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Content and duration of inclusive training: systematic review and analysis of teachers' discourse

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' inclusive attitudes are one of the most important factors to promote a fully inclusive society. In turns, they are shown to be influenced by various factors such as teachers' self-efficacy or students' type of learning difficulty. Inclusive education training has also an impact on teachers' inclusive attitudes and behaviors. However, while the literature consistently shows such a positive effect, there is little evidence on the optimal duration and content to consider when designing such trainings. To address this question, we conducted (1) a systematic review of literature to examine the effects of content and duration of the trainings and (2) a set of semi-directive interviews among general teachers of the French northern region (both studies are pre-registered). The systematic review on 36 interventions showed the overall positive effect of both stand-alone and infused trainings as well as information based cognitive and mixed ones. Moreover, twenty-four semi directive interviews by using a thematic discourse analysis revealed that supplemental needs such as a need of interprofessional collaboration with other social and medical professionals (e.g., special educators, speech therapists, etc.) should be emphasized in an educational teacher training. Such findings allow to inform educational policy makers when it comes to conceive a successful training to be further implemented in the university curricula to promote a fully inclusive school setting.

EXTENDED SUMMARY

Teachers' attitudes toward inclusive education appear to be an important factor to promote a fully inclusive society. In social psychology of education, this variable refers to teachers' beliefs or knowledge about educating children with special educational needs (SEN, MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013) and shown to influence teachers' intentions and behaviors to adopt inclusive practices within their classes (de Boer et al., 2011). In turns, this variable is strongly influenced by various factors (teachers' self-efficacy, Desombre et al., 2019; students' type of learning difficulty, de Boer et al., 2011; meritocratic selection function of school, Khamzina et al., 2021). Teachers' trainings on inclusive education are also shown to have an important impact on their inclusive attitudes and intentions (Lautenbach & Heyder, 2019; Tristani & Barrett-Hunter, 2021). However, while the literature consistently shows such a positive effect, there is little evidence on the optimal duration and content to consider when designing such programs. Considering the diversity of the education inclusive trainings in terms of content (theoretical, practical or combined) and duration (stand-alone or infused), it is difficult to identify which factors contribute to a successful training program. Furthermore, whereas few studies place a focus on the effect of the content (Lautenbach et al, 2019), the duration aspect is either merely mentioned in the research or not examined at all in terms

of its effects on the attitudinal changes. To clarify these issues, the findings of two studies are presented in the present communication.

The first study that consisted in the systematic review (pre-registered on <https://osf.io/4fmsu/>) aimed to investigate the impact of the preservice teachers' education inclusive trainings on their attitudes toward inclusive education, as well as to examine the effects of the content and duration of such trainings on their attitudes. Thus, 36 preservice teachers' education inclusive trainings were examined in terms of both duration and content. Overall, the majority of programs (69.4%) induced the positive change in attitudes toward inclusive education thus confirming the robust impact of the teacher training programs in attitudinal shift. As for the content, both mixed and theoretical interventions seemed to be efficient in inducing the positive change within teachers' attitudes. In the same vein, the stand alone and infused interventions were shown to yield both a positive effect on the attitudes.

The second study aimed to identify teachers' concrete needs and perceptions in terms of the efficient training to implement. To do so, 24 semi-directed interviews were conducted among general French teachers (pre-registered study on https://osf.io/6q5rx/?view_only=323d5360776b4b0fabd128a8956beb87). By using the thematic discourse analysis, teachers voiced the need of the combination of theoretical and case studies courses when it comes to the conception of such trainings. Moreover, the need to meet other medical and social professionals implied in the process of inclusive education and learn how to collaborate with them was also outlined by the participants. The expression of such need suggests a new orientation that should be considered in the conception of more successful teachers' education inclusive trainings

From the applied perspective, the conclusions of our researches might allow to inform educational policy makers as well as educational institutions when it comes to the conception and implementation of successful teachers' education inclusive trainings. Based on our findings, we suggest that future research might examine the content and the duration aspects of training program and their interaction in order to be able to identify and recommend the best practices in terms of efficient inclusive training programs.

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