

## Examination of Teachers' Self-Efficacies for Inclusion of Children With Special Education Needs

*Osman Aslan*

*(Turhal Science and Art Center, Turhal, Tokat, Turkey)*

**Abstract:** Self-efficacy perception is a means of motivation and motivation. It is a perception state that realizes one's abilities and increases inner motivation. It is a phenomenon that activates the individual to start work. It is the level of awareness of the individual's own potential. It is a way of knowing and expressing oneself. The aim of this study is to examine the self-efficacy of teachers who provide inclusive education for children with special education needs in terms of various variables. In the study, which was structured using quantitative research method, the data were obtained from various brans teachers working in Turhal district of Tokat. The relational scanning model, one of the quantitative research designs, was used in the study. SPSS 22 package program was used to analyze the research data. The normality test was applied to the data and it was determined that the data showed a normal distribution. Thus, independent samples t-test and one-way analysis of variance were used in the analysis of the data.

As a result of the research, it was seen that teachers' self-efficacy in "knowledge dimension" was lower than other dimensions. In the study, it was observed that teacher self-efficacy levels did not differ according to gender, education level and years of seniority. However, a statistically significant difference was found between the education level the teachers graduated from and their self-efficacy levels.

**Key words:** special education, self-efficacy, mainstreaming students

### 1. Introduction

Self-efficacy is an expression of an individual's belief in his or her abilities to do a job. It is the judgment about the ability of people to organize and exhibit the actions that will enable them to reach a certain performance (Bandura, 1986). From this point of view, the perception of self-efficacy is a means of motivation and motivation. It is a perception state that recognizes your abilities and increases intrinsic motivation. It is a phenomenon that activates the individual to start work. It is the level of awareness of the individual's own potential. It is a way of knowing and expressing oneself.

Perception of teacher self-efficacy is the effects of teacher beliefs on students' behaviors, academic success, and learning motivations of slow learners (Browsers & Tomic, 2000). A strong perception of self-efficacy develops skills such as love, interest, finding meaning, enjoying work, and effective communication. In these skills, it improves the individual's sense of being happy with his life and helps him to communicate effectively (Tsatsou-Nikolouli, 2020). Communication between students and teachers is at the heart of education. From this

aspect, the teacher's perception of self-efficacy supports his creation of an effective learning environment. It creates a psychologically potent effect in the classroom environment.

In the Self-Efficacy Theory, if a person defines himself/herself sufficient for a job, the probability of getting the job done is high. In the opposite case, if it sees its own business potential as weak, the possibility of doing the work weakens (Arseven, 2016). The self-efficacy perception of the teacher is also very important for his profession to be effective. The self-confidence of the teacher who is confident and thinks he knows his job well will increase. With this self-confidence, the teacher will gain the respect of his students while fulfilling the educational requirements. In this way, it will take an important step towards achieving its educational goals.

The teaching profession defines a very complex and challenging process. When we consider that many different variables and parameters are involved, the teacher's self-belief and motivation are quite fragile. Especially with 21st century skills, very intense and complex beer people have been added to the skills of teachers. When considered in this way, the fragile nature of the teacher's self-efficacy perception can be seen more clearly. Therefore, today, the teacher has to be compatible with the developing educational technologies and also have to trust and believe in his/her own educational background. This belief will not only love the teacher's profession but also make him stronger.

Teaching is a difficult profession. Besides, if you are working with students with "special education needs", your motivation need will be more than ever. Caring for inclusive students will require more patience for teachers. From this point of view, the sense of burnout and the concept of self-efficacy gain more importance in teachers working with children with special education needs (Karahan & Balat, 2011).

### **1.1 Mainstreaming and Education**

In today's understanding of education, measures are taken to ensure that children with special needs receive education with their peers. Thus, it is aimed that not only students with normal education but also students with special needs benefit from education (Toy & Duru, 2016). The aim of mainstreaming education is for students with special needs to be educated with normal students (Özabacı, 2012; Batu & Kırcaali-İftar, 2005). Inclusive education, including Turkey, has become the world's education policy in many countries. The term "mainstreaming" was first used in the 1970s to describe the practice of educating students with disabilities and their peers without disabilities in the same classroom (Islam, 2021).

Shore (2018) comments on the least restrictive environment by claiming, "Determining what is the least restrictive environment for a particular student requires balancing the need for the child to learn to integrate socially with his non-disabled peers with the need for the child to receive instruction appropriate to his abilities. Mainstreaming in education means that a school places child with disabilities in classrooms with their non-disabled peers without any discrimination (Islam, 2021). Taking students with special needs and their non-disabled peers into the same educational environment will mean that the teacher changes teaching methods and techniques. In inclusive education, the teacher should also go beyond the normal and create a special learning environment. At the beginning of this is the creation of an "individual training plan". In inclusive education, while the student receives his special needs lessons with an individual education plan, he sees the general lessons in the same classroom environment with his peers. As such, teachers who provide inclusive education, regardless of their branch, should have experience and knowledge about special education.

The basis of inclusive education is to study in the same environment with their peers. Thus, the possibility of having students with inclusive education needs emerged in every teacher's classroom. Teachers also had to turn to

in-service training activities to increase their knowledge of inclusion education. It can be said that the basis of all this training requirement is to increase the “self-efficacy” perception.

The aim of this study is to examine the self-efficacy of teachers who provide inclusive education for children with special education needs in terms of various variables. In the study, which was structured using the quantitative research method, the data were obtained from various brans teachers working in Turhal district of Tokat. The following research questions were sought with the obtained data.

- 1) What are the self-efficacy levels of the teachers participating in the study regarding inclusive education?
- 2) Do teachers’ self-efficacy levels regarding inclusive education differ by gender?
- 3) Do teachers’ self-efficacy levels regarding inclusive education differ by years of seniority?
- 4) Do teachers’ self-efficacy levels regarding inclusive education differ according to education level?

## 2. Research Method

This study, which examines the teachers’ self-efficacy for the inclusion of children with special education needs, was structured with a quantitative research method. The relational scanning model, one of the quantitative research designs, was used in the study. This model aims to reveal the relationship and effect of the variables that cause this event/situation by describing the investigated situation or event as it is (Kaya, Balay & Göçen, 2012).

### 2.1 Participants

Participants in the study were selected by “purposeful sampling” method among non-random sampling methods. Purposeful sampling enables the selection of particularly information-intensive situations and detailed research, depending on the purpose of the research (Büyüköztürk, Çakmak, Akgün, Karadeniz & Demirel, 2008).

The participants of the study consist of teachers working in Turhal district of Tokat. In the selection of teachers, those who “gave or gave inclusive education” were preferred. A total of 54 teachers participated in the study. The demographic information of the teachers participating in the study is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1 Demographic Information of Teachers Participating in the Study**

Demografik Özellik		f	%
Cinsiyet	Kadın	20	37,04
	Erkek	34	62,96
Eğitim Durumu	Lisans	42	77,78
	Yüksek Lisans	12	22,22
Kıdem Yılı	1-5	0	0
	6-10	12	22,22
	11-15	14	25,93
	16 ve üzeri	28	51,85
Toplam		54	100

A total of 54 teachers participated in the study. 37% of the teachers are female and 63% are male. Again, 78% of the teachers participating in the research are undergraduate graduates, while 22% are graduates.

### 3.2 Collecting Data

The data collection tool consists of two parts. In the first part, there is a “personal information form” prepared by the researcher. Here, various demographic information was asked from the teachers who participated

in the study. This information was used to make relational inferences in the analysis part of the study.

In the second part of the study, the “Teacher Efficacy for the Inclusion of Young Children with Disabilities” scale developed by Walls (2007) and adapted to Turkish by Sönmez and Bıçak (2017) was used. The scale consists of 19 items and has four sub-dimensions. These; Law Dimension, Knowledge Dimension, Self-Confidence Dimension and Perception Dimension.

### 3.2.1 Validity and Reliability

Exploratory factor analysis was applied to the scale by Sönmez and Bıçak (2017). As a result of the analysis, it was observed that the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value of the scale was 0.951, and the Bartlett’s Sphericity test result was significant ( $\chi^2 = 4827,819$ ,  $sd = 171$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). In addition, Cronbach  $\alpha$  internal consistency coefficient was calculated for the reliability of the scale. As a result of the calculation, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.976. With this value, it can be said that the scale is quite reliable.

## 3.3 Data Analysis

SPSS 22 package program was used to analyze the research data. Before starting the analysis of the data in the study, it was checked whether the data had a normal distribution or not. For normal distribution test, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was used and Skewness-Kurtosis values were examined. As a result of the examination, it was seen that the data showed normal distribution ( $p > .05$ , Skewness = -.386, Kurtosis = -.765).

As a result of the normal distribution of the research data, the t-test and anova test, which are among the parametric tests, were applied to the relationship between the variables. In addition, the average scores were interpreted by taking the average of the scores obtained from the scales. In interpreting the mean scores of the scale,

Between 1.00–1.80 “I have no confidence”

Between 1.81–2.60 “I have little confidence”

Between 2.61–3.40 “I have some confidence”

Between 3.41–4.20 “I trust”

It was expressed as “I completely trust” between 4.21–5.00.

## 4. Results

In the research, the mean scores of the answers given by the teachers to the scale were calculated and shown in Table 2.

When Table 2 is examined, the mean score of the teachers’ answers to the scale is 3.59. Thus, the self-efficacy level of teachers for the inclusion of students with special education needs was found at the level of “I trust”. When the mean scores of the scale in the dimensions of law, self-confidence and perception are examined, the self-efficacy levels of teachers were found at the level of “I trust”. Teachers’ self-efficacy in the knowledge dimension is at the level of “I trust a little” with an average of 3.04 points.

In the study, the difference of teacher self-efficacy according to the gender variable was examined. In Table 3, independent samples t-Test results are shown according to the gender variable of teachers’ self-efficacy.

When Table 3 is examined, there is no statistically significant difference between female teachers self-efficacy score averages ( $X = 3.68$ ) and male teachers’ self-efficacy score averages ( $X = 3.54$ ) according to the results of the independent sample t test [ $t_{(52)} = 0.60$ ,  $p > .05$ ].

**Table 2** Average Scores of Teachers' Answers to the Scale

Question Dimension	Matter	M	SD
Law Dimension	1	4.32	1.00992
	2	3.00	1.04323
	3	3.47	0.83205
	4	3.05	1.08604
Law Dimension Average Score		3.51	
Information Dimension	5	2.21	0.97402
	6	2.05	0.94883
	7	3.84	0.94432
	8	4.47	0.93370
Information Dimension Average Score	9	2.63	1.07550
		3.04	
	10	4.47	1.11452
Self-Confidence Dimension	11	1.95	1.05948
	12	4.00	0.97548
	13	3.80	1.04731
	14	3.00	1.05948
Self-Confidence Dimension Average Score	15	4.47	1.01414
		3.62	
	16	3.30	1.10940
Perception Dimension	17	3.40	0.93522
	18	4.50	0.88835
	19	3.40	1.04731
Perception Dimension Average Score		3.65	
Total Score Average		3.59	0.84467

**Table 3** Difference Between Self-Efficacy Scores According to Teacher Gender Variable

Variable	Grup	N	<i>X</i>	SS	t	sd	p
Self-EfficacyScore	Women	20	3.68	0.72	0.60	52	0.56
	Man	34	3.54	0.91			

In the study, the difference of teachers' self-efficacy according to the "educational status" variable was examined. In Table 4, independent samples t-Test results are shown according to the educational level of teachers' self-efficacy variables.

**Table 4** Difference Between Self-Efficacy Scores According to Teacher Education Status Variable

Variable	Group	N	<i>X</i>	SS	t	sd	p
Self-Efficacy Score	License	42	3.50	0.72	-1.52	52	0.05
	Master Degree	12	3.91	0.91			

When Table 4 is examined, a statistically significant difference was found between the self-efficacy score averages of the undergraduate teachers ( $X = 3.50$ ) and the self-efficacy score averages of the graduate teachers ( $X = 3.91$ ) according to the results of the independent sample t test ( $[t(52) = -1.52, p < .05]$  This difference is seen to be in favor of master degree.

In the study, the difference of self-efficacy perceptions was also examined according to the education level of the teachers. In Table 5, descriptive data are shown according to the education level of the teachers.

**Table 5 Data Regarding Descriptive Statistics According to the Education Level**

Variable	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
Primary School	6	3.97	0.55
Middle School	28	3.54	0.80
High School	20	3.55	0.96

When Table 5 is examined, 6 of the teachers participating in the research work in “primary school”, 28 are in “middle school” and 20 are in “high school”. Considering the average scores, it is understood that the self-efficacy of the teachers working in primary school is higher.

In the study, the difference of teacher self-efficacy according to the variable of “education level in which the teacher works” has been examined. Anova test results are shown in Table 6 according to the educational level variable of teachers’ self-efficacy.

**Table 6 Difference Between Self-Efficacy Scores According to the Variable of Education Level in which the Teacher Worked**

Self-Efficacy	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.946	3	0.473		
Within Groups	36.155	154	0.709	.667	.518
Total	37.101	157			

One-way analysis of variance was conducted to test whether there is a statistical difference between the self-efficacy levels of 54 teachers working at different educational levels. As a result of the analysis, no significant difference was found between the groups ( $F_{(3-154)} = .667, p > 0.05$ ).

In the study, the difference of the self-efficacy perceptions of the teachers according to their professional duty periods was examined. In Table 7, descriptive data are shown according to the tenure of the teachers.

**Table 7 Data Regarding Descriptive Statistics According to the Term of Duty of Teachers**

Duty Times	N	$\bar{x}$	SD
6–10 years	12	3.47	.24
11–15 years	14	3.84	.82
16 years and more	28	3.392	1,00

When Table 7 is examined, 12 of the teachers who participated in the research work for “6–10 years”, 14 of them “11–15 years” and 28 of them “16 years or more”. Considering the average scores, it is understood that the self-efficacy of experienced teachers is higher.

In the study, the statistical difference of teacher’s self-efficacy according to the variable of “the teacher’s tenure” was examined. Table 8 shows the results of the Anova test according to the “tenure” variable of teachers’ self-efficacy.

**Table 8 Difference Between Teacher’s Self-Efficacy Scores According to the Variable of Duty Times**

Self-Efficacy	Sum of Squares	sd	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	0.393	2	0.196		
Within Groups	36.708	51	0.720	.273	.762
Total	37.101	53			

One-way analysis of variance was conducted to test whether there was a statistically significant difference between the self-efficacy levels of 54 teachers working at different seniorities. As a result of the analysis, no significant difference was found between the groups ( $F_{(2-51)} = .273, p > 0.05$ ).

#### **4. Conclusion**

With this research, teacher self-efficacy for inclusion of children with special education needs was analyzed in terms of different variables. In the research, teacher self-efficacy scale consisting of four different dimensions and 19 questions was used. As a result of the analysis of the responses from the teachers, it was seen that the teachers' self-efficacy in the "knowledge dimension" was low. In the "law, self-confidence and perception" dimensions of the study, it has been stated that teacher self-efficacy is good.

In addition, research data were analyzed in terms of various variables. In the study, it was observed that teacher self-efficacy levels did not differ according to gender, education level and years of seniority. However, a statistically significant difference was found between the education level the teachers graduated from and their self-efficacy levels. It has been observed that this awareness is in favor of graduate teachers. In this case, it reveals that the self-efficacy levels of the graduate teachers are higher than the graduate teachers.

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