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How teachers' self-efficacy mediates the association between inclusive school climate and teachers' attitude toward inclusive education: Findings from a Meta-Analytic Structural Equation Modeling Study

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ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**Support** - This work is supported by the project of Guangdong Province Education Sciences Planning (2025ZQJK077; 2025ZQJK0174).**Review Stage at time of this submission** - Piloting of the study selection process.**Conflicts of interest** - None declared.**INPLASY registration number:** INPLASY202520076**Amendments** - This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 14 February 2025 and was last updated on 14 February 2025.**INTRODUCTION**

Review question / Objective Numerous studies have examined the association between inclusive school climate and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, but the results have been mixed. Social Cognitive Theory suggests that individual attitudes are influenced by a combination of external environmental factors and internal psychological factors, with self-efficacy being an important internal factor. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the association between inclusive school climate and teachers' attitudes, and the mediating role of teachers' self-efficacy in this association using meta-analytic structural equation modeling (MASEM).

Condition being studied Inclusive education constitutes a crucial component in building a high-quality special education system. In inclusive

education schools, general education teachers serve as pivotal practitioners, playing a critical role in translating inclusive education policies into classroom practices. Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education constitute a determining factor in the effective implementation of inclusive education, and enhancing these attitudes has become a focal point of widespread concern. Grounded in social cognitive theory, an individual's attitude is influenced by a combination of intrapersonal and extrapersonal factors. In fostering positive attitudes towards inclusive education among teachers, external factors are particularly important. Specifically, the school climate, being the primary workplace for teachers, exerts substantial influence on cultivating and sustaining positive attitudes.

In recent years, many studies have primarily explored how school climate affects attitudes towards inclusive education. However, there is no consensus on the strength of the relationship between school climate and attitudes towards

inclusive education, nor on the factors that moderate this relationship or the extent of the influence of mediating factors. With the advancement of positive psychology, current academic research on the mediating mechanisms of school climate on attitudes towards inclusive education focuses on intrapersonal factors, with literature reviews revealing a predominant focus on the mediating role of self-efficacy. Therefore, the present study aims to investigate the association between inclusive school climate and teachers' attitudes, and the mediating role of teachers' self-efficacy in this association using meta-analytic structural equation modeling (MASEM).

METHODS

Participant or population Teachers in inclusive schools.

Intervention No.

Comparator No.

Study designs to be included Experimental studies.

Eligibility criteria The following inclusionary and exclusionary criteria were employed: 1) The study must report original empirical data; 2) Participants of the study must be teachers working in inclusive schools; 3) Case studies and qualitative studies were excluded; 4) The study must report at least any pair of relationships among school climate, teachers' self-efficacy, and teachers' attitude; 5) No duplication of data sources across the literature.

Information sources Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of science, ScienceDirect, ProQuest, EBSCO and CNKI.

Main outcome(s) Firstly, a significant positive association was observed between inclusive school climate and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Secondly, the relationship between school climate and teacher's attitudes towards inclusive education was found to be moderated by economic level. Thirdly, self-efficacy was identified as a mediating factor in the impact of inclusive school climate on teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education.

Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis In this study, the meta-analysis literature quality assessment scale developed by Zhang (2019) was used to assess the quality of the articles included in the meta-analysis, including the research

methodology, the appropriateness of the sample size, and the reliability of the measurements.

Strategy of data synthesis Meta-analysis were conducted using Comprehensive Meta-Analysis Software (CMA).

Subgroup analysis No.

Sensitivity analysis No.

Country(ies) involved China.

Keywords inclusive education; teachers' attitudes; self-efficacy; school climate; meta-analysis.

Contributions of each author

Author 1 - Kaiying Lai drafted the manuscript and provided statistical expertise.

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