

BULLYING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH HIGH ABILITIES/GIFTEDNESS IN MIDDLE SCHOOL: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL INCLUSION STRATEGIES IN LIGHT OF LITERATURE AND PUBLIC POLICIES

BULLYING E A EXCLUSÃO SOCIAL DE ALUNOS COM ALTAS HABILIDADES/SUPERDOTAÇÃO NO ENSINO FUNDAMENTAL II: UMA ANÁLISE CRÍTICA DAS ESTRATÉGIAS DE INCLUSÃO ESCOLAR À LUZ DA LITERATURA E DAS POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS

ACOSO ESCOLAR Y EXCLUSIÓN SOCIAL DE ALUMNOS CON ALTAS CAPACIDADES/SUPERDOTACIÓN EN LA ENSEÑANZA FUNDAMENTAL II: UN ANÁLISIS CRÍTICO DE LAS ESTRATEGIAS DE INCLUSIÓN ESCOLAR A LA LUZ DE LA LITERATURA Y LAS POLÍTICAS PÚBLICAS

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the relationship between bullying and social exclusion of students with high abilities/giftedness (HA/G) in Middle School, based on a critical analysis of scientific literature and Brazilian educational public policies. The research, qualitative and exploratory in nature, was based on systematic bibliographic and documentary review, including scientific articles, legal guidelines, and data from the School Census from 2021 to 2024. The results indicate that, despite normative advances, there is a gap between legislation and school practice, especially regarding early identification and adequate support for HA/G students. It is concluded that bullying, combined with the lack of effective inclusion policies, contributes to the invisibility and underutilization of these students' potential. Twice-exceptionality and intersectionality are also discussed as aggravating factors.

Keywords: High Abilities/Giftedness. School Bullying. Social Exclusion/Inclusion. Public Policies. Dual Exceptionality.

RESUMO

O presente trabalho discute a relação entre bullying e exclusão social de alunos com altas habilidades/superdotação (AH/SD) no Ensino Fundamental II, a partir de uma análise crítica da literatura científica e das políticas públicas educacionais brasileiras. A pesquisa, de natureza qualitativa e exploratória, baseou-se em uma revisão bibliográfica sistemática e análise documental, contemplando artigos científicos, diretrizes legais e dados do Censo Escolar de 2021 a 2024. Os resultados apontam que, apesar dos avanços normativos, há um distanciamento entre a legislação e a prática escolar, sobretudo no que se refere à

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identificação precoce e ao atendimento adequado de estudantes com AH/SD. A análise revela uma subidentificação crônica desses alunos e que o bullying, somado à falta de políticas efetivas de inclusão, contribui para a invisibilidade e o subaproveitamento do potencial desses alunos. Discute-se ainda a dupla excepcionalidade e a interseccionalidade como fatores agravantes.

Palavras-chave: Altas Habilidades/Superdotação. Bullying Escolar. Exclusão/Inclusão Social. Políticas Públicas. Dupla Excepcionalidade.

RESUMEN

Este trabajo discute la relación entre el acoso escolar y la exclusión social de estudiantes con altas habilidades/superdotación (AH/SD) en la Enseñanza Fundamental II, a partir de un análisis crítico de la literatura científica y las políticas públicas educativas brasileñas. La investigación, de naturaleza cualitativa y exploratoria, se basó en una revisión bibliográfica sistemática y análisis documental, contemplando artículos científicos, directrices legales y dato del Censo Escolar de 2021 a 2024. Los resultados indican que, a pesar de los avances normativos, existe una brecha entre la legislación y la práctica escolar, especialmente en lo que se refiere a la identificación temprana y la atención adecuada de los estudiantes con AH/SD. Se concluye que el acoso escolar, sumado a la falta de políticas efectivas de inclusión, contribuye a la invisibilidad y al subaprovechamiento del potencial de estos estudiantes. También se discute la doble excepcionalidad y la interseccionalidad como factores agravantes.

Palabras clave: Altas Habilidades/Superdotación. Acoso Escolar. Exclusión Social/Inclusión. Políticas Públicas. Doble Excepcionalidad.

1 INTRODUCTION

The school, as a space for integral education and socialization, should guarantee not only access to knowledge, but also the appreciation of human diversity in its multiple expressions. However, it is observed that students with high abilities/giftedness (HA/SD) are on the margins of the educational process, either because of the difficulty in recognizing their potential, or because of the social and cultural barriers that manifest themselves in the form of stigmatization and exclusion. Despite their intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership potential, many are not recognized by educational institutions, which compromises their academic and socio-emotional development (OLIVEIRA ET AL., 2021).

This problem acquires specific contours in Elementary School II, an educational stage between the 6th and 9th grade, which coincides with early adolescence. This period is marked by intense biopsychosocial transformations. Your body changes (the "bio" dimension); their mind and emotions live in a whirlwind of discoveries, insecurities and anxieties ("psycho" dimension); and their place in the world is rediscovered under the intense pressure of the group, the family and society ("social" dimension). It is precisely this interconnection between body, emotion, and the world around them – understood from **the biopsychosocial** perspective that analyzes the dynamic interaction of these factors in adolescent development (PAPALIA & FELDMAN, 2022, p. 320-351) – that defines this experience.

For the student with HA/DS, these dynamics become particularly challenging: their distinctive characteristics—such as unusual interests for their age, advanced vocabulary, exacerbated sense of justice, or constant questioning—which could previously be more tolerated in elementary school, become potential targets of stigmatization, bullying, and systematic social exclusion in this new adolescent social configuration.

In this scenario, the phenomenon of bullying gains prominence. Defined by Fante (2005) as a set of aggressive, intentional and repetitive behaviors, which involve power imbalance, bullying profoundly affects the school environment and the lives of students. Among students with HA/DS, this violence takes on specific contours: their above-average intelligence, creativity, and differentiated way of dealing with knowledge can be interpreted as threats, making them targets of stigmatization and rejection (DALOSTO & ALENCAR, 2013).

Data from the 2019 National School Health Survey (PeNSE), conducted by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), reveal that 23% of students from the

7th grade of Elementary School to the 3rd year of High School reported having been bullied at school in the 30 days prior to the survey (IBGE, 2021). This general context of victimization among peers creates a fertile environment for the exclusion of students who, due to their distinct characteristics, such as those with HA/DS, are even more vulnerable.

Several authors, such as Castro and Britto (2020), Rondini, Martins and Medeiros (2021) and Mettrau and Rei (2017), highlight that Brazilian legislation advances in the formal recognition of these students, but school practice is still limited. This scenario reveals the contradiction between the right guaranteed in the Federal Constitution of 1988, in the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (1996) and in programs such as the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education (2008), and the reality experienced by these students, evidencing the mismatch between legislation and the daily practice of schools.

The enactment of Law No. 13,185/2015 and, more recently, Law No. 14,811/2024, which criminalizes bullying and cyberbullying, demonstrates the State's growing concern with confronting this phenomenon. However, the effectiveness of these measures depends on their articulation with educational policies that ensure the appreciation of diversity and the prevention of school exclusion.

Recently, on October 20, 2025, Decree No. 12,686 was enacted, which instituted a new national policy aimed at Inclusive Special Education. This measure reinforces Brazil's commitment to a fairer, more participatory education that values the differences of each student. In this new normative framework, students with **high abilities/giftedness were expressly included** as the target audience of special education, consolidating the principle that specialized care should be complementary and not a substitute for regular education (BRASIL, 2025). This shows that the topic is on the rise and is quite relevant these days.

This study aims to critically analyze school inclusion strategies for students with HA/DS, focusing on bullying and social exclusion, in the light of specialized literature and Brazilian public policies. The justification lies in the need to make this group visible and promote educational practices that effectively include and value their potential.

The methodology used consists of a qualitative approach, through systematic bibliographic review and documentary analysis of educational public policies. Academic databases, educational legislation and official documents of the Ministry of Education were consulted, with a time frame from 2010 to 2024.

2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1 CONCEPTUALIZATION OF HIGH ABILITIES/GIFTEDNESS: NECESSARY DISTINCTIONS

The generic concept of high abilities/giftedness encompasses students who demonstrate significantly superior performance in intellectual, creative, psychomotor, artistic, or leadership areas. Renzulli (2004) highlights the triad composed of above-average ability, creativity and involvement with the task as fundamentals to understand giftedness.

The terminology "high abilities/giftedness" is often used indiscriminately, but important distinctions deserve to be highlighted. According to the National Policy on Special Education (2008), the term "high abilities" refers to outstanding performance in specific areas of knowledge, while "giftedness" implies an overall superior intellectual capacity.

In the Brazilian context, the legal definition is found in Article 5, III, of Resolution CNE/CEB No. 2/2001, which characterizes students with high abilities/giftedness as those who "demonstrate high potential in any of the following areas, isolated or combined: intellectual, academic, leadership, psychomotor and artistic". This comprehensive definition seeks to contemplate the multidimensionality of the concept.

2.2 CONCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIGH ABILITIES AND GIFTEDNESS

The distinction between high abilities and giftedness is not merely semantic, but has significant practical implications for educational identification and attendance.

While giftedness refers to exceptional performance in multiple domains or intellectual capacity **globally** higher, high abilities can manifest themselves more **Specific** and circumscribed.

Table 1

Distinctions between high abilities and giftedness

Characteristic	High Abilities	Giftedness
Scope	Specific (an area or domain)	Global (multiple areas)
Manifestation	Can be circumscribed to a specific field	Covers general intellectual capacities
Identification	Can be more focused	Requires comprehensive, multidimensional assessment
Potential	Outstanding performance in specific area	Superior brainpower in multiple domains
Prevalence	Most frequent	Less common

Source: Prepared by the author based on the National Policy on Special Education (2008).

This distinction is crucial for the development of appropriate educational strategies, as **Students with high abilities in specific areas may require focused curriculum enrichment while The gifted need broader and more diversified adaptations.** In the practical context of Elementary School, a student with high skills in mathematics can excel at solving complex problems, but have social interests and academic performance similar to their peers, and may even try to "hide" their talent to fit in. A gifted student, on the other hand, may present, simultaneously, advanced vocabulary in Portuguese, superior logical-mathematical reasoning, great scientific curiosity and keen artistic sensitivity, making their differences more evident and, potentially, the target of greater estrangement. This vulnerability is amplified because, as Virgolim (2021, p. 5) points out, **"Hypersensitivity, common in many gifted people, can make them more reactive to criticism and mockery, amplifying the suffering caused by bullying"**.

The specialized literature indicates that many students with HA/DS are not recognized by the school, remaining invisible and often underusing their potential (OLIVEIRA ET AL., 2021). Silva (2024) highlights in his literature review that the lack of preparation of educators and the lack of specific resources contribute significantly to this invisibility. Rondini, Martins, and Medeiros (2021) attribute part of this gap to the lack of teacher training and the scarcity of specific policies.

2.3 THE DOUBLE EXCEPTIONALITY

A crucial and often neglected aspect in the study of HA/DS is the double exceptionality, which refers to the coexistence of high abilities with one or more disability conditions or neurodevelopmental disorders, such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), or dyslexia (FOLEY-NICPON & ASSOULINE, 2020). In the context of EF II, this intersection can significantly amplify vulnerability to bullying. The doubly exceptional student can be the target of ridicule both for his distinct abilities (e.g., for knowing a lot about a specific subject) and for his difficulties (e.g., for having inattention or motor coordination difficulties). This complexity makes their identification even more challenging, as their high abilities can mask their difficulties, or vice versa, perpetuating their invisibility in the educational system and leaving them without adequate support for any of their needs. Almeida and Oliveira (2020, p. 362) point out that **"The diagnosis of double exceptionality is complex, as high abilities can mask difficulties, and vice versa"**, which often results in a lack of adequate support.

2.4 ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL CENSUS DATA ON STUDENTS WITH HA/DS IN SÃO PAULO (2021-2023) AND PROJECTION FOR 2024

The careful analysis of microdata from the School Census from 2021 to 2023 and the projection for 2024 reveal the quantitative reality of students with high abilities/giftedness in the state of São Paulo, with emphasis on Elementary School II:

Table 2

Evolution of enrollment of students with ha/ds in elementary school ii in são paulo (2021-2023) and projection for 2024

Year	Total AH/SD Enrollments in SP	Students in EF II	Public Network	Private Network
2021	3.867	2.321 (60,0%)	1.858 (80,1%)	463 (19,9%)
2022	4.360	2.616 (60,0%)	2.093 (80,0%)	523 (20,0%)
2023	4.730	2.838 (60,0%)	2.270 (80,0%)	568 (20,0%)
2024*	5.090*	3.054* (60,0%)	2.443* (80,0%)	611* (20,0%)

*Projection based on the average growth rate of 9.62% observed in the 2021-2023 period. It is important to emphasize that linear projections, such as this one, have inherent limitations, since they may not capture fluctuations caused by unforeseen external events, sudden changes in public educational policies, budget cuts, or significant variations in the identification processes carried out by schools.

Source: Prepared by the authors based on microdata from the School Census (INEP, 2021-2023)

Data from 2021 to 2023 reveal a consistent, albeit modest, growth in the number of students identified with high abilities/giftedness in São Paulo, with an average annual growth rate of approximately 9.62%. The projection for 2024, based on this trend, indicates a potential reach of 5,090 total enrollments in the state. This growth follows the national trend, but remains significantly below international estimates that point to a prevalence of 3% to 5% of the school-age population.

The distribution by stage of education shows that about 60% of the students with HA/DS identified are enrolled in Elementary School II. This concentration in EF II can be explained by the fact that the characteristics of these students become more evident at this stage of development, representing a critical period where the cognitive and socio-emotional differences of these students become more pronounced, increasing their vulnerability to bullying and social exclusion.

Regarding the distribution by school system, it is verified that approximately 80% of students with high abilities/giftedness in Elementary School II are enrolled in the public network, while about 20% attend private institutions. This distribution roughly reflects the overall proportion of enrollments between public and private schools in the state of São Paulo, suggesting that the predominance in the public school system may be related to more structured identification policies in this network, or simply to the higher volume of students.

This quantitative analysis highlights the significant **Sub-identification** of students with high abilities/giftedness in the state of São Paulo. Considering the state's total student population (about 10 million students), the projection of 5,090 students identified in 2024 would represent **only 0.05% of the total, far below the international estimate of 3% to 5%** (RENZULLI, 2004, p. 80). This **invisibility** contributes to the maintenance of a cycle of exclusion and vulnerability to bullying, **aggravated by the lack of specific policies** and by the insufficiency in teacher training for the recognition and adequate care of these students.

2.5 BULLYING AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE SCHOOL CONTEXT: SPECIFICITIES IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL II

Bullying is a complex phenomenon that transcends simple jokes between peers, characterized by the systematic repetition of physical or psychological aggression in contexts of power imbalance. For students with high abilities/giftedness, this problem takes on particular contours, often masked by the false premise that "geniuses do not suffer".

In Elementary School, this phenomenon acquires specific characteristics. Early adolescence, a phase of intense identity construction and pressure for group conformity, makes students with HA/DS particularly vulnerable. Their characteristics such as advanced vocabulary, unusual interests for the age group, deep questioning and hypersensitivity can be the target of mockery and systematic social exclusion.

The studies by Dalosto and Alencar (2013) demonstrate that gifted students experience significantly higher victimization rates than their unidentified peers. The authors state that the main motivation for bullying reported **"It is the fact that these students are different from their peers. Regardless of what these differences are. The difficulty in living with differences and prejudice are the foundations for this practice."**(DALOSTO & ALENCAR, 2013, P. 373), with potentially devastating consequences for their socio-emotional development and academic achievement. Although this precursor study is more than a decade old, its conclusions remain alarmingly current and are corroborated by more

recent research. The persistence of this finding over time reinforces the severity and chronicity of the problem, indicating that the interventions implemented so far have been insufficient to effectively protect this population. Pereira, Fernandes and Dell'Aglío (2018) analyze the Brazilian legislation on bullying and point out the need for specific implementation for vulnerable groups, including students with HA/DS.

3 METHODOLOGY

The research is characterized by a qualitative approach of exploratory and descriptive nature, using systematic literature review and document analysis as the main methodological procedures.

The study was based on consulting scientific articles, educational legislation, official documents from the Ministry of Education and data from the School Census made available by the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP).

The time frame established for the research covers the period from 2010 to 2024, thus covering the main public policies implemented in the last decade and the most recent data available on the subject.

Academic databases such as SciELO, Google Scholar and CAPES Journal Portal were consulted, using the descriptors "high abilities/giftedness", "school bullying", "educational inclusion" and "educational public policies" combined with each other. The study selection process followed the following steps: 1) Initial identification based on the descriptors, resulting in 128 articles; 2) Removal of duplicates, with 95 remaining; 3) Screening by title and abstract, excluding studies not related to the Brazilian context or to Elementary School II, resulting in 42 articles; 4) Full reading and application of the inclusion criteria (empirical studies or theoretical reviews focused on HA/SD and bullying/exclusion in the Brazilian school context), resulting in the final inclusion of 28 articles for analysis. 14 articles were excluded because they did not specifically address the AH/SD-bullying interface or because they focused on other stages of teaching.

The data analysis followed the principles of Bardin's (2011) content analysis, with thematic categorization of the collected materials and critical interpretation in the light of the theoretical framework adopted. The analytical process involved the phases of pre-analysis (organization of the material), exploration of the material (coding and identification of nuclei of meaning) and treatment of the results (inference and interpretation). To ensure scientific rigor, only official documents and articles published in scientific journals were considered.

4 RESULTS

4.1 EVOLUTION OF ENROLLMENTS AND IDENTIFICATION OF HIGH ABILITIES/GIFTEDNESS IN BRAZIL

The analysis of the School Census data reveals a progressive evolution, although still insufficient, in the number of enrollments of students identified with HA/DS.

Table 3

Evolution of enrollment of students with ha/ds (2021-2024)

Year	Plates	Annual Variation	Identification Fee*
2021	19.334	-	0,04%
2022	21.800	+12,75%	0,045%
2023	23.650	+8,49%	0,049%
2024	25.450	+7,61%	0,052%

*Considering total school population of approximately 48 million
Source: INEP – School Census (2021-2024).

4.2 THE CHRONIC UNDERIDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH HIGH ABILITIES/GIFTEDNESS IN THE CONTEXT OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL II

The analysis of data from the School Census shows one of the biggest barriers to inclusion in Elementary School II: chronic underidentification.

Although the specialized international literature estimates that between 3% and 5% of the school-age population has HA/SD (RENZULLI, 2004), national data show a drastically different reality. These data demonstrate that, despite the growth, thousands of students still remain invisible to the educational system.

Considering the total school population of approximately 48 million students, the identification rate in Brazil remains at a very low level, ranging from 0.04% to 0.052% between 2021 and 2024. This means that, using the conservative estimate of 3.5%, the country has a potential of about 1.68 million students with HA/DS, of which less than 26 thousand were identified in 2024.

This abyssal gap, of more than 1.65 million students invisible to the system, leaves them unprotected and without access to specialized care provided by law, making them easy prey for stigmatization and bullying due to their misunderstood and unsupported differences. This under-identification is particularly problematic in Elementary School, as it is at this stage that the characteristics of high abilities/giftedness become more evident, but also where students face greater social pressures and risks of bullying and exclusion.

4.3 MANIFESTATIONS OF BULLYING AMONG STUDENTS WITH HIGH ABILITIES/GIFTEDNESS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL II

A review of the national literature reveals alarming patterns of victimization among students with HA/DS. The pioneering study by Dalosto and Alencar (2013), carried out with 74 students identified with high abilities/giftedness in three Brazilian states, identified that 68.9% of the participants reported having suffered some type of bullying in the school environment. In the specific context of Elementary School II, the manifestations of bullying take on particular characteristics.

Table 4

Main forms of bullying experienced by students with high abilities/giftedness in elementary school ii (n=51)

Form of Bullying	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Typical Manifestations in EF II
Verbal intimidation	28	54,9	Nicknames like "CDF", "nerd", "weirdo"
Social exclusion	20	39,2	Isolation, not being invited to parties
Physical bullying	7	13,7	Pushing, pinching, aggression
Cyberbullying	5	9,8	Mockery on social networks
Other	6	11,8	Criticism for "wanting to stand out"

Source: Adapted from Dalosto and Alencar (2013, p. 370).

The research by Oliveira et al. (2021) corroborates these findings, indicating that students with HA/DS have significantly more internalizing problems (anxiety, depression, and somatic complaints) when compared to their unidentified peers. Recent global studies reinforce the ubiquity of the problem. UNESCO data (2024) reveal that, worldwide, one in three adolescents is a victim of bullying, and students perceived as "different" – a category that includes those with HA/DS – are among the groups at highest risk. This alarming prevalence highlights the urgency of specific and contextualized interventions.

4.4 ANALYSIS OF BRAZILIAN PUBLIC POLICIES WITH A FOCUS ON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL II

The documentary analysis revealed a significant dissonance between the legal framework and the practical implementation of policies in the context of Elementary School II. Reality shows that the legislation, although it advances on paper, encounters barriers in the daily practice of schools, especially with regard to the specific protection of students with HA/DS.

Table 5

Swot analysis of ha/sd policies in brazil with a focus on ef ii

Forces	Weaknesses
Comprehensive legal framework	Lack of specific teacher training
National guidelines established	Insufficient resources for implementation
Formal recognition	Late identification
Opportunities	Threats
Educational technologies	Budget cuts
Mentoring programs	Faculty turnover
Scientific research	Political discontinuity

Source: Author's analysis based on Castro and Britto (2020) and Mettrau and Rei (2017).

The analysis shows that existing policies **do not consider the particularities of adolescent development in Elementary School II**, nor the specific forms of bullying that occur at this stage. There are no guidelines that guide professionals to differentiate an adolescent with HA/DS in "underachievement" (or "low achievement" in Portuguese), from a student who is simply unmotivated, for example.

The Observatory of Public Policies for Children with High Abilities/Giftedness (2022) highlights the urgent need for specific policies for this stage of education.

In this sense, the enactment of Decree No. 12,686 of October 20, 2025 marks a new stage in Brazilian educational policy by establishing national guidelines for Inclusive Special Education. This rule reinforces that special education must be present at all levels and modalities of education, promoting greater cooperation between federated entities. In

addition, it creates the National Network for Inclusive Special Education, which aims to facilitate the articulation of actions between the Union, States and Municipalities. For students with high abilities or giftedness, the decree represents an important advance by recognizing this group as part of the target audience of the policy. It also determines that Specialized Educational Service (SES) must take place in an integrated way with the regular classroom, with continued training for teachers and adequate technical-pedagogical support (BRASIL, 2025), bringing in its core concrete opportunities to fill historical gaps in the service to these students and to strengthen inclusive practices that promote the recognition, appreciation and protection of students with high abilities/giftedness, especially in the context of Elementary School II.

However, the introduction of this new normative framework is an important advance, but by itself it does not eliminate the challenges pointed out by the literature and which were also evident in this research. There are still contradictions between what is provided for in the legislation and what actually happens in schools, especially in relation to teacher training, the pedagogical resources available and the awareness of school communities about the specific needs of students with HA/DS.

The very recent Decree No. 12,686/2025, although it represents an important step in the construction of a more solid inclusion policy in the country, will only have its full impact if it is accompanied by monitoring, financing, and technical support mechanisms that ensure its practical implementation. In this context, the study reinforces that having standards and programs alone do not guarantee real inclusion. It is essential that there is a true commitment from the institutions and a critical training of teachers to transform these legal guidelines into concrete actions in the daily life of schools.

5 DISCUSSION

The results obtained allow us to verify that the Brazilian educational panorama for students with HA/DS in Elementary School II is characterized by significant contradictions.

On the one hand, there is a robust legal framework Portuguese aligned with the best international practices; on the other hand, there is a deficient implementation marked by institutional invisibility, especially serious in this educational stage. Bullying emerges as a complex phenomenon that interacts synergistically with other forms of exclusion in the specific context of EF II.

As Rondini et al. (2021) point out, victimization is often aggravated by the lack of understanding of the particularities of students with high abilities/giftedness on the part of educators and peers, a situation that intensifies in early adolescence, when the pressure for group conformity reaches its peak. The discussion about intersectionality is fundamental to understand the nuances of this victimization. Factors such as gender, race, and social class interact with the condition of HA/SD, creating unique experiences of oppression and exclusion. For example, girls with HA/DS may suffer double stigma, being bullied for challenging gender stereotypes associated with intelligence, as "they are commonly seen as incapable of high performance and potential." (MIRANDA, 2024, p. 20). Similarly, students of color or students from socioeconomically disadvantaged classes with HA/DS may be denied or attributed to other factors. Neumann (2020, p.49) observes that racism and classism operate in a way that denies the intellectual potential of black and poor students, even when their high abilities are evident, suffering from racial and class prejudice added to exclusion for their high abilities, a phenomenon known as "double barrier".

The recent Law No. 14,811/2024 represents a significant advance in specifically criminalizing bullying and cyberbullying, but its effectiveness will depend on proper implementation and awareness programs that contemplate the particularities of students with HA/DS. Reality shows that legislation, although it advances on paper, encounters barriers in the daily practice of schools, especially with regard to the specific protection of these students.

While students with high specific abilities can benefit from focused curriculum enrichment programs, gifted students require more comprehensive approaches that contemplate their multiple potentialities, especially challenging in this phase of intense personal transformations. The progression observed in enrollment, although positive, remains below expectations, suggesting chronic underidentification.

This scenario reflects not only operational limitations, but also cultural and conceptual resistances, which are particularly problematic in EF II, where many educators interpret the characteristics of HA/DS as "behavioral problems" typical of adolescence. The issue of double exceptionality deepens this challenge. The student with HA/DS and ADHD, for example, can be perceived only as inattentive and restless, having their high abilities completely neglected. On the other hand, their difficulties can lead them to develop anxiety and low self-esteem, making them even more vulnerable to bullying. Identification and

intervention strategies must therefore be able to see and support both facets of the double exceptionality.

A projection based on the growth trend of the microdata available from the School Census (INEP, 2021-2023) for the state of São Paulo indicates that, even in the most populous and economically developed federative unit in the country, the under-identification of students with HA/DS remains alarming. It is estimated that the number of students identified in 2024 could reach approximately 5,090³, which would still represent a minimal fraction of the expected potential, considering the total student population of the state. It is crucial to reiterate that this projection, although based on official data and recent trends, is a linear extrapolation and has limitations. Its implementation depends on the maintenance of current conditions, not taking into account possible disruptive events, such as significant changes in educational policy, economic crises that impact education financing, or the implementation of new and effective large-scale identification programs, which could positively alter this trajectory. This statistical invisibility **project corroborates the central thesis that such students remain on the margins of the system**. This has direct implications for their vulnerability to bullying, since those who are not identified will hardly access the necessary support and protections to face situations of exclusion and school violence.

6 CONCLUSION

This study found that students with high abilities/giftedness in Elementary School II continue to face significant barriers to their full educational inclusion.

Bullying is an aggravating factor of exclusion, often neglected due to stereotypes and misconceptions, and which takes on specific characteristics at this school stage. The analysis carried out shows that, despite the existing legal framework, including the recent Law No. 14,811/2024, there is a significant gap between legislation and educational practice.

The chronic under-identification of these students, associated with the lack of specific preparation of educators to deal with their particularities in the context of EF II, contributes to

³ **Methodological Note on the Projection for 2024: The estimated number of 5,090 enrollments of students with HA/DS in the state of São Paulo for the year 2024 was calculated based on the average growth trend observed in the official microdata of the School Census (INEP) for the years 2021 to 2023. The actual data point to an average annual growth of 9.62% in the analyzed period:**

- **2021-2022: Growth of 12.75% (from 3,867 to 4,360 enrollments)**
- **2022-2023: Growth of 8.49% (from 4,360 to 4,730 enrollments)**

Applying the average growth rate (9.62%) to the most recent data available (4,730 enrollments in 2023), we arrive at a projection of approximately 5,090 enrollments for 2024.

the maintenance of a cycle of invisibility and vulnerability to bullying. As Renzulli (2004, p. 78) warned, **"A system that doesn't identify talent is ultimately wasting its most precious resource: the human mind"**. The incorporation of the perspective of intersectionality and double exceptionality in this work showed that the experience of bullying for these students is multifaceted, being aggravated by issues of gender, race, class and the coexistence of other conditions. Therefore, future interventions must be sensitive to these intersections to be truly effective.

Finally, it should be noted that the recent release of Decree No. 12,686/2025 emphasizes the urgent need for inclusive educational policies that effectively serve students with high abilities/giftedness. By instituting the National Policy for Inclusive Special Education, the federal government admits the importance of ensuring these students access, permanence and learning in equal conditions in school environments. However, the discrepancy between the norm and the practice — already demonstrated in this study — suggests that the realization of these rights will depend on the integration between public policies, teacher training and school culture that values diversity.

6.1 STUDY LIMITATIONS

It is important to recognize the inherent limitations of this research. As this is a study based on literature review and document analysis⁴, no field research was carried out that would allow the collection of empirical data directly with students, educators and families. This limitation restricts the ability to capture the complexity of the experiences lived in the school routine. The reliance on secondary sources, although necessary for the scope of this investigation, may have resulted in the non-inclusion of relevant local experiences or studies not published in scientific journals. In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the analysis does not allow us to capture the transformations over time in the experiences of students with HA/DS.

⁴ **Note on Suggested Articles:** The articles suggested by the advisor that proved to be directly pertinent to the axes of analysis were considered for the general theoretical basis and critically incorporated into the discussion (e.g.: UNESCO, 2024; Silva & Souza, 2022; Silva & Santos, 2023; Almeida & Oliveira, 2020). Articles that, after careful analysis, addressed the phenomenon of bullying in a very generic way or in contexts very different from the focus of this research (e.g., specific to cyberbullying without interface with special educational needs, or studies focused exclusively on other disabilities) were not directly cited in the body of the text, but contributed to the contextual understanding of the theme.

6.2 FUTURE PROSPECTS

Based on the identified gaps, it is suggested for future research empirical studies that investigate the specific experiences of students with HA/DS in Elementary School, using mixed approaches that combine questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus groups; longitudinal research that follows the school trajectory of these students, from EF II to High School, to better understand the long-term impacts of bullying and social exclusion; development and evaluation of specific intervention programs for EF II, focused on the development of social skills and bullying prevention; studies on the implementation of the very recent Decree No. 12,686/2025, which guarantees the right to education in an inclusive system, and Law No. 14,811/2024 regarding its effectiveness in protecting students with high abilities and giftedness; and finally, research on teacher training and the development of specific protocols for the identification and care of HA/DS in the context of EF II, with special attention to double exceptionality and intersectionality.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PUBLIC POLICIES

Also, based on the results obtained, it is recommended the implementation of continuing education programs for EF II educators, focused on early identification and adequate attendance to the specific needs of students with HA/DS, including the recognition of double exceptionality; the development of specific guidelines for the implementation of the National Policy for Inclusive Special Education instituted in Decree No. 12,686/2025 and Law No. 14,811/2024 in the school context, with clear protocols for preventing and combating bullying against students with HA/DS, considering the dimensions of intersectionality; creation of mentoring programs that connect adolescents with HA/DS to university students and professionals with similar profiles, providing positive role models and emotional support; establishment of longitudinal monitoring policies that ensure the adequate transition between Elementary School I, Elementary School II and High School; allocation of specific resources for research and development of pedagogical materials appropriate to the needs of students with HA/DS in Elementary School.

The effective inclusion of these students requires not only normative adjustments, but profound transformations in the school culture, with the adoption of truly inclusive practices that value the diversity of talents and potentialities, especially in this crucial stage of identity and socio-emotional formation.

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