (n = 21)	11–15 (n = 26)	16–20 (n = 24)	Over 20 (n = 53)	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.91 (0.59)	4.76 (0.68)	5.02 (0.53)	4.72 (0.71)	4.59 (0.63)	4.71 (0.52)	0.104 *
Efficacy in collaboration	116.19	115.46	130.60	108.60	87.08	92.69	0.066 **
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.44 (0.63)	4.34 (0.86)	4.62 (0.49)	4.31 (0.63)	4.35 (0.63)	4.56 (0.49)	0.303 *

* Based on ANOVA test using M (SD). ** Based on Kruskal–Wallis test using mean rank.

Table A6. ANOVA and Kruskal–Wallis test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with teaching experience in special education.

Factor	0–1 (n = 92)	2–5 (n = 65)	6–10 (n = 30)	11–20 (n = 10)	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.71 (0.65)	4.92 (0.45)	5.13 (0.42)	5.10 (0.42)	0.001 *
Efficacy in collaboration	78.95	108.48	126.08	140.60	<0.001 **
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.41 (0.67)	4.56 (0.57)	4.74 (0.38)	4.72 (0.45)	0.040 *

* Based on ANOVA test using M (SD). ** Based on Kruskal–Wallis test using mean rank.

Table A7. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with training in special education.

Factor	Special Education Yes (n = 154)	Special Education No (n = 111)	t	df	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.92 (0.53)	4.59 (0.58)	4.830	263	<0.001
Efficacy in collaboration	4.70 (0.60)	4.32 (0.68)	4.746	263	<0.001
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.55 (0.54)	4.32 (0.67)	3.213	263	<0.001

Table A8. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with training in educational sciences.

Factor	Educational Sciences Yes (n = 91)	Educational Sciences No (n = 174)	t	df	p-Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.83 (0.59)	4.76 (0.57)	0.855	0.263	0.393
Efficacy in collaboration	4.54 (0.72)	4.55 (0.63)	−0.115	162.961	0.909
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.47 (0.65)	4.45 (0.58)	0.228	0.263	0.820

Table A9. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with training in another scientific field.

Factor	Training in Another Scientific Field Yes (<i>n</i> = 79)	Training in Another Scientific Field No (<i>n</i> = 186)	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.80 (0.64)	4.78 (0.54)	0.360	263	0.719
Efficacy in collaboration	4.67 (0.69)	4.49 (0.64)	2.017	263	0.045
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.51 (0.63)	4.43 (0.59)	1.076	263	0.283

Table A10. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with training in another seminar.

Factor	Training in Another Seminar Yes (<i>n</i> = 95)	Training in Another Seminar No (<i>n</i> = 170)	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.82 (0.55)	4.76 (0.59)	0.779	263	0.437
Efficacy in collaboration	4.61 (0.64)	4.51 (0.67)	1.200	263	0.231
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.57 (0.58)	4.39 (0.61)	2.369	263	0.019

Table A11. Independent sample *t*-test for factors of self-efficacy towards inclusive education with participation in a conference.

Factor	Participation in a Conference Yes (<i>n</i> = 102)	Participation in a Conference No (<i>n</i> = 163)	<i>t</i>	df	<i>p</i> -Value
Efficacy to use inclusive instructions	4.95 (0.53)	4.68 (0.58)	3.716	263	<0.001
Efficacy in collaboration	4.70 (0.68)	4.45 (0.64)	3.075	263	0.002
Efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors	4.65 (0.58)	4.33 (0.59)	4.331	263	<0.001

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