

## **Are the so-called Students *with Special Educational Needs* scarcely prosocial by *nature* or by *culture*?**

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### **Issue addressed**

Schools: Between Inclusion and Exclusion

### **Introduction**

Several studies on inclusion underline an increasing difficulty for the Italian school system in offering an adequate response to the differences that characterize each student while maintaining high levels of curricula standardization. Within a system tending to *normalization*, even socio-relational skills are conveyed and read through an ableist perspective, with the activation of inevitable processes of marginalization towards those students who diverge from default standards. This research, conducted from February to October 2015, is intended to evaluate if and to what extent the levels of pro-sociality of students identified as having Special Educational Needs (SEN) are different from those of their “not SEN” classmates. These data are analyzed in reference to inclusive processes activated inside the examined schools.

### **Type of data used**

Quality / quantity - based

### **Subjects**

168 students (seven classes from four different schools)

### **Tools**

- Students: *Prosocial scale* (Caprara, 2005); *Peer nominations* (Caprara, 2012); *Sociometric Test* (Moreno, 2007).
- Teachers: *Inclusion Questionnaire* (Bocci, Travaglini, 2014); interviews and focus groups.

### **Analysis**

NVivo; SPSS.

### **Results**

As regards the students, a connection between prosociality and learning levels emerges, with a tendency to the marginalization of SEN students. This situation is not perceived by teachers, who do not seem to notice such critical issues within the school system.

### **Main references**

- Ferri, B. (2015). Inclusion for the 21st Century: Why We Need Disabilities Studies in Education. *Italian Journal of Special Education For Inclusion*, 2, pp.
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- D'Alessio, S., Medeghini, R., Vadalà, G. & Bocci, F. (2015). L'approccio dei Disability Studies per lo sviluppo delle pratiche scolastiche inclusive in Italia. In R. Vianello & S. Di Nuovo (Eds.). *Quale scuola inclusiva in Italia? Oltre le posizioni ideologiche: risultati della ricerca*. Trento: Erickson.