

COMPARISON BETWEEN GENERAL AND PROFESSIONAL VALUES IN SPECIAL-EDUCATION TEACHERS AND REGULAR-CLASS TEACHERS

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Professional standards for teachers dealing with children with special needs as well as the educational processes required for the implementation of special activities at school have made the object of a vivid debate in the educational and professional fields. The distinction between special-education teachers and regular-class teachers – who are also supposed to deal with children with special needs – should be based on psychological and social studies. This paper aims to contribute to this topic, in particular with regard to the structure of values that underlie vocational training for teachers.

Values are commonly considered as concepts or beliefs about longed-for purposes of human existence; they are ordered according to their relative importance, which transcends specific situations and guides the selection and evaluation of behaviours and events. Remarkable differences can be observed in the system of professional values, also with regard to specific variables, such as age, educational level, cultural background and current job.

The purpose of this research was to compare different characteristics of the two systems of values (general and professional values) in two teacher categories: regular-class teachers (n = 50) and special-education teachers (n = 50).

Schwartz's Portrait Values Questionnaire (2001) and the Chart of working values (2003) was administered.

Results showed remarkable differences between the two systems of values, especially with regard to hedonism, self-orientation, power, stimulation, and self-achievement.

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