

# A Study on the Impact of Self-Efficacy on Teachers' Attitude towards Mainstreaming of Children with Disabilities

Rubee Mamagain Thapliyal<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Education, Government Degree College Bhupatwala, Haridwar, Uttarakhand, India

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## CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:

Rubee Mamagain Thapliyal;  
rubeethapliyal@gmail.com

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## ABSTRACT:

Implementation of inclusive practices at the grassroots level is highly recommended to investigate the nature of teachers' attitudes, whereas high levels of self-efficacy tend to exhibit the most favorable positive attitudes towards inclusive education. Thus, it is crucial to understand how self-efficacy affects teachers' attitudes toward inclusive classroom settings. This study was designed to determine the individual contribution of self-efficacy in predicting teachers' attitudes toward mainstreaming of children with disabilities in Gwalior district, Madhya Pradesh, India. Additionally, the study intended to investigate the collective influence of gender, school locality, and teaching experience on self-efficacy and attitudes. Using teacher efficacy for inclusive practices (TEIP) and teacher attitudes toward inclusive education (TASTIE) scales, data were collected from 613 government elementary school teachers. Parametric statistics, three-way ANOVA, and regression analysis were used to analyze data, and results showed that the level of self-efficacy was not significantly affected by gender, school locality, and teaching experience nor by the interaction of these variables. However, teachers' attitudes were significantly affected by the locale of schools, with urban teachers exhibiting more favorable attitudes than their rural counterparts. While there was a significant positive correlation between self-efficacy and teachers' attitudes, the contribution of self-efficacy to predicting attitudes was relatively low.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Attitude, Self-Efficacy, Disabilities

## INTRODUCTION

Inclusion in education refers to the practice of educating all students within a single classroom, regardless of their diverse characteristics, such as socio-economic status, abilities, gender differences, and other differences (AuCoin et al. 2020). It emphasizes individualized learning and is particularly focused on learners with disabilities, which refers to a person with impairment in body structure, functions, or mental functioning; activity limitation; and participation restriction in daily activities (Dubey, 2022), who may face exclusion due to their unique learning requirements. An inclusive education system “welcomes all students and supports them to learn, whoever they are and whatever their abilities or requirements, by ensuring that teaching and the curriculum, school buildings, classrooms, play areas, transport, and toilets are appropriate for all children at all levels” (UNICEF, 2017, p. 1).

In June 1994, more than 300 people from 92 governments and 25 international organizations participated in the Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education that emphasizes the need for schools to accommodate all learners. India has committed to making all mainstreaming schools accessible to all disabilities by 2020, having signed the Salamanca Statement (Kumar & Kumar, 2007). Although policy and legal reforms are essential, it is equally important to evaluate the actual implementation of inclusive practices at the grassroots level, which involves observing the behavior of schools and the provisions they make to ensure genuine inclusion in educational settings.

### Inclusive Classroom Competencies

Fostering inclusivity is not only cost-effective but also creates an effective learning environment accessible to all learners (UNICEF, 2017), which prioritizes the establishment of a multi-sensory teaching and learning environment to address the unique learning needs of all children, promoting an inclusive living experience for everyone involved (UNESCO, 2020). Achieving this goal necessitates commitment and investment from government ministries, collaboration among various educational institutions and social organizations, support from parents and teachers, an acceptance of diversity, the creation of a safe, inclusive learning environment, the implementation of a suitable progress monitoring system, and the cultivation of more competent teaching faculties (Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Bukvić, 2014; UNESCO, 2020).

Various studies (Singhal, 2010; Bukvić, 2014; Dias & Cadime, 2016) highlight the importance of specific

skills for teachers engaging in inclusive classrooms. These include practical experiences in special education, a comprehensive understanding of the root causes of disability, the science of learning, and the utilization of advanced communication technologies in teaching, awareness of various disabilities and diversities, adaptation skills for both curricular and co-curricular activities, collaboration with other education stakeholders, and a flexible monitoring process. Developing these skills is crucial for teachers to be effective in inclusive classrooms (EASNIE, 2020). The provision of relevant and high-quality education for learners with special needs in an inclusive setting is influenced by numerous factors, and extensive studies assert that the successful implementation of inclusive practices hinges on teachers' positive attitudes toward inclusive education (Yada & Savolainen, 2017; Saloviita, 2020) and their high confidence in their teaching abilities within a new and challenging environment termed as level of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006). These variables are interconnected and play a pivotal role in the successful implementation of inclusive education (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Singh, 2016a; Kofidou & Mantzikos, 2017).

“Allport (1935) expresses that an attitude is a mental or neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence on the individual's response to all objects and situations to which it is related” (Vishal, 2014, p. 2). Overall, the positivity of an individual's attitude towards a particular type of behavior is directly proportional to the individual's intention of exhibiting that behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010).

Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as a belief of an individual in his or her ability to perform the actions necessary to complete a particular task successfully. For inclusive classrooms, teaching efficacy consists of three sub-constructs: inclusive teaching strategies, managing challenging behavior, and collaborative teaching (Martin et al., 2021). The Efficacy theory postulates that an individual's self-efficacy drives their behavior and directly impacts the choice of action, amount of effort, and persistence they show when confronting problems (Bhati & Sethi, 2022).

### Literature Review

The absence of reliable national data on disabilities results in global uncertainty, making children with disabilities and their educational needs invisible to policymakers (UNICEF, 2017), while accurate data is essential for effective policy planning, implementation, and monitoring (UNESCO, 2020). Creating an inclusive learning environment to address all ranges of discrimination, including those with disabilities, is a big challenge for teachers;

different international organizations like OECD and UNICEF have recognized a significant gap between legislative frameworks and real-world practices in India in the implementation of inclusive education (UNICEF, 2012; Kohama, 2012; UNESCO, 2020). The results of various research done in the field of inclusive education categorized challenging factors into three main categories: teachers' associated factors, students' associated factors, and factors related to policy-making and infrastructure (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; UNICEF, 2017). Extensive previous research has shown that general school teachers oppose the inclusion of children with disabilities, especially those with behavioral disorders and profound intellectual disabilities, which indicates that the type and severity of disability significantly influence teachers' attitudes ranging from negative to moderate (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Singh, 2016a; Singh, 2016b). However, teachers' positive attitudes and high level of sense of teaching self-efficacy are vitally important for creating effective inclusive learning environment (Martin et al., 2021).

Moreover, Koster et al. 2010 acknowledge the potential gap between teachers and learners with disabilities when negative perceptions of inclusive education prevail (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014). A vast area of research indicates that attitudes and self-efficacy of general schools' teachers were differently impacted by a few contextual factors such as age, gender, length of teaching experiences, class size, locality of schools, type of disability, contact of teachers with disabilities, etc. (Furfurică, 2013; Specht & Metsala, 2018; Hutzler et al., 2019). Few revealed that male teachers showed more positive attitudes toward inclusion than female teachers (Sharma et al., 2014). Some are in contrast to these findings (Martin et al., 2021), and few showed that gender is not a significant factor (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Bukvić, 2014; Douglas & Ramesh, 2021; Seidensticker & Seyda, 2022). In the same way, teachers with more teaching experience showed more positive attitudes toward inclusion than inexperienced teachers or with less experience (Yada & Savolainen, 2017), and some showed no significant effect (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Sharma et al., 2014; Bukvić, 2014; Kuyini et al., 2018; Douglas & Ramesh, 2021; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Seyda, 2022). Similar findings are revealed for the effect of gender and teaching experience on the level of self-efficacy of teachers towards inclusive education; few found significant influence, and few did not (Kyuni et al., 2018; Martin et al., 2021). In India, the disabled population is more in rural areas while the available support services are in urban (Kohama, 2012), and surprisingly, studies showed that the locality of the school didn't affect teach-

ers' attitudes and self-efficacy significantly for the inclusive setting of teaching (Douglas & Ramesh, 2021). These findings for the influence of gender and teaching experience on teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy towards inclusive education are mixed, and understanding the impact of locality on attitudes and self-efficacy requires more study. The Independent effect of one variable may be due to some hidden effect of another independent variable, so it becomes pretty important to know the interaction effect as well. However, in the absence of data, we cannot draw any conclusion.

Several studies were conducted to understand the correlation between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes toward teaching in inclusive classrooms. However, finding a causal relationship between these two variables was rare. Although few studies support that self-efficacy is a substantial variable in predicting teachers' attitudes toward inclusion (Hellmich et al. 2019), a high level of sense of efficacy tends to exhibit more positive attitudes, and the enhancement of self-efficacy of teachers seems to be crucial (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Özokcu, 2018; Savolainen et al., 2020; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Seyda, 2022), while few others found no significant relationship in teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy (Hashim et al., 2014), and few are in favor that attitude and self-efficacy both not significantly affect teaching practices towards inclusive education (Opoku et al., 2021) or even a negative relationship among in both construct (Sharma et al., 2014).

Therefore, this study was focused on the following objectives:

1. To examine the influence of gender, locality of schools, teaching experience, and their interaction effects on teachers' self-efficacy towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.
2. To investigate the influence of gender, locality of schools, teaching experience, and their interaction effects on the attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.
3. To study the individual contribution of self-efficacy in predicting teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.

## METHODS

This study applies a quantitative descriptive survey research design to investigate teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy toward inclusive practices. A total of 613 government elementary teachers were selected for the study using a cluster sampling technique with its 5883-target population (Table 1).

Table 1. Block-wise distribution of teachers by 2018 in District Gwalior

Educational Block	Total Elementary Schools	Total Elementary Schools' Teachers	Schools selected for the Study	Number of Teachers in Selected Schools	Number of Teachers Surveyed	Number of Teachers selected for the final study
Bhitarwar	406	963	41	134	123	108
Ghatigaon	399	1071	40	154	146	138
Morar Urban	413	1613	41	199	173	126
Morar Rural	370	1019	37	144	134	113
Dabra	404	1217	40	174	145	128
Total	1992	5883	199	805	721	613

Table 2. Sample Size Distribution

Teachers Characteristics	Categories	Frequencies (N)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative Percentage
Locality of Schools	Rural School Teachers	417	68.0	68.0
	Urban School Teachers	196	32.0	100.0
	Total	613	100.0	
Gender	Male	426	69.5	69.5
	Female	187	30.5	100.00
	Total	613	100.0	
Teaching Experience in Years	Below 16 yrs	305	49.8	49.8
	16-30	233	38.0	87.8
	Above 30 yrs	75	12.2	100.0
	Total	613	100.0	

The Tool used to collect data was the TASTIE scale, the *Teachers' Attitudes Scale towards Inclusive Education* developed by Vishal Sood and Arti Anand in 2011. This is a three-point Likert scale comprised of four areas: psychological/behavioral aspects, social and parent-related aspects, curricular and co-curricular aspects, and administrative aspects of inclusive education. The reliability of the tool measured by test-retest reliability using product moment correlation 'r', which was 0.82, and internal consistency judged by computing coefficient 'r' was 0.68 in the psychological/behavioral aspect, 0.74 in the social and parental aspect, 0.67 in the curricular and co-curricular aspect and 0.81 was in the administrative aspect of the scale which represent that the scale is fairly reliable to measure the attitudes of teachers towards inclusive education. The second TEIP scale was used to measure *Teachers' Efficacy for Inclusive Practices* developed by Umesh Sharma, Tim Loreman, and Chris Forlin in

2011. This scale is a six-point Likert scale comprised of three areas related to inclusive practices. One is efficacy to use inclusive instructions, the second is efficacy in collaboration pertaining to an individual's perceptions of teacher efficacy in working with parents and other professionals, and the third is efficacy in managing behavior related to self-perceptions of teaching efficacy in dealing with disruptive behaviors. The reliability coefficient for the total scale is 0.89, which indicates that the scale has adequate reliability to measure the construct. The majority of the population speaks Hindi and uses it as the first language in government elementary schools in the Gwalior district. Hence, to accommodate the scale for the population, the following steps were taken:

**Translation:** The TEIP scale was translated into Hindi, using terms and phrases that accurately captured the meaning of the English text. The researcher collaborated with a language expert for this translation.

**Review:** The Hindi draft of the TEIP was reviewed and revised with the research supervisor and a subject expert to ensure content validity and objectivity.

**Pilot Study:** A pilot study was conducted with forty elementary teachers to test the reliability of the translated scale.

**Data Analysis:** After collecting data from the participants, the reliability of the TEIP scale was measured using Cronbach's Alpha, assessed with SPSS 21. The Cronbach's Alpha statistic was found to be 0.91, indicating good reliability, allowing the scale to be used for data collection from the target population.

### Data Collection

Before administering the tools, participants were informed about the purpose of the research, the implementation of the principle of confidentiality, and their volunteer response. This survey was conducted from January to April 2018, with the permission of the head and Dean of the Faculty of Education, Jiwaji University, and with the official approval of the District Education Officer, District Gwalior India. Gwalior District is bordered by Morena in the north, Shivpuri in the south, Bhind in the east, and Datia in the west. It comprises three Tehsils (Gwalior, Dabra, Bhitwar) and five Educational Development Blocks (Ghatigaon, Morar Urban, Morar Rural, Dabra, Bhitwar). The researcher used a multi-stage cluster sampling technique. In the first stage, picked blocks, divided them into primary and middle schools in the next stage, and finally chose 10% of these schools randomly in the third stage. Teachers from the selected schools were invited to complete a questionnaire, forming the study's sample. The researcher personally met with teachers to explain the study's purpose, assuring them of voluntary participation, confidentiality, and no impact on professional performance. Teachers were given sufficient time to complete the questionnaires and could return them by mail using provided stamped envelopes. In remote areas, Block Education Officers (BEOs) escorted the researcher to education centers, and questionnaires were distributed via Jan Shiksha Kendra (JSK) teachers when direct contact wasn't possible. Training teachers for inclusive education also assisted in the survey. Some teachers returned the completed questionnaires promptly, while others sent them later via mail or JSK Shikshak ('Community Teachers' who are helping to facilitate education at the root level under Serv Shiksha Abhiyan or Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan) at the BEO office, requiring the researcher to make multiple visits. The data collection took about four months, targeting 721 elementary teach-

ers. Out of these, 648 responded, but 35 forms were excluded due to incomplete information, resulting in 613 valid responses for the study.

### RESULTS

To find out the answers to the research question raised by this study, data were analyzed using parametric statistics (Three way-ANOVA and regression analysis Model), as data fulfilled all the assumptions required to apply parametric statistics, and the null hypothesis was framed for the results of the set objective as:

Male and female are two levels of gender. Rural and urban are the locality of schools, and teaching experiences less than 15 years, 15-30 years, and > 30 years are three levels of teaching experiences. Thus, the data were analyzed with the help of three-way ANOVA, and the descriptive findings are shown in Table 3.

#### **Influence of gender on teachers' self-efficacy towards the inclusion of children with disability in general schools.**

For gender influence, the significance value is .285, indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean score of self-efficacy of male and female teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of gender on teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. It may, therefore, be said that male and female teachers were found to possess self-efficacy to the same extent (Table 4).

#### **Influence of locality of schools on teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disability in general school.**

For the influence of the locality of schools, the significance value is .865, indicating that there is no significant difference in the mean score of self-efficacies of rural elementary school teachers and urban elementary school teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of the locality of elementary school teachers on teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general school is not rejected. It may, therefore, be said that rural and urban teachers were found to possess self-efficacy to the same extent (Table 4).

#### **Influence of teaching experience on teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value from Table 4 for teaching experience is .459, which was not significant. It indicates that

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Self-Efficacy

1=Female, F 2=Male, M	1=Rural, R 2=Urban, U	Teaching Experience	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
F	R	less than15	80.68	21.266	73
		15-30 yrs	83.32	21.293	28
		more than 30 yrs	83.00	9.899	2
		Total	81.45	21.015	103
	U	less than15	81.87	16.458	38
		15-30 yrs	87.43	14.880	37
		more than 30 yrs	87.56	12.670	9
		Total	84.93	15.495	84
	Total	less than15	81.09	19.684	111
		15-30 yrs	85.66	17.890	65
		more than 30 yrs	86.73	11.900	11
		Total	83.01	18.771	187
M	R	less than15	82.72	19.509	148
		15-30 yrs	81.19	23.190	145
		more than 30 yrs	84.05	16.833	21
		Total	82.10	21.097	314
	U	less than15	76.30	23.141	20
		15-30 yrs	75.55	25.264	49
		more than 30 yrs	82.88	25.298	43
		Total	78.50	24.940	112
	Total	less than15	81.96	20.007	168
		15-30 yrs	79.76	23.791	194
		more than 30 yrs	83.27	22.736	64
		Total	81.15	22.198	426
Total	R	less than15	82.05	20.081	221
		15-30 yrs	81.53	22.848	173
		more than 30 yrs	83.96	16.191	23
		Total	81.94	21.054	417
	U	less than15	79.95	19.012	58
		15-30 yrs	80.66	22.119	86
		more than 30 yrs	83.69	23.568	52
		Total	81.26	21.597	196
	Total	less than15	81.61	19.848	279
		15-30 yrs	81.24	22.569	259
		more than 30 yrs	83.77	21.465	75
		Total	81.72	21.214	613

Table 4. Summary of 2\*2\*2 Factorial Design of ANOVA of Teachers' Self-Efficacy Towards Inclusion of Children with Disability

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	4482.485 <sup>a</sup>	11	407.499	.904	.536
Intercept	1120264.556	1	1120264.556	2485.095	.000
Gender	515.906	1	515.906	1.144	.285
Locality Of School	13.087	1	13.087	.029	.865
Teaching Experience	413.771	2	206.885	.459	.632
Gender * Locality of School	612.707	1	612.707	1.359	.244
Gender * Teaching Experience	627.712	2	313.856	.696	.499
Locality Of School * Teaching Experience	135.618	2	67.809	.150	.860
Gender * Locality of School * Teaching Experience	36.822	2	18.411	.041	.960
Error	270926.814	601	450.793		
Total	4369225.000	613			
Corrected Total	275409.299	612			

a. R Squared = .016 (Adjusted R Squared = -.002)

there is no significant difference in the mean score of self-efficacies between elementary teachers with less than 15 years of teaching experience, teachers with 15-30 years of experience, and teachers with greater than 30 years of teaching experience. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of the teaching experience of elementary school teachers on their self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general school is not rejected. It may, therefore be said that all teachers with different lengths of teaching experience were found to possess self-efficacy to the same extent.

**Influence of interaction between gender, the locale of school, and teaching experiences on teachers' self-efficacy towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value for interaction between gender, the locale of schools, and teaching experiences is .041, which is not significant. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of male and female teachers' self-efficacy with different lengths of teaching experiences belonging to urban and rural elementary schools. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of interaction between gender, locality of schools, and teaching experiences on teachers' self-efficacy towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. It may, therefore, be said that self-efficacy was

found to be independent of interaction among gender, locality of schools, and teaching experiences (Table 4).

**Influence of gender on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disability in general schools.**

The significance value from Table 6 for gender influence is .415, which is not significant. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of attitudes of male and female teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of gender on teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. It may, therefore, be concluded that both male and female teachers were found to possess attitudes to the same extent (Table 5).

**Influence of locality of schools on teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disability in general schools.**

The significance value from Table 6 for the locality of schools is 5.206, which is significant at a .05 level with d.f.1/601. It indicates that the locality of schools significantly influenced teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of the locality of elementary school teachers on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general school is rejected. Further, the mean score for the

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Attitudes

F-Female M-Male	R-Rural U-Urban	Teaching Experience	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
F	R	less than15	105.58	8.751	73
		15-30 yrs	103.36	10.097	28
		more than 30 yrs	104.00	15.556	2
		Total	104.94	9.187	103
	U	less than15	110.39	13.960	38
		15-30 yrs	109.35	12.625	37
		more than 30 yrs	108.44	6.803	9
		Total	109.73	12.686	84
	Total	less than15	107.23	10.998	111
		15-30 yrs	106.77	11.900	65
		more than 30 yrs	107.64	8.028	11
		Total	107.09	11.126	187
M	R	less than15	108.40	10.184	148
		15-30 yrs	106.60	9.860	145
		more than 30 yrs	105.14	7.703	21
		Total	107.35	9.916	314
	U	less than15	111.35	11.922	20
		15-30 yrs	108.29	11.937	49
		more than 30 yrs	107.67	10.947	43
		Total	108.60	11.534	112
	Total	less than15	108.75	10.411	168
		15-30 yrs	107.03	10.417	194
		more than 30 yrs	106.84	10.008	64
		Total	107.68	10.367	426
Total	R	less than15	107.47	9.805	221
		15-30 yrs	106.08	9.942	173
		more than 30 yrs	105.04	8.065	23
		Total	106.76	9.786	417
	U	less than15	110.72	13.195	58
		15-30 yrs	108.74	12.176	86
		more than 30 yrs	107.81	10.298	52
		Total	109.08	12.022	196
	Total	less than15	108.14	10.655	279
		15-30 yrs	106.96	10.785	259
		more than 30 yrs	106.96	9.699	75
		Total	107.50	10.599	613



Table 6. Summary of 2\*2\*2 Factorial Design of ANOVA of Teachers' Attitudes Towards Inclusion of Children with Disability

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1910.409 <sup>a</sup>	11	173.674	1.562	.106
Intercept	1911163.184	1	1911163.184	17185.783	.000
Gender	46.100	1	46.100	.415	.520
Locality Of School	578.906	1	578.906	5.206	.023
Teaching Experience	406.914	2	203.457	1.830	.161
Gender * Locality of School	75.321	1	75.321	.677	.411
Gender * Teaching Experience	22.835	2	11.418	.103	.902
Locality Of School * Teaching Experience	.811	2	.406	.004	.996
Gender * Locality of School * Teaching Experience	33.921	2	16.960	.153	.859
Error	66834.841	601	111.206		
Total	7152619.000	613			
Corrected Total	68745.250	612			

a. R Squared = .028 (Adjusted R Squared = .010)

attitudes of urban teachers was 107.50, higher than the mean score for rural teachers, which was 106.76. It may, therefore, be said that urban teachers had significantly higher levels of attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools than their counterparts of rural teachers.

**Influence of teaching experience on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value from Table 6 for the teaching experience effect is 1.830, which is not significant. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of teachers' attitudes with different lengths of teaching experience. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of the teaching experience of elementary school teachers on their attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general school is not rejected. Therefore, we concluded that all teachers with different levels of teaching experience were found to possess attitudes to the same extent.

**Influence of interaction between gender and locale of schools on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value for interaction between gender and the locale of schools is .677, which is not significant.

This indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of male and female teachers in urban and rural elementary schools. So, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of interaction between gender and locality of schools on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. Attitude was found to be independent of interaction between gender and locale (Table 6).

**Influence of interaction between locale of school and teaching experiences on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value for interaction between the locale of schools and teaching experience is .004, which is not significant. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the mean score of teachers with different lengths of teaching experiences belonging to urban and rural elementary schools. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of interaction between the locality of schools and teaching experiences on teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. Attitude was found to be independent of the interaction between gender and teaching experiences (Table 6).

**Influence of Interaction between gender, locale of school and teaching experiences on teachers' attitudes**

**towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools.**

The significance value for interaction between gender, locale of schools, and teaching experiences is .153, which is not significant. It indicates that there is no significant difference in the means score of male and female teachers' attitudes with different lengths of teaching experiences belonging to urban and rural elementary schools. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of interaction between gender, locality of schools, and teaching experiences on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is not rejected. Attitude was found to be independent of interaction among gender, locality of schools, and teaching experiences (Table 6).

From Table 7 it was evident that teachers' attitudes score on TASTIE significantly correlated with teachers' self-efficacy score on TEIP.

The  $\beta$  coefficient for self-efficacy is .115, which was significant at the .05 level, and the percentage of contribution of self-efficacy in predicting teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of children with disability in general schools was 1.32. Thus, the null hypothesis that there is no significant individual contribution of self-efficacy in predicting teachers' attitudes towards the inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools is rejected. The regression model indicates a positive influence of self-efficacy scores (TEIP) on teachers' attitudes scores (TASTIE), but the contribution is too low. Self-efficacy is not a good predictor in response to Teachers' attitude towards inclusive education.

**DISCUSSION**

It could be concluded from reviews of different studies that positive attitudes are essential in creating inclusive classroom settings for all learners (Hofman & Kilimo,

2014; Singh, 2016a; Kofidou & Mantzikos, 2017; UNESCO, 2020), and also indicates that the level of self-efficacy is a strong variable to predict teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Martin et al., 2021; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Seyda, 2022) but few studies are in oppose of these findings. Therefore, this study was principally focused on determining the individual contribution of self-efficacy on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Moreover, mixed results were found for the influence of gender, locality of schools, and teaching experience on teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy toward inclusive practices in many earlier studies (Martin et al., 2021). Hence, I was also interested in knowing the factors affecting these two primary constructs and the interaction effect of teachers' contextual factors. For the influence of teachers' contextual factors affecting teachers' sense of self-efficacy towards inclusive education, this study indicates that gender, teaching experience, and locality of schools didn't affect it significantly, similar to the findings obtained in other studies (Bansal, 2013; Sharma et al., 2014; Hofman & Kilimo 2014, Yada & Savolainen, 2017) and findings are also similar for the influence of gender and teaching experience on teachers' attitudes similar to other previous studies (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Douglas & Ramesh, 2021; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Seyda 2022) but localities of schools significantly influence teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, that urban teachers were more optimistic than their rural teachers which coincide with other research findings (Bansal, 2013). When data were analyzed to determine the hidden effect of gender and teaching experiences on the locality of schools, it was found that the locality of schools independently affects teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education, not by the interaction with gender and teaching experiences. However, the findings are inconsistent with a few studies (Douglas & Ramesh, 2021) and require more future

Table 7.  $\beta$  Co-efficient for Regression Analysis

$\beta$ Co-efficient for Regression Analysis						Zero Order Correlation	% of Contribution	
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-value	Remark			
	B	Std. Error	Beta					
1	(Constant)	102.819	1.695	.115	60.654	.000	*.115	1.32%
	Self-Efficacy	.057	.020		2.852	.004		
a. Dependent Variable: Attitude								
<b>*Significant</b>								

studies to generalize the influence. For answering the question regarding contribution of teachers' self-efficacy in predicting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education this study first revealed a positive correlation in between these two set variables and found that self-efficacy strongly predicts teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education similar to the other findings (Hofman & Kilimo, 2014; Özokcu, 2018; Martin et al., 2021; Savolainen et al., 2020; Grimminger-Seidensticker & Seyda, 2022) with different educational context in Chile, Australia, India, and remarked the importance of high level of sense of self-efficacy of teachers in predicting most required variable that is attitude towards inclusion of children with disabilities in general schools but it must also need to take in consideration that in this study teachers were showing high sense of self-efficacy on TEIP scale and moderate level of attitudes on TASTIE scale, Hence, in the absence of additional data from participants with higher levels of teaching self-efficacy with poor attitudes and with inadequate levels of teaching self-efficacy with their high levels of positive attitudes, it is not easy to predict the contribution of self-efficacy to exhibit teachers' attitudes towards inclusion.

## LIMITATIONS

The present study has been limited to some characteristics of its population, which need to be acknowledged. In This study, the participant teachers were from government general schools of district Gwalior, MP, India, who had only a few days of sensitizing inclusive practices-oriented training, which is inadequate to develop their understanding and enhance their capacity to teach in inclusive settings even though most of the teachers were not aware of the term inclusion. However, they had contact with disabled or differently abled students in their class and a supportive and collaborative structure under Samgra Shiksha Abhiyan at the district, block, and village levels. Hence, to generalize the results, the same research must be carried out on general school teachers with intensive levels of inclusive education training.

## CONCLUSION

Following the COVID-19 worldwide situation, achieving the goal of mainstreaming left-behind children

promptly disabled is more challenging and demands monitoring of education legislative frameworks, their implementation, beliefs, and attitudes of the teaching community towards inclusion (UNESCO, 2020). This study was designed to know the impact of self-efficacy on teachers' attitudes towards mainstreaming learners with disability or differently-abled learners and to know the interaction effect of gender, locales of schools, and length of teaching experiences on it. Levels of self-efficacy represent how teachers are developing their beliefs in their teaching abilities to teach in inclusive classrooms. This study found a positive correlation between self-efficacy and the attitudes of teachers toward inclusive education. It revealed that teachers' sense of self-efficacy is a vital variable that contributes to predicting teachers' attitudes, which is similar to other studies in different countries with varying socio-economic contexts, which is not influenced by gender, locality of schools, and teaching experiences. However, the finding was significant in terms of the effect of the locality of schools on teachers' attitudes, indicating that urban teachers were more positive than rural teachers.

On the other hand, teachers' attitudes were not influenced by the interaction effect of gender, teaching experience, and locality of schools, which showed that the locality effect is independent. Therefore, the results of this study indicate that more attention should be paid to generating an effective inclusive environment and community in rural areas in the domains of physical, social, and cognitive inclusion, and comprehensive training programs need to be organized theoretically and practically for the general schools' teachers to transform general classrooms settings to inclusive that promote learning to live together. Teachers are a vital asset in implementing challenging tasks at the grassroots level. For this purpose, they have to be more competent, skilled, and effective with new innovative, inclusive practices and have higher positive attitudes.

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