

# FACTOR ASSOCIATED WITH TEACHER EFFICACY TOWARD INCLUSIVE PRACTICE IN INDONESIA: THE ROLE OF PERCEIVED SCHOOL SUPPORT AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

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## ABSTRACT

Numerous countries have implemented inclusive education to enhance students' special needs participation in education, including Indonesia. Each stakeholder involved has their responsibilities to create successful inclusive practice. However, many obstacles emerge in implementing inclusive education due to teachers' belief that they cannot teach special needs children, which is defined as teacher efficacy in inclusive practice. This study investigated the factor associated with teacher efficacy in inclusive practice, specifically in Indonesia's inclusive primary school. Through quantitative analysis, this research aims to find out the relationship between perceived school support and demographic factors, such as gender, age, type of school, teaching experience, level of education, and training experience towards teacher efficacy. The measurement used in this study were PSSIE (Perceived School Support for Inclusive Education) (Ahmmed, 2013) and TEIP (Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice) (Sharma et al., 2012). Using the convenience sampling technique, 324 inclusive primary school teachers from 15 provinces in Indonesia participated in this study. The result shows that perceived school support have a significant and positive relationship with teacher efficacy in inclusive practice ( $F(1, 322) = 129.978, p < .001, R^2 = .54$ ). In terms of demographic factors, teacher efficacy is associated with age, type of school, level of education, and training experience. It can be concluded that teachers will have efficacy in teaching inclusive classrooms if they receive adequate support from the school, both physically and emotionally. In addition, middle-aged teachers, who work in inclusive private schools, have a high educational qualification, and have received training tend to have more efficacy in inclusive teaching.

**Keywords:** Teacher Efficacy, Perceived School Support, Inclusive Education

## 1. Introduction

To successfully create equality of education, as stated in Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), every country should encourage inclusive education. Inclusive education is a system where the school accepts and accommodates the needs of children with special needs to learn alongside regular students [1]. Along with the emergence of the Salamanca Statement in 1994, the urgency to implement inclusive education has been spread to most countries globally. The system is trying to shift from segregation education, where all children with special needs are

placed in one special school, to inclusive education. In Indonesia, the regulation about inclusive education implementation is written in Ministry of National Education Regulation No. 70 the year 2009 [2]. All schools in most provinces are mandated to accept children with special needs, including but not limited to children with physical, emotional, mental, intellectual, and social disabilities [3].

Through inclusive education, children with special needs will receive the benefit and the regular students. Previous research has shown that inclusive education brings numerous positive impacts. Firstly, students with special needs are proven to have more academic achievements and social skills in an inclusive setting [4] [5]. They are more likely to improve in language development, appropriate behavior, and social interaction with peers. Secondly, an inclusive setting could also encourage parents with special needs children to have more positive aspirations toward their children [6]. Parents would see their children mingling with other regular students. Thus they would believe their children can slowly adjust to the real world. Thirdly, both children with special needs and regular students will have a more positive self-concept [7]. With all mentioned studies, it can be seen that an inclusive education system is pivotal to be implemented.

The successful implementation of an inclusive system can not be separated from the involvement of stakeholders. Principals, teachers, parents, counselors/psychologists, and the community are responsible for creating a safe environment and embracing the inclusive system in schools [8]. However, to accommodate students' needs in class, the teacher holds an essential role in ensuring students can achieve their targeted goals. Teachers who work in inclusive teaching face various challenges, including modifying the learning program, managing classroom behavior, and communicating children's needs and progress to parents [9]. Based on the educational level, teachers in inclusive primary schools have more concern than any other class. They must teach basic literacy and numeracy skills to children with different abilities and manage inappropriate classroom behavior [10].

Teachers in inclusive schools are responsible for teaching and providing different teaching strategies to support student's academic and social development. Subsequently, they are expected to believe in themselves to provide the best methods to make positive outcomes called teacher efficacy. Teacher efficacy is a belief about teacher's capabilities to conduct several actions that can result in desired outcomes of students' engagement and learning, apart from the conditions of the child (i.e., difficult or unmotivated) [11]. The teacher who has high efficacy might affect their teaching behavior, goals, and positive aspiration. According to [12], the context of teacher efficacy is highly dependable on the specific task that they possess. In inclusive education, teacher efficacy is needed to make them believe in teaching children with special needs and providing suitable learning accommodation. Teachers with high teacher efficacy in the inclusive classroom also tend to have a positive attitude toward inclusive education, improve work satisfaction, and lower bias in children with special needs in class [13].

Teacher efficacy is influenced by several factors, including external factors and internal factors. One of the external factors is the support that they get from their surroundings. Teachers who received support from the school tend to positively perceive their job [14] and willing to accept children with special needs in their inclusive classroom [15]. Hence, their efficacy will be improved as well. Previous qualitative research has shown that teacher efficacy is related to perceived school support [16][17][18]. It was demonstrated by the teacher's statement that said the more support they receive, the more they believe in their competency to teach an inclusive classroom. However, there is no further research that shows the effect of perceived school support on teacher efficacy. Perceived school support is defined as a teacher's perception of comprehensive support received from principals, other teachers, parents, and communities [19]. The support in training still lacks in Indonesian inclusive

schools, and implementing inclusive teaching practice not optimum [10]. Hence, it is vital to find out the effect of perceived school support on teacher efficacy.

Besides external factors, previous research also shows the impact of internal factors on teachers' efficacy, including demographic variables. Research on gender factors affecting teacher efficacy is still inconsistent. Pas et al. [20] found no gender differences in the level of teacher efficacy for teachers in inclusive schools. Likewise, Moalosi and Forchheh [21] stated that female teachers did show better performance than male teachers in engaging students in activities. However, there were no differences found in teaching strategies and classroom management not to affect teacher efficacy.

Meanwhile, research in Asian countries found that teacher efficacy in women is higher than in men, one of which is the stereotype that women are more suitable to work in education [22]. There is limited research on the relationship between teacher's age and teacher efficacy in inclusive practice. However, in the general context, it was proven that age also positively correlates with teacher efficacy [23]. The older the teacher, the more teacher efficacy they have. Teachers with a higher education level tend to have high teacher efficacy because they have more knowledge and training related to implementing inclusive teaching [24]. However, several studies have shown the opposite, namely that the level of education, including high school, undergraduate, and postgraduate graduates, is not related to teacher efficacy [20].

Other demographic variables that are assumed to affect teacher efficacy are teaching experience, training experience, and the type of school where they work. According to previous research, teacher efficacy will increase with increasing experience [12][25][24]. Teaching experience in inclusive teachers will affect teacher efficacy because the longer the teacher teaches, the more knowledge determining excellent or poor teaching for children with special needs and regular students [26]. Through this, teachers will have higher efficacy in education. Teachers who have more ample teaching experience will consider inclusive classrooms as a solution to increasing regular students' tolerance of children with special needs and the social and cognitive development of children with special needs [27]. Sharma et al. [28] conducted research related to teacher efficacy and found that teacher training related to inclusive education can improve teacher efficacy. Likewise, Forlin and Sin [29] found that teacher training held by schools influences self-efficacy in teachers. Teachers will feel more confident in teaching children with special needs in an inclusive class when they have attended related training. When teachers are confident, teacher efficacy in conducting and managing the class will also increase [30]. Concerning the type of schools, limited research explains teacher efficacy in inclusive public and private school differences. Purbani [31], in her qualitative study, finds that teachers in public schools have not shown effective inclusive practice. They tend to be influenced by other stakeholders' perspectives who do not react positively to the system and the children with special needs. In contrast, teachers in private inclusive schools have more empathy, tolerance, and willingness to give all children accommodation regardless of background [31].

The current study is aimed to find out the factors associated with teacher efficacy. According to the literature review mentioned earlier, two main factors affect teacher efficacy: external factor (perceived school support) and internal factor (demographic variables including age, gender, education level, teaching experience, training experience, and type of school). The hypothesis in this study is perceived school support and demographic variables influence teacher efficacy. This study will collect data from an inclusive primary school teacher in Indonesia regardless of the provinces where they employed or reside.

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Participant

Participants in this study were inclusive primary schools in Indonesia. The subjects are selected using convenience sampling and distributed through online form and post due to the pandemic Covid-19. There are three main requirements for a participant to be included in this study, namely (1) is a teacher who teaches in inclusive public primary school or inclusive private primary; (2) teach children with special needs and regular students in the same class; (3) is a classroom teacher or specialist. There are 388 questionnaires collected, but only 324 can be further processed after the screening process. Teachers who participated in this study are from 15 provinces in Indonesia, mainly from Java and Bali. Table 1 shows the demographic data of the participants.

*Table 1 Participant Demographics Data*

Demographic Variables		N	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	100	30,9%
	Female	224	69,1%
Age	≤30 years	157	48,5%
	31-40 years	94	29%
	41-50 years	44	13,6%
	≥51 years	29	9%
Education Level	High School	17	5,2%
	Diploma	7	2,2%
	Bachelor Degree	270	83,3%
	Master Degree	30	9,3%
Teaching Experience in Inclusive Setting	≤5 years	251	77,5%
	6-10 years	37	11,4%
	11-15 years	22	6,8%
	≥16 years	14	4,3%
Inclusive Training Experience	Yes	148	45,7%
	No	176	54,3%

## 3. Measure

### 3.1. Teacher Efficacy – TEIP

The measurement of teacher efficacy in this study uses Teacher Efficacy in Inclusive Practice (TEIP) by Sharma et al. [28]. TEIP consists of three components: efficacy in inclusive instruction, efficacy in collaboration, and efficacy in managing behavior. To use this measurement, TEIP has to be translated and adapted into the Indonesian context first. Previous research has adapted TEIP into the Indonesian language and context [32]. Hence this study used the adapted version. TEIP has 18 items and measured by the Likert scale (4 points), with one (1) is "strongly disagree" to 4 with "strongly agree". An example of the items is "I am confident with my capability to encourage students in doing activities/tasks that I give". This measurement has a good item validity with a coefficient of 0.06-0.61 and a good reliability score with an alpha coefficient of 0.77.

### 3.2. Perceived School Support – PSSIE

Perceived School Support in Inclusive Education (PSSIE) by Ahmmed [19] was used in this study as a measurement for perceived school support. This scale consists of 8 items representing different types of support, including support from the principal, coworkers, parents of regular children, parents of children with special needs, school committee, training support, and availability of resources. PSSIE also has been translated and adapted into the Indonesian language in this study. The responses are divided into 5 points Likert scale from 1 "not at all" to 5 "very adequate". The example from this measurement is "I get the needed support from principal to implement inclusive education in the classroom level". The adapted version of PSSIE has an excellent reliability score with an alpha coefficient of 0.88 and item validity in the range of 0.51 to 0.89.

### 3.3. Demographic Variable

This study collects information regarding teachers' demographic variables through a personal detail section. However, the name is not compulsory to maintain participant's anonymity. Participants have to fill out their gender, age, education level, and teaching experience in inclusive classrooms (in years). In addition, participants also need to tick one of the options of training experience (yes/no) and type of school (public school/private school).

## 4. Results

Table 2. described the result of ANOVA analysis regarding demographic variables and perceived school support toward teacher efficacy. It can be seen that there is a significant difference in teacher efficacy based on participants' age, education level, type of school, training experience, and perceived school support. Meanwhile, gender and teaching experience in inclusive schools do not affect teacher efficacy as there is no significant difference.

*Table 2. ANOVA Analysis of Factor Associated with Teacher Efficacy*

Variable	Variable Sig.		
	F	p	Mean Square
Gender	0.024	0.878	61.215
Age	3.474	<b>0.016*</b>	59.659
Education Level	2.706	<b>0.045*</b>	60.078
Type of School	6.793	<b>0.010*</b>	59.955
Teaching Experience	0.845	0.470	61.118
Training Experience	14.455	<b>0.000*</b>	58.589
Perceived School Support	129.978	<b>0.000*</b>	43.614

There are mean differences of each category in the demographic variables. Teachers in the age of 41-50 have the highest teacher efficacy while age 31-40 have the lowest. In terms of the educational level, teachers who hold master degree qualification have the highest teacher efficacy while diploma graduates have the lowest. These diploma graduates in Indonesia are D1, D2, or D3 based on the year duration they complete the diploma.

Additionally, teachers who work in private inclusive primary schools have higher teacher efficacy than public inclusive primary schools. If teachers receive training related to inclusive

education, they have more teacher efficacy in inclusive practice compared to those who do not receive any training.

*Table 3. Mean Difference*

	Variable	Mean
Gender	Male	57.61
	Female	57.75
Age	<31	58.08
	31-40	56.06
	41-50	60.43
	>50	56.90
Education Level	High School Graduates	60.18
	Diploma	56.00
	Bachelor	57.24
	Master Degree	60.90
Type of School	Public Inclusive School	56.43
	Private Inclusive School	58.69
Teaching Experience in Inclusive School	< 6 years	57.37
	6-10 years	58.32
	11-15 years	59.05
	>15 years	60.00
Training Experience	Yes	59.47
	No	56.23

*Table 4. Regression Analysis of Perceived School Support toward Teacher Efficacy*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	40.597	1.545		26.274	0.000
Perceived School Support	0.604	0.053	0.536	11.401	0.000

The regression analysis result shows a positive and significant effect of perceived school support on teacher efficacy with  $F(1, 322) = 129.978$ ,  $p < 0.01$ . This result illustrates that teacher efficacy can be predicted by how much support the teacher perceived they get from the schools. The higher level of support that the teacher contracts, the higher level of their efficacy would be. In contrast, the less support teacher receive from schools. They are most likely not having the efficacy to teach in the inclusive classroom. Through this analysis, the regression equation can explain how much-perceived support can influence the change of teacher efficacy. The equation was  $Y = 40.597 + 0.536X$ , which means the rise of one score perceived school support can improve 41.133 teacher efficacy.

## 5. Discussion

This study aimed to determine factors associated with teacher efficacy in inclusive practice, including demographic variables and perceived school support. The hypothesis regarding teacher efficacy factors is tested through statistical analysis ANOVA and regression method.

Results indicated that perceived school support affects teacher efficacy in inclusive practice. In addition, demographic factors that significantly influence teacher efficacy are age, education level, type of school, and inclusive training experience.

Based on the first finding, perceived school support in implementing inclusive education is shown to have a significant relationship with teacher efficacy. These results are consistent with research conducted by Malak et al. [33], which states that teachers' self-confidence in teaching inclusive classes is influenced by their views on the support provided by the school. The findings per each dimension also show that there is a significant and positive relationship between school support and (1) efficacy in providing inclusive instruction, (2) efficacy in collaboration, and (3) efficacy in regulating behavior.

The number of participants who had high teacher efficacy (57.4%) was not much different from participants in the moderate category (42.3%). This result shows that inclusive primary school teachers in Indonesia believe they can teach inclusive students. On the other hand, teachers in the medium category have sufficient confidence to teach but are not yet fully competent in providing inclusive instruction, managing behavior, or collaborating. Teacher efficacy, one of which is influenced by the training experience that has been obtained [28]. This finding is consistent with participant training data, which is that less than half of the participants (45%) have received training. Therefore, the training they get can explain high teacher efficacy, while teachers who have not received training will have teacher efficacy in the medium category.

Finding on the gender shows that teacher efficacy does not influence the teacher's gender. It can be explained by the difference in people's willingness to help, and confidence in teaching does not depend on whether they are female or male. Each person has an unprecedented amount of efficacy regarding the inclusive system, despite their stereotypical gender role. This finding is consistent with the previous research [20][21], which stated that female teachers show a slightly higher teacher efficacy, but there is no significant difference between females and males. In contrast, this study found that age can significantly affect teacher efficacy in inclusive practice. The older the teacher, the more efficacy they have in implementing inclusive education inside the classroom. However, this would only apply until the teacher reached age 50 because it can be seen that there is a declining level of teacher efficacy after age 51. These results are similar to prior research from [23][34] that states teacher efficacy increases along with age. Therefore, teachers with older generations tend to be more confident in teaching inclusive classrooms. This statement might be because when people get older, they have more encounters with different types of students and grow wiser personally and professionally.

Teacher efficacy of people who work in inclusive private primary schools is significantly different with inclusive public primary school, with a higher level of teacher in private school. This result is aligned with previous findings from Purbani [31], which stated that private schools accept inclusive systems based on their willingness to help children with special needs. It also leads to how all stakeholders, including principals, teachers, parents, and school staff, respond to an inclusive system. Private schools are usually able to adjust their curriculum and method to adjust students' needs. However, in the public system, inclusive education is a new and compulsory concept. That is why teachers in inclusive public schools are often not ready and perceive themselves as not competent enough to teach inclusive classrooms, leading to a lower level of teacher efficacy.

In terms of education level, most teachers in this study were young, under 30 years of age, and had the latest bachelor education. These findings indicate that inclusive schools have followed national regulations from the government regarding the minimum requirements for teacher academic qualifications, namely a minimum of diploma and bachelor [35]. There are

5% of teachers with high school qualifications. Based on a short interview with one of the school principals, teachers who graduated from high school graduates are still employed because dealing with children with special needs requires patience and openness to new experiences. Schools prefer to hire high school graduates and then be given a variety of inclusive teaching training, compared to accepting bachelor graduates with majors that are not suitable for education. This result supports Yada et al. [36], which states that training will have more effect on teacher efficacy than the level of education.

## 6. Conclusion and Limitation

Based on the research results and discussion, it can be concluded that there are factors that influence teacher efficacy, namely perceived school support, age, type of school, education level, and training experience. Meanwhile, gender and teaching experience do not affect teacher efficacy. There are several limitations in this study, namely the self-report method in data collection, which can then be added to direct observation so that the data can be more comprehensive. In addition, the sample selection method for future research can use random sampling so that more participants from various provinces in Indonesia are involved. This is useful for enriching the research data and obtaining an overview of variables from different regions in Indonesia, both urban and rural.

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