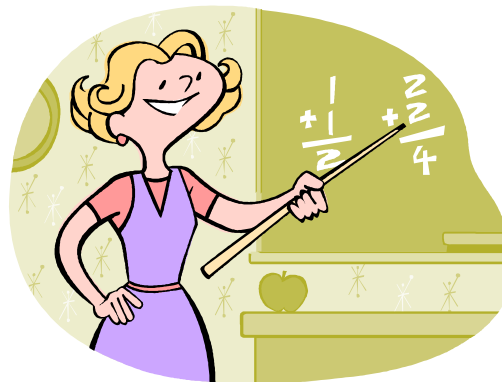


# Teacher competence beliefs towards including children with intellectual disabilities.

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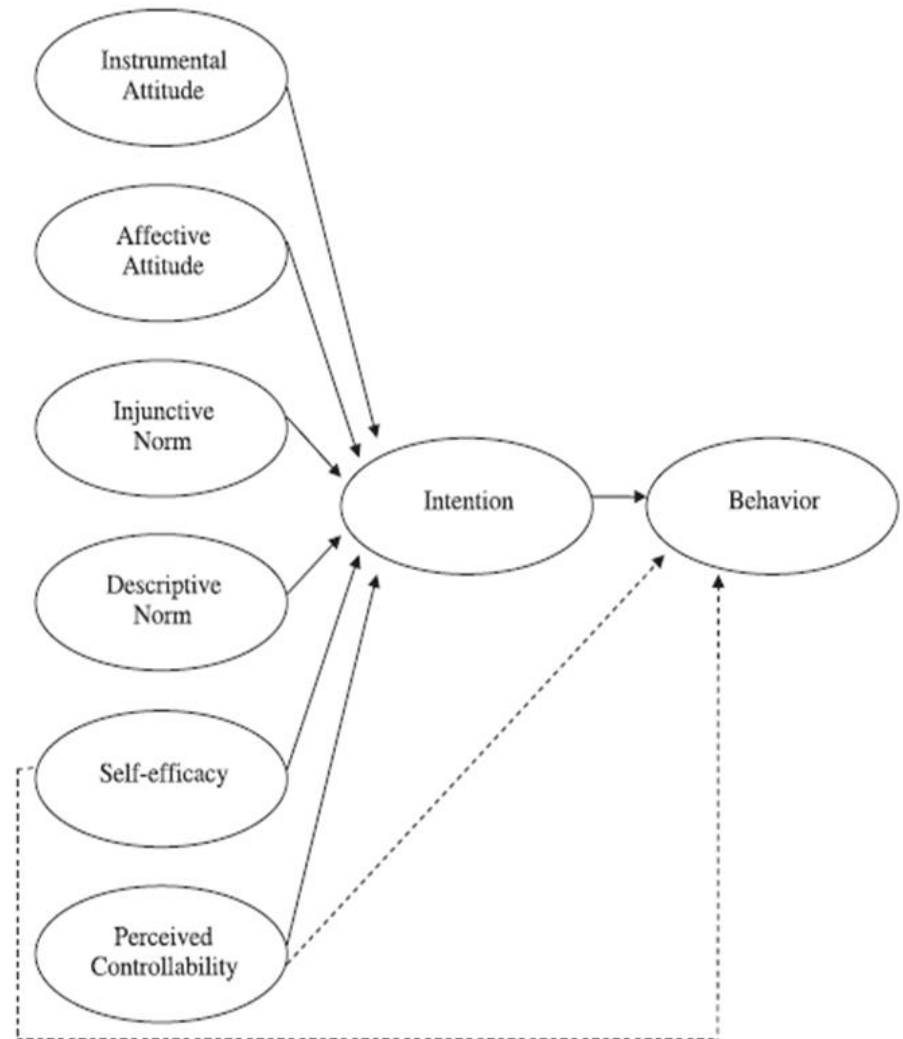


# Study 1: Background

- What is inclusion?
  - Aims to increase the acceptance and participation of children of all abilities.
- How does this impact teachers' roles?
  - Classroom adaptations must be made.
  - Mixed evidence to support the use of these.
- What influences teachers' decisions to make adaptations?
  - Gender (De Boer, Pijl, & Minnaert, 2011)
  - Experience (Avarmidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000)
  - Training (Sharma, Forlin, Loreman, & Earle, 2006)
  - Lack of resources (Avarmidis et al., 2000)
  - Grade taught (Ross-Hill, 2009)
- A need to examine factors which may be malleable.

# Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB: Ajzen, 1991)

- TPB is one of the most successful theories in the understanding of the relationship between cognitions and behaviour.
- TPB has been successfully operationalised within various health and social settings (e.g. Rhodes, Blanchard, & Matheson, 2006; Ravis & Sheeran, 2003) but is applied considerably less within an educational setting.
- Issues with studies applying TPB to understand teacher behaviours:
  - One-component model only
  - Haven't measured behaviour
  - Haven't used TPB items




# Study 1: Aims

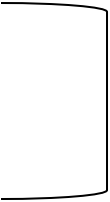
- Examined mainstream teacher cognitions and behaviour towards including children with intellectual disabilities (ID) in their classroom.
- Hypotheses:
  - Attitudes (instrumental and affective), social norms (injunctive and descriptive norms) and perceptions of control (self-efficacy and controllability) would predict intentions
  - Intention, self-efficacy and controllability would predict inclusive behaviour.
- The findings are important for:
  - **Theory development**: Applicability of TPB to a novel setting.
  - **Practice**: Enhancing teaching practices, professional developmental opportunities and initial teacher training.

# Study 1: Method

- 145 Scottish primary school teachers:
  - 85% female
  - Age range 22-62 (M= 37.74 SD= 11.71)
  - Mean years' experience 13.78 (SD=10.09)
- Study was prospective in design.
  - **At Time 1**, self-report questionnaires measured TPB variables; attitudes (affective and instrumental), subjective norms (injunctive and descriptive), PBC (self-efficacy and controllability) and intentions with respect to three inclusive behaviours
  - **At Time 2** (two weeks later), questionnaires assessed reported inclusive behaviours

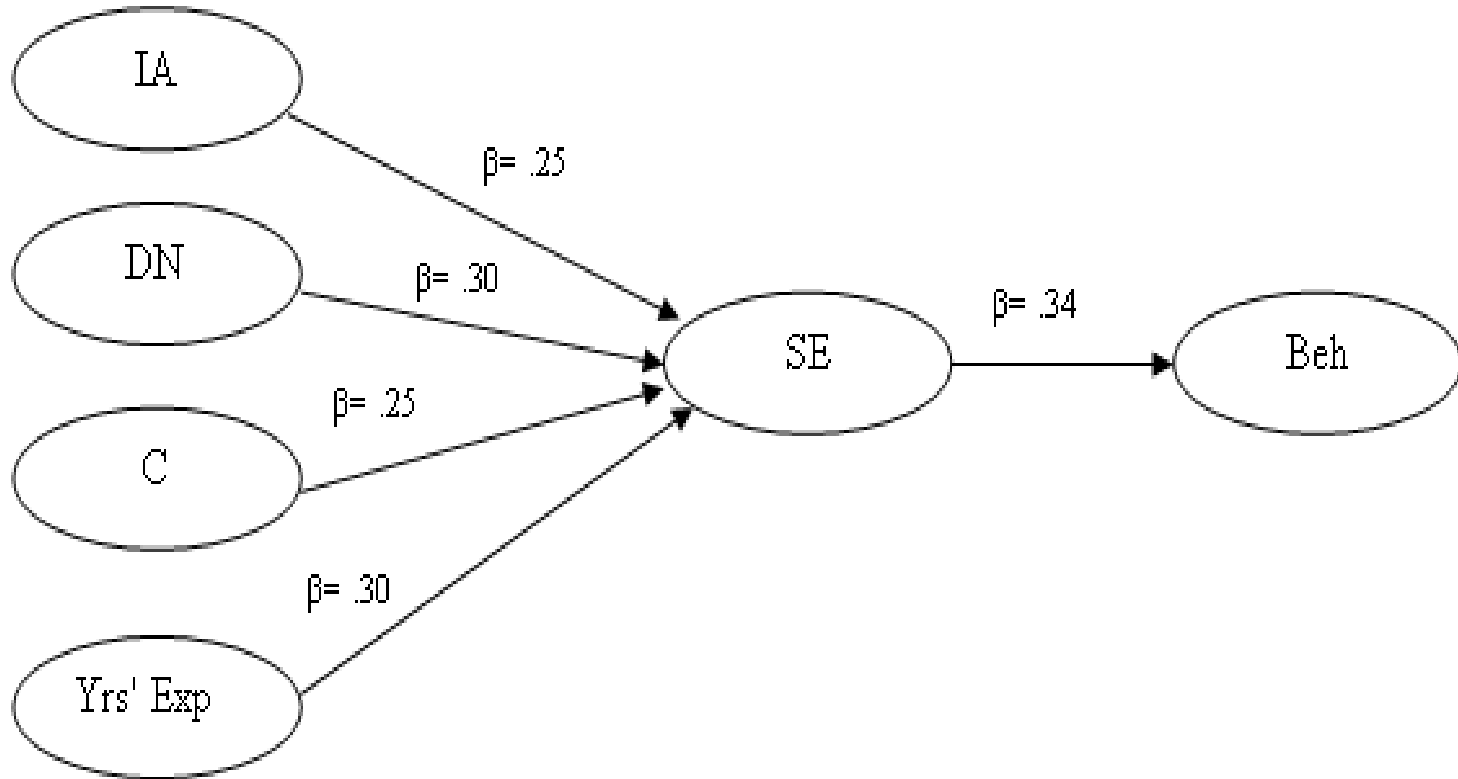
# Study 1: Results

- Hierarchical multiple regression was used to identify predictors of teachers' intentions and behaviour.
- Predictors of intentions:
  - Instrumental attitudes ( $\beta=.31, p<.001$ )
  - Descriptive norms ( $\beta=.19, p=.003$ )
  - Self-efficacy ( $\beta=.51, p<.001$ )

These accounted for 64% of the variance in intentions
- Predictors of behaviour:
  - Self-efficacy ( $\beta=.34, p=.022$ ). This accounted for 24% of the variance in behaviour
- Predictors of self-efficacy:
  - Instrumental attitudes ( $\beta= .25, p= .019$ )
  - Descriptive norms ( $\beta= .30, p < .001$ )
  - Controllability ( $\beta= .25, p= .002$ )
  - Year's experience ( $\beta= .30, p < .001$ )

These accounted for 36% of the variance in self-efficacy
- Self-efficacy mediated these components' relationships with behaviour.

# Study 1: Results



IA= Instrumental Attitudes; DN= Descriptive norm; C=Controllability; Yrs' Exp= Years' experience;  
SE= Self-efficacy; Beh=Behaviour

# Study 1: What do the results mean?

## For Theory

- Study is the first to apply TPB prospectively in the theory's purest form.
- Self-efficacy most important predictor of behaviour.
- TPB operates differently in the examination of teacher behaviours.

## For Practice

- Teachers look to their internal resources, that is, perceived ability rather than external factors such as time or resources.
- Suggests the importance of teacher education to cover inclusive education.
- The importance of the school climate.



# Study 2: Rationale

- Study 1 identified important cognitions in teachers' use of inclusive strategies for children with ID.
- This could inform intervention but TPB is not a theory of behaviour change.
- Little is known about how to change self-efficacy (Anderson & Betz, 2001; Henson, 2002; Klassen et al., 2011).
- Study 2 therefore examined how teachers' self-efficacy beliefs are fostered and ultimately, how these may be increased.

# Study 2: Rationale

- Bandura (1986, 1997) argued efficacy beliefs are developed through;
  - Mastery experience
  - Verbal persuasion
  - Vicarious experience
  - Psychological state
- This suggests the importance of school climate.

Based on Bandura's source of efficacy and on the antecedents of self-efficacy identified in Study 1, Study 2 examined the importance of mastery experience and perceptions of the school climate in predicting teachers' efficacy beliefs towards working with children with ID.

# Study 2: Method

- 148 primary teachers from mainstream schools in Scotland:
  - 138 females and 10 males
  - Age range 22 to 65 (M= 37.04, SD= 11.37)
  - Mean length of teaching experience was 12.68 years (SD= 10.55)
- Completed questionnaires assessing;
  - Self-efficacy
  - School climate factors (institutional integrity, head teacher's leadership, resource influence, teacher affiliation, academic emphasis)
  - Mastery experience
  - Inclusive classroom behaviours

# Study 2: Results

- Multiple linear regression was conducted to determine whether mastery experience and perceptions of school climate predicted teachers' efficacy beliefs towards working with children with ID.
- Both mastery experience ( $\beta=.39$   $p<.001$ ) and perceptions of school climate ( $\beta=.24$   $p=.001$ ) predicted efficacy beliefs.
  - Accounted for 30% of the variance in efficacy beliefs.
- Examining school climate factors rather than as a whole;
  - Push for academic achievement ( $\beta=.20$   $p=.019$ )
- Efficacy beliefs predicted teachers' use of inclusive teaching practices.

# Study 2: Discussion

- Importance of mastery experience has implications for both practicing and student teachers.
  - A need to support in-service teachers.
  - Initial teacher training to provide mastery experience opportunities.
- The importance of school climate indicates that the social working environment surrounding teachers is key in the development of efficacy beliefs.
  - Teachers who believe they work in a positive and supportive school environment are more likely to perceive themselves as capable of working with children with ID.
- Importance of academic emphasis suggests teachers may dedicate more time and effort to ensuring students with ID will achieve.

# Conclusions

- Both studies suggest teachers' competence (i.e. self-efficacy) is an important predictor of the use of inclusive teaching practices.
- If we can increase these beliefs, we may increase inclusive teaching. Increasing these beliefs may involve:
  - Teachers' mastery experience beliefs
  - Positive perceptions of the school climate

# Thanks for listening.. Any questions?

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