

Equal Opportunities within the Regular School: the inclusion of students with disabilities

Ana Abadia dos Santos Mendonçaⁱ 

Secretaria de Estado de Educação de Minas Gerais, Uberlândia, MG, Brasil

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Abstract

The article brings a topic widely discussed in the educational environment: the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools. Since education is a right for all, the school could not ignore special education students. The right is guaranteed by national and international laws. Thus, the text brings a bibliographical research that elucidates the following objectives: identify and conceptualize school inclusion, its students and discuss the opportunities that are given to students with disabilities when belonging to the school school and their development in the teaching-learning process. In the discussions, it became evident that every student with a disability, in addition to having their right to attend a regular school, also has the right to learn like students who are representative of normality.

Keywords: Students with Disabilities. Guaranteed right. Regular School. Teaching-learning process.

A igualdade de Oportunidades dentro da Escola Regular: a inclusão dos alunos com deficiências

Resumo

O artigo traz um tema bastante discutido no meio educacional: a inclusão de alunos com deficiências na escola regular. Sendo a educação um direito de todos, a escola não poderia deixar de lado, estudantes da educação especial. O direito é garantido por leis nacionais e internacionais. Assim, o texto traz uma pesquisa bibliográfica que elucida os seguintes objetivos: identificar e conceituar a inclusão escolar, os seus estudantes e discutir as oportunidades que são dadas aos alunos com deficiências ao pertencerem a escola escolar e seu desenvolvimento no processo ensino-aprendizagem. Nas discussões ficou evidente que todo estudante com deficiência além de ter seu direito de frequentar uma escola regular, também tem o direito de aprender como os alunos representativos da normalidade.

Palavras-chave: Alunos com Deficiências. Direito garantido. Escola Regular. Processo Ensino-aprendizagem.



1 Introduction

Education is a right for all and is guaranteed in the 1988 Federal Constitution and, later, in the Law of Directives and Bases for Education (LDB) 9.394/96. Therefore, the enrollment of students with disabilities in regular schools is also a consequence of the legislations. Parents and/or guardians realize that children with disabilities can and must attend school, just like any other children (SASSAKI, 2005).

Also according to Sasaki (2005) the regular school, in recent times, has gone through well-defined transformations and one of them, perhaps the most important, is the inclusion of students with disabilities inside it, like all other students representing normality.

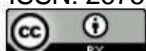
Thus, it is up to the school to offer conditions so that all children and young people can reach their potential, respecting their individual characteristics and needs, and the diversity inside the classroom is a challenge that only contemplates a quality education.

School Inclusion is a modality of education that should overlap to contemplate children with physical or cognitive disabilities, or with multiple disabilities in the same classroom with students representing normality in regular school (MENDONÇA, 2014).

The legislation has advanced and places people with disabilities on an equal footing with others to attend schools and enjoy all the benefits they may have, because the school aims at the education of all, regardless of being disabled or not.

Inclusive Education implies a paradigm shift that aims at a transformative education for the benefit of all. Students with different performances will reach the same goal in the classroom, which is learning..

Inclusive education is the process that occurs in schools at any level that are prepared to provide quality education to all students regardless of their personal attributes, intelligences, learning styles, and common or special needs. School inclusion is a form of inclusion in which the traditional ordinary school is modified to be able to welcome any student unconditionally and to provide him or her with





a quality education. In inclusion, people with disabilities study in the school they would attend if they were not disabled (SASSAKI, 1998, p. 8)..

The transformation of the regular school, called "traditional common" by Sassaki (1998) is also advocated by Mantoan (2008 and 2010), Capovilla (1993), Batista; Enumo (2004), Pereira (2007), Glat (2002), defended by the Declaration of Salamanca (1994, p. 11) and established in the Law of Directives and Bases of National Education (LDB), No. 9394/96 in Chapter 49 V of Special Education, it becomes necessary and urgent the awareness of inspectors and school administrators, supervisors, educational coordinators and especially teachers who take responsibility when the presence of students with disabilities in the classroom, assume their role as educators and develop an education where everyone should benefit from the result of this action aimed at learning for all.

Mantoan states:

Inclusion questions not only the policies and organization of special and regular education, but also the very concept of integration. It is incompatible with integration, since it provides for school inclusion in a radical, complete and systematic way. All students, without exception, should attend regular education classrooms (MANTOAN, 2008, p. 19).

The insertion of all students in regular school, regardless of their disability, is something that scares education professionals, especially teachers. These professionals have this attitude, according to Beyer (2003) for not having enough information, understanding of the proposal, corresponding adequate training, adequate didactic and methodological techniques and appropriate working conditions nor adequate qualification.

2 Methodology

This is a bibliographic research that aims to identify and conceptualize school inclusion, its students and discuss the opportunities that are given to students with disabilities when they belong to regular school and their development in the teaching-learning process.



The bibliographic research is inserted mainly in the academic environment and has the purpose of improving and updating knowledge, through a scientific investigation of works already published (Andrade 2010).

Andrade (2010) also concludes that

It is mandatory in exploratory research, in the delimitation of the theme of a paper or research, in the development of the subject, in the citations, in the presentation of the conclusions. Therefore, if it is true that not all students will conduct laboratory or field research, it is no less true that all, without exception, to prepare the various papers required, must undertake bibliographic research (ANDRADE, 2010, p. 25).

Thus, the scientific research through bibliographic research in which the researcher searches for the most relevant already published works with the purpose of knowing and analyzing the proposed theme to be carried out. It is done with the purpose of identifying what is known about the subject of the research to be carried out, thus collaborating in the choice of the problem and of the most appropriate methodologies for the research that will be conducted.

3 Results and Discussion

The concept of inclusive education emerged in 1994, with the Salamanca Declaration. The idea is that children with special educational needs should be included in regular schools. The goal of inclusion demonstrates an evolution of Western culture, advocating that no child should be separated from others because of some kind of disability.

From a pedagogical point of view, this integration has the advantage of interaction between children, seeking a joint development. However, sometimes it is very difficult for schools to integrate children with disabilities because of the need to create the right conditions.

Inclusion is an innovation that implies an effort to modernize and restructure the current conditions of most of our schools, by assuming that the difficulties of some



students are not only theirs, but are largely the result of the way teaching is delivered and how learning is conceived and assessed (MANTOAN, 2006).

Mantoan (2006) also points out that inclusion thus implies changes; it questions not only the policies and organization of special and regular education, but also the very concept of integration. It implies changes in the educational perspective, because it does not only affect students with disabilities and those who have difficulty in learning, but all the others, so that they can be successful in the general educational chain.

Inclusion is a provocation, whose intention is to improve the quality of education in schools, reaching everyone who fails in their classrooms (MANTOAN, 2006). The term inclusive education assumes the school's willingness to meet the full diversity of students' needs in mainstream schools. Therefore, inclusion presupposes a school that fits all children, rather than expecting a particular child with disabilities to fit the school. Above all, it is necessary to understand that the school has the task of teaching students to share knowledge, meanings of things, emotions; to discuss and exchange experiences and points of view.

According to Rippel & Silva (2003), in this sense, the school has a primary and irreplaceable commitment: to introduce the student to the social, cultural, and scientific world; and this is the unconditional right of every human being, regardless of normality standards established by society or prerequisites imposed by the school.

Inclusive Education implies a paradigm shift that aims at a transformative education for the benefit of all. Students with different performances will reach the same goal in the classroom, which is learning.

School Inclusion and Students with Disabilities

The Federal Constitution (1988) together with LDB 9394/96 made it mandatory for regular schools to enroll students with disabilities within their school space. Thus, it places in the same environment, students representing normality and those with disabilities.





The coexistence of both is beneficial. The gain is on both sides: the students with disabilities gain in the measure that they live in a challenging, provocative environment, rich in experiences that make them think and act, many times alone. On the other hand, those representing the normality win by having the opportunity to learn with the other's difference, experiencing new ways to build knowledge and communicate (libras, braille) and also by experiencing opportunities for collaboration, mutual help and solidarity (SARTORETTO, 2010).

Rodrigues (2008) emphasizes the importance of understanding that inclusive education is not only a possibility, but a right for students. He highlights that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, established under the United Nations, proclaimed that:

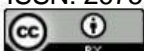
"[...]States recognize the right of all persons with disabilities to education. With a view to realizing this right without discrimination and with equal opportunity, States Parties shall ensure a system of inclusive education at all levels, and lifelong learning [...]" (Art. 24 paragraph 1) (UNITED NATIONS, 2006).

To include, it is necessary to consider diversity. The schools, culturally, socially and historically consider that the individual with disabilities is not capable of learning, therefore, being unable to satisfactorily develop their learning within the regular classroom and sometimes even hindering the teaching-learning process of the so-called "normal" ones.

In view of the national and international legislations, it is known that any student with disabilities must be inserted in the regular school classroom. This is beyond the Federal Constitution (1988), LDB 9394/96, the Brazilian Law of Inclusion (2015), among other laws, has the right ensured to any person with disabilities, Autism Spectrum Disorder to be enrolled in a school institution of any level.

The Brazilian Law of Inclusion (LBI) brings in its Article 3, item XIII that every student with disabilities is entitled to a

[...] school support professional: person who performs activities of feeding, hygiene and locomotion of students with disabilities and acts in all school activities in which it is necessary, at all levels and types of education, in public





and private institutions, excluding the techniques or procedures identified with legally established professions (BRASIL, 2015, s/p).

Still with regard to the BIL, in its Article 27, sole paragraph, it is restrictive when it comes to the educational process for students with disabilities.

Art. 27 - Education constitutes the right of the person with disabilities, assured by an inclusive educational system at all levels and learning throughout life, in order to achieve the maximum possible development of their talents and physical, sensory, intellectual, and social abilities, according to their characteristics, interests, and learning needs.

Sole paragraph. It is the duty of the State, the family, the school community and society to ensure quality education for persons with disabilities, keeping them safe from all forms of violence, neglect and discrimination (BRASIL, 2015, s/p).

Considering this article of the BIL, it can be affirmed that individuals with disabilities have the same right to education as any other representative of normality. It is known that the school, especially the teachers, must be prepared to teach these students in the regular classroom.

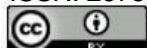
Considering the school that we have today, it is also known that many of these teachers and even the pedagogical and administrative teams of the regular school are not prepared to receive students with disabilities.

For Mantoan (2003) the reorganization of the school in pedagogical and administrative aspects is of great importance to provide a good service to students with disabilities. The author explains that "the reorganization of schools depends on a chain of actions which are centered on the political-pedagogical project" (2003, p. 34).

The teacher needs to keep in mind that it is possible for students with disabilities to learn in the regular school classroom, and that this only depends on how the teacher conducts his/her classes.

Mantoan starts from the proposition that "teaching the whole class: without exceptions and exclusions" (2003, p. 37).

To teach the whole class, we start from the fact that students always know something, that every student can learn, but at the time and in the way that is proper to him/her. Moreover, it is essential that the teacher has high expectations in relation to the students' ability to progress and that he/she never gives up looking for ways to help them overcome obstacles at school (MANTOAN, 2003, p. 37).





For the author, for learning to be a success with students with disabilities, the teacher needs to "explore talents, update possibilities, develop natural predispositions of each student" (MANTOAN, 2003, p. 37). Difficulties will always exist, limitations by the student with disabilities are recognized, but at no time, the teaching-learning process ceases to exist.

4. Final considerations

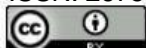
Considering that school inclusion is a very current issue, it can be certified that the identification and conceptualization of school inclusion with students, target audience served by schools were important for discussions about the opportunities given to students with disabilities to belong to regular school, highlighting their development in the teaching-learning process.

Through the bibliographical research developed, it was possible to collect important data and to verify that the school inclusion of students with disabilities demands a lot of work and attention from everyone at school.

The inclusion of students with disabilities is an educational reality in regular schools, regulated by Brazilian and international legislation that gives the right to these students to attend regular schools and to go through the teaching-learning process in a satisfactory way, according to the capacity of each one, regardless of their disability.

The school needs to prepare itself to receive students with disabilities. The first thing it needs to do is to reorganize itself based on the Political Pedagogical Project. Re-signifying contents and learning are of equal importance, since it is known that anyone can learn, it just depends on how to teach.

National and international laws provide the legal support for the regular school to play its role, allowing the inclusion of students with disabilities, within the school space to which they are entitled.





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¹Ana Abadia dos Santos Mendonça, <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5478-0290>

Secretaria de Estado da Educação de Minas Gerais. Escola Estadual Bueno Brandão. Centro de Referência da Educação Especial e Inclusiva (CREI).

Graduação em Pedagogia (Universidade de Uberlândia (UFU)). Mestre e Doutora em Educação com ênfase a Educação Especial e Inclusiva. (Universidade de Uberaba (UNIUBE)) Coordenadora do Centro de Referência da Educação Especial e Inclusiva (CREI) (Secretaria de Estado da Educação de Minas Gerais (SEEMG)).

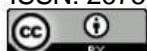
Contribuição de autoria: única autora.

Lattes: <http://lattes.cnpq.br/1002426699157378>

E-mail: ana_abadia@yahoo.com.br

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