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TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS AND MENTAL RESILIENCE OF SPECIAL PEDAGOGISTS CARING THE SCHOOL INCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

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ABSTRACT

The main theoretical idea of the work focuses on the problem of resilience of special pedagogists caring teachers the school inclusion for students with autism. The purpose of this theoretical research was to investigate the correlation of resilience with the personal teaching effectiveness of general and special education teachers, primary and secondary, who care for students with autism with Targeted Individual Structured and Didactically Differentiated Inclusive Intervention with Pedagogical Program of Special Education and Training (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.). The methodological approach utilizes the combined systematic bibliographic review of international and Greek academic literature. With the fundamental thematic analysis, resilience and personal teaching effectiveness were found to have moderate and negative correlations with real-life experiences.

Keywords: autism, T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T., mental resilience, teaching effectiveness.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The professional challenges and training needs of teachers working with students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) in general and special education schools [1], as reported by researchers [2], are necessary

in the modern educational reality, which is characterized by the gradual transition from segregated special education settings to inclusive education [3]. The inclusive change in the school environment [4] affects all teachers, who are called upon to respond to the specific learning, communication and sensory needs of students with autism and requires scientific training, specialized teaching strategies [5], high levels of personal teaching effectiveness and mental resilience [6]. Teaching and supporting students with neurodevelopmental specificities, such as autism, entails continuous adaptation of teaching practices, emotional involvement and management of unforeseen situations that arise within the classroom [7]. Because the culture of inclusion of students with autism in mainstream and special schools is "tested" as one of the most complex challenges in the educational system [8]. Indeed, the management of speech [9], social interaction and communication disorders [9] determines their smooth adaptation to mainstream and special schools and requires teaching tools, personal teaching effectiveness and mental resilience [11] on the part of teachers [11].

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this research is to investigate the correlation between teachers' resilience and their personal teaching effectiveness. The theoretical study focuses on general and special education teachers, primary and secondary, who provide care with pedagogical tool as the Targeted Individual Structured and Didactically Differentiated Inclusive Pedagogical Intervention Program of Special Education and Training (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.) and support to students with autism. The individual objectives examine the following questions:

- What is the relationship between resilience and personal teaching effectiveness of general and special education teachers who support students with autism?
- How is the mental resilience and teaching effectiveness of teachers related to the real-life learning experiences of students with autism by applying the pedagogical tool T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.?
- Which systemic factors (micro- , meso- and extra-systemic), according to the Bioecological Model of Development [12], emerge as decisive for shaping the resilience and self -efficacy of teachers who care for individuals with autism?
- How does the use of specialized pedagogical tools (such as T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism) affect teachers' intrinsic motivation, professional persistence and sense of success in the classroom?

3. CLARIFICATION TERMS

3.1. Teaching effectiveness

Teaching effectiveness [14], and more specifically teaching self -efficacy [15], is defined as the teacher's subjective belief and confidence in his or her personal abilities [16]. These refer to the way in which he or she organizes, plans, and executes specialized teaching activities that lead to the achievement of desired learning, social, and behavioral goals for all students, regardless of neurodevelopmental specificities.

Specifically in the context of education and support for individuals with autism, teaching effectiveness is defined by the teacher's ability to respond to Special Educational Needs. In our study, teaching effectiveness is defined by the specific teaching methodology, teaching practices for the unpredictable

behaviors of a student with autism, maintaining emotional self-regulation and professional well-being in the classroom. Particular importance is given to connecting teaching with real life and with the authentic real-life learning experiences of students with autism [17].

3.2. Mental resilience

Mental resilience is defined as a dynamic life skill and a process of positive adaptation to stressful conditions and the daily challenges of educational practice. Research on Greek special education teachers, on burnout, job satisfaction, and sources of stress related to teaching work, report that resilience protects them from emotional exhaustion and burnout [16]. On the other hand, studies on the educational care of students with autism are limited and coexist as part of restorative therapies.

In this paper, resilience focuses on teachers who care for students with neurodiversity and neuropsychiatric disorders such as autism in the light of the levels of the Bioecological Model of Development [16], see Figure [1]. In addition, as Rutter (2012) pointed out, resilience is an interactive concept and is derived from individual differences in teachers' personality and the outcome among those who have been exposed to stressful, difficult and adverse teaching conditions while caring for students with autism. In this paper, teachers' resilience is defined as a dynamic life skill and adaptability that is reflected in the ways in which they learn to manage professional challenges, stress and the increased demands of structured teaching interventions, in accordance with the pedagogical principles of Special Education and Training.

3.3. Targeted Individual Structured and Didactically Differentiated Inclusive Intervention with Pedagogical Program of Special Education and Training (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.) emphasizes on autism

The good practices of teaching interventions for students with special educational needs [19] is defined by the theoretical principles that govern the Framework of Analytical Program Special Education (F.A.P.S.E.) [20], by the universal planning for people with disabilities and inclusive education. The pedagogical tool 'Targeted Individual Structured and Didactically Differentiated Inclusive Intervention with Pedagogical Program of Special Education and Training (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.) emphasizes on autism, evolves into five basic phases that the teacher can use. In the first phase, he carries out systematic empirical observation in the case study with hetero-observations [21], in the second phase with informal pedagogical evaluation, using Basic Skills Checklists it records the student's capabilities, difficulties and levels of achievement in order to define teaching priorities. In the third phase, it designs the structured teaching program by formulating realistic goals, which implements in the fourth phase with appropriate differentiations, and in the fifth phase, it evaluates the intervention, the degree of achievement of the goals, the pedagogical reflection on the targeted activities that worked effectively, as well as on the exercises that need modification [22].

4. THEORETICAL PART

In the theoretical part, theories on the specific topic are presented and our own theory is formulated. More

specifically, the theoretical foundation of the work is based on the synergy of three central pillars of special education and training [23], the neuropsychiatric disorder of autism [19] and educational psychology [25]. The methodological approach [21] utilizes the combined systematic bibliographic review of international and Greek academic literature on certain fundamental themes. These refer to teaching effectiveness, mental resilience, see Figure [1], and inclusive pedagogical practices for students with autism with the pedagogical tool T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T. [27], which with the fundamental thematic analysis, the theoretical concepts and findings were categorized and interpreted.

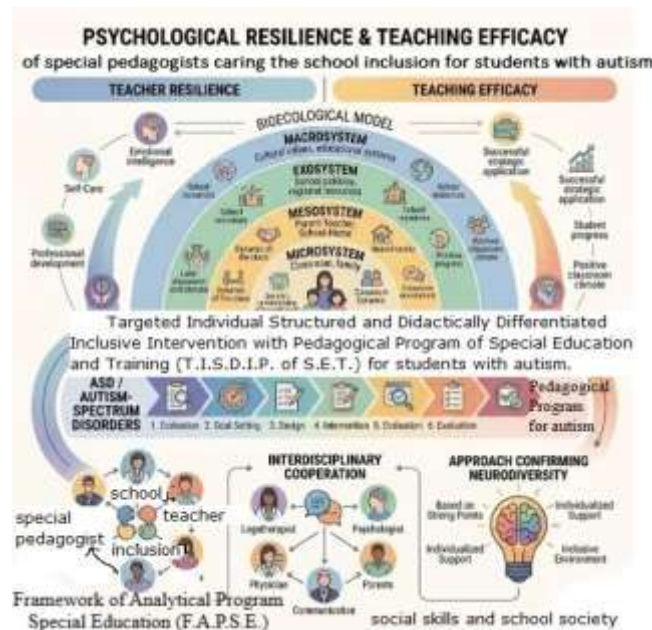


Figure 1. Teaching effectiveness and mental resilience of t special pedagogists caring for students with autism.

4.1. The theory of social ecology

With the theory of social ecology of the Frenchman Edgar Moren [28] approaches the teaching effectiveness and mental resilience of teachers who care for students with autism, within the context of "complex thinking", which attempts to overcome the narrow divisions between the sciences and the humanities [29]. Edgar's positions Morin on community, social ecology and the planetary era argues that reality cannot be understood through isolated cognitive fields, but requires an approach that simultaneously captures the relationships, interdependencies and contradictions that constitute the world. Through this prism, he approaches the concept of community, linking it inextricably with social ecology and planetary consciousness. In the planetary era, human destiny is now common and uncertain, which makes it imperative to seek a new balance in social relations and support structures, as the material and spiritual autonomy of the individual directly depends on his interaction and interdependence with the social and cultural environment. Morin emphasizes that addressing contemporary challenges requires founding social and educational interventions on the basis of solidarity that connects individuals without assimilating them, maintaining a creative balance between extreme individualism and extreme

communitarianism.

According to this, it is estimated that excessive individualism cuts off the person with autism from the social fabric, leading to alienation and the loss of collective meaning, as happens with the imposed parallel support in the classroom, which teaches the student in the presence of the second teacher. But also, the closed or dogmatic communitarianism for the lifelong disability of autism, encases the pedagogical view of individuality and suppresses the particularity of the person for the sake of an oppressive collective identity of people with autism. As Moren argues, the meaning of human existence and education is achieved by maintaining equal distances from these two tendencies. In this way, social ecology promotes a “politics of civilized coexistence”, where the preservation of human dignity and mutual understanding are the central pillars for the smooth integration and education of all individuals in the community.

In our opinion, the connection between social ecology and Edgar 's positions Moren's approach to Special Education and Training offers a holistic framework [28] for understanding individuals with autism. Instead of a fragmented, purely medical-centered approach, the education of individuals with autism is understood as an open, dynamic system, where specialized sciences such as pediatrics, developmental psychology, speech therapy, occupational therapy, psychotherapy [30] and social theories [31] continuously interact with pedagogy, contributing to dialectical thinking around the teaching effectiveness and mental resilience of teachers who care for students with autism.

In lifelong Special Education and training of individuals with autism, expectations for full autonomous inclusion often intersect with the frustrations caused by systemic and social barriers. Morin 's thinking invites us to accept the uncertainty and inherent complexity of this path, recognizing that support does not consist in imposing a normative uniformity, but in preserving the human dignity of individuals with autism [32]. With solidarity, special education cultivates an environment of mutual understanding by transforming the universal design of disability into a fundamental educational and moral value by maintaining equal distances from individualism and extreme communitarianism for autism. In this way, interdisciplinary interventions with specialized sciences acquire substantial meaning, promoting the equal presence and development of the individual within the social whole.

4.2. The theory of the Bioecological Development Model [33]

The theory of the Bioecological Model of Development, formulated by Bronfenbrenner [12], helps to understand the interactions of the teacher with the environment in which the student with autism lives. This theory organizes the environment into a series of hierarchical and interrelated systems. These are listed:

- [a] in the microsystem, where the direct interaction between the teacher and the student with autism in the classroom takes place. In the educational care of students with autism, the microsystem includes specialized instructions, curriculum differentiation, interactions with peers, and the use of individualized pedagogical interventions.
- [b] the mesosystem, in educational care, refers to the available resources, the curriculum and weekly

timetable of lessons and the administrative arrangements. In this, the relationship and cooperation between school, family and special education support structures, includes the interconnections and relationships that develop between two or more microsystems in which the individual actively participates. For the teacher, the mesosystem is expressed in collaborations, by harmonizing teaching resources with life experiences and transferring skills to the extra system. Examples are educational policies, the financing of school units, the provision of support resources and the availability of specialized professional development programs.

- [c] the exosystem refers to environments in which the person with autism does not participate directly as an active subject, but the events that occur in them directly affect his microsystem.
- [d] the macrosystem with the broader cultural, rights-based policies and legislation and the ideological values of society shapes the structure of the underlying systems that are reflected in the culture of inclusion. In special education and the inclusive education and inclusion of students with autism, the macrosystem reflects social attitudes and stereotypes towards neurodiversity.
- [e] a time system that incorporates the dimension of time, recording the changes and continuities in both the person with autism and their environment throughout life. It examines the evolution of support systems, the stages of the teacher's professional career and changes in educational trends over time and the interaction with the pedagogical tool T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism.

Furthermore, as Armstrong emphasizes in his book on neurodiversity in the classroom and strengths-based strategies for supporting students with autism to succeed in school and life. An example is the case of Temple Grandin, a livestock production engineer, professor of animal science at a state university, and designer of one-third of the cattle handling equipment manufactured in the United States, is one of the most fascinating people to have been diagnosed with autism. From Armstrong 's book [34], we study *"When she was 2 years old, she still wasn't talking or interacting with others, so she was taken to specialists, who said she had brain damage. They recommended that she be institutionalized. Instead, her parents found a daycare that specialized in speech therapy and hired a nanny who played turn-taking games with her for hours. Gradually, she began to speak and make social progress. Her experiences at school were often very difficult. As a teenager, she easily lost her temper and got into fights with her classmates. She was expelled from school for throwing a book at a girl and sent to a boarding school for emotionally disturbed students. Eventually, a science teacher recognized her potential and suggested she channel her energy into science. She began to show an interest in rockets, electronics, and horses. She went on to earn a degree in psychology, as well as a master's and doctorate in animal science. She became nationally known after the release of an Emmy -winning film based on her life [35]."*

The story of Temple Grandin, of course, is not typical of someone diagnosed with autism. Most people with autism are not as fortunate as she is to receive such intensive support throughout their lives. Most people with autism struggle every day with things the rest of us take for granted: expressing basic needs, socializing with others, and understanding other people's perspectives. However, Grandin 's life is a testament to what can happen when caregivers and educators see the positives in children with autism.

4.3. The theory of teaching self-efficacy and the T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.

The theory of teacher self-efficacy for individuals with autism is reinforced through Targeted Individual, Didactically Differentiated, Inclusive Pedagogical Interventions for Special Education and Training with an emphasis on autism (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism). Because according to this theory, the ability to organize structured pedagogical guidance and execute teaching actions that promote learning supports mental resilience in teachers who care for students with autism and is harmonized with the theory of social ecology and the theory of the Bioecological Model of Development, further explaining the meaning of the dynamic inclusive system and the content of special educational services [33]. As reported by the researchers [37] who studied self-efficacy and the quality of their professional lives in 332 primary and secondary education teachers from schools in the wider region of Attica, who expressed positive perceptions about the quality of their professional lives. In the same study, a statistically significant negative correlation was found between self-efficacy and burnout and significant differences in resilience were observed depending on their years of experience. Finally, an important finding was self-efficacy as a predictive factor of compassion satisfaction and burnout.

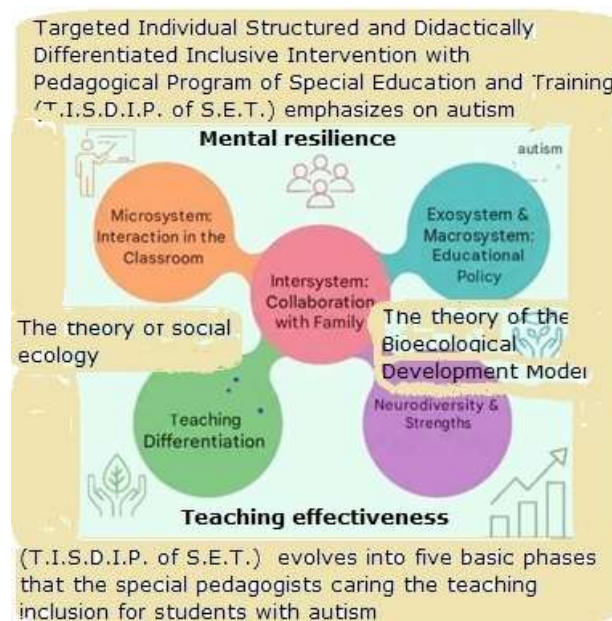


Figure 2. Teaching effectiveness and mental resilience

According to this approach, the pedagogical tool T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T. is considered a developing life skill of teachers who care for people with autism that is tested, cultivated and continuously strengthened within the educational practice. Moreover, Rutter 's theory [11] has emphasized that the nature of resilience is an interactive concept that is derived from individual differences in individual personality characteristics.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

This theoretical study, synthesizing the principles of special education, social ecology, neuropsychiatry and educational psychology, highlights the factors that shape professional well-being and teaching

readiness in the modern school. It is confirmed as a basic conclusion in ensuring quality in inclusive education [5], the strengthening of the mental resilience and teaching effectiveness of teachers who support students with autism. Inclusive practice with the implementation of differentiated teaching actions such as T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T. in combination with the understanding of the Bioecological Model contributes substantially to the creation of accessible learning environments for students with autism. Interventions are not limited to the individual level, but cover pedagogical actions in the mesosystem and the exosystem by creating and providing appropriate teaching resources for autism.

5.1. Partial conclusions

[1] The two-way relationship between resilience and teaching self-efficacy is confirmed. They function as interrelated, dynamic components of the educational process [11]. The teacher's strong belief in his or her abilities to design and execute specialized teaching interventions strengthens his or her perseverance in the face of daily challenges, while acting as a protective shield against emotional exhaustion and burnout.

[2] The intersystemic factors with real-life experiences is also confirmed. The research highlights that the moderate and negative correlations of resilience and teaching effectiveness highlight the gap that teachers often experience between theoretical training and the demands of the authentic classroom. Managing unpredictable behaviors, sensory overload, and communication deficits without systematic guidance tests the teacher's subjective sense of success and teaching competence.

[3] The professional functionality and mental resilience of the teacher are co-shaped through the interaction of ecosystem levels and are not an individual case, or an individual personality trait. The multisystem dimension of the Bioecological Development Model is therefore confirmed with the microsystem and daily classroom routines, the mesosystem with school-family cooperation, the exosystem with the search and allocation of resources, and educational rights policies, but also the macrosystem with the culture of inclusion and acceptance. An important individual finding is the positive relationship of resilience with the motivation-challenge for understanding the needs of students with autism. At the same time, practical success in teaching is enhanced when teachers are motivated, persistent and learn to familiarize themselves with specialized pedagogical tools such as T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T. and deal with teaching failures.

[4] This finding confirms the positive contribution of the T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T. tool with an emphasis on autism, with the application of Targeted Individual Didactically Differentiated Inclusionary Interventions (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism) in successive phases (observation, informal assessment, planning, three-dimensional cognitive machines, evaluation, pedagogical reflection), because it offers the teacher a clear methodological support and security. It enhances motivation, persistence in acquiring scientific knowledge and the feeling of professional success in the classroom. At the same time, in the light of Edgar's social ecology Morin (1999), this approach maintains "equal distances" from both extreme individualisms, as may occur with passive dependence on parallel support, and from the dogmatic

communitarianism of disability, promoting solidarity, human dignity and equal inclusion.

[5] Finally, the focus on strengths and neurodiversity is confirmed by adopting an approach that focuses on the capabilities and special interests of the student with autism, as demonstrated in the philosophy and pedagogical principles of F.A.P.S.E., while functioning as a protective mechanism against burnout. The example of Temple Grandin enhances teachers' intrinsic motivation and job satisfaction, promotes empathy and deep understanding of student behavior, facilitating emotional organization and self-regulation in the classroom.

5.2. Educational extensions and pedagogical suggestions

The first educational extension refers to specialized and ongoing training with the organization of experiential workshops for all general and special education teachers with an emphasis on the application of structured pedagogical tools (T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism), the use of multisensory material, three-dimensional cognitive engines and alternative communication systems.

The second pedagogy refers to the strengthening of interdisciplinary synergy as described in the intersystem. For this reason, it is proposed to systematize collaboration meetings between classroom teachers, special education teachers, special education personnel such as psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists and parents to ensure the consistency of interventions.

The third educational extension refers to the institutional care for the prevention of professional burnout as described in the external system. It is therefore proposed to institutionalize pedagogical reflection groups and peer support within the school schedule, as well as the provision of psychological resilience counseling services by competent bodies such as the Centers for Interdisciplinary Assessment, Counseling, and Support, which in Greek named KEDASY, Educational Counselors and other scientists who are active and act in the interdisciplinary field of special education and training.

The fourth educational extension refers to the cultivation of an inclusive culture and acceptance of neurodiversity as described in the macrosystem. For this reason, it is proposed to move from the deficit model to the recognition of the strengths of students with autism and to the awareness of typically developing students, ensuring the implementation of the institutional framework for equal education.

The epilogue of this study highlights the role of pedagogical tools such as T.I.S.D.I.P. of S.E.T.-autism, which functions as a protective factor against professional burnout, offering clear orientation and enhancing the sense of success. Professional persistence for a deeper understanding of the needs of students with autism functions as an internal motivation-challenge, which fuels the need for continuous knowledge and professional development. We conclude with the knowledge that the specificities in the context of supporting students with autism require interdisciplinary management of increased demands.

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