


## Full-time education: A qualitative study on the opportunities and challenges for the educational process

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### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research was to analyze the challenges and opportunities of full-time education. The study was characterized as exploratory and qualitative, which was limited to fifteen teachers who work in a Brazilian school that adopts the full-time education method. After the application of in-depth interviews with the teachers, the data analysis revealed a promising educational model, although full of obstacles to be overcome. The reports of the fifteen teachers interviewed highlighted structural challenges, such as the lack of material

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resources and adequate infrastructure, which compromise not only the implementation of innovative pedagogical practices, but also the motivation of teachers and student engagement. On the other hand, promising opportunities were found, such as increased student motivation and engagement, the development of socio-emotional skills, and a more integrated view of knowledge. Given this scenario, it is imperative to invest in physical infrastructure, educational materials, technical support, and continuing education programs for teachers, in addition to promoting public policies that encourage a more inclusive and integrated approach to education. Thus, it becomes possible to enhance full-time education as an effective means of promoting the integral development of the individual and improving the quality of the educational system.

**Keywords:** Education, Full-time education, School, Teaching, Learning.



## INTRODUCTION

Integral Education is an educational approach that seeks to provide a complete and comprehensive education to students, considering not only intellectual development, but also emotional, social, physical and cultural development. In its essence, Integral Education goes beyond the simple provision of academic knowledge, aiming to promote the integral growth of the individual, preparing him to face the challenges of the contemporary world and contribute significantly to society (MACIEL; SILVA; FRUTUOSO, 2019).

The historical contextualization of full-time education goes back to different periods and social contexts, reflecting changes in educational conceptions over the centuries. In the Western context, the idea of an integral education can be traced back to Ancient Greece, where philosophers such as Plato defended the importance of the complete formation of the individual, including physical, intellectual and moral aspects (DUTRA; MOL, 2018).

However, it was only during the nineteenth century that the full-time education model began to take hold, particularly with the emergence of the Industrial Revolution. During this period, the need to train qualified workers to meet the demands of the industry drove the expansion of full-time public education, especially in urban areas (PARENTE, 2018).

Thus, industrial schools, boarding schools, and other educational institutions were established to provide a comprehensive education, including both academic knowledge and technical and moral training. This model, often rigid and disciplined, aimed to prepare young people for the labor market and for effective participation in the emerging industrial society (MACIEL; JACOMELI; BRASILEIRO, 2017).

Throughout the twentieth century, full-time education continued to evolve, influenced by social, political, and cultural changes. During the first decades of the century, educational reform movements, such as the New School, sought a more student- and experience-centered approach, promoting the integration of practical, artistic, and sports activities into the school curriculum. However, it was after the Second World War that full-time education systems began to be more widely adopted in various parts of the world, as a response to the economic and social challenges faced in the post-war period (COELHO; 2009; LECLERC; MOLL, 2012).

In the following years, different models of full-time education were implemented, varying according to the educational policies of each country and the specific needs of its populations. Currently, full-time education continues to be an area of interest and debate, with increasingly focused approaches towards a more humanized and inclusive approach, which recognizes the importance of the integral development of the individual beyond the merely academic aspect (COELHO; 2009; LECLERC; MOLL, 2012).



According to Maciel, Silva and Frutuoso (2019), one of the pillars of Integral Education is the expansion of educational time and space, allowing students to have access to a variety of extracurricular activities, such as sports, arts, music, languages, technology, among others. These activities are designed to stimulate different skills and talents, promote creativity, critical thinking, autonomy and teamwork.

In addition, Integral Education values interdisciplinarity and integration between the various curricular components, seeking to establish significant connections between the knowledge acquired and the reality experienced by the students. In this way, teaching is contextualized and applied in practical situations, favoring meaningful learning and the development of essential life skills (MACIEL; SILVA; FRUTUOSO, 2019).

However, despite the benefits of the Integral Education approach, its implementation faces several challenges. One of the main obstacles is the lack of adequate financial and structural resources, which can jeopardize the provision of extracurricular activities and the effective integration between disciplines. In addition, the training of teachers trained to work in an interdisciplinary and contextualized way is also an important demand, requiring investments in continuous professional development programs. Another issue to be considered is regional and socioeconomic differences, which can influence the availability of resources and the quality of comprehensive education offered in different schools and regions (BERNARDO, 2020).

In this context, the objective of this research was to analyze the challenges and opportunities of full-time education. The study was limited to fifteen teachers who work in a Brazilian school that adopts the full-time education method, having, therefore, a qualitative methodological approach. By understanding the challenges and opportunities of full-time education, it has become possible to offer theoretical and practical subsidies for the formulation of more effective educational policies and for the development of strategies that promote quality and equity in education.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology adopted in this research was exploratory, which aims to explore a research theme or problem in a broad and initial way, providing insights and directions for further studies. This choice was justified by the need to understand the challenges and opportunities related to the implementation of integral education in a comprehensive and initial way, without prior restrictions on the subject.

As for the approach, a qualitative approach was chosen. In this type of approach, we seek to understand social phenomena from the perspectives and interpretations of the participants, privileging the depth and richness of the data collected. The choice of the qualitative approach for



this research was justified by the exploratory nature of the study, allowing a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions and meanings attributed by teachers in relation to integral education.

The sample consisted of fifteen teachers from a Brazilian school, selected by convenience. The choice of this selection method is due to the practicality and accessibility of the participants, facilitating the performance of the research in a specific school context. The selected teachers work in a school that has recently adopted the integral education method, making them ideal participants to provide information about the challenges and opportunities of this educational approach.

For data collection, in-depth interviews were conducted. These interviews consist of detailed and open conversations with participants, aimed at exploring their experiences, opinions, and perspectives on the topic at hand. After the initial contact with the school manager, the interviews were scheduled and carried out according to the teachers' availability. During the interviews, tape recorders were used to record the participants' statements, ensuring the reliability of the information. The teachers were informed in advance about the objectives of the research and agreed to be recorded to participate in the study.

Finally, the data analysis was performed using the discourse analysis technique, which consists of the interpretation and comprehension of the participants' discourses, seeking to identify patterns, meanings and symbolic constructions present in the speeches. The choice of this technique is due to its ability to reveal the social representations and narratives of teachers about integral education, providing important insights for the understanding of the phenomenon under study.

## RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

After conducting in-depth interviews with the fifteen teachers of the Brazilian school, several relevant data were obtained that allow a more detailed analysis of the challenges and possibilities related to the implementation of integral education.

As a result, the main challenge of full-time education cited by teachers was around structural issues. Most teachers highlighted the lack of material resources and adequate infrastructure as one of the main obstacles to the implementation of comprehensive education. Issues such as lack of adequate physical spaces for extracurricular activities, lack of teaching materials, and absence of technical support were mentioned.

In our reality, we deal daily with the lack of adequate rooms for extracurricular activities. It is challenging to organize these activities when we do not have appropriate spaces available (E2).

The scarcity of teaching materials is a constant obstacle for us teachers. Without the necessary resources, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive and quality education for students (E7).



We face significant difficulties due to the absence of adequate technical support. Without support to deal with technological and administrative issues, it is difficult to effectively implement comprehensive education in the school (E10).

The results reveal that the main challenges faced by teachers in the context of full-time education are related to structural issues. The emphasis on the lack of material resources and adequate infrastructure points to a reality where the physical conditions of schools represent a significant obstacle to the effectiveness of this teaching modality. The frequent mention of the lack of appropriate physical spaces for extracurricular activities suggests a limitation in the provision of learning opportunities beyond the traditional curriculum, compromising the offer of a comprehensive education that includes socio-emotional, cultural and sports aspects.

In addition, the absence of adequate teaching materials is also highlighted as a recurring challenge. This suggests that a lack of basic resources, such as books, laboratory materials, and educational equipment, can hinder the quality of education offered, limiting the possibilities for meaningful and diverse learning experiences. This material shortage not only compromises the implementation of innovative pedagogical practices, but can also affect teacher motivation and student engagement.

The reference to the absence of adequate technical support highlights the importance of support infrastructure for the efficient functioning of full-time schools. The lack of technical assistance to deal with technological and administrative issues can directly impact the development and execution of educational projects, as well as the day-to-day management of the school. This underscores the need for investments not only in material resources, but also in human and technological resources to ensure the success of comprehensive education.

The results indicate that structural challenges represent a significant obstacle to the effective implementation of full-time education in schools. To overcome these challenges, substantial investments in physical infrastructure, educational materials, and technical support, as well as public policies that promote a more integrated and inclusive approach to education are needed. These measures are essential to ensure that all students have access to quality education that goes beyond traditional education and promotes the integral development of the individual.

Another challenge addressed by the participants was the need for continuous and specific training to deal with the challenges of integral education. Teachers expressed the importance of developing appropriate pedagogical and methodological skills to work with a more integrated and contextualized approach.

In order to effectively implement comprehensive education, it is essential that teachers receive continuous and specific training. We need to learn to work in a more integrated and contextualized way, adapting our pedagogical practices to the needs and realities of students (E14).



Our initial formation did not adequately prepare us to deal with the challenges of integral education. We feel the need for continuous and specific training that enables us to develop pedagogical and methodological skills that are more appropriate for this type of teaching (E1).

It can be seen that the participants' reports highlight the relevance of continuous and specific training for teachers to effectively deal with the challenges of integral education. The emphasis on the need to develop appropriate pedagogical and methodological skills reflects the understanding of the complexity of this teaching modality, which requires a more integrated and contextualized approach. This suggests that teachers recognize the importance of adapting their pedagogical practices to students' needs and realities in order to promote more meaningful and relevant learning.

The mention of inadequate initial training highlights a gap in the preparation of teachers to deal with the specific challenges of integral education. This may indicate a disconnect between the demands of the contemporary school environment and the content and approaches offered in pre-service teacher education programs. The search for continuous and specific training demonstrates the recognition of the need for updating and professional improvement throughout the teaching career, especially in the face of the demands of a constantly evolving education.

Thus, the reports point to the importance of investments in continuous professional development programs, which offer opportunities for training and updating teachers, especially with regard to integral education. These programs should address not only pedagogical and methodological aspects, but also issues related to classroom management, teamwork, and students' social-emotional development. In addition, it is essential that these initiatives consider the specific demands and realities of each school context, ensuring training that is truly relevant and applicable to teaching practice.

Despite the challenges faced, teachers reported observing some positive impacts of integral education on student learning. The main opportunity mentioned was the greater motivation and engagement of the students, as can be evidenced in the subsequent reports.

I have noticed that students are more motivated and engaged in activities since we implemented comprehensive education. They seem more interested in learning and actively participating in classes, which is very rewarding as an educator (E8).

It is inspiring to see how comprehensive education has positively impacted student learning. They are more involved in school activities, showing greater interest and curiosity in exploring new knowledge. This motivates us to continue looking for ways to further improve this educational approach (E5).

One of the most rewarding aspects of integral education is observing students' increased motivation to learn. They show greater enthusiasm for participating in activities and show a genuine desire to be involved in the educational process. This makes us believe in the transformative potential of this approach to promote more meaningful and lasting learning (E12).



The teachers' reports show positive impacts of the implementation of integral education on student learning, especially the increase in student motivation and engagement. These results are consistent with the educational literature, which suggests that a more comprehensive and integrated approach can promote more meaningful and lasting learning. The active involvement of students in school activities is critical to their academic and personal success, and teachers' reports indicate that integral education is contributing to this engagement.

The teachers' reports show a feeling of gratification and inspiration in the face of the progress observed in the students. This aspect underscores the importance not only of academic results, but also of the positive impact on students' motivation and personal development. The recognition of the transformative potential of integral education to promote meaningful and lasting learning underscores the importance of continuing to invest in this educational approach and constantly seeking ways to improve it.

In addition, another opportunity was around the development of social-emotional skills. As reported by respondents, this aspect is crucial, as it emphasizes the importance of promoting not only academic development but also students' emotional and social well-being.

One of the most significant opportunities of integral education is the focus on developing students' social-emotional skills. Over time, I have noticed an improvement in students' ability to relate positively to others, resolve conflicts constructively, and deal with their emotions in a healthy way, which is critical to their personal and academic success (E3).

I have observed that, with the implementation of integral education, students are developing socio-emotional skills in a more evident way. They demonstrate greater empathy, communication skills, and the ability to deal with complex emotional situations, which contributes not only to their academic performance but also to their overall well-being (E7).

In view of the above, it is evident that the respondents' reports highlight the development of socio-emotional skills as a significant opportunity provided by comprehensive education. This aspect underscores the importance of promoting not only academic success but also students' emotional and social well-being. The improvement in students' ability to relate positively to others, resolve conflicts constructively, and manage their emotions in a healthy way suggests that integral education is providing an environment conducive to students' holistic development.

Teachers indicate that the implementation of integral education is producing tangible results, such as greater empathy, improved communication skills, and a stronger ability to face emotional challenges. These observations corroborate the importance of an educational approach that considers not only the academic aspect, but also the integral development of students. Thus, the emphasis on social-emotional skills in integral education is proving vital to prepare students not only for academic success but also for a full and successful life.





Finally, the professors also highlighted the possibility for students to have a broader and more integrated view of knowledge. This perspective emphasizes the importance of connecting different disciplines and areas of knowledge, allowing students to understand how the various topics relate and apply in practice. By promoting this holistic approach, integral education empowers students to develop a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the world around them

## **FINAL THOUGHTS**

In view of the analyses carried out on the opportunities and challenges of the implementation of full-time education, it is evident that this educational model presents itself as a promising path, but not without obstacles to be overcome. From the reports obtained in the in-depth interviews with the fifteen teachers of the Brazilian school, it was possible to identify a set of structural challenges that permeate the effectiveness of this teaching modality.

Among the challenges highlighted by the teachers, the lack of material resources and adequate infrastructure emerge as significant obstacles. The scarcity of adequate physical spaces for extracurricular activities, the lack of teaching materials and the absence of technical support were pointed out as limiting factors for the provision of a quality comprehensive education. These issues not only jeopardize the implementation of innovative pedagogical practices, but also affect teacher motivation and student engagement.

On the other hand, teachers' reports also show promising opportunities associated with full-time education. The increase in student motivation and engagement, the development of socio-emotional skills, and the possibility of a more integrated view of knowledge are positive aspects that deserve to be highlighted. Integral education not only fosters an environment conducive to students' holistic development but also prepares them to face the challenges of the contemporary world more effectively.

In this context, it is clear that there is a need for substantial investments in physical infrastructure, educational materials, technical support, and continuing education programs for teachers. In addition, public policies that promote a more integrated and inclusive approach to education are essential to ensure that all students have access to quality education that goes beyond traditional education and promotes the integral development of the individual.

Therefore, it is concluded that full-time education offers a vast field of possibilities to improve the quality and effectiveness of the educational system. However, in order for this teaching modality to reach its full potential, it is essential to overcome the structural challenges identified and take advantage of the promising opportunities pointed out by teachers.



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