

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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SANTANA, Andriele Moraes de. Et al. The inclusion of students with autism spectrum disorder in regular school. Revista Científica Multidisciplinar Núcleo do Conhecimento. Year 05, Ed. 11, Vol. 24, pp. 159-173. November 2020. ISSN: 2448-0959, Access Link: <https://www.nucleodoconhecimento.com.br/education/regular-school>, DOI: 10.32749/nucleodoconhecimento.com.br/education/regular-school

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SUMMARY

This article discusses an analysis of the inclusion process of a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in a private regular school. In this sense, the objective is to understand the challenges and possibilities around the school inclusion of students with ASD from the following question that started from the problem that evidences the impasses of inclusive experiences in the school space: how does the school enhance inclusive practices during the teaching-learning process of students with disabilities, especially with ASD? Therefore, it evidences a bibliographic approach focused on the understanding of autism and its

characteristics, as well as the difficulties of interaction and socialization in the school environment. In view of this, it was analyzed through some observations and dialogues held in the institution, the possibilities developed to include when understanding the need expressed in order to help in overcoming this challenge. Throughout the study, some interventions were performed during observations in the regular room and multifunctional resource room during specialized educational care, with the objective of experiencing inclusive actions in school through the challenges arising from this demand directed to respect and valorization of human diversity. Thus, it is necessary to make continuous adaptations in the educational institution in order to enable the development of children with ASD, valuing their potentialities.

Keywords: School inclusion, human diversity, spectrum disorder, autistic.

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education is an area of knowledge that has enhanced research by professionals who yearn for the acceptance of human diversity in the school space. Thus, throughout the study, some real difficulties are pointed out that prevent the full inclusion of the student who presents some kind of special educational need. However, it is important to realize some advances resulting from the struggle for the right of people with disabilities, as well as the creation of Public Policies aimed at social protection and inclusion.

In view of this, a research was developed in a private regular school that started from the observation of the learning of a child with the diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder, in a class of Early Childhood Education, specifically, in preschool. For this, the situations of adaptation of the child in the school space were observed along with the resistance demonstrated from their behavior in a typically new environment, also emphasizing the importance of Specialized Educational Care (ESA) in this school.

In view of this theme, it is important to consider that the inclusion of students with ASD faces a condition that is still well understood by the active professionals and that the implementation of inclusive strategies is a perceived obstacle through the insufficiency of care directed to the need presented.

Therefore, the understanding of the characteristics of ASD, together with the possibilities of inclusion, is part of the development of the possibilities of preparing a welcoming environment capable of valuing differences. Thus, when contemplating the challenges and the distance existing in this inclusive ideal, it should motivate the need for change as a potentiating principle of innovation of practices that enable the acceptance of all.

BRIEF LOOK AT THE INCLUSION OF THE STUDENT WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

The Greek origin of the name autism (autos or self) was incorporated to define human behaviors centered on oneself, which itself return to the subject himself. In this context, psychiatry used the use of this term to evidence the attitudes that are demonstrated during the conviviality of the individual who presents this characteristic and led to the development of scientific research.

The first studies on autism were presented by Dr. Leo Kanner in the 1940s. In their investigations, it showed some atypical behaviors (behavioral attitudes that are not usually manifested by people during their biological development) in the child manifested by the lack of parental love, difficulty in establishing relationships between people, situation of isolation, escape from reality and obsessive attitudes. Later, around 1944, Hans Asperger, another scholar, took into account some approaches on autism that influenced the emergence of new research through the characteristics presented by people considered autistic.

According to Mello (2007), autism is currently understood as a development disorder when manifesting changes from the early age, usually before the age of three. These changes have an impact on some behavioral aspects of the individual, such as: in the areas of communication, social interaction and learning. It is important to highlight that the last edition of the International Classification of Diseases (DMS) in 2014, adopted by Brazilian legislation as a standard reaffirmed by the World Health Organization (WHO), considers autism together with Asperger syndrome from a single diagnosis called Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Autism Spectrum Disorder is included in the group of neurodevelopmental disorders that manifest before the child attends the school space. In this context, some typical

characteristics compromise personal, affective, school and social functioning that vary to the detriment of the limitations that are presented in view of the development of skills that can cause social or intellectual losses.

The increased diagnosis of ASD has led many researchers and scholars to mobilize to find the cause and even cure of the disorder. However, because they did not obtain conclusive answers through the concerns expressed, some strategies were developed to facilitate communication and socialization, especially in schools that allowed the increase in the frequency of people with ASD in these spaces from the emergence of Laws and Public Policies aimed at the inclusion of citizens with disabilities in the common spaces of social life as a result of the struggle for the rights of people with disabilities.

Law N°. 12,764/2012 – Berenice Piana Law establishes the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of People with Autism Spectrum Disorder, which provide for access and permanence in an inclusive school space at its different levels of teaching and care for professionals able to develop work from an inclusive perspective. In view of this statement, it is the right of the autistic student to attend and remain in school in view of the care of professionals qualified for this demand.

Currently, the understanding of the individual with ASD by society is still distant from a principle of inclusion due to lack of knowledge (ORRÚ, 2012). The manifestation of this misunderstanding provokes concepts that distance themselves from the real characteristics and needs of the person with ASD, especially with regard to their acceptance in various environments, such as at school.

The above-mentioned author states that

[...] when people are asked about autism, they are often led to say that these are children who struggle against the wall, have weird movements, are swaying their bodies, and even say that they are dangerous and need to be locked up in an institution for the mentally handicapped. These statements reveal disinformation about this syndrome (ORRÚ, 2012, p. 37).

Prejudiced conceptions about autism contribute to social exclusion. Thus, this intense portion

of society causes the limitation of interaction relationships that can be socially established. For Cruz (2014), biological needs should not invalidate the social experience and culture of the individual in its different aspects. To do so, a person with autism needs to be stimulated, with greater emphasis, to develop the capacity for socialization rather than being isolated. In this perspective, it is appropriate for schools that develop interaction activities to enable significant advances in this need.

Therefore, it is understood that the differences, specifically manifested by the person with Autism Spectrum Disorder, does not define it from disabilities, nor should their limitations make development impossible. The characteristics are part of a scheme not standardized by society that incorporates human diversity that instigates the acceptance of differences in various spaces as a humanizing attitude in favor of respect and appreciation of capacities.

FEATURES MANIFESTED IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

The inclusion of students with ASD in school enhances the understanding of their characteristics that manifest themselves in behavior in accordance with the diagnosis. Therefore, some frequent attitudes regarding communication difficulty and social interaction are evidenced, patterns that are significantly repeated, sometimes through movements with the body and its restrictions.

According to Orrú (2012), the characteristics pertinent to the lack of communication and absence of verbal language or late development of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder at school, evidences one of the most striking specificities noted in educational institutions.

[...] people with autism tend to have difficulty expressing themselves adequately, presenting some disabilities in terms of communication, being the most common in the absence of spontaneity in speech; speaks of little communicative with a tendency to monologues; use of the personal third-person pronoun; grammatically incorrect phrases; bizarre expressions, neologisms; difficulty in understanding abstract information and meanings, in addition to ecolalia (BENINI E CASTANHA, 2016).

In view of these characteristics presented, it is important to realize that despite the

perception of common behaviors, autistic people present different attitudes in relation to the different ways of to react/act from external stimuli. In this context, the level of impairment of the disorder does not necessarily define which characteristics are manifested, because at the same step each person presents its singularity in its various aspects.

The difficulty of abstraction that refers to the planning and organization of elements of an abstract nature, is another characteristic witnessed in ASD along with attachment to objects or interests that in certain situations are judged as unusual or strange. Corroborating, the Manual for Schools (2011) informs that some people with ASD have some skills, such as: visual dexterity, ease of memorization of mechanical sequences or facts, excellent long-term memory, strong musical interest, artistic and mathematical skills, honesty/sincerity and among others.

Thus, the skills mentioned can serve as a stimulus for the development of pedagogical actions that encompass the areas of interest of children with ASD in order to mediate the construction of learning through the potentiation of the skills they manifest. To this end, it is important that school institutions develop didactic-pedagogical strategies that address this diversity to meet the needs of students who are part of this system from the evidence of official statements that encourage the adopt inclusive practices by schools and educational networks.

THE DECLARATION OF SALAMANCA AND THE GUARANTEE OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The Salamanca Declaration is seen as a legal document from a worldwide event that took place in Salamanca, Spain, in 1994. It proposed in evidence changes in the educational scenario through the needs that countries presented in providing a quality education for all, at an egalitarian level. This event included about 88 countries, including Brazil, when it presented difficulties in including people with disabilities in school. This statement highlights the need to include people who manifest Special Educational Needs (SEN) from a pedagogy centered on the subject.

To this do so, it points out that

Every child has a fundamental right to education, and should be given the

opportunity to achieve and maintain the appropriate level of learning, every child has characteristics, interests, skills and learning needs that are unique, educational systems should be designated and educational programs should be implemented in order to take into account the wide diversity of such characteristics and needs, those with special educational needs should have access to the regular school, which should be able to support them within a child-centered Pedagogy, capable of meeting such needs, regular schools that have such inclusive guidance are the most effective means of combating discriminatory attitudes by creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all; moreover, such schools provide effective education to most children and improve the efficiency and ultimately the cost of the effectiveness of the educational system (UNESCO, 1994, p.01).

The document defines some principles at national level necessary for the new thinking of special education, which must be worked collectively for the implementation of inclusive practices in the educational system. Thus, according to the difficulties faced by Brazil in promoting access and permanence of students with SEN, inclusion in the scope of promoting an accessible teaching and learning process taking into account the particularities of students, has become the center of many debates and slow changes in the educational scenario by ensuring the commitment to an education for all.

Thus, it establishes the responsibility to be assumed at the governmental level regarding the policy and financing of education based on the priority of making it inclusive, effective enrollment of children of all children in regular school, training of teachers, participation of the community from the proposals of the institutions for the formation of partnerships and among other willing mechanisms that are part of government actions

The Salamanca Declaration presents the importance of including in the educational system all those who, for some reason, whether of a social and economic order, do not maintain access to school to the detriment of human rights that enhances education as the right of all. To this end, institutions must accommodate students regardless of their cultural, historical and socioeconomic differences. In this inclusion bias when referring to differences, the individual with Special Educational Need (SEN) also remains at the center of the debate and configures as a challenge for the educational system, because it highlights precisely the

adaptations that schools must make possible learning.

According to the document, “Special Education incorporates the more than proven principles of a strong pedagogy from which all children can benefit” (UNESCO, 1994, p. 04). Child-centered pedagogy evidences the set of strategies that start from the modifications of the mechanisms needed in learning mediation, capable of enabling quality in the learning process through overcoming barriers that hinder such action.

Therefore, from this understanding that encompasses the types of SEN and their relationship with the proposals contained in the Salamanca Declaration, it is perceptible the responsibility of educational systems, in this case Brazilian, to promote quality education at the national level by ensuring opportunities according to the characteristics presented by the subjects that demarcate their potentialities and limitations in the context of learning. Thus, a pedagogy centered on the child as an ideal raised, covers the specificities that must be incorporated to the satisfaction of all students who make the regular classes and that favors the development of skills for social interaction.

SPECIALIZED EDUCATIONAL SERVICE (AEE) IN THE INCLUSION PROCESS

Specialized Educational Care is an important action of the National Special Education Policy, which is based on the promotion of educational opportunities for the formation of autonomous subjects before emerging society in its different aspects. Therefore, it is also a challenge, since the lack of adequate preparation, as well as the lack of commitment on the part of some professionals who are part of the education system, makes it difficult to provide adequate care for those with special educational needs.

The ESA also aims to stimulate “[...] the participation of the family and the community; architectural accessibility in transport, furniture communications and information [...]” (BRASIL, 2008). It came with the aim not of replacing education, but rather complementing or complementing the education of the student. The National Policy in the perspective of inclusive education, a document elaborated by the working group of the national policy of special education, brings this statement well when it says that the activities developed in the ESA (Specialized Educational Care), which can be understood as a multifunctional resource

room, differ from those performed in the common classroom, not being substituted to schooling (BRASIL, 2008).

The presence of the family in the process of schooling, especially as a support in the realization of inclusive teaching, is a basic premise based on its influence, because it plays a very important role in the life of the subject who is born with some special educational need, because its acceptance in society depends greatly on the respect of the family when perceiving individual potentialities and how they can be developed through social interaction. For the deaf subject, for example, his main challenge will be communication, and since since from birth his first contact of interaction and socialization are with the members of his family, it is his parents who will ensure inclusion in the first instance and not only the school and other environments of public access.

The teacher, who needs to have a specific and continuous training, also plays a fundamental role. Its challenge is great, but its training is not enough, because dealing with children with disabilities requires a theoretical-practical exercise. The mediator is demanded sensitivity, respect and empathy to understand that each child is unique and learns according to their differences.

However, it is not right to disregard the teacher's training to work in the ESA (Specialized Educational Care), and this is one of the proposals of national policy. Its training serves so that it can serve all children in a private and individualized way, respecting their cognitive abilities. This is possible with changes in pedagogical practice, because, unlike the constructivist practice of teaching, the traditional leads the teacher to disregard the particularities and differences of the students by teaching everything in the same way.

New changes are suggested in the documents defined by the Secretariat of Special Education, which gives suggestions for materials and resources, such as playful games and materials that can be made by the teachers of the ESA themselves; in addition to adapted furniture, such as adjustments and cutouts of tables chairs and other adaptations (BRASIL, 2006). These are proposals aimed at continuing distance training of teachers for Specialized Educational Care and for each type of disability. Among these documents, especially physical disability, one can find important details about assistive technology, defined by Bersch (in Schirmer et al, 2007, p. 31) as

(...) an expression used to identify the entire arsenal of resources and services that contribute to providing or expanding functional skills of people with disabilities and, consequently, promoting independent life and inclusion. (...) it means “functional problem solving.

Assistive technology has its importance because it allows the autonomy and independence of students, who are often attended in regular education in a limited way, avoiding contact with their “normal so-called” colleagues. Hardly this limitation in care is understood as, again, a process of “school exclusion” and, once again, “integration”, terms quite confused today as inclusion.

Just as inclusion should not be confused with integration, the same should not happen with assistive technology and resources used in the teaching-learning process. It is important to understand that assistive technology is a tool, often constructed by the teacher, whether from the regular class or specialized educational care, to facilitate learning as an aid in promoting opportunities from contact with the object of knowledge. Resources are part of everything that is used in the learning teaching process, and it makes no difference as to the educational needs manifested, such as the use of books. However, the modification of this resource to meet diversity is what will contribute to the existence of an assistive technology, which can be low or high cost.

METHODOLOGICAL DESIGN

A process of observation of some classes was carried out in the regular and multifunctional room through the pedagogical follow-up of student Y, diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, in school X. The observations contributed to the development of a qualitative approach research based on information that focuses on social aspects (FONSECA, 2002), and evidenced through observations carried out together with some interventions during the performance of classroom activities

The nature of the research is classified as applied, because it makes it possible to generate knowledge for practical application, aimed at solving specific problems, also involving local truths and interests (GERHARDT, 2009). In this context, the literature review is used as a

systematic guidance of actions for practical intervention. From the point of view of its objectives it is classified as explanatory from the search for explanations of the situations through the results offered through the observations made in the school, especially in the classroom space.

The technical instruments applied refer to the case study, because it aimed to know a certain situation, seeking to know how the process of inclusion of student Y occurs in school X, as well as the appropriate instruments and actions developed by the institution to contribute to the learning of the student who presents Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The observation focused on the analysis of aspects relevant to the school's functioning profile and the actions developed to effect inclusive teaching. To this end, it is worth highlighting interactive practices as participation during the teaching process of student Y through monitoring in the regular and multifunctional room. The observations also included the dialogue with the teachers of the regular and multifunctional room, together with the coordinator of Inclusive Education of school X.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The guarantee of education from an inclusive perspective is currently an obstacle. Despite the numerous theoretical-practical discussions that guide specialized education, some aspects relevant to the structure of the functioning of schools, as well as teacher preparation, should be expanded through the needs that are part of this new educational scenario. Therefore, it is necessary to reflect on the promotion of an education that highlights the opportunity in the face of the differences that must be respected, and contributes to the implementation of the teaching and learning process.

In this perspective, an observation process was carried out in a private school X, with the purpose of perceiving the importance of the inclusive teaching of a student who presents Autism Spectrum Disorder, along with the measures incorporated to promote learning. Therefore, the observation was performed constituted a workload corresponding to 20 hours and allowed the pedagogical follow-up of student Y in the regular and multifunctional room.

It is important to consider the profile of the school's functioning regarding its structure:

adequacy of the facilities according to the student's need, as well as the guarantee of access to the different spaces and the use of the multifunctional room for pedagogical purposes. Thus, specifically for student Y, the school facilities allow the exploration and use of the environment safely and presenting materials accessible according to need. Thus, it ensures the elements proposed by ABNT 9050 (2015) by highlighting the follow-up of accessibility to guide inclusive work, enabling the mobilization and communication of students with special educational needs in the physical space.

The use of the multifunctional resource room for pedagogical purposes was focused on specialized educational care (ESA) that occurred twice during each week, specifically, in the opposite shift and at a time compatible with that of the regular room that corresponded to one hour of duration at each moment. It is worth mentioning that in the opposite shift the service was performed by the coordinator of Inclusive Education, and at the next moment it was performed by the teacher in the multifunctional room. It is important to highlight this includes several pedagogical support instruments to mediate the learning of the Student Y, highlighting the games, the routine panel, use of videos, mobile alphabet and among others.

According to the observations made, the student presents Y presents typical behaviors of ASD, such as: difficulty of interaction and socialization, escape from reality at times, sensitivity to noise, absence of verbal language (pronounced only a few words that are not correct before the verbal pattern of the language), aggressive attitudes when confronted and the non-acceptance of the rules imposed collectively.

Passerino (2012) discusses the difficulty of interaction of the autistic individual, as well as the inability to symbolize during social relations, which differentiates from other people. As a result of this behavior, they often tend to be isolated because they are distant from this type of socially established relationship. However, the school as a social space, should bring the student closer to overcome this difficulty, promoting behavioral control in some situations throughout its development.

Therefore, the Specialized Educational Care (ESA) is one of the measures to guarantee the preparation of students with SEN in regular school from extracurricular accompaniments, in order to develop activities from supplementary to the regular class during the development of potentialities through the needs they present. Decree 6,253 of 2007 establishes

specialized educational care in the complementary perspective for children with special educational needs, as well as the double transfer of funds to those enrolled in the two schools. Subsequently, Decree 6,571 states that the ESA could be offered by public education systems or community, philanthropic or confessional institutions with the public authorities. Currently, it is identifiable that the public power becomes the “largest” responsible for offering this service in the multifunctional resource rooms in public schools.

Mantoan (2006) portrays some strategies elaborated at the municipal level, citing that “some municipalities have created forms of specialized educational care, others have expanded or maintained their special teaching services and aids, some are only enrolling these students in educational networks [...]” (p. 51). This perception denotes the reality of the situation of a portion of Brazilian municipalities today and demonstrates the lack of commitment in the public sphere to promote a quality educational system for all.

Through the observations it was remarkable that in some situations motivated by certain activities in the classroom, the teachers appropriated different instruments in order to enable the participation of the student with ASD. In this context, the use of adapted tools is a reality that also permeates the regular room in specific situations to facilitate the involving and learning of the individual. This action is defined from the use of aspects maintained by special education by allowing, later, significant advances towards inclusion.

Therefore, by perceiving the needs pertinent to the inclusion process in the regular school today, it is possible to highlight the challenges and possibilities of developing strategies that focus on the mediation of learning of students with ASD, considering their characteristics and potential skills that are developed throughout this process. To this end, it is important that the school uses tools capable of promoting such development based on the need expressed by the child, from its adaptation in the school environment to the construction of learning.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The process of school inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in regular school experiences some challenges and possibilities regarding the development of learning in this environment. Therefore, the understanding of the particularities that are presented through

the specific characteristics demonstrates the sensitivity that educational institutions must develop to expand the acceptance of the student through their diversity and the needs that focus on socialization and interaction while promoting overcoming such difficulty.

In this context, it is possible to perceive according to the study conducted the distance that persists between the reality presented and the inclusive ideal, since there are some obstacles that must be overcome for the applicability of a full inclusion in the school environment, especially with regard to involving the student with ASD. However, it is important to consider that barriers have already been overcome in order to enable their experience in the school space, which points to the growth in the frequency of other autistic students in school today.

Therefore, it is essential to develop practices that contemplate the development of autistic children in school to the detriment of their needs and overcoming the difficulties that are manifested due to the disorder. Therefore, the development of an education with principles based on inclusion and, consequently, on the valorization of human diversity, highlights the basis for breaking with the prejudiced attitudes that still persist in the acceptance of the autistic student in this space.

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Submitted: November, 2020.

Approved: November, 2020.