

Inclusion in Higher Education



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ABSTRACT

Currently, one cannot discuss education without considering the inclusion of people with disabilities. In Brazil and in the world this movement had as a landmark the Declaration of Salamanca in 1994 which has as its main principal education for all, enabling access to regular education. The opportunity to be in regular education enabled the student to have access to higher education that has

a new demand to think strategies to ensure accessibility and inclusion. The objective of the research was to analyze the educational, attitudinal, and communicational strategies of inclusion that are being carried out in higher education by professionals who work in specialized educational care so that the student has opportunities for learning equity. Method: qualitative research, in which nine professionals who work in specialized educational care in higher education were interviewed. Results and discussion: the data showed that higher education institutions make adaptations according to the legislation. Final considerations: Higher education has made adaptations to ensure inclusion and equity to create an inclusive culture.

Keywords: Inclusion, Higher education, Material adaptation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Inclusion is a worldwide movement, but the challenge is to implement its policy, in which countries must adapt the education system to meet the needs of all students. For this to be effective, it is necessary that education systems re-signify their role, acting against exclusion and becoming an inclusive space.

Currently one cannot discuss education without considering inclusion. In the world and in Brazil this movement had as a landmark the Declaration of Salamanca in 1994 that has as its main principle the education for all, enabling access to regular education.

Inclusion must be guaranteed to all students and in all modalities of education, including higher education. In Brazil, there is Decree No. 6,571, of September 17, 2008 that guarantees accessibility and permanence in higher education.

The inclusion movement guaranteed the right to education to students with disabilities in regular education and consequently an increase in enrollment in higher education, according to data from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep). In the last five years, the increase in overall enrollment in higher education, face-to-face courses and distance



education (ODL) was 7%, while the growth in enrollment of students with disabilities was 27%. Given the increase in students with disabilities in higher education, public policies to ensure inclusion have become necessary.

The Federal Constitution of 1988 guaranteed the right to:

[...] to build a free, just and solidary society; eradicate poverty and marginalisation and reduce social and regional inequalities; promote the good of all, without prejudice of origin, race, sex, color, age and any other forms of discrimination (BRAZIL, 1988).

In 2001 in the National Education Plan, Law No. 10,172/2001 (BRASIL, 2001), points out that "the great advance that the decade of education should produce would be the construction of an inclusive school that guarantees the attendance to human diversity".

Ordinance No. 3,284 (Brasil, 2003) specifies the accessibility requirements for people with disabilities, regulating the processes of authorization and recognition of courses for higher education institutions. This document shows the need to ensure access to equipment, facilities for the "physically and sensorially disabled" and with reduced mobility.

This ordinance was a breakthrough for inclusive education, but it is for a specific audience people with physical or sensory disabilities, and education should be for everyone and discussions are about diversity.

In the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008 in Brazil is published the National Plan for Education in Human Rights, with the objective of:

[...] develop strategic affirmative action policies in HEIs that enable the inclusion, access and permanence of people with disabilities and those who are the target of discrimination due to gender, sexual and religious orientation, among others, and generational and ethnic-racial segments (Brasil, 2008, p.41).

The discussions on education for all have in their principle to break with the prejudice, which should not be limited to education, but to society in all its spaces, considering that changes must occur in all spheres (Carvalho, 2005).

In inclusive education, teacher training is of paramount importance and was the axis of the Education Development Plan – PDE in 2007:

[...] the training of teachers for special education, the implementation of multifunctional resource rooms, the architectural accessibility of school buildings, access and permanence of people with disabilities in higher education and the monitoring of access to school for those favored by the Continuous Provision Benefit – BPC (Brasil, 2007, p.1)

In higher education, for inclusion to ensure the professional training of students, the training of teachers is important so that their practices meet the singularities and learning needs of all students (Garcia, Rodriguero, & Mori, 2011).



In most countries, discussions and actions for inclusive education focus on basic education, but access to higher education is possible for a larger number of students, considering the need for professional training and employment, and it is necessary that inclusion in higher education for students with disabilities (Rodrigues, 2004).

According to Duarte, Rafael, Filgueiras, Neves, and Ferreira (2013) there is little research on inclusion in Higher Education, thus hindering the elaboration of public policies to guide the actions of inclusive education in Higher Education.

In the inclusion of higher education, one should consider "students' school trajectory as a fundamental part of the process that is composed of access, entry, permanence and exit". Knowing the student and his academic trajectory and what his meaning, helps in the monitoring in higher education and for the permanence of this student the support should be throughout the course (Santos; Gates; Branches; Castro; Roselane, 2015, p. 215).

According to Santos et al. (2015) access and the right to education for all are important advances for education, but the homogeneous education model that does not consider differences is a problem present in educational institutions, making it a priority to rethink about a practice that considers diversity and differences, a truly inclusive model.

Higher education institutions are responsible for the formation of citizens, it is a space for the acquisition and exchange of knowledge and interpersonal relationships, when considering the diversity of students, education for all, will also have the role of socially resignifying the person with disabilities who will no longer have the stigma of inefficient, unproductive, when they have educational opportunities (Castanho and Freitas, 2005).

In inclusive education, the entry of students with disabilities in higher education is an important data, but it should be considered that being in college does not mean their effective participation and appropriation of content, for this to occur it is necessary that adaptations are made (Moreira, Bolsanello, Seger, 2011).

Both higher education and other levels of education need to rethink their practice in all educational contexts, considering the curriculum, methods, teachers, learning differences, seeking a significantly inclusive one.

In undergraduate courses it is not mandatory to have an exclusive area for student support, but institutions have been organized to perform the welcoming, accessibility, adaptations and guidance to the entire academic community for the permanence of the student with disabilities. In higher education, the most present professional to ensure inclusion is the Libras interpreter, followed by the educational service professional (Tomelin, 2020).

According to Tomelin (2020, p. 79)



The fact is that professionals dedicated to the monitoring of these students are fundamental to ensure their permanence and completion, recognizing their needs, supporting the teaching, and learning processes and guiding the pedagogical team.

The objective of the research was to analyze the educational, attitudinal, and communicational strategies of inclusion that are being carried out in higher education by professionals who work in specialized educational care, so that the student has opportunities for learning equity.

2 METHOD

This research was qualitative in approach and was characterized as exploratory and descriptive. Minayo (2002, p. 21-22), refers to qualitative research as a "[...] universe of meanings, motivations, beliefs, values and attitudes, which corresponds to a deeper space of relations, processes and phenomena that cannot be reduced to operationalization".

2.1 PARTICIPANTS

Nine professionals who work in specialized educational care in private higher education in several states of Brazil participated in the research.

2.2 INSTRUMENT

An interview script with ten open and closed questions was elaborated applied to the professionals who work in the specialized educational service in higher education.

2.3 PROCEDURE

Field and qualitative research. Initially, the project was submitted to the ethics committee. After approval by the Ethics Committee, the professionals were contacted by the researcher to explain the purpose of the research and make the invitation to participate, the professionals who agreed signed the Consent and Free Clarification Term – ICF and the questions were sent via *Forms*. Data were analyzed qualitatively.

The study was approved by the Ethics Committee under number 58428222.9.0000.5594.

2.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The method of analysis by content theme was used according to Minayo (2012), which proposes the following steps: (1) organization of the reports into subsets from homogeneities and differentiations, for comparison purposes; (2) classification of the material by subject and (3) reclassification into a smaller number of topics, based on a greater understanding of the relevance structures covered by the interviewees. Thus, for the presentation of the data, the following thematic categories were selected: (1) profile of the professionals who work in the specialized educational



service in higher education; (2) describe the main actions performed by professionals in specialized educational care; (3) to analyze the challenges that professionals working in specialized educational care encounter for the effective inclusion of students with disabilities.

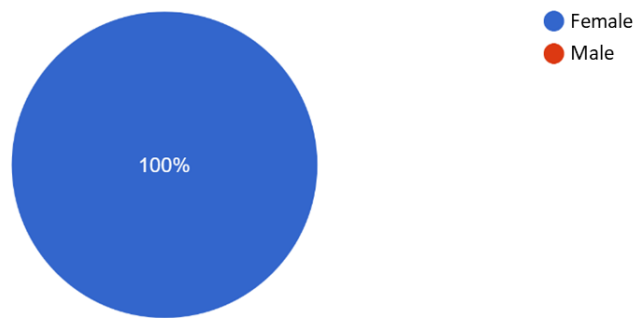
3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey had a total of nine responses from professionals who work in specialized educational care in higher education.

1- Profile of professionals who work in specialized educational care in higher education.

Figure 1- Gender

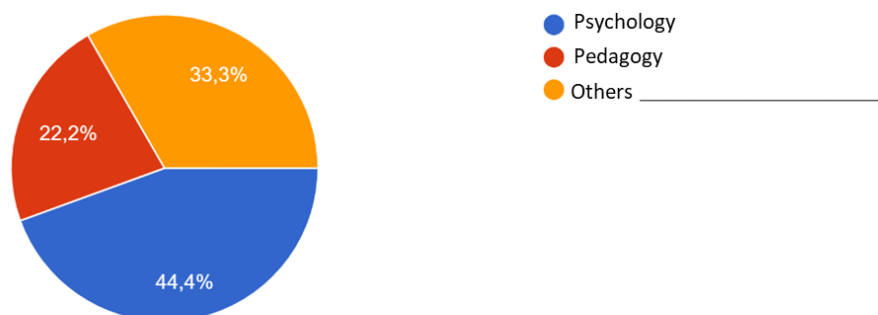
What's your gender?
9 answers



In the question of gender, 100% of the participants declared themselves female.

Figure 2-Higher education of professionals who work in specialized care

What's your background?
9 answers



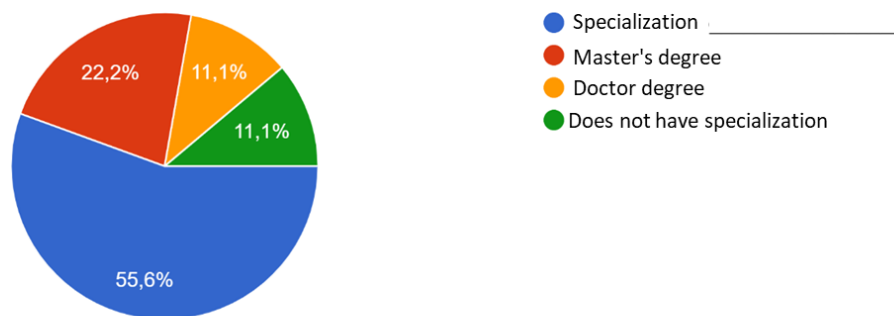


Regarding the higher education of the professionals, 44.4% are graduated in Psychology, 22.2% in Pedagogy and 33.3% in other areas with Librarianship and Computer Science.

It is observed by the results of the research that the main areas that work in specialized care in higher education are professionals trained in Psychology and Pedagogy which are courses that discuss knowledge about human development, learning and inclusion.

Figure 3-In this question, the post-graduation of the professionals participating in the research was investigated:

Do you have a graduate degree?
9 answers



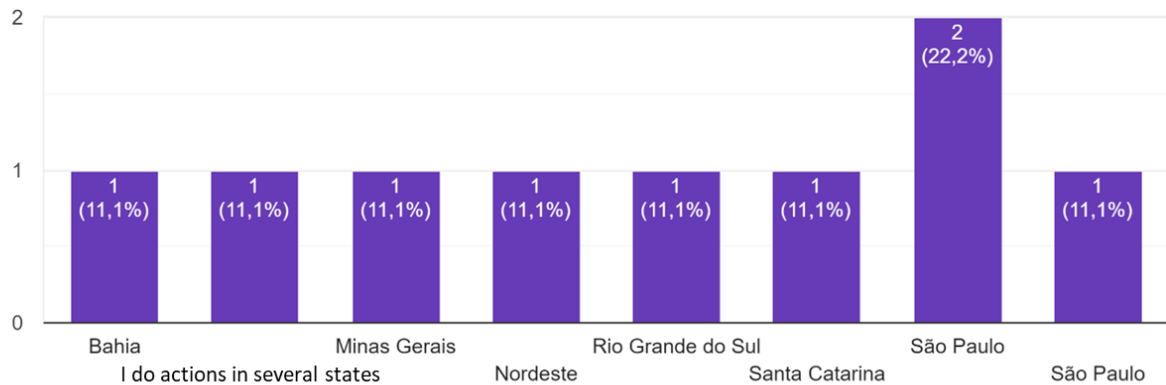
The professionals answered that 55.6% have specialization courses, followed by the master's degree in which 22.2% have completed, 11.1% have a doctorate and 11.1% do not have a postgraduate degree.

According to the data, the most sought after graduate program by professionals is specialization, being an area of activity that does not require *Stricto Sensu* training.



Chart 1-Graph 1 shows the distribution of the professionals who participated in the research according to the states in which they work

What state do you work in?
9 answers



Graph 1 shows that 33.3% of the participants are from the state of São Paulo, with the remaining participants from Bahia, Minas Gerais, the Northeast, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina and one participant working in several states. Therefore, the implementation of centers for specialized care in private higher education has been carried out in several states of Brazil, with the objective of ensuring the permanence and monitoring of students with disabilities or disorders.

Table 1-Table 1 describes the time of work of professionals in specialized care in higher education

Professional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Acting time	22a	7th	4a	6a	3m	4m	3a	3rd	15th

According to Table 1 the time of work of the professionals vary from 3 months to 22 years, these data indicate that higher education has been organized to offer specialized care to students with disabilities or disorders for 22 years.

2- Main actions carried out by professionals in specialized educational care

According to the results of the research, the deficiencies that are met in specialized educational care are: visual, hearing, physical and intellectual impairment.

The disorders are: neurodevelopmental disorders mainly Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Learning Disorders. Followed by Anxiety Disorders and Affective Disorders.

These data show that With the inclusion there is greater access of the student with disabilities in basic education, and consequently more students are arriving in higher education. According to the National Institute of Studies and Research (INEP) of 2017, the admission of students with disabilities between the years 2013 and 2017 increased 600% which corresponds in eight years from 5,078



students to 29,221. This indicates that there is a need to rethink strategies and methods in higher education.

The main adaptations made by the professionals participating in the research in the specialized educational service in higher education are supported by the principles of equity and inclusion. They are:

- Brazilian Sign Language Interpreter (Libras) for the student with hearing impairment / deafness
- Ledor for the visually impaired student
- Expansion of letters in the works, activities and tests for the student with low vision
- Extension of time in activities and tests
- Accompaniment in the tests
- Architectural accessibility for the student with physical disabilities
- Adaptation in academic activities and exams
- Use of assistive technology
- Guidance from the entire academic community on inclusion

The actions carried out by the specialized educational service guarantee the permanence, reception and accessibility of the student with disabilities in higher education.

Tomelin (2020, p.80) corroborates the research data by stating that

The fact is that professionals dedicated to the monitoring of these students are fundamental to ensure their permanence and completion, recognizing their needs, supporting the teaching and learning processes and guiding the pedagogical team

The actions, adaptations and strategies carried out in higher education to ensure equity and inclusion are in accordance with the legislation, and are based mainly on the Statute of the Person with Disabilities, Law 13,146 of July 6, 2015.

The specialized educational service, among its actions, provides guidance to teachers of students with disabilities or disorders. The orientations are carried out in person or virtually, individually, or collectively.

The face-to-face orientation is carried out with the participation of the professional responsible for the specialized support in the teacher training, in the realization of punctual meetings with the teachers of the students with disabilities, conversation circles and lectures. In the virtual ones, e-mails are sent at the beginning of the semester with the orientations to the teachers of the necessary adaptations in the classroom for the accompaniment of the student.

In higher education, for inclusion to be effective it is necessary the involvement of the entire academic community, especially teachers, according to Castanho and Freitas (2005) in the educational



environments in which the student with disabilities is included are responsible for promoting citizenship, ensuring and encouraging education for all, so higher education is a space of knowledge, learning, exchanges and social coexistence.

According to the research data, the specialized service carries out inclusive actions not only with teachers and students through lectures, conversation circles, but punctual orientations with the students of the class of the student with disabilities when a difficulty of relationship with the class or conflict situations is identified. In these cases, the responsible professional is triggered by the teacher or coordinator to intervene in the specific classroom, in which the objective is to sensitize students to topics such as inclusion, diversity, accessibility and mental health.

Guijarro (1998) considers that the inclusive school is the one that modifies its structure, functioning and educational responses to coexist with individual, social or cultural differences, considering the differences related to disability. Therefore, all actions for inclusion and equity are fundamental to building an environment that respects diversity.

For an environment of equity and inclusiveness the entire academic community should be inserted in the actions and interventions carried out by the specialized support, so according to the interviewees these also include: continuing education, workshops with themes related to diversity and inclusion, extension projects and events aimed at disseminating the themes of diversity and inclusion.

Watzlawick (2011) in his study states, that the strategies in higher education for equity and inclusion are multifaceted and global when considering in their actions all those involved in this process the teachers, the students, the curriculum and the learning contexts, that is, the institution in its entirety. Thus, as the author states, specialized support carries out its actions considering all aspects of the institution to promote inclusion and equity, not focusing only on the student.

3- The main challenges of inclusion in higher education

According to the survey data, although there are many actions to ensure inclusion, there are still challenges to be worked on in higher education, they are:

- Create and maintain an inclusive culture
- To provide students with disabilities who feel they are protagonists of their academic career
- Digital accessibility
- Attitudinal accessibility
- Integration of all professionals involved in the inclusion process
- Pedagogical adaptation

Given the challenges presented by the interviewed professionals, it can be observed that higher education has been mobilized and carried out actions to ensure equity and inclusion, it is still necessary



to think of other strategies to ensure that the work is effective not only in the admission of students with disabilities, but for their permanence and belonging.

4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the educational process, inclusion has been a challenge in all teaching modalities. In higher education, there was a mobilization and restructuring in strategies and actions to respond to the growing number of students with disabilities or disorders who enter with different educational needs.

Higher education institutions currently have the nuclei that are responsible for the actions and strategies of specialized support, identifying what the needs are and proposing interventions to effect inclusion, but for these to be implemented it is necessary the involvement of the entire academic community, this being a teamwork in which everyone needs to be integrated and involved in the proposals of equity and inclusion.

It can be considered that there are still challenges for the inclusion of students with disabilities or disorders in higher education, such as accessibility to digital resources, teacher training and an inclusive culture.

It should be considered that the actions that are developed in the specialized supports, which have guaranteed the permanence and development of students with disabilities or disorders, in addition to the involvement of the entire academic community, especially with the effective participation of teachers.

Therefore, the present research pointed out the main actions taken for the inclusion of students with disabilities in higher education and the challenges to be overcome, indicating the need for further studies in this area to think of new interventions that respond to the needs for effective inclusion.



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ATTACHMENT

INTERVIEW SCRIPT

- 1- What is your background? () Psychology () Pedagogy () Other _____
- 2- Do you have a graduate degree? () Specialization () Master () Doctorate
- 3- What is your state?
- 4- How long do you work on the inclusion of higher education?
- 5- What are the deficiencies addressed at your institution?
- 6- What are the main adaptations made for students with disabilities?
- 7- How do you provide guidance to teachers of students with disabilities?
- 8- Is there any intervention with the other students?
- 9- What other actions do they take to ensure that inclusion is effective in the institution?
- 10- What are the main challenges of inclusion in higher education?