

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ITS ROLE IN THE CONTEMPORARY SCENARIO

EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL E SEU PAPEL NO CENÁRIO CONTEMPORÂNEO

LA EDUCACIÓN ESPECIAL Y SU PAPEL EN EL ESCENARIO CONTEMPORÁNEO



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ABSTRACT

Considering the challenges of school inclusion for students with disabilities in Brazil, this article aims to understand the role of contemporary Special Education, highlighting barriers and pathways toward equitable inclusion. The objective is to analyze how public policies and inclusive pedagogical practices can contribute to accessible and welcoming school environments. To this end, a literature review was conducted in the CAPES Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD), with works defended between 2019 and 2023. A total of 221 studies were identified, of which 17 were selected for meeting criteria of thematic relevance, timeliness, and contribution to the field. Thus, advances are observed, but also persistent challenges in inclusion policies: gaps in teacher training, obstacles in the implementation of inclusive pedagogical practices, and the permanence of attitudinal, structural, and curricular barriers. The data highlight the importance of listening to students, teachers, and families as an indispensable step toward building truly inclusive school environments. The productions also evidence the strategic role of assistive technologies, intersectional approaches, and intersectoral practices as solutions to everyday challenges. This allows us to conclude that, despite significant legal advances, effective school inclusion remains a trajectory under construction, requiring joint efforts between public policies, ongoing teacher training, and school management to ensure access, permanence, and learning for all students in a democratic, equitable, and plural school.

Keywords: Special Education. School Inclusion. Educational Barriers. Public Policies.

RESUMO

Considerando os desafios da inclusão escolar de estudantes com deficiência no Brasil, este artigo busca compreender o papel da Educação Especial contemporânea, destacando barreiras e caminhos para uma inclusão equitativa. Objetiva-se analisar como políticas públicas e práticas pedagógicas inclusivas podem contribuir para ambientes escolares acessíveis e acolhedores. Para tanto, procedeu-se a uma revisão de literatura na Biblioteca Digital de Teses e Dissertações (BDTD) da CAPES, com trabalhos defendidos entre 2019 e 2023. Foram identificados 221 estudos, dos quais 17 foram selecionados por atenderem a critérios de

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relevância temática, atualidade e contribuição ao campo. Desse modo, observa-se avanços, mas também desafios persistentes nas políticas públicas de inclusão: lacunas na formação de professores, obstáculos na implementação de práticas pedagógicas inclusivas e permanência de barreiras atitudinais, estruturais e curriculares. Os dados ressaltam a importância de escutar estudantes, professores e famílias como passo indispensável para construir ambientes escolares realmente inclusivos. As produções também evidenciam o papel estratégico das tecnologias assistivas, das abordagens interseccionais e das práticas intersetoriais como soluções para os desafios cotidianos. O que permite concluir que, apesar dos avanços legais significativos, a inclusão escolar efetiva ainda é uma trajetória em construção, exigindo esforços conjuntos entre políticas públicas, formação contínua de professores e gestão escolar para garantir o acesso, a permanência e o aprendizado de todos os estudantes em uma escola democrática, equitativa e plural.

Palavras-chave: Educação Especial. Inclusão Escolar. Barreiras Educacionais. Políticas Públicas.

RESUMEN

Considerando los desafíos de la inclusión escolar de estudiantes con discapacidad en Brasil, este artículo busca comprender el papel de la Educación Especial contemporánea, destacando barreras y caminos hacia una inclusión equitativa. Tiene como finalidad analizar cómo las políticas públicas y las prácticas pedagógicas inclusivas pueden contribuir a ambientes escolares accesibles y acogedores. Para ello, se procedió a una revisión de literatura en la Biblioteca Digital de Tesis y Disertaciones (BDTD) de la CAPES, con trabajos defendidos entre 2019 y 2023. Se identificaron 221 estudios, de los cuales 17 fueron seleccionados por cumplir criterios de relevancia temática, actualidad y contribución al campo. De esta manera, se observan avances, pero también desafíos persistentes en las políticas públicas de inclusión: lagunas en la formación docente, obstáculos en la implementación de prácticas pedagógicas inclusivas y permanencia de barreras actitudinales, estructurales y curriculares. Los datos resaltan la importancia de escuchar a estudiantes, profesores y familias como paso indispensable para construir ambientes escolares realmente inclusivos. Las producciones también evidencian el papel estratégico de las tecnologías asistivas, los enfoques interseccionales y las prácticas intersectoriales como soluciones a los desafíos cotidianos. Lo que permite concluir que, a pesar de los avances legales significativos, la inclusión escolar efectiva sigue siendo una trayectoria en construcción, que exige esfuerzos conjuntos entre políticas públicas, formación continua de docentes y gestión escolar para garantizar el acceso, la permanencia y el aprendizaje de todos los estudiantes en una escuela democrática, equitativa y plural.

Palabras clave: Educación Especial. Inclusión Escolar. Barreras Educativas. Políticas Públicas.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, Special Education has gained strength and new meanings in Brazil. Driven by public inclusion policies, the advancement of debates on human rights, and the historical struggle of social movements that defend the rights of people with disabilities, this field has been consolidated as a priority (Amorim, 2019; Azzi, 2019). These advances are supported by legal frameworks such as the Federal Constitution of 1988 (Brasil, 1988), the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education – LDB/1996 (Brasil, 1996), the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education (Brasil, 2008) and the Brazilian Law of Inclusion (Brasil, 2015), which reaffirm the right to education as a fundamental right. However, despite legislative achievements, the Brazilian education system still faces structural challenges and a school model that does not fully meet the needs of students with disabilities.

Important gaps persist, especially in specialized educational care, in the initial and continuing training of educators, in the architectural and communicational accessibility of schools, and in the implementation of truly inclusive pedagogical practices (Nalin, 2023). Educational inclusion goes far beyond the enrollment of students with disabilities in regular schools. It demands profound transformations in the ways of teaching, learning, and living together, ensuring the full participation and integral development of all students (Gonçalves, 2019). This change requires facing attitudinal, cultural and institutional barriers that limit the learning and socialization of students who are the target audience of Special Education. This article aims to broaden the dialogue on the role of Special Education in the contemporary educational scenario, based on recent academic productions — mainly theses and dissertations defended between 2019 and 2023. Through a systematic literature review, it seeks to identify the challenges that permeate the implementation of inclusive policies and practices, recognize the advances, and contribute to the construction of a truly democratic, equitable, and sensitive school to the singularities of its students (Rodrigues, 2022; Ivo, 2021).

Reflecting on the role of Special Education today implies valuing diversity as a principle, deconstructing segregating practices still present in institutions, and ensuring active listening to those involved — students, teachers, families, and managers (Kohls, 2019). Academic research plays a crucial role in this process, revealing tensions, pointing out directions, and subsidizing the formulation of more effective and humane public policies, capable of facing the complex challenges of school inclusion (Modelski, 2021; Maciel, 2023). This study aims to analyze how public policies, associated with inclusive pedagogical practices, can contribute to the construction of accessible and welcoming school environments for all students, especially those

with disabilities, identifying advances, challenges and perspectives in the field of contemporary Special Education.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this study is organized into three articulated axes that dialogue with the recent literature on Special Education and school inclusion: the legal frameworks and historical achievements that sustain the right to inclusive education, teacher training and inclusive pedagogical practices, and the contemporary challenges in the implementation of public inclusion policies. These axes seek to theoretically contextualize the object of study and identify gaps, contradictions and consensuses relevant to the proposed discussion.

2.1 LEGAL MILESTONES AND HISTORICAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Brazilian legislation has played a crucial role in ensuring the right to quality education for all, especially for students with disabilities (Rodrigues, 2020; Abreu, 2023). Although the process of school inclusion in Brazil has made significant progress over the last few decades (Amorim, 2019), we still face challenges that require a continuous and careful analysis of laws and their practical implementation (Azzi, 2019; Diniz, 2019). Historically, Brazilian education has been marked by exclusionary practices, which often segregated people with disabilities, denying them access to dignified and inclusive education (Azzi, 2019; Gonçalves, 2019). The Federal Constitution of 1988 became an essential milestone in this trajectory by establishing, in its article 205, that education is a universal right and a duty shared between the State and the family (Brasil, 1988). More than reaffirming the importance of education, this article enshrined the principle of equal rights, ensuring that everyone, regardless of their conditions, can enjoy an appropriate educational education (Nussbaum, 2019). The promulgation of the Constitution gave visibility to the inclusion of students with disabilities, consolidating this right (Rodrigues, 2020). However, the realization of school inclusion began to take shape with the implementation of specific public policies, such as the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (Brasil, 1996). This legislation strengthened the idea of inclusive education, highlighting the importance of schools adapting to the diversity of their students (Amorim, 2019).

The LDB was an invitation for the school to become a space where everyone could learn together, overcoming barriers and celebrating differences (Kohls, 2019). As Kohls (2019) states, inclusion should be a permeating principle of all educational practices, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn and grow together. With the publication of the National Policy on

Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education, in 2008, new advances were achieved (Brasil, 2008). This policy reaffirmed the commitment to the inclusion of students with disabilities in regular schools, ensuring their rights to access and remain in the school environment (Nalin, 2023). In addition to guiding teacher training, this policy encouraged the creation of adequate conditions for inclusion, such as physical and curricular adaptations in schools (Modelski, 2021). In the same year, Brazil ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Brasil, 2008), an international landmark that strengthened national laws, requiring efforts to ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities in society, including access to education (Rodrigues, 2020). However, as Amorim (2019) points out, the existence of legal frameworks, by itself, does not ensure their practical application. Transforming laws into concrete actions is still a challenge that requires continuous investments in teacher training, curricular adaptations and accessible infrastructure.

Educational inclusion in Brazil still faces financial obstacles and institutional resistance in some schools (Nalin, 2023; Azzi, 2019). Structural problems, such as the absence of architectural adaptations and assistive technologies in many institutions, remain significant barriers to the effectiveness of inclusion policies (Diniz, 2019; Gonçalves, 2019). As Diniz (2019) points out, physical and attitudinal barriers are still a challenge that needs to be faced to ensure access to quality education for all. The continuous training of teachers is essential for inclusive pedagogical practices to get off the ground and come to life in everyday school life.

2.2 TEACHER TRAINING AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

Teacher training is one of the most important pillars to consolidate Special Education in Brazil. In the context of inclusive education, initial training is essential, but it is continuing education that prepares educators to deal with the daily challenges of inclusive education. The National Common Curriculum Base (BNCC) reinforces the importance of training that goes beyond the technical, sensitizing teachers to the diversity of their students (Lima, 2021). Lopes (2021) argues that this training should include a critical and reflective approach, equipping teachers to meet the different needs of students.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought additional challenges to the fore. As Modelski (2021) points out, many teachers faced difficulties when adapting to remote teaching, evidencing the digital exclusion of many students with disabilities. These students rely on assistive technologies that were often unavailable. The pandemic has revealed the urgent need to train teachers in technological skills so that they can use accessible pedagogical tools and respond to the demands of inclusive teaching in digital environments. This new reality highlights

the importance of a training curriculum that adapts quickly to social and technological changes, as suggested by Ivo (2021), who emphasizes the need for training that not only informs, but also transforms teaching practice. As Azzi (2019) points out, teacher semi-training is an obstacle to inclusive education. Many teachers do not have access to adequate preparation to work with diversity in the classroom, which makes it difficult to implement inclusive practices (Azzi, 2019; Rodrigues, 2022). In this sense, continuing education should be a permanent process, which offers opportunities for theoretical updating and reflective practice. Mendes (2023) points out that it is essential for teachers to be able to share their experiences and find creative solutions to the challenges they face in everyday school life (Rodrigues, 2022; Azzi, 2019).

Teacher training must also recognize the cultural, social and individual plurality of students. An inclusive education goes beyond meeting the needs of students with disabilities. It encompasses all forms of diversity present in classrooms, such as gender, race, ethnicity, and social class. As Kohls (2019) emphasizes, it is essential that teacher training includes sensitivity to deal with diversity, promoting an environment of respect and welcoming. This sensitivity is indispensable to create respectful and inclusive learning environments (Lima, 2021; Nalin, 2023). Another critical aspect is the collaboration between teachers and other professionals, such as psychologists, speech therapists and occupational therapists. Teamwork enriches pedagogical practices, allowing for a more effective response to the specific needs of students (Rocha, 2022). Interdisciplinary collaboration, as discussed by Rodrigues (2020), is essential for educational strategies to be more comprehensive, involving different knowledge that can contribute to the integral formation of the student.

In addition, teachers need to be up-to-date on the use of ever-evolving educational technologies (Piccolo, 2022). Digital tools and assistive technologies, when applied well, can transform the learning experience and create a more equitable environment for all learners (Nussbaum, 2019; Rocha, 2022). Training in assistive technologies should be an essential component of teacher training, as suggested by Gonçalves (2019), who points out that the lack of knowledge about these tools can lead to the exclusion of students who need specific adaptations. It is essential that teacher training includes the development of socio-emotional skills (Kohls, 2019; Mendes, 2023). Empathy, active listening, and welcoming are essential skills to create an environment where everyone feels valued and respected. Promoting these competencies in teachers is investing in the construction of truly inclusive and humane schools (Nussbaum, 2019). Teacher training should, therefore, integrate emotional and social aspects into the pedagogical curriculum, aiming not only at inclusion in the physical sense, but also with regard to belonging and valuing students' identities.

Teacher training is a crucial element in the construction of effective inclusive education (Azzi, 2019; Kohls, 2019). It must be a continuous and reflective process, which not only informs, but also transforms pedagogical practice in response to contemporary demands (Mendes, 2023; Modelski, 2021). Inclusion should be understood as a principle that encompasses all forms of diversity, placing respect and acceptance as core values in the school environment (Lima, 2021; Nussbaum, 2019). Collaboration between professionals and updating in assistive technologies and innovative methodologies are essential to ensure that all students have access to quality, equitable and inclusive education (Rodrigues, 2020; Gonçalves, 2019).

2.3 CHALLENGES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PUBLIC INCLUSION POLICIES

Despite legal advances and initiatives aimed at inclusion, the reality in Brazilian schools is still marked by significant challenges. The implementation of public inclusion policies faces a series of barriers that make it difficult for students with disabilities to access and remain in the educational system (Amorim, 2019; Nalin, 2023). One of the main obstacles is the lack of adequate financial resources, which directly affects school infrastructure and teacher training (Kohls, 2019; Rodrigues, 2020). According to Gonçalves (2019), many schools do not have the necessary architectural adaptations, such as ramps and adapted bathrooms, which limits the physical access of students with disabilities. This lack of accessibility is not only a physical problem, but also a symbolic one, as it reinforces the exclusion and marginalization of these students in the school environment. In addition, the lack of assistive technologies in many institutions prevents these students from being able to fully enjoy their potential (Rocha, 2022; Piccolo, 2022). The lack of investment in adaptive technologies and in the training of educators to use these tools is one of the factors that contribute to exclusion (Diniz, 2019). The inability to integrate assistive technologies into pedagogical practices can result in an even greater distancing of students with disabilities, limiting their learning and participation in school activities, which is particularly concerning in an increasingly digitized world.

Another significant challenge is the resistance of some institutions and professionals to adopt inclusive practices. Often, school culture is still rooted in traditional practices that do not contemplate diversity (Gonçalves, 2019; Amorim, 2019). This resistance can manifest itself in a variety of ways, from a reluctance to modify curricula to a lack of support from school administration to implement inclusive practices. The lack of awareness and continuing education for educators can result in a hostile environment for students with disabilities, where their specific needs are not recognized (Azzi, 2019).

Teacher training, although crucial, is still not enough to prepare educators to meet diversity. As mentioned earlier, semi-formation is a significant barrier (Azzi, 2019). This issue demands a reassessment of initial and continuing education curricula, so that they are more comprehensive and sensitive to inclusive education issues (Lopes, 2021; Ivo, 2021). Teacher training must go beyond theory, incorporating reflective practices and real experiences that allow educators to develop skills to deal with diversity in the classroom. Mendes (2023) emphasizes that it is essential that teacher training courses include reflective practices and space for teachers to dialogue about their experiences and challenges, promoting a collaborative learning environment. In addition to structural and formative issues, the implementation of public inclusion policies faces the difficulty of articulation between different spheres of government and society. The lack of integrated planning and the mismatch between the federal, state, and municipal spheres can lead to an uneven implementation of inclusion policies (Rodrigues, 2020; Kohls, 2019). This fragmentation makes it difficult to create a cohesive support network that can ensure the effective inclusion of all students in schools (Gonçalves, 2019; Nalin, 2023). The articulation between the various government spheres is crucial for establishing clear guidelines and for there to be a flow of resources and information that favors the implementation of inclusive practices in all educational institutions (Piccolo, 2022). As Amorim (2019) points out, the lack of coordination between the different levels of government can result in policies that do not complement each other, compromising the effectiveness of actions and the promotion of a truly inclusive educational environment.

Another factor that deserves to be highlighted is the importance of involving the school community, including parents and students, in the construction of inclusive practices. Active community participation can strengthen inclusion policies, creating a culture of respect and appreciation for diversity (Nalin, 2023). The awareness and engagement of all actors involved are essential for inclusion to cease to be a mere formality, becoming a reality experienced in everyday school life (Nalin, 2023; Rodrigues, 2020).

The active involvement of teachers, students, parents, and the school community as a whole is essential to create a learning environment that values diversity and promotes equity (Kohls, 2019; Mendes, 2023). When all members of the school community commit to inclusive practices, it is possible to build a culture of respect and appreciation of difference, allowing all students, regardless of their conditions, to feel an integral part of the school (Gonçalves, 2019; Rodrigues, 2020). The active participation of each member of the school community not only strengthens inclusion, but also enriches the educational process, promoting an environment in which diversity is celebrated and respected. In addition, the lack of research and data on the

school inclusion of students with disabilities in Brazil makes it difficult to evaluate public policies and identify their failures (Diniz, 2019; Piccolo, 2022). Studies and research are essential to support the creation and implementation of more effective and inclusive policies (Lima, 2021; Modelski, 2021). Data collection and analysis can provide valuable insights into the needs of students with disabilities and how schools can best serve them (Piccolo, 2022).

It is essential that public inclusion policies be accompanied by constant monitoring and systematic evaluations, in order to ensure their effectiveness and promote adjustments when necessary (Rocha, 2022; Mendes, 2023). The implementation of an evaluation system that considers the specificities of inclusive education can contribute to the improvement of pedagogical practices and the promotion of equity in access to education (Rocha, 2022). Thus, the fight for inclusion must be continuous and collective, involving all segments of society so that a fairer and more egalitarian future can be guaranteed for all students, regardless of their conditions.

3 METHODOLOGY

This study is a qualitative and exploratory literature review, with the purpose of identifying advances, challenges and perspectives of Special Education in the contemporary Brazilian scenario. The qualitative approach was adopted because it allows the interpretative analysis of the selected academic productions, enabling the understanding of the meanings, contexts and tensions that cross the field of school inclusion.

Data collection was carried out in the Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations (BDTD) of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), considered one of the main bases of Brazilian scientific production in education. The time frame comprised theses and dissertations defended between 2019 and 2023, with a view to capturing the most recent discussions on Special Education, public inclusion policies, and inclusive pedagogical practices in the post-educational reform and post-pandemic context.

The descriptors used in the search were "Special Education", "school inclusion", "public inclusion policies" and "inclusive pedagogical practices", combined by Boolean operators. The initial search resulted in 221 works. From this set, the following inclusion criteria were applied: (a) works that directly addressed Special Education, school inclusion or public policies aimed at people with disabilities; (b) thematic relevance to the object of study; (c) the timeliness of theoretical and methodological discussions; and (d) contribution to the field of Special Education. As exclusion criteria, studies that did not directly address the theme, were repeated, or were unavailable in full were disregarded.

After applying the criteria, 17 studies were selected to compose the corpus of analysis. The analysis of the data occurred through systematic reading and thematic categorization of the findings, organizing them into axes that dialogue with the theoretical framework of the study: legal frameworks and historical achievements, teacher training and inclusive practices, challenges in the implementation of public policies, intersectional and technological perspectives and proposals for effective inclusive education. The organization of the productions in thematic axes sought to highlight not only the recurrences, but also the gaps and tensions present in the field, contributing to a critical and contextualized understanding of the role of Special Education in contemporary Brazil.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the 17 selected works reveals a complex panorama of contemporary Special Education in Brazil. The findings are organized into two central axes that dialogue directly with the theoretical framework: (a) the intersectional and technological perspectives that cross the field and (b) the concrete proposals for the implementation of an inclusive education. These axes synthesize both the advances identified and the persistent challenges that demand articulated action from different social and institutional actors.

4.1 INTERSECTIONAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION

Contemporary Special Education cannot be understood in isolation: it is articulated with issues of gender, race, social class, and territory, which directly interfere in the conditions of access, permanence, and learning of students with disabilities (Piccolo, 2022; Rodrigues, 2022). An intersectional perspective recognizes that the barriers faced by these students are not only physical or curricular, but also structural, related to the historical inequalities that cross the Brazilian educational system (Gonçalves, 2019). Disregarding this dimension implies policies and practices that, although well-intentioned, can reproduce exclusions of another nature.

In this context, assistive technologies emerge not only as accessibility resources, but as instruments of equity. When integrated with intentional pedagogical practices, they allow students with different disabilities to actively participate in the teaching and learning process, overcoming communicational, sensory, and motor barriers (Rocha, 2022; Maciel, 2023). However, the mere availability of equipment does not guarantee inclusion: it is essential that

educators are prepared to use them in a meaningful and contextualized way (Modelski, 2021; Lima, 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic has sharply highlighted the inequality in access to digital technologies and the gaps in teacher preparation for inclusive remote teaching (Modelski, 2021). Students with disabilities who rely on specific assistive technologies have been especially vulnerable by the abrupt migration to non-accessible digital environments. This scenario reinforces the urgency of pedagogical planning that anticipates and contemplates diversity, and not only reacts to it in crisis situations (Ivo, 2021; Azzi, 2019).

The intersectoral approach is also indispensable: full school inclusion requires the articulation between education, health, social assistance, and culture (Mendes, 2023; Kohls, 2019). When these sectors act in an integrated manner, it is possible to build support networks capable of responding to the complex needs of students with disabilities and their families, contributing to more stable, dignified, and transformative school trajectories (Nalin, 2023; Rodrigues, 2020). The Special Education that is wanted for the twenty-first century is, therefore, one that recognizes the complexity of subjects and contexts and that is committed to an inclusion that goes beyond the walls of the school.

4.2 PROPOSALS FOR EFFECTIVE INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

For school inclusion to be effective, it is necessary that public policies be accompanied by concrete and practical actions that promote real inclusion (Rodrigues, 2020; Nalin, 2023). The concept of inclusion goes beyond simple physical access to schools, involving the transformation of cultures, policies, and practices that ensure the full participation of all students, especially those with disabilities (Rodrigues, 2020; Nalin, 2023). Some of the following proposals can contribute to building an inclusive school environment, providing quality education that respects and values diversity.

Investment in continuing education: It is essential that educational institutions promote continuing education programs that train educators to deal with diversity and inclusion (Azzi, 2019; Gonçalves, 2019). Initial training, while important, is often not enough to prepare teachers for the challenges of inclusion. Workshops, seminars, and study groups can be effective mechanisms to promote the exchange of experiences and professional development (Amorim, 2019; Diniz, 2019). In addition, it is essential that these programs address not only teaching methodologies, but also aspects related to empathy and understanding of the different realities faced by students (Nussbaum, 2019; Rodrigues, 2022). Training must be a continuous and contextualized process, adapting to the needs of the school community (Ivo, 2021).

Curricular adaptations: Schools should be encouraged to make curricular adaptations that consider the different needs of students. This includes the personalization of activities, the use of active methodologies, and the inclusion of diversified teaching materials that meet the specificities of each student (Lima, 2021; Mendes, 2023). Flexibility in the curriculum is an effective strategy that allows all students to engage in the learning process in a meaningful way (Lima, 2021; Mendes, 2023). This approach implies the use of different resources and evaluation formats, as well as the creation of an environment that values the participation and protagonism of students. Curricular adaptations should be seen as an opportunity for pedagogical innovation, promoting not only inclusion, but also the quality of teaching (Azzi, 2019; Gonçalves, 2019).

Accessible infrastructure: It is essential that schools invest in accessible infrastructure, ensuring architectural adaptations and the availability of assistive technologies that allow the full participation of students with disabilities (Rocha, 2022; Maciel, 2023). This includes the creation of physical environments that respect the needs of all students, such as access ramps, adapted bathrooms, and adequate signage (Rocha, 2022; Maciel, 2023). In addition, assistive technology, such as reading software and devices that facilitate communication, must be integrated into everyday school life (Diniz, 2019; Piccolo, 2022). Accessibility should not be seen only as a legal demand, but as an ethical and pedagogical commitment that reflects the value of inclusion in education (Brasil, 2008; Brazil, 2015).

Interdisciplinary collaboration: Teamwork among educators, health professionals, social workers, and other experts is vital for inclusion success (Kohls, 2019; Rodrigues, 2020). Interdisciplinary collaboration can provide more comprehensive support for students, considering their needs in multiple dimensions (Kohls, 2019; Rodrigues, 2020). This integrated approach allows schools to develop individualized support plans, which take into account the particularities of each student and ensure that available resources are used effectively (Rodrigues, 2022). The construction of a support network that involves different areas of knowledge and professional practice is essential to promote inclusive and quality education (Amorim, 2019; Nussbaum, 2019).

Community involvement: Inclusion should be a shared mission for the entire school community. Promoting awareness of the importance of inclusion and involving families, students, and the community in general in discussions about inclusive practices is essential to create a culture of respect and appreciation of diversity (Amorim, 2019; Tomelin, 2023). The active participation of the community can be stimulated through events, lectures, and awareness campaigns, which promote discussion about diversity and inclusion (Amorim, 2019;

Tomelin, 2023). When everyone involved in the educational process feels part of this commitment, the effectiveness of inclusive practices tends to increase, contributing to a more welcoming and respectful school environment (Rodrigues, 2020; Nalin, 2023).

Use of educational technologies: Integrating educational technologies into the teaching-learning process can facilitate inclusion. These tools should be used in a way that promotes accessibility and participation for all students, considering their specific abilities and needs (Diniz, 2019; Piccolo, 2022). The use of digital platforms, applications, and multimedia resources can enrich the educational experience, allowing students to learn in a more interactive and personalized way (Diniz, 2019; Piccolo, 2022). However, it is important that the implementation of these technologies is accompanied by adequate training for educators, ensuring that everyone can fully enjoy the potential that technology offers in the context of inclusion (Modelski, 2021; Maciel, 2023).

Building an effective inclusive education requires a collective commitment and a multifaceted approach that considers the specificities of students and the demands of educators (Rodrigues, 2020; Nussbaum, 2019). The proposals presented reflect the need for a continuous and systematic effort to transform schools into truly inclusive spaces, where all students have the opportunity to develop their potential in an environment of respect and appreciation of diversity. Inclusion should not be seen as a goal to be achieved, but as an ongoing process that requires reflection, adaptation, and innovation on the part of all involved (Kohls, 2019; Rodrigues, 2022). It is essential that public policies are continuously reassessed and adjusted according to emerging needs, ensuring that inclusive education is a reality experienced by all students (Brasil, 2008; Brazil, 2015).

5 CONCLUSION

Contemporary education, especially with regard to Special Education, faces a scenario of challenges and opportunities that reflect the search for inclusion and equity. The strengthening of public policies, supported by legal frameworks, has been fundamental to guarantee the right to education of all students, particularly those with disabilities (Brasil, 2015; Amorim, 2019; Rodrigues, 2020). However, the realization of this right requires more than legislation: it requires a structural transformation in educational practices (Nalin, 2023; Piccolo, 2022). Educational inclusion demands a reassessment of teaching methods and teacher training, promoting an approach that values diversity and respects the uniqueness of each student (Nalin, 2023; Mendes, 2023). The continuous training of educators is essential so that they can adequately meet the needs of a diverse classroom (Azzi, 2019; Gonçalves, 2019).

Mendes, Vilaronga and Zerbato (2014) emphasize that this training should not only train teachers in technical issues, but also develop a sensitivity to the diversity present in classrooms. Ziliotto (2023) complements this view by stating that special education should be designed in an inclusive way, considering the particularities of each student and promoting a learning environment that respects and values diversity.

In addition, assistive technologies emerge as crucial tools to facilitate the learning and integration of students with disabilities, but their implementation must be accompanied by pedagogical strategies that consider cultural and social plurality (Maciel, 2023; Rocha, 2022). Furthermore, school inclusion is not only a responsibility of the educational system, but a commitment that must be shared by the whole society. Building a culture that respects and values diversity depends on the collaboration of schools, families, communities, and governments, working together towards a common goal (Rodrigues, 2022; Tomelin, 2023). The path to a truly inclusive school involves overcoming attitudinal and institutional barriers, ensuring that all students have not only access, but also the opportunity to fully participate in school life (Diniz, 2019; Kohls, 2019). This implies promoting a learning environment that welcomes and values all identities, stimulating collaboration between educators and professionals from different areas.

As stated by Nussbaum (2001, p. 47), "education should be a means of promoting human dignity, allowing all individuals, regardless of their circumstances, to develop their capacities and reach their full potential". Thus, Special Education, by moving towards inclusion, reflects a commitment to building a more just and egalitarian society, where each individual can develop their potential in an environment that celebrates diversity. The challenge is ongoing, but the search for an education that truly serves everyone is a vital step towards strengthening democracy and human rights (Gonçalves, 2019; Azzi, 2019; Mendes, 2023; Piccolo, 2022).

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