SCHOOL INCLUSION OF ASD

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ABSTRACT

The school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex challenge that demands special attention to ensure quality education for all students. In this context, it is crucial to analyze the practices and challenges related to this inclusion, aiming at the development of strategies and policies that promote the effective participation and learning of these children in the school environment. The general objective of this work is to analyze the practices and challenges related to the school inclusion of children with ASD, seeking to contribute to the development of strategies and policies that promote inclusive and quality education for all. The methodology used in this research was of a bibliographic nature, with the analysis of relevant studies and documents on the theme of school inclusion of children with ASD. The results obtained highlight the diversity of inclusive practices adopted in different school contexts, as well as the challenges faced by educators, families and managers in promoting the effective inclusion of children with ASD. It is concluded that the school inclusion of children with ASD requires a joint effort of all the actors involved, in addition to public policies and educational strategies that consider the specific needs of these students. Promoting an inclusive culture and adequate support are key to ensuring the full development and learning of all children, regardless of their differences.

Keywords: Inclusion. Education. Autism Spectrum Disorder. Practices. Challenges.

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INTRODUCTION

The school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) emerges as a topic of increasing relevance and complexity in the contemporary educational context. This work seeks to explore the practices and challenges related to the inclusion of these children in schools, highlighting the importance of understanding and addressing their needs in an effective and inclusive way.

In the field of education, school inclusion has been increasingly recognized as a fundamental right of all students, regardless of their individual abilities or characteristics. However, the successful implementation of the inclusion of children with ASD presents unique challenges that require special attention from educators, school managers, families, and society at large.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurological condition that affects the development and social interaction, communication, and behavior of those who experience it. It is characterized by a wide range of symptoms and levels of severity, making each individual experience unique. With the increasing prevalence of ASD diagnosis, the inclusion of these children in mainstream schools has become a pressing and multifaceted issue.

The rationale for conducting this study lies in the need to understand the challenges faced by children with ASD, their families and educators in the school context, as well as to identify and promote inclusive practices that ensure their full academic, social and emotional development. School inclusion not only benefits children with ASD, but also contributes to building a more just and egalitarian society, in which diversity is valued and celebrated.

The core of this study lies in the following question: What are the practices and challenges related to the school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in regular schools? This question guides research into the experiences, perceptions, and needs of children with ASD, their families, and educators, aiming to identify effective strategies to promote truly meaningful and comprehensive school inclusion.

The general objective of this work is to analyze the practices and challenges related to the school inclusion of children with ASD, seeking to contribute to the development of strategies and policies that promote inclusive and quality education for all. To achieve this goal, the specific objectives are: (1) To investigate the current practices of school inclusion of children with ASD; (2) Identify the main challenges faced by educators, families and children with ASD in the school context; (3) Analyze the perceptions and experiences of all

parties involved in the school inclusion of children with ASD; (4) Propose recommendations to promote more effective and meaningful school inclusion for children with ASD.

The relevance of this theme lies in the urgent need to ensure that all children, regardless of their individual differences, have access to quality and inclusive education. By addressing the challenges and promoting effective school inclusion practices for children with ASD, this study seeks to contribute to the construction of a more welcoming, diverse, and enriching educational environment for all students.

The methodology adopted in this study will be predominantly bibliographic, involving the systematic review of the academic and technical literature related to the theme of school inclusion of children with ASD. Empirical studies, theoretical reviews, government reports, and policy documents will be considered, with the aim of mapping existing practices, identifying knowledge gaps, and proposing recommendations for future actions and research.

DESCRIPTION OF THE MAIN CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurobiological condition that affects the development and social, communicative, and cognitive behavior of individuals. Understanding the fundamental characteristics of ASD is crucial for the effective management and proper inclusion of these people in society, especially in the school context.

According to Khoury et al. (2014), the behavioral manifestations of ASD encompass a wide range of peculiarities. Among them, difficulties in social interaction and in the development of communication skills stand out. Individuals with ASD may exhibit repetitive behavior patterns and restricted interests, which can significantly affect their participation in conventional social activities (Khoury et al., 2014).

It should be noted that the social peculiarities of ASD are not uniform, varying in intensity and individual expression. Williams and Wright (2008) emphasize the importance of recognizing this diversity for a personalized and effective approach in living with people diagnosed with ASD.

Challenges in communication represent a significant facet of ASD. Ropoli (2010) points out that many affected individuals may have delays in language development, difficulties in understanding communicative subtleties and a preference for non-verbal forms of expression. Silva (2012) emphasizes the importance of specific strategies for the

development of communication and language, aiming to facilitate the interaction and expression of these people.

Sensory sensitivities, such as hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity to sensory stimuli, are frequent features in ASD. Severino (2002) observes that individuals diagnosed may react atypically to visual, auditory, tactile or olfactory stimuli, which can impact their comfort and participation in different environments.

In addition, stereotypical behaviors, such as repetitive movements, are common in ASD and can serve as a form of self-regulation in the face of challenging sensory stimuli (Williams & Wright, 2008).

Understanding the main characteristics of ASD is essential to promote appropriate inclusion strategies, especially in the school environment. Behavioral, social, communication particularities and sensory sensitivities must be considered in an individualized way to provide an inclusive environment and facilitate the full development of these individuals.

ASD LEVELS

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex neurobiological condition that affects the development and social, communicative, and cognitive behavior of individuals. Understanding the fundamental characteristics of ASD is crucial for the effective management and proper inclusion of these people in society, especially in the school context (Varela, 2017).

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is characterized by a variety of symptoms that affect communication, social interaction, and repetitive behaviors. According to the DSM-5TR (Almeida, 2023), this disorder is categorized into three levels, each reflecting the degree of support needed by the individual:

Individuals with ASD at level 1 have notable difficulties in social communication, social interaction, behavioral flexibility, and symbolic functioning, often manifesting themselves through subtle symptoms. Although they may possess functional language skills, they may face difficulties in social contexts and in adapting to change. These characteristics can affect the individual's ability to fully participate in daily activities and social interactions (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

ASD level 2 is characterized by a more significant impairment in social communication, social interaction, and repetitive behaviors, requiring substantial support to accommodate these difficulties. Individuals at this level may exhibit limited verbal and nonverbal communication, difficulties initiating or responding to social interactions, and

repetitive behaviors that interfere with daily functioning. They may require more intensive interventions and targeted support to develop social and communication skills (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

ASD level 3 is the most severe and requires very substantial support to accommodate the individual's needs. These individuals face significant challenges in social communication, social interaction, and repetitive behaviors, with symptoms that profoundly affect their daily functioning. They may have extremely limited or absent communication, intense stereotyped behaviors, and difficulties adapting to change or transition. They require a high level of support and specialized intervention to perform basic day-to-day activities and to participate effectively in social interactions (American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

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It should be noted that the social peculiarities of ASD are not uniform, varying in intensity and individual expression. Williams and Wright (2008) emphasize the importance of recognizing this diversity for a personalized and effective approach to individualized assessment, adapted intervention, incorporation of the individual's perspective, in living with people diagnosed with ASD.

Challenges in communication represent a significant facet of ASD. Ropoli (2010) points out that many affected individuals may have delays in language development, difficulties in understanding communicative subtleties and a preference for non-verbal forms of expression. Silva (2012) emphasizes the importance of specific strategies such as visual communication, augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), direct and clear communication, repetition and positive reinforcement, routines and structuring, support for the understanding of emotions and intentions, adaptation of the environment, for the development of communication and language, aiming to facilitate the interaction and expression of these people.

Sensory sensitivities, such as hypersensitivity or hyposensitivity to sensory stimuli, are frequent features in ASD. Severino (2002) observes that individuals diagnosed may react atypically to visual, auditory, tactile or olfactory stimuli, which can impact their comfort and participation in different environments.

Marina Bialer (2014) highlights the importance of recognizing the sensory particularities of children with ASD to promote a more inclusive and effective educational environment. Ana Rita Teixeira Fernandes (2016) emphasizes the role of body practices in the sensory regulation and global development of children with ASD, highlighting the need to consider sensory sensitivities in the planning of educational interventions.

Sensory hypersensitivity, characterized by an intense and aversive reaction to common sensory stimuli, is one of the frequent manifestations in the autistic spectrum (Varela & Machado, 2017). Hypersensitive autistic children may have an aversion to sounds, lights, textures, and smells, which can generate discomfort and interfere with their engagement and learning in the classroom (Bialer, 2014). In addition, sensory hypersensitivity can lead to challenging behaviors, such as refusal to participate in activities or anxiety crises (Fernandes, 2016).

On the other hand, sensory hyposensitivity, characterized by the search for intense sensory stimuli or the lack of response to sensory stimuli, is also common in autistic children (Varela & Machado, 2017). These children may show little sensitivity to pain, temperature, or even their own body perception, which can make it difficult for them to understand physical and social boundaries and affect their safety and interaction with the school environment (Bialer, 2014).

In the face of these distinct sensory sensitivities, it is essential to adopt an individualized approach that is sensitive to the needs of each autistic child (Almeida, 2023). Teaching strategies based on the active flipped classroom methodology can be adapted to consider sensory sensitivities, offering flexibility, choice, and control over the learning environment (Fernandes, 2016). For example, providing sensory material options and adapting ambient lighting and noise can help reduce sensory stress and promote autistic children's active participation in the learning process (Bialer, 2014).

Therefore, when implementing the active flipped classroom methodology in teaching autistic children, it is critical to consider each student's individual sensory sensitivities and tailor the activities and learning environment according to their specific needs. By doing so, educators can create a more inclusive and stimulating environment that promotes the engagement and full development of autistic children in the school context (Varela & Machado, 2017).

In addition, stereotypical behaviors, such as repetitive movements, are common in ASD and can serve as a form of self-regulation in the face of challenging sensory stimuli (Williams & Wright, 2008).

Understanding the main characteristics of ASD is essential to promote appropriate inclusion strategies, especially in the school environment. Behavioral, social, communication particularities and sensory sensitivities must be considered in an individualized way to provide an inclusive environment and facilitate the full development of these individuals.

CURRENT PRACTICES OF SCHOOL INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH ASD

Inclusive education represents a significant advance in the pedagogical approach, seeking to provide equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their abilities or characteristics. This topic explores the specific benefits of inclusive education for children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), highlighting the importance of this innovative approach.

The implementation of inclusive education brings with it the need for adaptations in the school environment to meet the specific demands of children with ASD. Carvalho (2019) emphasize the importance of flexible strategies and resources that promote the active participation of these students. In addition, social interaction, often challenging for autistic children, finds fertile ground in inclusive education. Khoury et al. (2014) highlight that presence in mixed environments provides regular opportunities for the practice of social skills, essential for interpersonal development throughout life.

Table 1: Current practices of school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

School Inclusion Practice	Description
Individualized Assessment	Conducting specific assessments to understand the needs and abilities of each child with ASD.
Intervention Programs	Implementation of personalized intervention programs, including behavioral and educational therapy.
Learning Support	Offering additional support, such as individualized assistance, adapted materials, and assistive technologies.
Teacher Training	Continuous training for teachers and school staff on inclusive teaching strategies and curricular adaptations.
Partnering with Families	Establishing open and collaborative communication with families to better understand the child's needs and provide support at home and at school.
Inclusive Environment	Adoption of practices that promote a welcoming and inclusive school environment, such as raising awareness of diversity and promoting acceptance among students.
Support from Health Professionals	Collaborating with healthcare professionals, such as psychologists, occupational therapists, and speech pathologists, to ensure a holistic approach in supporting children with ASD.

Fonte: adapted from (Volkmar & Wiesner, 2019).

The inclusive approach allows for the personalization of teaching according to individual needs, which is particularly crucial in the case of children with ASD. Ropoli et al.

(2010) emphasize that the curricular flexibility provided by inclusion facilitates the adaptation of teaching methods to better meet the specific abilities and challenges of these students. This personalized approach, according to Silva (2012), is fundamental for stimulating cognitive potential, favoring an environment that recognizes and values the diversity of skills and talents present in each child.

The effectiveness of inclusive education for children with ASD is also linked to close collaboration between teachers and specialist support professionals. Khoury et al. (2014) highlight the importance of a multidisciplinary team that works together to develop effective teaching and emotional support strategies. This synergy, as Severino (2002) points out, not only strengthens the support for children with ASD, but also enriches the educational experience of all students, promoting a culture of inclusion and mutual respect.

HOW SCHOOLS CAN ADAPT CURRICULA TO MEET THE NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH ASD

The inclusion of students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in regular schools has become a relevant agenda in the educational area, requiring adaptations in the curricula to meet the specific needs of these students. According to Carvalho (2019), understanding the nuances of autism is essential to provide a more inclusive education. In this context, Khoury et al. (2014) highlight the importance of behavioral management in the school environment, offering a guide to guide teachers in the care of children with ASD in situations of inclusion.

The adaptation of the curriculum is a crucial point to ensure the full development of students with ASD. Ropoli (2010) highlights that Special Education from the perspective of school inclusion requires an approach that considers the uniqueness of each student. Curricular flexibility is a fundamental strategy, allowing adjustments that meet the specific learning needs of each autistic student.

In the methodological sphere, Severino (2002) emphasizes the importance of scientific research as a basis for decision-making in education. In the context of the inclusion of students with ASD, the research contributes to the development of effective pedagogical strategies. When adapting curricula, it is necessary to consider the different forms of learning present in the autism spectrum, providing varied approaches to knowledge acquisition.

Understanding autism is a central element in the formulation of inclusive pedagogical strategies. Mundo Singular (Carvalho, 2019) highlights that the pedagogical approach must consider the specific characteristics of ASD, such as preference for routines and sensory

sensitivity. In this way, curricular adaptation is not restricted to the offer of differentiated materials, but involves a deep understanding of the individual needs of each student.

Khoury et al. (2014) emphasize that behavioral management is a fundamental tool to create a welcoming educational environment. Teachers must be prepared to deal with challenging behaviors, promoting strategies that favor the effective participation of students with ASD. The continuing education of educators is, therefore, a crucial investment to ensure inclusive and appropriate practices.

The perspective of inclusion, as advocated by Ropoli (2010), goes beyond curricular adaptation; It implies the promotion of an inclusive school culture, where diversity is valued. The construction of an educational community that welcomes the uniqueness of each student with ASD is a continuous process, demanding the engagement of the entire school team.

Adapting curricula to meet the needs of students with ASD is a challenge that requires a multidimensional approach. Understanding the characteristics of autism, combined with flexible pedagogical strategies and behavioral management, is essential to promote inclusive and equitable education. Scientific research and the continuing education of teachers are key elements in this process, contributing to the development of pedagogical practices that respect and value the diversity present in the school environment.

GOVERNMENT GUIDELINES ON ASD

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a neurodevelopmental condition that affects the communication, social behavior, and social interaction of people diagnosed with this condition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). ASD is a public health concern, and governments around the world have implemented guidelines and policies to address the challenges related to this condition.

One of the main government guidelines related to ASD is the encouragement of early diagnosis and intervention. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (2018), early diagnosis of ASD is essential to ensure that affected children have access to specific interventions and therapies. Governments have invested in screening programs and training of health professionals to identify the early signs of ASD (Filipek et al., 2000).

Ensuring access to health and education services is another priority in government guidelines. The government should ensure that families have access to quality health services, including behavioral and speech therapies (Dawson et al., 2010). In addition, the

inclusion of children with ASD in mainstream schools is an important goal, and inclusion policies should be implemented and monitored (Zablotsky et al., 2017).

Families of individuals with ASD often face significant challenges. Therefore, government guidelines should also include measures to support families. This may involve access to support groups, respite care services, and guidance on how to cope with ASD challenges (Brooks et al., 2019).

The government also plays an important role in funding and encouraging research on ASD. It is crucial to better understand the cause of ASD and develop policies based on scientific evidence (Baio et al., 2018). In addition, constant monitoring of existing policies is essential to ensure that they meet the ever-evolving needs of people with ASD (Mandell et al., 2012).

Public awareness of ASD and reducing the stigma associated with this condition are also important goals of government guidelines. Awareness campaigns can help promote acceptance and understanding of ASD in society at large (Autism Speaks, 2021).

In short, government guidelines on ASD play a key role in improving the quality of life for those affected by this condition. Early diagnosis, access to health and education services, support for families, ongoing research, and awareness raising are essential components of these guidelines. The continued commitment of governments to meeting the needs of people with ASD is essential to promote the inclusion and well-being of these individuals in society.

THE MAIN PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGIES TO ASSIST STUDENTS WITH ASD

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a set of neuropsychiatric conditions that affect the development of communication, social interaction, and behavior. The diagnosis of ASD is increasingly common, and, consequently, the need for effective pedagogical strategies to meet the needs of these students has become a priority in inclusive education. In this context, this text will address the main pedagogical strategies to serve students with ASD, highlighting the importance of an individualized and inclusive approach.

One of the fundamental pedagogical strategies to serve students with ASD is alternative and augmentative communication (AAC). According to Franco (2018), AAC encompasses methods and resources that help the communication of individuals who have speech or language difficulties. For students with ASD, AAC can be a crucial tool for expressing needs, emotions, and thoughts. The use of visual communication systems, such as whiteboards, pictograms, and communication applications, has been shown to be effective in promoting effective communication for these students (Gomes, 2019).

Another relevant strategy is applied behavior analysis (ABA), which is an intervention model based on scientific evidence (Smith, 2017). ABA involves the application of teaching techniques, functional behavior analysis, and positive reinforcement to promote learning and the reduction of problem behaviors. For students with ASD, ABA can be tailored to their individual needs, focusing on developing social, academic, and life skills.

Early intervention is also crucial in the care of students with ASD. According to Dawson and Burner (2018), early identification and intervention can significantly improve long-term outcomes for children with ASD. Early intervention programs, such as the Denver Model of Early Intervention, focus on developing social, emotional, and cognitive skills in a structured and supportive environment.

In addition, it is important to highlight the relevance of raising awareness and training teachers in serving students with ASD (Ribeiro, 2019). Teachers play a key role in implementing effective pedagogical strategies. Therefore, it is essential that they receive adequate training on ASD, its characteristics, and inclusive teaching strategies. Continuous training and support from school staff are key components for the successful inclusion of students with ASD in the school environment.

In conclusion, serving students with ASD requires the implementation of specific pedagogical strategies that are tailored to their individual needs. Alternative and augmentative communication, applied behavior analysis, early intervention, and teacher training are essential elements to promote the development and success of these students in inclusive education.

EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES FROM AN INCLUSIVE PERSPECTIVE

The inclusion of students with special educational needs in regular schools has been a constant challenge for the educational system. In this context, different educational approaches have been developed and implemented with the aim of promoting the effective inclusion of these students. This text will discuss some of the main educational approaches from an inclusive perspective, highlighting their characteristics and contributions to the promotion of a more egalitarian and inclusive education.

One of the most widely recognized approaches in the inclusive perspective is the Person-Centered Approach. This approach is based on the premise that each student is unique and has their own needs, abilities, and potentialities (Ferreira, 2018). Therefore, the main focus of this approach is individualized development, taking into account the characteristics of each student. The Person-Centered Approach values diversity and seeks

to adapt teaching to meet the specific needs of each student, thus promoting full inclusion (Ribeiro, 2019).

Another relevant approach from the inclusive perspective is the Socioconstructivist Approach. This approach, based on Vygotsky's theories, highlights the importance of social interactions and cultural context in learning (Silva, 2017). From an inclusive perspective, the Socioconstructivist Approach values collaboration between students with and without special needs, promoting the exchange of experiences and the development of social skills (Gomes, 2021). Through this approach, students are encouraged to learn together, respecting their differences and contributing to a more inclusive school environment.

In addition to student-centered approaches, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Approach also plays a significant role in promoting educational inclusion (Almeida, 2018). UDL is based on the assumption that teaching strategies must be flexible and adaptable to meet the diverse needs of students (Martins, 2019). This approach proposes the availability of multiple forms of representation, expression, and engagement, allowing each student to choose the most appropriate way to learn (Fonseca, 2020). Thus, UDL contributes to the elimination of barriers in the teaching-learning process and to the construction of an inclusive environment.

Another important focus is the Inclusive Education as a Human Right Approach. This approach emphasizes that inclusion in education is not only a pedagogical issue, but also a fundamental right of all students (Lima, 2018). It is based on principles of equality, non-discrimination, and active participation (Carvalho, 2019). By adopting this perspective, schools are challenged to ensure access and full participation for all students, regardless of their individual characteristics (Oliveira, 2021). The Inclusive Education as a Human Right Approach strengthens the importance of inclusion as a moral and legal imperative.

In short, educational approaches in the inclusive perspective play a key role in promoting a more equitable and inclusive education. The Person-Centered Approach values the individuality of students, the Socioconstructivist Approach emphasizes collaboration and social interactions, UDL strives for flexibility and adaptability, and the Inclusive Education as a Human Right Approach highlights the importance of ensuring inclusion as a fundamental right. These approaches, when implemented in an integrated and appropriate manner, can contribute significantly to building a more inclusive and egalitarian society, where all students have the opportunity to learn and develop fully.

METHODS OF COLLABORATION IN THE CONTEXT OF CARE FOR STUDENTS WITH ASD

In the context of care for students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), collaboration between professionals, family members, and the school community plays a crucial role in the development and inclusion of these students. In this sense, it is essential to understand and apply effective collaboration methods that promote the adaptation of the educational environment and meet the specific needs of these students.

Interprofessional collaboration is key to promoting the educational success of students with ASD. As highlighted by Farias (2019), the joint action of different professionals, such as psychologists, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and teachers, allows for a holistic approach in the care of these students. This collaboration involves exchanging information, defining intervention strategies, and constantly monitoring student progress. In addition, the active participation of parents or guardians in this process is essential to ensure an integrated and student-centered approach (Gonçalves, 2018).

With regard to collaboration between teachers and support professionals, Silva (2021) highlights the importance of regular team meetings, in which individualized teaching plans and inclusion strategies are discussed. These meetings allow teachers to share their experiences and challenges in the classroom, while support professionals contribute their technical expertise. This collaboration collaborates with the adaptation of the curriculum and pedagogical practices, ensuring that students with ASD have access to quality education.

Collaboration with the school community also plays a significant role in serving students with ASD. Santos (2017) points out that it is essential to involve principals, coordinators, school employees and classmates in this process. Raising awareness of the specific needs of students with ASD in the school community can contribute to creating an inclusive and welcoming environment. In addition, promoting activities that involve all students, such as awareness and awareness projects, can strengthen acceptance and understanding of differences.

Regarding collaboration with the external community, such as rehabilitation clinics and social organizations, Oliveira (2019) argues that strategic partnerships can enrich the care of students with ASD. Through these partnerships, the school can access additional resources such as specialized therapies and teacher training programs. This collaboration expands the possibilities of offering comprehensive support to students with ASD, considering their individual needs.

Collaboration in the context of serving students with ASD is an ongoing and dynamic process. It is important that everyone involved is willing to learn and adapt as new

information and strategies emerge (Fernandes, 2020). Effective collaboration requires open communication, empathy, and flexibility on the part of all participants, with the goal of providing students with ASD with the best opportunities for learning and development.

Collaboration in the context of serving students with ASD plays a central role in promoting inclusive and quality education. Through interprofessional collaboration, parent involvement, interaction with the school community, and external partnerships, it is possible to create an educational environment tailored to the individual needs of students with ASD. This collaborative approach contributes significantly to the success and inclusion of these students in the school environment (Martins, 2022).

MAIN CHALLENGES FACED BY EDUCATORS, FAMILIES AND CHILDREN WITH ASD IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT

In the school context, the inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) presents a series of challenges for educators, families and, especially, for the children themselves. As highlighted by Alves (2005), inclusion is a complex process that involves several actors and requires continuous adaptations. One of the main challenges faced by educators is the lack of specific training to deal with the needs of these students (Santos & Mafra, 2017).

The lack of preparation of educators can generate difficulties in the implementation of appropriate pedagogical strategies, as well as in the identification and management of behaviors characteristic of ASD (Volkmar & Wiesner, 2019). In addition, work overload and lack of material and human resources are also challenges faced by education professionals (Cabral & Marin, 2017).

On the other hand, families of children with ASD face significant challenges in the school inclusion process. Often, according to Cunha (2017), these families find themselves isolated and helpless, without adequate support from the school and the community. The lack of understanding and acceptance on the part of other parents and even family members can increase the stress and anxiety of parents of children with ASD (Falcão, 2023).

In addition, the search for inclusive schools and the guarantee of quality education are constant concerns of families of children with ASD (Santos & Mafra, 2017). The need to adapt the school environment and the implementation of individualized teaching strategies are frequent demands of the families of these students (Volkmar & Wiesner, 2019).

Finally, children with ASD themselves face significant challenges in the school context. For many of them, the classroom can be a stressful and aversive environment due

to intense sensory stimuli and difficulties in communication and social interaction (Cabral & Marin, 2017). The lack of understanding on the part of classmates and the absence of support for the development of social skills are also challenges faced by these children (Cunha, 2017).

The inclusion of children with ASD in the school context presents complex challenges for educators, families, and children. The lack of training of educators, the isolation of families and the difficulties faced by the children themselves are just some of the obstacles to be overcome in this process. It is essential that there is a joint effort by the entire school community to ensure inclusive and quality education for all children, regardless of their differences.

THE PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF ALL PARTIES INVOLVED IN THE SCHOOL INCLUSION OF CHILDREN WITH ASD

The school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is a complex process that involves not only the child, but also their family, teachers and other school professionals. Brito (2013) highlights that, when analyzing the process of inclusion of an autistic child in a public school, it is possible to observe different perceptions and experiences that directly influence the success of this inclusion.

Khoury et al. (2014) emphasize the importance of behavioral management in the context of school inclusion of children with ASD. Teachers and school staff need specific guidance to deal with the behavioral challenges that may arise, promoting an inclusive and welcoming environment for the child's development.

Menezes (2012), in his master's thesis, investigates who teaches and who learns in the context of the school inclusion of students with autism. The need for a pedagogical approach that considers the individual characteristics of each child is highlighted, promoting meaningful learning and respecting their particularities.

Santos and Mafra (2017) explore the challenges, expectations and possibilities faced by families and teachers in the process of school inclusion of children with ASD. These stakeholders play key roles in supporting and promoting child development, tackling challenges along the way together.

Volkmar and Wiesner (2019) offer an essential guide for understanding and treating autism, highlighting the importance of inclusive education and multidisciplinary support for successful school inclusion. This holistic approach is key to ensuring that the child's needs are met appropriately.

Cabral and Marin (2017) conducted a systematic review of the literature on the school inclusion of children with ASD, evidencing the diversity of practices and approaches used in this context. The analysis of these studies contributes to the construction of more effective and inclusive strategies in the school environment.

Cunha (2017) highlights the importance of Psychopedagogy and educational practices at school and in the family to promote the inclusion of children with autism. Collaboration between education professionals, family and multidisciplinary team is essential to ensure the full development of the child inside and outside the school environment.

Falcão (2023) emphasizes the use of pedagogical resources as mediators in the teaching and learning of children with ASD in the context of school inclusion. Adaptive and individualized strategies are essential to meet the specific needs of these children, promoting their active participation in the educational process.

It is perceived, therefore, that the school inclusion of children with ASD involves a complex network of actors and processes, which demand a multidisciplinary and collaborative approach to ensure the full development and learning of the child.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PROMOTE MORE EFFECTIVE AND MEANINGFUL SCHOOL INCLUSION FOR CHILDREN WITH ASD

The inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in the school environment requires adequate preparation on the part of teachers. As Alves (2005) and Santos and Mafra (2017) point out, teacher training should cover not only theoretical aspects of ASD, but also inclusive pedagogical practices. Understanding the specific needs of these children and developing tailored teaching strategies are key to fostering a welcoming and effective school environment.

Table 2: Proposals to promote more effective and meaningful school inclusion for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Proposal	Description
Teacher training	Offer specialized TEA training to teachers, aides, and school staff.
Adaptation of the curriculum	Tailor the curriculum to meet individual needs and learning styles.
Inclusive environments	Create welcoming and inclusive school environments, with adequate sensory resources.
Communication strategies	Implement visual and alternative communication strategies for nonverbal children.
One-on-one support	Offer individualized support, such as follow-up with occupational therapists or speech therapists.
Early intervention programs	Implement early intervention programs to identify and intervene early.
Partnership with families	Establish a collaborative partnership with families to understand and support the child's needs.
Promotion of acceptance and empathy	Promote activities that encourage acceptance, empathy, and understanding among students.
Sensitization and awareness	Carry out awareness campaigns about ASD in the school community.
Continuous evaluation and necessary adjustments	Conduct regular assessments of the child's progress and adjust strategies as needed.

Source: adapted from (Falcão, 2023).

Cabral and Marin (2017) emphasize the importance of making curricular and pedagogical adaptations to meet the individual needs of children with ASD. These adaptations may include the use of visual resources, the simplification of instructions, the organization of the school environment and the flexibility of activities. By personalizing teaching according to the characteristics of each student, it is possible to provide more meaningful and accessible learning.

Social interaction is a crucial aspect of the development of children with ASD. Volkmar and Wiesner (2019) highlight the importance of creating opportunities for these children to interact with their classmates in a positive and inclusive way. Structured activities, such as cooperative games and group projects, can facilitate social integration and promote the development of social and emotional skills.

The partnership between school and family plays a fundamental role in the process of school inclusion of children with ASD. According to Cunha (2017), it is essential to involve parents in the planning and execution of educational strategies, respecting their experiences and knowledge about their child. The constant dialogue between teachers and family members allows for effective collaboration to ensure the child's well-being and academic success.

Falcão (2023) emphasizes the importance of ensuring access to specialized resources and support for children with ASD, such as support professionals, therapists, and assistive technologies. These resources can offer additional support to specific learning

needs and contribute to the promotion of more effective and meaningful inclusion in the school context.

To promote more effective and meaningful school inclusion for children with ASD, it is necessary to cultivate an inclusive culture throughout the school community. This involves raising awareness and respecting diversity, promoting empathy, and accepting differences. As highlighted by Cabral and Marin (2017), an inclusive culture values and celebrates the contributions of all students, creating an environment where each child feels respected, valued, and able to reach their full academic and social potential.

Finally, it is essential to conduct an ongoing assessment of the school inclusion process of children with ASD, monitoring their academic, social, and emotional progress and adjusting strategies as needed. The assessment should be carried out collaboratively, involving teachers, parents, support professionals, and the child himself, ensuring that their needs and interests are considered at all stages of the educational process (Falcão, 2023).

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The school inclusion of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) has represented a significant challenge for educators, health professionals and families over the years. This study sought to investigate practices and challenges related to this inclusion, evaluating whether the proposed objectives were achieved and whether new results are needed for a deeper understanding of the facts.

In the course of the research, it became evident that, although progress has been made in promoting the school inclusion of children with ASD, there is still much to be done to ensure a truly inclusive and welcoming environment. The results achieved demonstrated that, although effective practices exist in some schools, the lack of adequate training for educators, insufficient resources and the lack of understanding on the part of the school community still represent significant barriers.

The contributions of this study to the study area were diverse. First, the importance of addressing the school inclusion of children with ASD in a holistic way was highlighted, considering not only educational needs, but also social and emotional needs. In addition, the need for continuous training programs for educators was highlighted, aiming to provide them with the necessary tools to effectively support these students in the classroom.

However, despite the contributions, there is still room for further research and improvement. It is essential to further investigate the intervention strategies that have proven to be most effective, as well as to identify possible factors that contribute to the success of school inclusion of children with ASD in certain contexts. In addition, more

research is needed on the perception and involvement of parents in this process, as well as the development of more effective public policies to support school inclusion.

In summary, this study represented an important step in understanding the challenges and practices related to the school inclusion of children with ASD. However, it is necessary to continue moving forward, seeking new research and improvements to ensure that all children, regardless of their needs, have access to quality and inclusive education.

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