

Inclusive Education – The Impact Of Inclusive Educational Policies

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Abstract:

Background: The data evaluation revealed six articles that mention important historical events that support the implementation of inclusive education policies, confirming that preschool education is the first stage of basic education and rights in Brazil. The purpose of the study is to expose the inclusive education policies in force in Brazil.

Materials e Methods:

The approach used is bibliographical and descriptive.

Result:

The result obtained showed that early childhood education has undergone constant restructuring and transformations, evolving towards updating and guaranteeing access to school, sustainability and quality of facilities for all young children.

Conclusion:

Therefore, it is concluded that, when considering inclusion from this perspective, this objective seems unattainable. It is clear that issues of accessibility and behavioral development are prioritized in schools, rather than an education that provides opportunities to live with diversity, interaction and immortality.

Keywords: Policies; Educational; Inclusive.

Date of Submission: 18-11-2024

Date of Acceptance: 28-11-2024

I. Introduction

In Brazil, inclusive education policies are guaranteed to all children aged 0 to 5, as provided for by law Resolution No. 4, of July 13, 2010¹. Like all other levels of education, preschool education must be based on inclusive education^{2;3}.

As established by the Secretariat of Basic Education based on the National Policy for Special Education, inclusive education is an education based on human rights and equality of opportunities, and is a responsibility of the educational system. It was designed to enable all students to learn together and meet their particular needs^{2;3}.

Laws and official documents that support the creation and implementation of national policies to train teachers for inclusive education are essential for inclusion. This mitigates the consequences of exclusion and helps in the implementation of new teaching methodologies^{2;3}. Several measures have been innovative to assist students with learning difficulties and take into account the role of the State in this scenario. The objective of article 206 of the 1988 Federal Constitution is to guarantee that everyone has equal access to education. The complement of article 207. According to this provision, it is up to the family, society and the State to protect children and adolescents against violence and discrimination, through education, culture and dignity⁴. Understanding the relevance of education reveals that government policies in Brazil affect the foundation and condition for the exercise of citizenship and access to social, economic, civil and political rights. Article 206 of the 1988 Federal Constitution establishes that education is guaranteed to all in an equitable manner, while Article 207 establishes that families are responsible for providing education. Societies and states guarantee the right to education, culture and respect⁴.

II. Material And Methods

The study was conducted using a qualitative methodology. The sources include academic texts, theses, dissertations and government documents. It was necessary to consult scientific texts on the topics covered.

The research began with documentary exploration, seeking the basis for understanding the concepts of early childhood education, inclusive education and disability, in addition to the rights of children with disabilities with regard to education. To this end, it was necessary to examine the official documents that deal with these subjects.

For the bibliographic research, before any subsequent step, it was necessary to define a period, more precisely one year, that would guide the search for the most appropriate academic works to achieve the desired results. We chose the period from 2017 to 2022, as it is a period that allows the analysis of the most recent academic productions that address the subject. The bibliographic research began with a search in the CAPES database of theses and dissertations, with the main purpose of choosing the works that dealt with the topic for reading and further study, in addition to assessing whether this would be the most appropriate platform for carrying out the study.

However, after some initial research, it was discovered that CAPES, despite being the first option and being an extensive and comprehensive platform, would not be the best source of research. This is due to the fact that texts are included daily, resulting in different results with each new search, which makes it impossible to control how many texts were analyzed.

Therefore, to address this issue, it was decided to explore another platform, the BDTD (Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations). This, like CAPES, offers an extensive collection of academic works for analysis. In addition, it offers an advanced search that allows keywords to be crossed in order to separate them into different research fields. Furthermore, when performing a search with the chosen filters, it allows the data found to be stored in a table in EXCEL.

III. Discussion

The Federal Constitution and the Statute of Children and Adolescents (ECA) guarantee citizens the right to a high-quality education, seen as a curriculum that provides students with civic and diversified training. Additionally, the Law and the Guidelines of the National Framework for Education (Brazil, 1996)⁵ guarantee that students with disabilities can participate in regular classes, preferably in regular education systems^{4, 6}.

International declarations, such as the Universal Declaration on Education for All (1990) and the Salamanca Declaration on Educational Principles, Policies and Practices, emerged in the 1990s with the aim of guiding the implementation of educational policies by signatories. Some of these declarations have been amended, such as Neves, Rahme, & Ferreira (2019)⁷ and Silva, & Alvarenga (2023)⁶.

In Brazil, the 1994 Salamanca Declaration stated that children with disabilities should attend regular schools instead of segregated institutions, raising questions about the definition of services for this community. Certain services are formalized to ensure the detriment of these public services and to provide transparency in records. The movement of people with disabilities and their families expressed their opinions on this reform. The government is beginning an effort to destroy this sector.

Therefore, in 1998, the Ministry of Education (MEC) released a document defining the curriculum according to the criteria of the national curriculum⁸. This resulted in the creation of specific guidelines for each country⁴. In 2003, Brazil began implementing guidelines for the administration of fundamental educational policies under a broad vision. This prioritized PAEE students, even if they received special support, in regular classes in public schools. Brazil joined the International Covenant on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, approved by the UN in 2006, and began to refer to the provisions of this document and the Optional Protocol. The goal is to create a state that is easily accessible.

The 2007 Education Development Plan (PDE) suggested improving multi-functional resource rooms to assist the education system in structuring and providing special education (AEE). In Brazil, between 2005 and 2012, there was a change of 37,801 multi-functional cases, covering 90% of the 26 federal states and municipalities⁹. The program establishes a dynamic alliance between the federal government, which provides material resources for the creation of resource centers, and local leaders, responsible for providing physical space and hiring trained teachers for education management¹⁰. In 2008, the previous special education policy from 1994 - the School Enrollment Policy with Emphasis on the Definition of Special Services - was elevated by the Special Education Policy with a Vision for Inclusive Education (PNEEPEI). PNEEPEI was created as a strategy for state and municipal governments to guarantee the right to lifelong education. In short, the goal is to create a unified educational system that benefits all of society, including individuals with disabilities, people with developmental disabilities, and people with intellectual disabilities.

Historically, special education was seen as a complementary strategy to regular education, which meant that students with disabilities could only attend regular schools. On July 13, 2010, special education was integrated into general education and transversal modalities, instead of being a substitute at all levels and modalities of education. Support for Special Education (AEE) ensures that all students receive a high standard of education. The changes are officially documented in the Common Educational System².

The National Policy on Special Education in an Inclusive Vision states that special education is characterized as an area of study and a transversal teaching method that applies to all levels and modalities of education. This plays an important role in the discussion about the role of schools in overcoming exclusionary logics, including their participation in the regular education process. Although all current laws, including the Brazilian Inclusion Law, were sanctioned in 2015, the importance of taking into account some changes in the

process of creating public policies is recognized. Despite our efforts to promote inclusive education, we find that students' demands for academic success exceed legal restrictions⁴. The Common National Base, also referred to as BNCC, is a project that establishes guidelines for the development of the curriculum of education systems, both public and private, from early childhood to secondary education. This text reinforces the commitment of education in Brazil to inclusive education, helps education networks and educational institutions to develop curricular plans that contextualize the content of curricular components, illustrates the interdisciplinary organization of these components, and proposes a range of processes, strategies, and methodologies. Those involved in the educational process, including formative assessment and childcare, can benefit from understanding which practices are most comprehensive in order to apply the principles of inclusion and quality in their classrooms.

The statements should always highlight the need for cooperation between inclusive education policies. The school environment is welcoming because all individuals and groups are recognized in the teaching and learning process, in addition to fostering a diverse culture⁴.

Inclusive education consists of accepting differences, rather than simply including students in the classroom. This implies that the education system needs to change to enable teachers to encourage student collaboration, respect for individual differences and, most importantly, problem-solving. We offer inclusive education, encouraging dignity and respect through a protected curriculum, organizational changes, learning methods, community cooperation and use of resources⁴.

Inclusive Strategies Used in Early Childhood Education

The texts examined address the ways in which teachers address issues of inclusion and diversity in the classroom. They focused on the fact that building schools for all students with disabilities does not necessarily imply the interruption of the inclusion process. All participants in the educational process must analyze and debate the views of others, covering physical facilities, resources, training, and pedagogical activities^{3; 11}.

Teachers who teach children with disabilities have the ability to considerably improve the inclusion of these children in the educational environment. It should be noted that the most frequent tactics were innovative based on common sense or the teachers' perspective. This indicates that we need to understand more deeply what it means to include and provide a diverse education for children with and without disabilities^{3; 11}.

As Carvalho, & Schmidt (2021)³, Camargo et al. (2020)¹¹ and Fonseca, Freitas, & Negreiros (2018)¹² highlight, it is essential that children with disabilities are integrated into the school environment. They emphasize that this is not only the right of children to attend school, but also the responsibility of teachers to supervise and ensure the academic progress of students, in addition to providing an education adjusted to special educational needs. Since there are no pre-defined strategies for children with disabilities, educators need to consider aspects such as the social operation of the school, the teaching and learning process, the content and the pedagogical activities of the institution.

Each situation is unique and requires a different occurrence. The responsibility lies with the environment and the tools, not with the people. To ensure that other students participate in the same content and activities, the format and materials must be adjusted according to the child's learning needs. The research methods examined by Carvalho, & Schmidt (2021)³ do not target the desired skills in the classroom. Taking this into account, educators have a great chance of designing appropriate activities to allow children to follow the stages of the required content.

Here are some tactics that can help your learning: Transition Practice - (The educator organizes the transitions between the main activities and plans personalized learning experiments geared towards the specific learning goals of each child); these activities are designed to help all children develop social and emotional skills. Practice during activities: (It is crucial to give children the chance to perform the tasks after completing the basic activities). These methods include instructional feedback, techniques to identify appropriate responses, and immediate and ongoing effects on children's behavior and work. Teachers need to clearly elucidate specific or appropriate behavior in feedback, using context to provide additional information about knowledge that helps in further review of learning after lessons and activities are completed³.

Teachers also employ routines to adjust the curriculum to children's particularities, which do not necessarily need to be substitutions in the school routine. The discipline considers characteristics and has been mentioned as a strategy for improving children's performance. This perspective highlights the role of the family. The formation of a set of social skills is favored by interactions between family and school, which are fundamental for inclusion in education. The connection between school and family is crucial so that each one plays a distinct role and shares responsibilities to achieve shared goals. This implies the need to share information about children's progress frequently^{13; 11}.

Teachers need guidance to help children with disabilities complete their homework. Guidance can be provided on the conditions for performing certain tasks, the resources used, and the support or assistance provided to the child at home, according to the specific needs of the disability^{11; 13}.

Methods that promote cooperation among students with disabilities through interaction in different environments and group activities, such as games, classes, and outdoor trips. Teachers stated that interaction among peers can contribute to personal development. In relation to students with disabilities, interaction with other groups can be beneficial^{3; 11}.

Finally, diversity improves teaching and learning, especially for autistic children, as it helps to resolve behavioral problems, such as closing doors to prevent children from running away. Use a lower tone. Use a rug if your child gets upset and slips on the floor. Absence from the classroom in times of crisis^{3; 11; 16}.

The ways in which educators address students' problematic behaviors are evidently reactive. Furthermore, without a situational assessment of the antecedents and consequences that may trigger or sustain the behavior, some alternative strategies to prevent problematic behaviors are not necessarily proven and efficient³.

Taking into account the above, the strategies that teachers and school psychologists can employ to promote inclusive education appear to be beneficial to the school community, with teachers and children being the main beneficiaries. Psychologists learn to understand children's particularities and educators improve their understanding. Learn techniques such as testing and adjustment activities. Teachers feel confident and autonomous in scheduling activities with students, resulting in a reduction in demand throughout the school year. Teachers provide positive evaluations¹².

Teachers use recreational activities to address variety and diversity in the classroom. Children are encouraged to engage in a variety of creative outdoor activities for physical, sensory, and cognitive challenges. Recreational activities are essential for children's growth, regardless of their disability status. This is because this activity allows all children to participate in activities according to their abilities.

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Challenges experienced by teachers in planning inclusive educational practices

The articles in this category address the lack of training for teachers who are unprepared to work with children with disabilities. They report a lack of support and professional training to support their pedagogical work with included children. Sometimes, lack of information and lack of preparation are factors that prevent teachers from developing “a pedagogical practice that is sensitive to the needs of the included special child”^{11; 13; 14}.

The articles mentioned in this category speak of the lack of preparation of teachers who are not prepared to work with children with disabilities and the lack of support and professional training to support their educational work with children. Sometimes, a lack of information and preparation can hinder a teacher's progress¹⁴.

The authors report that it is important to train teachers for inclusive education that allows them to address the diversity, specificity and differences inherent to all children. Pedagogical work is based on details, but training is important in its implementation and is provided to provide opportunities for reflection and useful adjustments in the learning process, taking into account the specific needs of the child¹⁴.

Given the complexity of the inclusive principle, the difficulties faced by teachers in carrying out their work confirm that there are limitations/obstacles to the proper development of their pedagogical work due to working conditions, deficiencies in the professional training process and physical insufficiency. Structural parts of the school, including lighting, maintenance of classrooms, physical structure, lack of teaching materials and technological resources for better planning and implementation of classes, limited or non-existent access to the internet, inadequate adaptation of the curriculum, etc. Support professionals, such as psychologists and speech therapists, may also be necessary. The reality is that schools do not always have these resources and, in many cases, do not have the budget to carry out the type of implementation that public bodies do. Therefore, the lack of essential materials and tools for the full implementation of inclusive education can be a real challenge that educational institutions must face^{6; 14; 16}.

Another issue reported by teachers in classrooms concerns schools, which need to rethink and consider education as a comprehensive principle, including, guaranteeing and ensuring the active participation of teachers in all teaching and learning activities, emphasizing the teaching context. There is much discussion about inclusion, but the discourse in the literature is often tied to time, concepts and prejudices and becomes empty. Historically, schools were created with a limited view of schooling as a privilege for certain groups¹⁷.

In this sense, the admission process is slow. When analyzing inclusive education from the perspective of educational policy and project implementation, it is understandable that when we look at the requirements arising from the priority law of the inclusive pedagogy political project, we come across many gaps and ambiguities. What is not seen is the possibility of a unified form. Despite the extensive legislation on the rights of people with disabilities, there is still a lack of information, economic resources, documentation and

knowledge¹⁵. This category also describes the difficulties that teachers face in behavioral and communication situations. Behaviorally, the biggest challenge is behavior management, which involves reluctance to perform a behavior or follow routines and rules. Another difficulty mentioned is related to the child's communication, such as difficulties in understanding speech, difficulties in being understood by peers and teachers, or difficulties in creating interactive and reciprocal conversations^{11; 14}.

Communication with families is a challenge also mentioned by teachers, including difficulties in dealing with parents, the need for differentiated recommendations for parents or children, difficulties with family resistance to what is provided and, above all, with parents. Families receive their children's schooling and special services and continue the work carried out at the school of origin. The contributions of families to their children's academic success are fundamental, especially when it comes to inclusion. The importance of the family-school partnership is due to the fact that they provide this aspect as an important axis in teacher training as part of inclusive education practices¹¹.

Diversity in the classroom is perceived as a challenge in the classroom. In addition to the challenges that teachers face, many parents are not fully aware of diversity issues and still believe that their children's learning is delayed when their children with special educational needs attend school and space. Meanwhile, parents of children with disabilities themselves may also face cultural barriers, which can have an unnecessary impact on their children when enrolling them in regular schools. Deep down, they fear that their children will become victims of bullying, rejection and even violence, which is to be expected in an unsafe environment that is less prepared for their children's needs. This paradigm shift can only happen if schools themselves involve parents in the conversation^{11; 16}.

The lack of effective support for teachers contributes to creating conditions of exclusion in the classroom itself. Curricular deficits and methodological changes also influence situations of exclusion in the classroom¹².

It was observed that early intervention underwent conceptual changes and was a topic that received little attention during the study period. It also became clear that there are few resources for early intervention due to a lack of investment, legislation, and effective systems that allow for coverage of education in early childhood. According to Kaufmann, analyzing the work developed on this topic was extremely important to shift focus to the practices carried out by special education teachers and to conduct interviews with them, which helped her understand their knowledge regarding early intervention. "The actions of Early Intervention focus primarily on the interaction process involving the child, their family, and the context in which they are situated¹⁶."

As a result, the author concluded that few of the produced works provide education professionals with sufficient content to perform their jobs effectively, as it is necessary for teachers to be in constant pursuit of knowledge in order to offer meaningful pedagogical experiences to their students. The recognition of special education teachers regarding the need for support in the practice of Early Intervention demonstrates the necessity for initial and ongoing training on this topic. "There are deficiencies in public and social policies at the national level, which reflects in shortcomings in both theoretical and practical training¹⁶."

As a result, it was observed that education is a right guaranteed by law to all citizens, regardless of race, religion, social class, or gender, and it is enshrined in the Federal Constitution of 1988. Consequently, young children have gained access to education as a legal right.

It was from the Federal Constitution that the education of children aged zero to six became a right to be guaranteed and provided by the State in daycare centers and preschools. "Although it does not impose an obligation on families, it was considered a significant milestone, as this document was a precursor in recognizing the right of young children to access public and free education¹⁷."

Thus, it is ensured that Early Childhood Education promotes the development of autonomy and allows children to take an active role in constructing their knowledge. In this way, students are seen as active agents and the reason for the existence of educational institutions. Furthermore, it provides "conditions for children to learn in situations where they can play an active role in environments that invite them to face challenges and feel motivated to solve them¹⁸".

IV. Conclusion

Preschool education has undergone a series of constant transformations and changes, and is still constantly evolving to ensure that all young children have access to high-quality structures, access to school, and sustainability. Therefore, special education is also offered in early childhood education centers, as babies and children with disabilities must also be included in the educational process.

As educational institutions must not only comply with legislation, but also understand their objective of providing an education that stimulates the cognitive, social, and motor aspects of young children, in addition to understanding their needs and particularities.

Young children's first contact with the outside world occurs in preschool education. At school, children experience different experiences and realities. In addition, they share their experiences as members of society and their worldview. Family participation is not limited to just taking their children out of school.

A relevant and high-quality contribution, especially to the community and infants and young children, requires strong family ties and interaction with educators. In addition, it is the responsibility of educational institutions to maximize opportunities. They need to create moments of involvement that go beyond basic obligations, integrating families into the school environment. In addition, one element helps to create a welcoming environment.

The study indicates that all children, regardless of whether they are normal or atypical, require family support and involvement in school life. Contribution becomes even more essential and relevant in inclusive education. Educational institutions must adapt to the particularities of children with disabilities and their specific educational needs. For education to be truly inclusive, it is essential that educators recognize the uniqueness experienced by all children outside the formal educational context.

Inclusive education is a broad area that encompasses many topics and different perspectives. As research progresses, the field will be increasingly researched. To improve teacher training and education, family participation must be continually verified and documented. There are still issues for future studies.

The challenges faced by teachers and the relevance of inclusive education in early childhood education are well known. Therefore, some tips are highlighted, such as collaborative work with other teachers to improve the learning and performance of students with disabilities. It is also crucial to create projects that encourage ongoing training for teachers and improve the performance of students with disabilities. Another point to be taken into account is the contribution of the family.

When we analyze inclusion from this perspective, it seems unattainable. It is clear that educational institutions prioritize behavioral development and accessibility problems, instead of providing students with opportunities to deal with diversity, interaction and immortality. In addition, educational institutions deal with challenges such as lack of planning, resources, ongoing training, inclusion policies, insufficient teachers, unhealthy working conditions, lack of family involvement and understanding of the restrictions of differences. It is important to emphasize that teaching methods are fundamental, as they need comprehensive plans to deal with the diversity of children and the varied learning styles they have. Research details the activities that need to be ongoing and reflective to ensure that all children are participating.

In addition, this research revealed that direct investigation of participation in support services as a way to foster school inclusion is insufficient. Furthermore, it is crucial to highlight the limitations of this review regarding online research, as the number of articles was reduced due to the unavailability of some studies. Furthermore, given that this is a constantly evolving topic, this study can serve as a foundation for building knowledge about effective practices for the inclusion of children. Therefore, future research will need to incorporate larger and more diverse samples. In addition, field research can be conducted to analyze these variables related to educational practice for children with disabilities and/or special educational needs.

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