

Examining the connections between teacher selfefficacy and parental involvement practices

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Introduction. Teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement are closely connected and can both have a significant impact on student success. Objectives. This article examines the connections between teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement practices. The idea that parental involvement and teacher self-efficacy have a positive influence on students' academic achievement is widely accepted. Methods. A quantitative study was conducted to examine the levels of self-reported self-efficacy and parental involvement of 600 special education teachers in Greece. Results. The results revealed that teacher selfefficacy is significantly positively correlated with parental involvement in pedagogical work. Conclusion. Overall, the research reviewed in this article suggests that special education teachers in Greece with a high level of self-efficacy involve parents in the education of their students more often. This is very important because high levels of parental involvement can contribute to better education of students with special needs.

Keywords: self-efficacy, parental involvement, special education teachers

Introduction

In recent years, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of parental involvement in children's education. Numerous studies have shown that when parents are actively involved in their children's education, it can have a positive impact on students' academic achievement and motivation (Hill & Taylor, 2004). One factor that has been found to play a crucial role in parental involvement is teacher self-efficacy. Teacher self-efficacy refers to a teacher's

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belief in their own ability to positively impact and engage students in learning. Research has shown that when teachers have high levels of self-efficacy, they engage more often in practices that promote parental involvement, such as regular communication with parents, involving parents in decision-making processes, and providing resources for parents to support their child's learning at home. The present research has aimed to contribute to the information and knowledge base regarding teachers' self-efficacy and how they view parental participation in the educational process, specifically in the context of special education

Exploring Special Education Teacher's Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1997) introduced the construct of self-efficacy in his social cognitive theory. Teacher's self-efficacy refers to the capability of teachers to effectively handle the tasks, obligations, and challenges related to their work. It is perceived as the teachers' ability to positively influence a student's participation in the learning process and, therefore, get the desired outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Self-efficacy is a teacher's expectation of the results they will achieve in a specific learning environment (Ross et al., 2001). Therefore, it is a significant factor for both teachers and students (Hussain & Khan, 2022).

Teachers with high efficacy are able to complete their assignments and goals, manage their classrooms more effectively, and more easily adopt innovative teaching methods to meet the needs of their students (Artino, 2012). On the other hand, teachers with low levels of self-efficacy avoid difficult tasks and do not trust their own capabilities. Self-efficacy can also positively affect students' achievements, strengthen their learning motivation (Swarnalatha, 2019), and facilitate their achievement of goals (Hussain & Khan, 2022).

There is a growing number of studies that examine the important role of teachers' self-efficacy in the inclusion of students with special needs (Woodcock et al., 2022). It has been found that high levels of teacher self-efficacy contribute to a more positive view toward the inclusion of special needs students, and the probability of excluding students from learning is reduced (Savolainen et al., 2020; Woodcock & Jones, 2020). In the study of Woodcock et al. (2022), it is also mentioned that teachers with high self-efficacy employed teaching methods that made their classrooms more enjoyable and more inclusive, where all students are engaged in the learning process in a safe learning environment. In special education classes, the complexity of the different learning features that a teacher must deal with, as well as the limited support that a teacher can have in a special education classroom, can negatively affect the teachers' perception of self-efficacy (Anglim et al., 2018).

Examining the connections between teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement practices can provide valuable insights into understanding how

teachers perceive their own abilities and how this affects their engagement and collaboration with parents (Dussault et al., 2004).

The Role of Parental Involvement in Education

Parental involvement can take different forms, such as: assistance with homework, discussions with the child about school issues, visiting schools to discuss with teachers (Yang et al., 2023), participation of parents in the process of their children's educational experience (Pramanik et al., 2023), or parents' collaboration with teachers in order to enhance learning in the school or home environment (Fisher & Kostelitz, 2015). Since home and school are the main environments where learning occurs, this collaboration is vital for the benefit of children (Ihmeideh & Oliemat, 2015). Setting objectives, assessing results, and creating parent-teacher relationships are all necessary steps in the implementation of parental participation (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). According to Epstein et al. (2011), the main framework for a child's educational experience comes from a combination of support activities from the community, school, and home. The advantages to the child's learning and development increase with the level of collaboration among those factors. Research suggests that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, improved academic outcomes, increased student engagement, and enhanced teacher self-confidence and selfefficacy can be created (Barger et al., 2019).

The impact of parental involvement on students with special needs or vulnerable groups that belong to minorities is a matter of ongoing research. Children from underprivileged families who experience lower levels of parental support are more likely to experience dropouts in school settings (Yang et al., 2023). Efforts to include parents of children from low socioeconomic households can help to lessen educational inequality (Neuenschwander, 2020). The purpose of the present study was to examine the relationship between the teacher's selfefficacy and parental involvement of children with special educational needs.

Connections Between Teacher Self-Efficacy and Parent Engagement

Many studies deal with the impact of the level of teacher self-efficacy on parent involvement. These studies indicate that effective parental engagement is connected with teacher self-efficacy. In general, more parental involvement has been linked to increased levels of teacher self-efficacy (Krizman, 2013). Teachers' perceptions of the role that parents play in their children's education are crucial. When teachers perceive parents as partners in children's education, they have more confidence in their work, leading to better educational outcomes (Pramanik et al., 2023). Another study found that elementary teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement self-efficacy are factors that contribute to the extent to which the teacher will be engaged with the family during the child's education (Davis, 2022). According to Davis (2022), many elementary teachers lack the self-efficacy to impact their students' home environment. Teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to believe in the importance and effectiveness of parental involvement, and as a result, they are more motivated and confident in their ability to engage parents in their child's education. There are also studies that examine the impact of parental involvement on teachers' self-efficacy. Parental involvement can also affect teachers' self-efficacy. Domina (2005), Lawson (2003), and E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik (2010) demonstrate in their studies that wrong parental participation may have a detrimental effect on teachers' efficacy if it does not give them the tools they need to make adjustments. That would guarantee a child's achievement and may incite resentment against parents due to their excessive involvement in social situations and their perceived authority.

These findings suggest that teacher self-efficacy plays a crucial role in fostering effective communication and collaboration between teachers and parents. Overall, the connections between teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement practices demonstrate the importance of building educators' confidence in their ability to effectively engage parents.

Method

Research design

This quantitative study was aimed at analyzing the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and parental involvement practices. The quantitative approach uses self-report psychometric instruments to gather data from many individuals and then performs statistical analyses to answer research questions (J. W. Creswell & J. D. Creswell, 2022). Other studies have explored the topic of self-efficacy in the context of working in inclusive education environments. The questionnaire was chosen to explore the research questions. The current research used two academic scales: the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES) and the Parent-Caregiver Relationship Scale (PCRS). Specifically, teachers' self-efficacy was assessed using the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Recognizing the conceptual and methodological problems of tools for measuring teacher self-efficacy, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2001) developed a self-report scale to explore teachers' sense of effectiveness. Based on the self-efficacy scale of Bandura (1997), the researchers used exploratory factor analysis and concluded that there are three factors of teachers' self-efficacy, relating to teacher self-efficacy for instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement. This scale has been translated and validated in the Greek language by Tsigilis et al. (2010), where the suitability of the TSES to assess teachers' efficacy within the Greek educational context is supported.

The views of the teachers regarding the extent of parental involvement were collected with the use of the Parent-Caregiver Relationship Scale (PCRS) by Elicker et al. (1997), adapted by Rentzou (2011). It includes 35 items that measure parental

involvement as a total score, as well as three separate dimensions of trust/confidence, collaboration, and affiliation (Elicker et al., 1997).

Sample

The sample included 600 special education teachers working in primary and secondary schools in Greece. The study utilized a sampling method that was convenient and non-probable based on the availability of suitable candidates to take part in the research (J. W. Creswell & J. D. Creswell, 2022). The sample contained 55% (N = 328) women, while 45% (N = 272) were men.

Results

Given the results of the normality tests, non-parametric Spearman rho correlations were performed between the dimensions and subscales of the study. Results, which are presented in Table 1, show that there were statistically significant small-sized correlations between teacher self-efficacy and its subscales, with parental involvement in pedagogical work and its subscales (all p<.001). Specifically, the dimension of teacher self-efficacy had significant positive correlations with parental involvement in pedagogical work (rho=.16). as well as with its subscales of trust/confidence (rho=.13), collaboration (rho=.24) and affiliation (rho=.14). The same was true for the dimension of parental involvement in pedagogical work which, apart from the low positive correlation with the dimension of teacher self-efficacy, had significant positive correlations with the self-efficacy subscales of teaching strategies (rho=.32), and involving students in the education process (rho=.30), as well as a significant negative correlation with classroom management (rho=-.343). In fact, the self-efficacy subscale of classroom management had significant negative correlations not only with the dimension of parental involvement in pedagogical work but also with all its subscales, trust/confidence (rho=-.34), collaboration (rho=-.32) and affiliation (rho=-.14).

Therefore, teachers' self-efficacy and parental involvement of children with special educational needs were statistically significantly correlated with low positive correlations, except for the subscale of teacher self-efficacy in classroom management, which had a significant and negative correlation with parental involvement in pedagogical work and all of its subscales.

Table 1Non-parametric Spearman rho correlations between the dimensions and subscales of the study (teacher self-efficacy, parental involvement in pedagogical work-teacher responses)

		Parental involvement in pedagogical work (Total)	Trust/ Confidence	Collaboration	Affiliation
Teacher self-	rho	.157*	.129*	.237*	.142*
efficacy (Total)	p	.000	.002	.000	.000
Teaching strategies	rho	.319*	.275*	.376*	.200*
	p	.000	.000	.000	.000
Classroom	rho	343*	339*	316*	144*
management	p	.000	.000	.000	.000
Involving students	rho	.299*	.283*	.364*	.237*
in the educational	p	.000	.000	.000	.000
process					

^{*} p<.001

Discussion

The results of this study supported Bandura's theory, suggesting that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy engage in parental involvement practices more often and perceive themselves as more capable of including their students' families in the educational process. This study assessed the views of 600 special education teachers in Greece regarding their connections between teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement practices. There were small statistically significant correlations between the dimension and subscales of teacher self-efficacy (teaching strategies, involving students in the education process) with those of parental involvement in pedagogical work (trust/confidence, collaboration, affiliation). This result is consistent with other studies that demonstrate that high teacher self-efficacy positively affects teachers' perceptions of positive outcomes through parental involvement because instructors who are confident in their own skills are more comfortable involving parents in a child's education (Ekornes & Bele, 2022; Kim, 2009).

The remaining teacher's self-efficacy subscale of classroom management had statistically significant negative correlations with parental involvement in pedagogical work and its subscales. This result is contradictory to the assumption that high levels of parental involvement have positive effects in alleviating classroom management problems and, hence, enhancing the self-efficacy of a teacher in classroom management. Cheng and Chen, (2018) mention that parents should take an active role in their children's education by

participating in classroom management. In the long term, parental involvement in their children's education will be more potent the sooner it starts. In the field of special education. Salleh and Rosli. (2019) mention that school administrations should create initiatives that foster the cooperation between teachers and parents of children with learning disabilities in order for misbehavior and discipline problems to be handled more effectively.

Interpreting the negative correlation between classroom management and the other subscales is crucial. Based on the available literature, one possible explanation is that teachers who focus too much on classroom management may not have as much time or energy to devote to other aspects of teaching, such as student engagement and instructional strategies. By prioritizing classroom management, teachers may neglect other important areas of their practice, which could have negative consequences for overall teaching effectiveness. Alternatively, teachers who are less confident in their classroom management ability may overcompensate by emphasizing control and discipline rather than other more student-centered practices. This explanation aligns with the findings in one study (Freiberg et al., 2009), which noted that it is difficult for teachers to both control student behavior and provide for complex instruction; if there is a choice between the two, complex instruction often suffers. In summary, the negative correlation between classroom management and the other subscales suggests that there may be a trade-off between focusing on classroom control and other important aspects of teaching. This underscores the importance of a balanced and holistic approach to classroom management that also prioritizes student engagement, effective instruction, and other key elements of teaching effectiveness.

Teacher self-efficacy, or teachers' belief that they can be effective in the goals and tasks they set for themselves in their teaching career, is strongly determined by their adequacy of knowledge or competence, and by the existence of appropriate social support. These factors are important for teachers' sense of professional commitment (Minghui et al., 2018).

Limitations of the study: The field research can contribute to a better understanding of the factors that impact teacher self-efficacy and teachers' perceptions of parental involvement in children's education. More precisely, questionnaires collect the views and attitudes of individuals but cannot gather experimental data on people's actual behavior as they relate to self-efficacy and parental involvement in pedagogical work. Due to the difficulty of creating experimental methods for measuring self-efficacy and parental involvement in pedagogical work, future research can merge quantitative and qualitative data with observational data gathered in the classroom to triangulate the findings and uncover how they can be applied in real-world settings.

The present study did not examine parents' and children's perspectives on parental involvement in pedagogical work. In the future, comparing research to teachers' views could be beneficial

Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher self-efficacy and teacher views on parental involvement in children's educational process are significantly correlated, which aligns with Meador's (2019) findings. Specifically, he reported that teachers' sense of self-efficacy is related to parental involvement when teachers with high self-efficacy are able to collaborate effectively and constructively with parents to support the child's learning (Meador, 2019). Teachers' self-efficacy at school is important for the sense of achievement and competence it inspires, where the teacher successfully sets and accomplishes academic goals while being able to adapt to change and be patient in the face of potential obstacles to education (Versland, 2018).

Parental involvement in pedagogical work, involving constructive communication with the teacher and the school, is important given that the family significantly shapes the child's learning and promotes their development (Epstein & Sheldon, 2019). Parental involvement enables parents to contribute to the decision-making processes regarding their child's education, which include the content of lessons and teaching methods. Determining the nature and level of parental involvement in special education can be a complex process as it involves diverse relationships and behaviors developed at both the school and home.

Furthermore, parental involvement in pedagogical work can have a positive impact on the cognitive, social, and emotional development of the child. The child's academic performance is based on their family history, their environment, as well as their school and educational system (Roy & Giraldo-García, 2018). According to Al-Dababneh (2016) and Koch (2016), parental involvement plays a significant role in the success of special education programs. Research has demonstrated the benefits of involving parents in pedagogical work since it can enhance the child's psychological health and academic performance (Park & Holloway, 2018).

Parental involvement in the pedagogical work of children with special educational needs is complicated by the fact that such parents may worry more about sharing knowledge about their child's health rather than being included in the decision-making processes at school (Alaluf et al., 2016). Teachers' perceptions and emotions toward parents influence their interactions and communication with them. Their attitudes towards their parents affect their relationships with the child and the family. Lastly, the teacher's attitude towards parents can affect their ability and motivation to be involved in their child's education (Herman & Reinke, 2016).

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Ispitivanje veza između samoefikasnosti nastavnika i prakse uključivanja roditelja

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Uvod: Samoefikasnost nastavnika i uključenost roditelja usko su povezani i oba mogu imati značajan uticaj na uspeh učenika. *Ciljevi:* Ovaj rad ispituje veze između samoefikasnosti nastavnika i prakse uključenja roditelja. Ideja da roditeljsko učešće i samoefikasnost nastavnika pozitivno utiču na akademska postignuća učenika široko je prihvaćena. *Metode:* Sprovedena je kvantitativna studija kako bi se ispitali nivoi samoefikasnosti i uključenosti roditelja 600 nastavnika specijalnog obrazovanja u Grčkoj. *Rezultati:* Rezultati su pokazali da je samoefikasnost nastavnika u značajnoj pozitivnoj korelaciji sa uključenošću roditelja u pedagoški rad. *Zaključak:* Sve u svemu, istraživanje prikazano u ovom članku sugeriše da nastavnici specijalnog obrazovanja u Grčkoj sa visokim nivoom samoefikasnosti češće uključuju roditelje u obrazovanje svojih učenika. Ovo je veoma važno jer visok nivo uključenosti roditelja može doprineti boljem obrazovanju učenika sa posebnim potrebama.

Ključne reči: samoefikasnost, uključenost roditelja, defektolozi

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