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Values, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation in Special Education Teachers: An Empirical Analysis¹

Valori, Autoefficacia e Motivazione dei Docenti di Sostegno: un'analisi empirica

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ABSTRACT

The study aims to examine the relationship between personal values and self-efficacy among special education teachers, analyzing the influence of teaching motivations (autonomous and controlled)

¹ This work is the result of the joint contribution of all authors. Dr. Annalisa Ianniello is responsible for the drafting and development of the following sections: 1) Personal Values, Self-Efficacy, and Motivation in Special Education Teachers: An Overview; 2) Materials and Methods; 3) Results; 4) Discussion; 5) Implications for Teacher Education and Inclusive Practices; 6) Limitations and Future Research; 7) Conclusions. Professor Ali Musleh Alodat is the Scientific Supervisor of the research. Professor Paola Aiello is the Scientific Coordinator of the research.

(Schwartz, 2012; Bandura, 1977; Roth et al., 2007).

The research involved a sample of 314 participants ($F = 70.4\%$, $M = 29.6\%$; $M\text{ age} = 41\text{ years}$; $SD = 10.56$). The Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001), the Autonomous Motivations for Teaching Scale (Roth et al., 2007), and the Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (Caprara, 2001) were administered. The results of two hierarchical multiple regression analyses are discussed in relation to implications for both pre-service and in-service teacher education, with the aim of improving the implementation of inclusive education policies (Aiello & Sharma, 2021).

Keywords: Personal Values, Self-Efficacy, Motivation, Inclusion.

RIASSUNTO

Lo studio si pone lo scopo di esaminare la relazione tra i valori personali e il senso di autoefficacia dei docenti di sostegno, analizzando l'influenza delle motivazioni (autonome o controllate) all'insegnamento (Schwartz, 2012; Bandura, 1977; Roth et al., 2007). La ricerca ha coinvolto un campione di 314 partecipanti ($F = 70.4\%$ $M = 29.6\%$; $M = 41\text{ anni}$; $DS = 10.56$). Sono stati somministrati il Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2001), la Autonomous Motivations for Teaching Scale (Roth et al., 2007) e la Teachers' Self-efficacy Scale (Caprara, 2001).

I risultati delle due analisi di regressione gerarchica multipla sono discussi in relazione alle implicazioni per la formazione iniziale e in servizio dei docenti di sostegno, con l'obiettivo di migliorare l'attuazione delle politiche educative inclusive (Aiello & Sharma, 2021).

Parole chiave: Valori Personali, Autoefficacia, Motivazione, Inclusione.

1. PERSONAL VALUES, SELF-EFFICACY, AND MOTIVATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS: AN OVERVIEW

In recent decades, inclusive education has become established as a key theoretical and operational framework for addressing the growing heterogeneity of educational contexts, placing at its core the right of all students to equitable, high-quality education (Aiello & Sharma, 2018). The inclusive approach promotes shared responsibility across the entire school community in designing flexible and accessible learning environments that respond to the different educational needs of *all* students (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006). The focus is on removing barriers to participation and learning, promoting active engagement, and recognizing individual *differences* as a valuable educational resource (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011). In this regard, the role of teachers is of central importance (Aiello, 2019). More specifically, the figure of the special education teacher emerges as a key element in inclusive processes, operating at the intersection of complex educational needs, collaborative work, and shared responsibilities in promoting the educational success of *each and every student* (Sibilio & Aiello, 2018). Their contribution has become increasingly significant considering the growing complexity of students' educational needs and the expanding professional demands placed on teachers (Murdaca, 2022). These demands extend beyond instructional and methodological competencies to encompass value-based, motivational, and self-efficacy dimensions, which are

crucial to the quality of educational practice and to teachers' professional well-being (Aiello & Giaconi, 2024).

From this perspective, the literature has widely highlighted the central role of teachers' personal values in guiding choices, behaviors, and attitudes (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012). According to S. H. Schwartz's Theory of the Universal Structure of Human Values, values are trans-situational guiding principles that orient instructional action and influence how teachers interpret their professional role and the demands of the school context. Schwartz's theoretical model identifies four value dimensions, referred to as Higher Order Values: (1) Self-Transcendence, (2) Conservation, (3) Self-Enhancement, and (4) Openness to Change (Fig.1). These four value dimensions are further articulated into ten basic values, the so-called Original Values, some of which have subsequently been subdivided and refined, resulting in a total of 19 values (Fig. 2) (Schwartz & Cieciuch, 2021).

Value Dimensions	Description
Self-Transcendence	Promotes the well-being of others and the broader community, prioritizing prosocial and universalistic interests.
Conservation	Emphasizes stability, security, and the preservation of traditions and social norms.
Self-Enhancement	Oriented toward personal success, power, and control over resources.
Openness to Change	Encourages autonomy, novelty, and independence of thought and action.

Fig. 1. The four value dimensions described in the Theory of the Universal Structure of Human Values (Schwartz, 2012).

These values are organized within a circular model, arranged according to the degree of compatibility or similarity in the type of motivational goals they express (Fig. 2). The motivational content of each specific value refers to the direction in which it orients individuals' perceptions and decisions: adjacent values are closely related, whereas those positioned opposite each other reflect contrasting orientations (Ianniello, Alodat & Corona, 2022).



Fig. 2.: Circular model - S. H. Schwartz's Theory of Human Values (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012).

Indeed, as shown in Fig. 1, the value dimension of Conservation, oriented toward stability, security, and the preservation of traditions, stands in contrast to the values of Openness to Change, which are characterized by independence of thought and a readiness for novelty. Similarly, Self-Enhancement values, which emphasize the pursuit of personal interests, are diametrically opposed to Self-Transcendence values, which emphasize transcending one's own interests for the benefit of others (Schwartz & Cieciuch, 2021).

Within the circular model, Schwartz also contrasts values characterized by a personal focus (on the right side), oriented toward the achievement of individual outcomes, with values characterized by a social focus (on the left side), oriented toward social life and the well-being of others or institutions (Schwartz *et al.*, 2012).

Specific value orientations have been associated with different teaching styles, levels of professional engagement, and ways of managing educational relationships (Pantić & Wubbels, 2012; Barni *et al.*, 2018; Balkar & Alev, 2022). Recent studies also suggest a positive correlation with perceived self-efficacy, indicating that teachers' value systems may help shape beliefs regarding their own professional competence (Barni *et al.*, 2019). The concept of self-efficacy derives from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) (1977) and refers to teachers' beliefs in their capacity to manage professional challenges effectively. A substantial body of research has shown that high levels of teacher self-efficacy are associated with greater instructional effectiveness, more effective classroom management strategies, and higher resilience to occupational stress (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Teacher self-efficacy can be conceptualized as a dynamic belief system, sensitive to individual and motivational factors that shape how teachers interpret and respond to professional demands (Bandura, 1997). Within this framework, teaching motivation represents a further key construct for understanding the processes through which personal values may be translated into efficacy beliefs.

A broad line of research has, in fact, highlighted the importance of teaching motivation, distinguishing between autonomous and controlled motivation as relevant factors in the exercise of

the teaching profession (Roth *et al.*, 2007; Ryan & Deci, 2017). According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), autonomous motivation is characterized by the personal internalization of the value of teaching activity and is associated with higher levels of engagement, job satisfaction, and persistence in the teaching profession. In contrast, controlled motivation is driven by external or internal pressures, such as the desire to obtain rewards or avoid sanctions and feelings of guilt and has frequently been associated with less adaptive outcomes in engagement and professional well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Despite the extensive literature on each of these dimensions, there is still a limited number of studies that jointly examine personal values, self-efficacy, and motivation among special education teachers, taking into account the specific features of their professional role. In light of these considerations, the present study aims to address this gap by contributing to the expansion of knowledge on the relationships among these constructs, which are relevant to supporting effective and inclusive educational practice.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study aimed to investigate the relationship between personal values and perceived self-efficacy in a sample of special education teachers, examining the moderating role of autonomous and controlled teaching motivation in this relationship. To this end, two hierarchical multiple regression analyses were conducted to test whether autonomous and controlled teaching motivation moderated the relationship between personal values and self-efficacy. The sample consists of 314 special education teachers ($F = 70.4\%$, $M = 29.6\%$; M age = 41 years; $SD = 10.56$), aged between 25 and over 60 years. At the time of data collection, all participants were actively working as special education teachers in mainstream educational settings and were responsible for supporting students with disabilities across different school levels. The participants' experience in special education support averaged approximately 12-14 years, with a range from 1 to over 35 years. All participants signed an informed consent form and were assured that their privacy would be respected. Each participant provided socio-demographic information, including gender, age, province of origin, marital status, school level, and educational qualification (Fig. 3).

Characteristic	Category	n (%)
Gender	Female	221 (70.4)
	Male	93 (29.6)
Age group (years)	25–29	57 (18.2)
	35–39	86 (27.4)
	45–49	107 (34.1)
	55–59	57 (18.1)
	≥ 60	7 (2.2)
Marital status	Married	236 (75.2)
	Single	78 (24.8)
Province	Napoli	92 (29.3)

School level	Caserta	77 (24.5)
	Salerno	85 (27.1)
	Avellino	37 (11.8)
	Benevento	23 (7.3)
	Preschool	49 (15.6)
Education level	Primary school	121 (38.5)
	Lower secondary school	63 (20.1)
	Upper secondary school	81 (25.8)
	High school diploma	52 (16.6)
	Bachelor's/master's degree	253 (80.6)
	PhD	3 (1.0)

Fig. 3. Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample.

a. Tools

Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR)

To assess value priorities, the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR), developed by S. H. Schwartz based on the Theory of the Universal Structure of Human Values (2012), was administered. The instrument was used in its validated Italian version; therefore, no linguistic validation process, translation, or back-translation from the original language was required. The updated version of the questionnaire (PVQ-RR revised scale) was employed, currently validated across 49 cultural groups and available in 32 language versions. The Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ-RR) consists of 57 items, each providing a brief portrait description of a person and their goals, aspirations, or desires, allowing the assessment of the 19 values proposed by the author. In the general instructions provided on the questionnaire cover page, participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each statement (item) described a person similar or dissimilar to themselves, using a 6-point Likert scale (1 = “not at all like me” / 6 = “very much like me”). The estimated administration time was approximately 20 minutes. In line with the theoretical model, the 19 values were aggregated into four higher-order dimensions: Conservation, Openness to Change, Self-Transcendence, and Self-Enhancement. A mean score was calculated for each dimension. Reliability analyses conducted on the sample indicated satisfactory levels of internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values of $\alpha = .84$ for Conservation, $\alpha = .78$ for Openness to Change, $\alpha = .82$ for Self-Transcendence, and $\alpha = .76$ for Self-Enhancement, consistent with previous literature and with the use of the PVQ-RR in educational contexts.

The Autonomous Motivations for Teaching Scale (AMTS)

Teaching motivations were assessed using the Autonomous Motivations for Teaching Scale (AMTS) (Roth et al., 2007). The scale consists of 16 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The instrument measures two dimensions of teaching motivation: controlled motivations and autonomous motivations. Eight items assess controlled motivations, namely reasons related to external pressures or the desire for approval (e.g., devoting time to students in order to gain parents' recognition), whereas the remaining eight items measure autonomous motivations, referring to

personal interests, internal values, and intrinsic enjoyment derived from teaching activities (e.g., the pleasure of interacting with children and adolescents). The scale was translated into Italian and subsequently back-translated into English following standard linguistic adaptation procedures. In the present study, the internal reliability of the subscales was satisfactory, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .72 for the controlled motivations subscale and .80 for the autonomous motivations subscale.

Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES)

The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) is a self-report instrument developed by Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001) to measure teachers' beliefs regarding their ability to effectively influence teaching-learning processes and to manage the main professional demands of the school context. The scale, widely used in international research, is based on the socio-cognitive construct of self-efficacy. For the present study, the short Italian validated version of the questionnaire was used, consisting of 12 items formulated as statements describing typical teaching situations (Caprara, 2001). The items assess three main dimensions of teacher self-efficacy: 1. Classroom management efficacy (e.g., the ability to maintain discipline and prevent problem behaviors); 2. Instructional strategies efficacy (e.g., the ability to explain content clearly and adapt teaching to students' needs); 3. Student engagement efficacy (e.g., the ability to motivate and stimulate students' interest and active participation).

Items are rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = not at all capable to 7 = fully capable, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived self-efficacy. The total score can be calculated as either the mean or the sum of item responses, while separate scores can also be obtained for each dimension. Consistent with previous studies, a global teacher self-efficacy index was computed as the mean of the 12 items. In the present sample, the global index showed good internal consistency ($\alpha = .82$). Previous studies have also reported adequate psychometric properties of the TSES, confirming its reliability and construct validity across different educational and cultural contexts.

b. Data Analysis

The analyses were conducted using the statistical software SPSS. Variables were initially described using descriptive statistics, and the associations among them were subsequently examined through Pearson's bivariate correlations. The first regression analysis included controlled motivations as the moderator, whereas the second included autonomous motivations. In both models, the main predictors and the moderating variable were entered to examine their relationships. Subsequently, the statistical significance of the moderation effects was assessed. Prior to testing the interactions, the scores of the independent variables were mean-centered by subtracting their respective means, in order to reduce potential statistical issues and facilitate the interpretation of the results. When the interaction effect was statistically significant, additional analyses were conducted to clarify how motivation influenced the relationship between personal values and self-efficacy.

3. RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the study variables are reported in Table 1. The sample consisted of 314 special education teachers (70.4% women, 29.6% men), with a mean age of 41 years ($SD = 10.56$). Regarding personal values, teachers attributed greater importance to self-transcendence

values ($M = 4.87$, $SD = 0.62$), followed by conservation values ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.82$), openness to change values ($M = 3.80$, $SD = 0.75$), and self-enhancement values ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 0.95$).

With respect to teaching motivations, participants reported significantly higher levels of autonomous motivation ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 0.50$) than of controlled motivation ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 0.58$), $t(313) = 24.87$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.40$. In addition, teachers showed high levels of perceived self-efficacy ($M = 5.38$, $SD = 0.69$).

Correlation analyses indicated that personal values were largely associated with one another, except for the relationship between self-transcendence and self-enhancement, which was not significant ($r = .03$, ns). Openness to change ($r = .18$, $p < .01$), self-transcendence ($r = .21$, $p < .01$), and self-enhancement ($r = .17$, $p < .01$) values were positively associated with autonomous motivations, whereas controlled motivations were positively correlated with self-enhancement values ($r = .15$, $p < .05$) and negatively associated with self-transcendence values ($r = -.16$, $p < .01$).

Self-efficacy was positively correlated with conservation values ($r = .29$, $p < .01$), openness to change values ($r = .20$, $p < .01$), and self-transcendence values ($r = .23$, $p < .01$). No significant associations emerged with self-enhancement values ($r = .05$, ns) or with autonomous ($r = .08$, ns) and controlled motivations ($r = -.04$, ns).

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1) Conservation	1						
2) Openness to change	.18**	1					
3) Self-transcendence	.35**	.26**	1				
4) Self-enhancement	.21**	.50**	.03	1			
5) Controlled motivations	.10	.05	-.16**	.15*	1		
6) Autonomous motivations	.12*	.18**	.21**	.17**	.44**	1	
7) Self-efficacy	.29**	.20**	.23**	.05	-.04	.08	1
Mean	3.88	3.80	4.87	2.82	2.97	3.91	5.38
SD	0.82	0.75	0.62	0.95	0.58	0.50	0.69
Range	2-6	2-6	3-6	1-6	1-5	2-5	3-7

Note. $p < .01$; * $p < .05$.

Tab. 1.: Descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables.

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression analyses are reported in Table 2. In Model 1, which included controlled motivations as the moderating variable, the model was significant, $F(9, 304) = 5.87$, $p < .001$, explaining 14.8% of the variance in self-efficacy ($R^2 = .148$). Conservation values emerged as a positive predictor of self-efficacy ($\beta = .236$, $t = 4.10$, $p < .001$), regardless of the level of controlled motivations. The interaction between openness to change and controlled motivations was significant ($\beta = -.241$, $t = -3.12$, $p = .002$), indicating that the association between openness to change and self-efficacy was stronger among teachers who perceived lower levels of external pressure.

In Model 2, which included autonomous motivations as the moderator, the model was also significant, $F(9, 304) = 5.45$, $p < .001$, explaining 13.9% of the variance in self-efficacy ($R^2 = .139$). In this model as well, conservation values were positively associated with self-efficacy ($\beta = .229$, $t = 3.97$, $p < .001$). Furthermore, the interaction between self-transcendence and autonomous motivations was significant ($\beta = .146$, $t = 2.28$, $p = .023$), indicating that the positive association between self-transcendence and self-efficacy was stronger among teachers with higher levels of autonomous motivation.

Model 1 - Controlled motivations (CM) as moderator

Predictors	β	t	p
Step 1 (main effects)			
Conservation	.236	4.10	<.001
Openness to change	.131	1.98	.049
Self-transcendence	.095	1.71	.088
Self-enhancement	-.048	-0.86	.389
Controlled motivations (CM)	-.030	-0.59	.557
Step 2 (interactions)			
Conservation $\times$ CM	.017	0.33	.743
Openness to change $\times$ CM	-.241	-3.12	.002
Self-transcendence $\times$ CM	-.041	-.77	.443
Self-enhancement $\times$ CM	.118	1.74	.083

Model fit: $R^2 = .148$, $\Delta R^2 = .038$, $F(9, 304) = 5.87$, $p < .001$

Model 2 - Autonomous motivations (AM) as moderator

Predictors	β	t	p
Step 1 (main effects)			
Conservation	.229	3.97	<.001
Openness to change	.127	1.92	.056
Self-transcendence	.090	1.61	.109
Self-enhancement	-.057	-1.01	.313
Autonomous motivations (AM)	.051	1.00	.320

Predictors	β	t	p
Step 2 (interactions)			
Conservation $\times$ AM	-.038	-0.70	.482
Openness to change $\times$ AM	-.061	-0.93	.352
Self-transcendence $\times$ AM	.146	2.28	.023
Self-enhancement $\times$ AM	.008	0.14	.889

Model fit: $R^2 = .139$, $\Delta R^2 = .029$, $F(9, 304) = 5.45$, $p < .001$

Note. $p < .01$; * $p < .05$. CM = controlled motivations; AM = autonomous motivations.

Tab. 2.: Hierarchical Moderated Regression Analyses predicting Teachers' Self-Efficacy.

4. DISCUSSION

The present study examined the relationship between personal values and self-efficacy among special education teachers and analyzed the moderating role of autonomous and controlled teaching motivations. The findings are consistent with the main theoretical models of personal values (Schwartz, 2012), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977), and autonomous motivation (Roth *et al.*, 2007), contributing to a deeper understanding of the dimensions involved in the professional functioning of special education teachers.

Conservation values emerged as a dimension consistently associated with self-efficacy, regardless of the type and level of motivation. This result suggests that value orientations related to responsibility, work structuring, and security may support professional competence in contexts characterized by high complexity and uncertainty, such as schools. In contrast, openness to change and self-transcendence values are associated with self-efficacy in ways that depend on the quality of motivation. In particular, openness to change is more strongly associated with self-efficacy among teachers who perceive lower levels of external pressure, suggesting that flexibility and an orientation toward innovation may translate into a stronger sense of efficacy, especially when professional activity is not experienced as externally controlled. Similarly, self-transcendence values are more strongly associated with self-efficacy when autonomous motivation is high, indicating that an orientation toward others' well-being supports a sense of competence when teaching is experienced as consistent with one's personal values. Furthermore, in line with empirical findings from other studies, self-enhancement values are not associated with self-efficacy, nor does this relationship appear to be influenced by the quality of teaching motivation, suggesting a marginal role of orientations focused on personal success in participants' perceived professional functioning (Barni *et al.*, 2019).

The study shows that special education teachers' sense of self-efficacy is supported by specific value orientations and shaped by the quality of teaching motivation. Conservation values represent a stable resource for professional competence, whereas openness to change and self-transcendence values are functional to self-efficacy only under favorable motivational conditions. The findings suggest that

self-efficacy in special education teachers emerges from the interaction between value orientations and motivational quality, rather than from the direct influence of each dimension considered in isolation.

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

The results have important implications for initial and in-service training of special education teachers (Forlin & Chambers, 2011). The stable relationship between conservation and self-efficacy underscores the importance of training pathways that develop skills in educational planning, clarity of professional role, assumption of responsibility, and structured management of interventions-key aspects for fostering a sense of efficacy in heterogeneous contexts. At the same time, the moderating role of motivation highlights the need to promote, in both training and school contexts, conditions that foster autonomous motivation and reduce external pressure and perceived forms of control. This implies the adoption of training approaches that value reflection on personal values, which serve as a central reference for guiding professional choices and behaviors, and that promote teachers' active participation and recognition of their decision-making autonomy (Pavone, 2016).

A high sense of self-efficacy, supported by values consistent with the professional role and by autonomous motivation, may also represent an important protective factor for professional well-being and for a more effective management of work resources. In particular, the opportunity to express openness and prosocial orientations in a context perceived as supportive and non-controlling appears to foster greater positive work engagement and higher professional satisfaction. From this perspective, the findings suggest indirect but meaningful implications for educational practices, mediated by special education teachers' sense of self-efficacy. Since teacher self-efficacy is a key factor in the adoption of effective inclusive strategies, it affects not only the choice of teaching methodologies but also the quality of educational interactions, the ability to adapt interventions to learners' specific needs, and the sustainability of professional commitment in educational contexts characterized by high complexity (Aiello *et al.*, 2016). Accordingly, a higher sense of self-efficacy among special education teachers is associated with greater willingness to use flexible practices, to actively collaborate with subject teachers and other professional figures, and to support the active participation of students with special educational needs within the classroom group (Corona, 2014). In this sense, training interventions oriented not only toward the development of instructional and methodological skills, but also toward the promotion of specific value and motivational orientations, may indirectly contribute to improving the quality of inclusive processes. Fostering reflection on personal and professional values, together with supporting autonomous motivation, may strengthen the sense of coherence between personal identity and professional role, enhancing perceived self-efficacy and, consequently, the effectiveness of educational action (Ianniello & Corona, 2023).

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Despite the theoretical and methodological coherence of the findings, the present study has some limitations. First, the correlational design does not allow causal conclusions to be drawn regarding the observed relationships. Second, the exclusive use of self-report measures may have introduced social desirability bias. In addition, the sample's specificity, composed exclusively of special

education teachers, limits the generalizability of the results to other teacher populations. Finally, although the tested models explain a significant portion of the variance in self-efficacy ($R^2 \approx .14$), a substantial amount of variability remains unexplained, suggesting the need for future research to include additional individual and organizational factors and adopt longitudinal designs to further investigate the development of self-efficacy over time.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The present study provides new insights into the associations between personal values, teaching motivation, and perceived self-efficacy among special education teachers. By examining the moderating role of autonomous and controlled motivation, this research contributes to a broader understanding of the processes underlying teachers' professional functioning within inclusive educational contexts. The findings indicate that special education teachers' self-efficacy cannot be interpreted solely in relation to acquired professional competencies or workplace characteristics but is also associated with the value orientations guiding professional identity and with the quality of teaching motivation underlying educational action. These findings highlight that special education teachers' self-efficacy emerges from the interaction between personal dimensions and motivational conditions rather than from the isolated influence of single factors. This perspective encourages considering teachers not only as professionals who possess specific methodological competencies, but also as individuals whose perceived professional efficacy is closely connected to the meaning they attribute to their role and to the motivations that sustain their educational commitment. Although further longitudinal and multimethod studies are needed to deepen understanding of the processes through which personal values, motivation, and self-efficacy develop and influence each other over time, the findings of the present study contribute to a broader perspective on special education teachers' professional development. Recognizing the role of these dimensions may represent a significant element in designing training interventions aimed at supporting teachers' professional growth and promoting the quality and sustainability of inclusive education processes (Gaspari, 2016).

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