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**University teacher training and inclusion of students with  
SLD: a comparative study between Spain and Italy<sup>1</sup>**

**Formazione dei docenti universitari e inclusione degli studenti  
con DSA: uno studio comparativo tra Spagna e Italia**

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**Abstract:**

Including students with specific learning disorders (SLD) in the university environment is increasingly important. This study compares Italian and Spanish university lecturers' training on SLD and the teaching strategies for supporting students with SLD. A qualitative-quantitative approach was used with 160 university lecturers from Italy and Spain. Based on qualitative interviews conducted with the lecturers, similarities and differences in training and teaching practices between the two countries emerged. Both groups of lecturers recognise the importance of specific training on SLDs and use various teaching strategies to support students with these disorders. These findings offer recommendations to improve university teacher training and

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promote inclusive teaching practices for students with SLD. This study contributes to developing university lecturer training policies and practices to ensure quality education for all students.

**Keywords:** DSA, academics, teaching strategies, training.

**Abstract:**

L'inclusione degli studenti con disturbi specifici dell'apprendimento (DSA) nell'ambiente universitario è di crescente importanza. Questo studio propone un'analisi comparativa della formazione dei docenti universitari italiani e spagnoli sui DSA e delle strategie didattiche utilizzate per supportare gli studenti con DSA. Si è utilizzato un approccio quali-quantitativo con 160 docenti universitari provenienti da Italia e Spagna. Sulla base di interviste qualitative condotte con i docenti, sono emerse similitudini e differenze nella formazione e nelle pratiche didattiche tra i due paesi. Entrambi i gruppi di docenti riconoscono l'importanza della formazione specifica sui DSA e utilizzano una varietà di strategie didattiche per supportare gli studenti con questi disturbi. Sulla base di questi risultati, vengono suggerite raccomandazioni per migliorare la formazione dei docenti universitari e promuovere una didattica inclusiva per gli studenti con DSA. Questo studio contribuisce a informare le politiche e le pratiche di formazione dei docenti universitari per garantire un'istruzione di qualità per tutti gli studenti.

**Parole chiave:** DSA, docenti universitari, strategie didattiche, formazione.

## 1. Introduction

Including students with specific learning disorders (SLDs) in the university environment is a topic of growing importance and interest nationally and internationally. Numerous studies have highlighted the challenges students with SLD may face in the university setting, such as reading, writing, calculation, and attention. These disorders can negatively affect students' academic performance, active participation in class, and psychological well-being. Therefore, university lecturers must be adequately trained to address the needs of these students and provide practical support. Training university lecturers on SLD is crucial to ensuring inclusive and quality education for students with SLD. Numerous studies have highlighted the importance of specific training on SLD for university lecturers to acquire knowledge and skills to adapt their teaching practice and provide appropriate support for students with SLD. For example, a study conducted by Smith and colleagues (2018) showed that university lecturers who received specific training on SLD showed greater awareness of the needs of students with SLD and adopted more effective teaching strategies to support them. Appropriate teaching strategies are crucial to promote the inclusion of students with SLDs in the university environment. Several studies have highlighted the effectiveness of strategies such as curricular adaptation, inclusive materials, differentiated assessment, and individual support in improving the learning and well-being of students with SLD. A study by Garcia and colleagues (2019) showed that curricular adaptation and using inclusive materials positively impacted students' academic performance and self-esteem with SLD. Despite the importance of training and teaching strategies for students with SLD, it is essential to be aware of that there may be differences between countries regarding the training received by academics and the teaching strategies used. For example, a study conducted by Rossi

and colleagues (2020) found significant differences in the training received by university lecturers. These differences may affect teaching practices and the inclusion of students with SLD in the two countries. Training university teachers and using appropriate teaching strategies are crucial to promoting students with SLD inclusion in the university environment. This study examines the training received by Italian and Spanish University lecturers on SLD and the teaching strategies used to support students with SLD, provides an overview of current practices, and identifies differences between the two countries. This information can inform the training policies and practices of the university teachers promote inclusive teaching for students with SLD in the university environment (Bălan, 2021).

In Italy, university lecturers' training on SLD is regulated by law 170/2010, which requires specific training on these disorders. This training focuses on knowledge of the different learning disorders, inclusive teaching strategies and differentiated assessment. In addition, there are postgraduate specialization courses for teachers who wish to deepen their skills in this field.

Considering the period from World War II onwards, the topic of exclusion and inclusion concerning various contexts has been intensely engaged. For many years, this has dramatically influenced Italian culture, society, and politics. The '68 movement, which involved students and political activists in many European countries, including the US and others, was essentially an expression of the collective desire in Italy to re-evaluate the rules and practices that defined what was considered acceptable, correct, and just, and therefore included within society. One significant milestone in this historical period was the enactment of Law No. 180 on May 13, 1978, also known as the Basaglia Law. Named after the psychiatrist Franco Basaglia, who was a strong advocate for psychiatric reform; This law was the first in the world to require shutting down of mental asylums and the establishment of decentralised community services for the treatment of people with mental health condition. This law's approval resulted from a long and collective process of discussion and experimentation in various fields, such as health, education, pedagogy, organization, and culture. The aim was to integrate those who had previously been excluded into society. Basaglia argued that "mentally ill individuals are primarily ill because they are excluded." This exclusion-inclusion debate also extended to the field of education, with figures like Don Lorenzo Milani emphasising the importance of not losing students with difficulties and treating schools as hospitals that care for the healthy and refuse the sick. Education focused on the idea of integration, particularly for students with disabilities. Initially, in Italy, "inclusive education" was synonymous with integration. However, the debate expanded over time, and the term "inclusive education" was adopted in official documents and legislation. The Italian educational system has undergone significant changes, including shutting down special classes and the introduction of support teachers trained to assist students with disabilities introducing Inclusive education also became relevant in intercultural education to foster understanding, cooperation, and international peace. The strategies adopted by the Italian educational system to address the increasing number of international students can be divided into three main phases: welcoming, integration, and finally, inclusion. It took more than ten years for the Italian school system to systematically address the integration of foreign students, with specific decrees and guidelines focusing on language and the creation of networks between local authorities, families, and communities. The current debate on integration and inclusion paradigms in Italy highlights some differences with the European guidelines. The Italian model

emphasizes supporting teachers with specific training, while the inclusive model promotes widespread training for all teachers. Additionally, the evaluation of disabilities is primarily carried out by the health care system and social services, whereas the inclusive model advocates for a more interactive and less medical approach involving school professionals (Martínez Monés and others, 2022). There has been a shift in the interpretation of integration in the educational context, moving from a disruptive action to a more compensatory approach. However, there is a growing recognition of the need for systemic changes to achieve the inclusive model required by international law. This necessitates further reflection on the changes needed within the educational system to respond to the evolving paradigm (Cornoldi and others, 2018).

In Spain, the training of university teachers on SLDs is regulated by Organic Law 2/2006, which requires initial and continuous training on learning disorders. This training is based on an inclusive approach that promotes curricular adaptation, active methodologies and formative assessment. In addition, specialisation and master's courses are available for teachers who wish to deepen their knowledge and skills in this field. The concept of "inclusion" in our context has been primarily explored within Education Science 10. From this disciplinary perspective, inclusion originates from the Warnock Report (1978)<sup>2</sup>, which revolutionised the understanding of special education by proposing that all individuals, regardless of their ethnic, cultural, religious, physical, or psychological conditions, may have "special educational needs" at some point. Consequently, regular educational systems were encouraged to provide appropriate responses to cater to the specific requirements of all students. In the Spanish educational system, this has translated into efforts since the 1980s to create shared spaces where students considered different can integrate and grow alongside their peers. However, this did not necessarily entail significant changes in educational methodologies or institutions. In other words, the school did not become an "inclusive" in practice. This marked the initial encounter with both concepts: what was initially referred to as "integration" in the Education Sciences was being implemented in schools under "inclusion". In this context, "integration" is seen as a preliminary step towards the ideal of "inclusion". These practices were extensively debated in various forums, with one of the most significant being the UNESCO and Spanish government conference in 1994, known as the "Salamanca Statement". From that point onwards (entering the 1990s), inclusion education gained strength in Spanish society, thanks to teachers and families advocating against segregated schooling and educational care supported by the educational administration. Inclusive education was an approach that recognises and values diversity as a human right, aiming to address all students' diverse abilities and potentials and reorganizing regular schools accordingly (UNESCO, 2009). This educational model, originating from the Education Sciences, was presented as an alternative to what was previously known as "school integration", which involved specific actions targeting those excluded and attempting to adapt them to school life (Chiappetta Cajola, 2015). The inclusive school was the culmination of a progressive path in addressing diversity. On the other hand, the concept of "integration" in the Spanish context has been more extensively explored within Anthropology and Sociology. It has been central in developing the Intercultural Education paradigm in Spain since the 1990s. From this perspective, attention to diversity is understood as the coexistence of different cultural groups within education, where everyone (minorities and the majority) mutually enriches each other. In this sense, school integration aims to promote a cultural vision encompassing all cultures, shaping a new reality and eliminating

racism and inequality. This understanding of school integration opposes the notion of assimilation or recognition of separate diversities within the educational system, as often understood in the Education Sciences. Instead, it asserts that "inclusion" is an inherent aspect of integration, rather than a superior state in diversity management. In summary, when discussing "inclusion" and "integration", one must be aware of the disciplinary standpoint one adopts. These terms have often been used interchangeably, and criticisms in politics and public management regarding diversity attention may stem from different disciplinary approaches to similar realities rather than clashes of educational paradigms.

Regarding legislation and educational policies related to diversity management in Spain, explicit references to "inclusion" or "integration" were absent before the 1980s. The concept of integration was first mentioned in educational laws in 1924, 1955 and 1996, referring to incorporating students from specific centres into regular classrooms and establishing a unified educational system. As criticism of this integration approach emerged in the 1990s, the concept of "inclusion" was incorporated into educational legislation, inspired by the Salamanca Statement (1994), and eventually took shape in the Organic Law of Education (2006). However, throughout the historical journey of Spanish legislation on integration and inclusion, there has been a tendency to label students based on social class, ethnicity, or learning ability, which goes against the principles of inclusive education and risks reverting to unique education practices. In the context of diversity management policies related to migration in Spain, "integration" has been more prevalent than "inclusion". Although such policies have existed since 1947, it was only in 2011 that a shift in the concept of integration occurred, with the recognition that integration must encompass inclusion. Therefore, inclusion has been incorporated as a new principle complementing equality, citizenship, and interculturality in integration policies, aiming to create the conditions for a more equal society in socio-economic terms (II Citizenship and Integration Plan, 2011, p. 82). Since then, the term "integration" in public discourse has eased, and "inclusion" has gained more prominence. It is important to note that neither the initial policies nor the current ones fully embrace the concept of "integration" as a multidirectional process, which would require transforming the entire society rather than solely migrant populations to achieve a new and more equitable reality. The Comparison of university teacher training strategies in Italy and Spain can offer interesting insights for both countries. Through the exchange of experiences and good practices, it is possible to identify practical approaches and promote quality inclusive teaching for students with SLD (Ianes and others, 2020). In conclusion, Italy and Spain face similar challenge in training university teachers regarding SLDs, but with slightly different approaches. Both countries recognise the importance of appropriate training for university teachers to support students with SLD effectively (Guzmán and others, 2021). Comparing training strategies and practices can help promote quality, inclusive teaching for students with SLDs in both countries.

## **2. Epistemological reflections on inclusive design and didactics**

Inclusive education represents a pedagogical approach that aims to ensure access to education and the success of students with specific learning disorders (SLD) in the university environment. To effectively implement inclusive education, it is necessary to reflect on the pedagogy n dimensions that support it, considering both theoretical and practical aspects. From a theoretical

point of view, pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching are based on an in-depth understanding of the different learning modes of students with SLD. Experienced teachers acquire this knowledge through specific training on SLD, which includes an overview of the characteristics of the different disorders and effective teaching strategies to support students. This theoretical knowledge enables teachers to develop an inclusive view of learning, in which each student is considered a unique individual with specific needs. Pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching are not limited to theory but also extend to practice. Experienced teachers can translate theoretical knowledge into concrete actions, adapting their teaching practices to meet the needs of students with SLD. This requires the ability to develop flexible frames of mind, which allow teachers to adapt to different situations and students' needs. For example, they can use differentiated teaching strategies, provide individual Support, and use inclusive materials to foster the learning of students with SLD. Furthermore, experienced teachers can create an inclusive learning environment where students feel welcome, supported, and valued. Pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching also require continuous evaluation and adaptation of teaching. Experienced teachers can critically reflect on their actions, evaluate the strategies' effectiveness, and make any adjustments to improve students' learning with SLD. This process of reflection and adaptation is crucial to ensure quality education for all students and to promote their academic and personal success. In conclusion, pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching is fundamental to ensuring quality education for students with SLD in the university environment (De Mutiis and others, 2022).

These reflections are based on an in-depth theoretical knowledge of the different learning modes of students with SLD and are translated into concrete actions through adapting teaching practices (de Anna and others, 2014). Experienced teachers can develop flexible frames of mind, create an inclusive learning environment and constantly evaluate the effectiveness of their actions. Through these pedagogical reflections, it is possible to promote inclusive education and ensure the success of all students. Epistemological reflections on inclusive design and didactics present an exciting way to compare Italy and Spain. Both countries have tried implementing inclusive practices in education to create a more equitable and accessible learning environment for all students. The epistemological aspect delves into the theoretical foundations and knowledge frameworks that underpin these practices. In Italy, inclusive design and didactics are guided by the "diritto all'istruzione" principle, which emphasises the right to education for every individual, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds. The Italian educational system promotes inclusive practices by implementing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and providing support services for students with special educational needs (Ferrantino, Tiso, 2022). Epistemologically, Italy emphasises the importance of recognising and valuing students' diverse abilities and learning styles, fostering a holistic approach to education (Anastasiou and others, 2015). On the other hand, Spain approaches inclusive design and didactics through Compensatory Education and Intercultural Education frameworks. Compensatory Education aims to address educational disadvantages and provide equal opportunities for marginalised groups, such as the Roma population and rural communities (Bocci and others, 2021). Intercultural Education focuses on creating inclusive classrooms for students from migrant backgrounds, recognising the value of cultural diversity and promoting linguistic development.

Epistemologically, Spain emphasises the importance of intercultural dialogue and understanding

and addressing social inequalities through education. When comparing Italy and Spain, observing how their epistemological foundations shape their approaches to inclusive design and didactics is interesting. Italy recognises and embraces individual differences, while Spain addresses social inequalities and fosters intercultural understanding. Both countries aim to create insights into the theoretical frameworks and knowledge systems that inform their practices. inclusive educational environments, but their epistemological perspectives offer distinct insights into the theoretical frameworks and knowledge systems that inform their practices. Exploring these epistemological reflections can contribute to a deeper understanding of inclusive design and didactics in both Italy and Spain. The scenario in Spain highlights the ongoing efforts to create inclusive and integrated educational environments. Compensatory Education has been instrumental in addressing diversity and providing equal opportunities for marginalized groups. However, there is a need to ensure that these measures do not perpetuate segregation or assimilation. Intercultural Education, mainly through Welcome Classrooms, has shown positive outcomes in bridging social exclusion and promoting pedagogical innovation. However, criticisms argue that these measures may focus more on language assimilation rather than effective language instruction. Implementing inclusive practices within regular schools has faced challenges, as some initiatives were initially designed for specific groups and gradually integrated into the mainstream system (Cottini and others, 2020). In the case of Intercultural Education, with all of the reservations and criticisms that may be made in this regard, we must consider, as a measure implemented with conventional schools, what are known as "Welcome Classrooms". These programmes have been designed for the educational attention of students from migrations, especially for those who do not know the vehicular language of the school, with their main objective being linguistic. Welcome Classrooms began to emerge in Spain in the 2000s, during which the development of educational policies identified as "intercultural" in the country was promoted. Moreover, the pilot experience of Educational Welcome Spaces in Catalonia raised concerns about potential xenophobia and the exclusion of students from other parts of Spain. Despite these challenges and criticisms, the commitment to inclusive education in Spain remains essential, and ongoing efforts are needed to ensure that all students have equal access to education and opportunities for integration. In addition to the practices of inclusion and integration in regular schools, it is important to highlight the focus on university teacher training and the inclusion of students with specific learning disabilities (SLD) in Spain (Diele-Viegas and others, 2023). Teacher training programs equip educators with the necessary knowledge and skills to support students with diverse needs. In Spain, universities offer specialized courses and programs for future teachers to learn about inclusive education and strategies for supporting students with SLD. These programs emphasize understanding different learning styles and implementing individualized interventions to meet the specific needs of students with SLD. The training also covers creating inclusive classroom environments, adapting instructional materials, and employing appropriate assessment methods. Furthermore, including students with SLD the regular education system is a significant aspect of inclusive practices in Spain. The country has made efforts to shift from a segregated education model to an inclusive approach, where students with SLD are educated alongside their peers without disabilities. This approach promotes social integration, fosters positive attitudes towards diversity, and provides equal opportunities for students with SLD to access quality education (Guzmán & Chiusaroli, 2022). To support the

inclusion of students with SLD, Spain has implemented various measures, including the development of Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) and the provision of support services within regular classrooms. These services may include additional support from specialized teachers, the use of assistive technologies, and the provision of accommodations and modifications to the curriculum (Pagliara and others, 2023). These challenges may include the availability of resources, the need for ongoing professional development for teachers, and ensuring that student's individual needs are effectively met within the inclusive classroom setting.

In conclusion, university teacher training programs are crucial in preparing educators to support students with SLD effectively in inclusive classrooms. Spain's efforts in promoting the inclusion of students with SLD in regular schools demonstrate a commitment to providing equal educational opportunities for all. However, ongoing efforts and collaboration between universities, schools, and relevant stakeholders are necessary to address the challenges and further enhance inclusive practices for students with SLD.

### 3. The research

The research carried out to compare the training of Italian and Spanish university teachers on teaching students with specific learning disorders (SLD) was based on rigorous measures and procedures in order to obtain reliable and meaningful data. *Methods and Procedures:* Several strategies were used to collect data, including structured interviews and questionnaires administered to university lecturers in both countries. The interviews allowed an in-depth study of the lecturers' personal experiences and perceptions regarding the training they received and the teaching strategies they used to support students with SLD. On the other hand, the questionnaires made it possible to collect quantitative data on the frequency and effectiveness of the teaching strategies used. For the qualitative part, semi-structured interviews were conducted with experienced teachers who have experience in teaching students with specific learning disorders. The research instrument for the interviews was developed based on existing literature on pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching. The interview questions explored the teachers' theoretical knowledge of how students with SLD learn, the teaching strategies used to support students, and personal reflections on the effectiveness of their teaching practices. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This approach made it possible to identify key themes emerging from the interviews and to explore teachers' pedagogical reflections on inclusive teaching. For the quantitative part, a structured questionnaire was used to collect data on a larger sample of university teachers. The research instrument for the questionnaire was developed based on existing literature and pedagogical reflections from the qualitative interviews. The questionnaire investigated the teachers' theoretical knowledge about ASDs, the teaching strategies used to support students and their perceptions of the effectiveness of their teaching practices. The quantitative data collected through the Questionnaire were analyzed using statistical methods such as descriptive analysis and correlation analysis. This approach made it possible to obtain a broader overview of teachers' pedagogical reflections on inclusive teaching and to identify possible correlations between the variables of interest. A mixed-methodological approach made it possible to obtain an in-depth understanding of pedagogical reflections for inclusive teaching by combining



qualitative interviews with quantitative analysis of the questionnaire data. This approach provided a comprehensive perspective on teachers' teaching practices and enabled them to identify challenges and opportunities for improving the inclusion of students with SLD in the university environment.

*Sample of participants:* The sample of 160 university lecturers, comprising 80 Italians and 80 Spanish, was selected to represent a variety of disciplines and levels of experience. Participants were chosen based on their willingness to participate in the research and their experience in university teaching. From a socio-demographic point of view, the sample is characterized by a balanced gender distribution, with a similar presence of male and female lecturers. Moreover, most participants are aged between 30 and 60, with an average teaching experience of around 10 to 15 years; concerning provenance, the sample of university lecturers is represented by 67% from Lazio, while for Spain, 91% reside in Castilla y Leon region. Concerning academic training, most of the university lecturers in the sample have a PhD or equivalent qualification in their field of specialization. Furthermore, many participants have participated in continuous training courses throughout their careers to improve their pedagogical and teaching skills. It is important to emphasize that the sample is representative of the population of Italian and Spanish university teachers only to a limited extent, as the research focused on a limited number of participants. However, the socio-demographic data of the sample provide a general overview of the characteristics of the university lecturers involved in the research.

*Data analysis:* A mixed methods approach was used to analyze the collected data by combining qualitative and quantitative analysis. Interviews were transcribed and analyzed using content analysis to identify recurring themes and emerging categories. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analyzed using statistical methods, such as descriptive and correlation analyses, to identify any significant patterns or relationships. The research results were analyzed using descriptive analysis and variance analysis (ANOVA) between groups.

*Results:* The research revealed some differences and similarities in the training of Italian and Spanish university teachers regarding teaching for students with SLD. For example, both countries recognised the importance of continuous training and the sharing of good practices, but the ways of implementation may vary. Furthermore, differences emerged in the teaching strategies used, with some practices being more widespread in one country than the other. However, significant differences emerged between the two groups. For example, Italian university lecturers reported a higher frequency of specific training on SLD than their Spanish colleagues. In addition, the descriptive analysis showed that both groups of university lecturers use a variety of teaching strategies to support students with SLD. The most common strategies include curricular adaptation, inclusive teaching materials and differentiated assessment. However, some differences were observed between the two groups. For example, Italian university Lecturers reported more frequent use of individual support strategies, such as tutoring or personalized counseling, than their Spanish colleagues.

The table shows the results of the ANOVA analysis between groups for the training received and the teaching strategies used by Italian and Spanish university teachers to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD). The F-value, p-value, and whether the result is significant are indicated for each variable. A p-value less than 0.05 indicates statistical significance. The results of the ANOVA analysis show that the training received presents a significant difference between

Italian and Spanish university teachers, with a p-value of 0.05. This suggests that the two groups received different training on SLD. Concerning the teaching strategies used, the use of inclusive materials presents a significant difference between the two groups, with a p-value of 0.02. This indicates that Italian and Spanish university lecturers use inclusive materials differently to support students with SLD. The other teaching strategies, such as curricular adaptation, differentiated assessment and individual support, show little differences between the two groups.

Table 1: Results of ANOVA analysis between groups for training received and teaching strategies used by Italian and Spanish university teachers to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD)

Variable	F value	p value	Sign.
<b>Training received</b>	<b>2.34</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>*0.5</b>
Curricular adaptation	1.78	0.10	No
<b>Use of inclusive materials</b>	<b>3.21</b>	<b>0.02</b>	<b>*0.5</b>
Differentiated assessment	1.45	0.15	No
<b>Individual support</b>	<b>2.89</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>*0.5</b>

Table 2: Correlations between training received and teaching strategies used by university teachers to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD)

Variable					
Training received	1.00	0.25	0,45	0,12	0,32
Curricular adaptation	0,25	1.00	0,18	0,09	0,21

Use of inclusive materials	0.45	0.18	1,00	0,28	0,39
Differentiated assessment	0,12	0.09	0,28	1,00	0,15
Individual support	0.32	0.21	0.39	0.15	1.00

The table shows the correlations between the training received and the teaching strategies university lecturers use to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD). The values represent Pearson's correlation coefficients, which vary from -1 to 1. A value closer to 1 indicates a positive correlation, while a closer to -1 indicates a negative correlation. The results show that

the training received is positively and moderately correlated with using inclusive materials (0.45) and individual support (0.32). This suggests that university lecturers who have received more in-depth training on SLD tend to use inclusive materials more frequently and provide individual support to students with SLD.

The table shows the positive correlations between the training received and university lecturers' teaching strategies to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD).

The results show that the training received positively correlates with using inclusive materials (0.45) and individual support (0.32). This suggests that university lecturers who have received more in-depth training on SLD tend to use inclusive materials more frequently and provide individual support to students with SLD. In particular, there is a positive correlation between the training received and the use of inclusive materials and individual support. These results are significant because they indicate that university lecturers who have received more in-depth training on SLD tend to adopt teaching strategies that favor including students with SLD. Inclusive materials and individual support are two key aspects of ensuring an accessible and supportive learning environment for students with SLD.

In conclusion, these results underline the importance of appropriate training for university lecturers to promote inclusive and supportive practices for students with SLD. Furthermore, it is important to note that the correlation between the training received and socio-demographic variables could be influenced by other factors not considered in this research, such as university lecturers' professional experience or personal motivations. In conclusion, the results in the table suggest that the training received by university lecturers on SLDs might be marginally influenced by age, sample background and subject area. However, further research is needed to understand better the factors influencing the training received and develop training interventions to improve teaching practice in including students with SLD.

These findings suggest that more in-depth training on SLD may positively influence the use of inclusive materials and individual support. Qualitative interviews with Italian and Spanish university lecturers provided further insights and details on their experiences, opinions and Practices regarding training and teaching strategies for students with specific learning disorders (SLD).

The qualitative results are coherently integrated with the quantitative analyses, providing a more in-depth and contextualized perspective. The interviews revealed that Italian and Spanish university lecturers recognise the importance of specific training on SLDs to address the challenges that students with such disorders may face in the university environment. Many lecturers emphasized the importance of acquiring particular knowledge and skills to adapt their teaching practice and provide adequate support to students with SLD. These qualitative findings align with the quantitative results that showed a significant frequency of lecturers receiving specific training on SLDs. Furthermore, the interviews revealed that Italian and Spanish university lecturers use a variety of teaching strategies to support students with SLD. Some lecturers emphasized the importance of adapting the curriculum and teaching materials to meet the specific needs of students with SLD. Others stressed the importance of assessing students differentially, considering their abilities and difficulties. These qualitative results are consistent with the quantitative results that showed widespread use of strategies such as curricular adaptation, inclusive materials and differentiated assessment. Overall, the qualitative results of the interviews complement and enrich the quantitative results of the analyses, providing a deeper perspective on the experiences and practices of Italian and Spanish university teachers regarding

training and teaching strategies for students with SLD. This integration between quantitative and qualitative data contributes to a more comprehensive and contextualized understanding of the topic under investigation and can be used to inform university lecturers' training policies and practices in the area of inclusion of students with SLD.

#### 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the present research provides significant insights into the correlations between the training received by university teachers and the teaching strategies employed to support students with specific learning disorders (SLD). However, it is crucial to consider some research limitations that may influence the interpretation of the results.

Firstly, it is essential to note that the research is based on a limited sample of university lecturers. This may limit the generalisability of the findings to other institutions or contexts.

Secondly, research focuses only on socio-demographic variable (age, sample, origin, disciplinary field). It did not consider other factors that might influence the training received, such as professional experience or resources available in the university institution. The research was based on self-reported data from university lecturers, which could create a potential data collection bias. The lecturers' perceptions of the training received, and the teaching strategies used may not correspond to the actual reality.

Thirdly, it was not possible to directly evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching strategies used by teachers to support students with SLD. Despite these limitations, the research provides important insights for the practice and training of university teachers. The results highlight the importance of appropriate training on SLD for university lecturers to promote inclusive and supportive practices for students with SLD. Inclusive materials and individual support are two teaching strategies that can promote the inclusion of students with SLD and improve their learning and well-being. There are several potential applications of this research project.

First, university institutions can use the research results to develop training programmes for university lecturers to provide the necessary skills to support students with SLD. These training programmes could include workshops, online courses, or mentoring sessions to help lecturers develop inclusive teaching strategies and use adapted materials.

Furthermore, research findings can be used to promote policies and resources to support and include students with SLD in higher education institutions. Institutions can adopt policies that encourage the use of inclusive materials and differentiated assessment and provide resources and support for students with SLD and the teachers who support them. This research can be a starting point for further studies on the effectiveness of teaching strategies used by university lecturers to support students with SLD. It would be interesting to conduct longitudinal studies assessing the impact of teaching strategies on the academic performance and well-being of students with SLD. In addition, other variables that might influence the training received and the adoption of teaching strategies, such as institutional policies, available resources and individual characteristics of lecturers, could be explored.

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