


EDUCATIONAL SERVICE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN ELEMENTARY EDUCATION AT JOÃO CHAMA MUNICIPAL SCHOOL, LOCATED IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF APARECIDA DO TABOADO – STATE OF MATO GROSSO DO SUL

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ABSTRACT

Students with disabilities may display exceptional abilities or face difficulties in their learning. These specificities are considered special insofar as they require teachers to provide targeted responses to learning difficulties. The general aim of this research was to understand the importance of teacher training at the elementary level at João Chama Municipal School, located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado, state of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS). The research problem was framed as follows: Do the teachers at João Chama Municipal School feel qualified to provide educational services to students with special needs? To carry out this study, we employed a qualitative methodology, with documentary and bibliographic review. In addition to these approaches, it was necessary to conduct field research directly with teachers, by delivering questionnaires in person to the female teachers. The questions addressed items related to the service provided to students with disabilities and to the training of teachers working in the field of special education. The results demonstrated the importance of continuing education for teachers so that they know how to design instructional plans to serve students with the most diverse needs. For the development of this work at the aforementioned school, we obtained authorization from the school's administration and from the teachers who were research participants. This is the Educational Unit where we carried out the Supervised Professional Internship for the Pedagogy Program at João Chama Municipal School, located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado/MS.

Keywords: Special education; Disability; Teacher training.

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INTRODUCTION

This study addressed the educational service provided to students with disabilities in Elementary Education at João Chama Municipal School, located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado, state of Mato Grosso do Sul (MS).

The work was developed within the school environment, which is a space of constant construction of diverse learning processes and of students, each with their own way of understanding knowledge. Within this context, the study focused on students with disabilities.

The research problem was: Do the teachers at João Chama Municipal School feel qualified to provide educational services to students with special needs?

The general objective was to understand the importance of teacher training at the Elementary level at João Chama Municipal School, located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado/MS. The specific objectives were: to identify the main disabilities present in the educational environment; to list the training of teachers at João Chama Municipal School for serving students with disabilities; to analyze the need for and importance of continuing education for the teachers at this school to serve these students.

The development of the study arose from the demands observed in the school environment with regard to students with disabilities, which require teachers to develop a methodological practice and to organize their planning aimed at meeting the needs that arise in the teaching–learning process of these students.

Continuation of this work may bring further knowledge about students with disabilities in the school environment who require that teachers possess the appropriate knowledge to assist them on their journey toward knowledge construction, encouraging greater pursuit of training among these professionals.

To better understand the topic, in item 2 we present the methodology and theoretical framework used to carry out this study. In item 2.2 we discuss the inclusion of students with disabilities, citing the relevant legislation; item 3 addresses the importance of continuing education in the field of special education for teachers to provide quality and equitable service to students with disabilities; and finally, item 4 discusses the continuing education in special education offered to teachers at João Chama Municipal School with respect to Special Education.

PATHS OF THE RESEARCH: METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

METHODOLOGY

The study was developed using the Scielo and Google Scholar databases, the library of the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UEMS), UEMS's digital library, and literature related to the topic.



Periodicals in the field of special education were used, such as *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, among others.

The study had a qualitative approach, with bibliographic, documentary, and field research components.

This methodology was chosen as a way to add greater theoretical support to the topic, given the extensive literature in the field in the case of the bibliographic review.

Qualitative research is characterized as privileging the analysis of microprocesses, through the study of individual and group social actions, conducting an intensive examination of the data, and being characterized by heterodoxy at the moment of analysis (Martins, 2004, p. 2).

Fávero; Centenaro (2019, p. 171) state that “thus, documentary research is understood as a process that uses methods and techniques for the apprehension, understanding, and analysis of documents of the most varied types.”

According to Cavalcante and Oliveira (2020), bibliographic review studies are defined by the use and analysis of documents within the scientific domain—such as books, theses, dissertations, and scientific articles—without directly relying on empirical facts. They make use of secondary sources, considering the contributions of authors on a given topic, which distinguishes them from documentary research, characterized by the use of primary sources that have not yet received scientific treatment.

Field research was chosen because of the real-world perspective and reflection it can provide on the training of teachers to work in serving students with disabilities.

For the initial development of the work, the following descriptors were used: disability, teacher, training. We first selected works and published articles, considering the topic and the research objectives; subsequently, we created reading notes (*fichamentos*) of the material found. Then, for the field research, we prepared a questionnaire with questions addressing the theme of the study. The questionnaire was delivered personally to the research participants, that is, two teachers, followed by analysis and discussion of the results obtained. The questions were semi-structured, with both open and closed questions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this item we sought authors whose works address inclusion and teacher training, considering students with disabilities in the school environment. On this basis, we present our theoretical framework: Silva; Carvalho (2017); Menezes (2001); Rosa (2010); Neto et al. (2018); Barbosa (2006); Rosin-Pinola; Del Prette (2014); Vygotsky (1991); Melo (2016).

In addition to these theorists, the legislation used included: (Brasil, 2003); Brasil (2001).

We present below the statement by Silva; Carvalho (2017, p. 294), who writes:

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“It should be emphasized that ‘inclusive education is the acceptance of differences, not merely placement in the classroom,’ and that it demands transformations in the education system, involving respect for individual differences, cooperation among students, teachers trained to include all students in all school activities, and, above all, work on the issue of respect and dignity.” (Silva; Carvalho, 2017, p. 294)

Needs are related to individuals who have learning difficulties in the school context and demand specific responses from the teacher in his or her pedagogical practice.

Students who generate special needs due to high ability or difficulty in their learning are not only those with disabilities; rather, by virtue of the needs they present, they become “special” because they require specific responses adequate to each difficulty (Menezes, 2001).

Rosa (2010) highlights that educational needs may include those related to people with different physical, social, intellectual, emotional, and sensory conditions; people who work or live on the streets; remote or nomadic populations; linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities; and disadvantaged or marginalized groups.

The presence of students with disabilities in the teaching–learning process requires more specific responses and significant attention from the teacher to the development of methodologies and the use of resources that facilitate their access to curricular content and the development of skills.

The creation and implementation of inclusive educational policies have brought a new perspective on the presence of students with disabilities and their real importance in this process.

In Brazil, the National Policy on Special Education from the Perspective of Inclusive Education ensures access to regular education for students with diverse disabilities—intellectual, physical, deaf, blind—those with pervasive developmental disorders, and students with high abilities/giftedness, from early childhood education through higher education (Neto et al., 2018, p. 84).

With the creation of legislation aimed at serving students with disabilities in the context of education, it became possible to open a wide range of significant opportunities for these students to be seen through a new lens within the educational context.

The Federal Constitution and the Statute of the Child and Adolescent ensure the population’s right to quality education, understood as an educational process that leads learners to a comprehensive and civic formation. This quality school, through the content it offers and the social relations it provides, promotes human development in its fullness, conditions of freedom and dignity, respecting and valuing differences (Silva; Carvalho, 2017, p. 294).

The relevance of the teacher’s practice in his or her context is also considered, taking into account the need for work geared toward students’ needs, their expectations, and forms of development, with challenging and enriched activities. The teacher’s practice should be mediational in the student’s

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learning, valuing the student. Barbosa (2006) states that the obstacle faced by the teacher requires that he or she be able to learn to deal with it, working with various levels of understanding and welcoming conclusions with varying degrees of complexity, without generating in the student feelings of inferiority or superiority.

This professional should help the student overcome fears. Barbosa (2006) emphasizes that the teacher should provide the student with ways to establish a bond with learning, helping the student overcome fear and defensiveness regarding new knowledge to be learned.

The school's aim is to help students acquire skills and knowledge so that they may live in society independently, and support services should be adapted to assist the general classroom. Considering that support services are important in the schooling of students with special needs, teacher training—both for generalists and specialists—has fallen short of current educational demands; this is one of the challenges faced by today's schools (Rosin-Pinola; Del Prette, 2014).

In this context, interaction within the school space is essential for the subject's development. Based on the studies of Piaget (1970), whose focus is the epistemic subject, he states that the subject constructs himself through his action upon the object of knowledge; there is a direct relationship between subject and object that allows the subject to construct his learning, understanding characteristics and establishing relationships necessary for learning (Santana, 2008).

Considering that the proposal of inclusion signifies a change in teaching conditions and that this change depends largely on teacher training and practice, in the sense of leading innovative practices that foster the participation of all students, it is understood that published materials must be accompanied by guidelines on the actions and skills that the teacher should display to create conditions for learning for all students (Rosin-Pinola; Del Prette, 2014, p. 345).

Serving students with disabilities presupposes that the teacher seeks the necessary knowledge to deal with existing demands and to meet the student's learning expectations.

The demands of today's world with respect to teacher training and practice require not only curricular knowledge but also skills of reflection on practice and many other abilities in carrying out educational action. Such behaviors are not disconnected from the specific role the teacher assumes, nor from the teacher's conceptions and responsibility toward historically produced knowledge, but they must be directed toward promoting articulation between academic learning and students' socioemotional development (Rosin-Pinola; Del Prette, 2014, p. 345).

The teacher's practice in the educational process requires constant reflection on his or her work and the pursuit of knowledge, knowing students' disabilities and characteristics so as to assist in the construction and practice of learning.

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For Vygotsky (1991), properly organized learning results in the subject's mental development, setting in motion many developmental processes; this is seen as an essential aspect so that psychological functions may be organized (Vygotsky, 1991).

Education is a right of all subjects. The school as a whole plays a relevant role in the individual's formation and in upholding his or her rights before society.

Education is considered a right of all, a duty of the State and the family, and is to be promoted and encouraged together with society, fostering personal development, preparation for the exercise of citizenship, and qualification for work. It may also be seen as a factor of cohesion that must take into account the diversity of individuals and human groups; respect for diversity and for the specificity of individuals is a fundamental principle of educational practices. Thus, educational systems must respect pluralism, the richness of cultural expressions of the various social groups that make up society, and the multiplicity of individual talents (Silva; Carvalho, 2017, p. 294).

Mello (2016) states that, for Vygotsky (1991), in his theoretical school, the teacher's task is to offer opportunities for the reproduction of human aptitudes produced by this collective of people; thus, teachers must ensure the appropriation of these qualities by identifying the elements that need to be assimilated by the child so that he or she may develop skills.

Students with disabilities require a more specific and satisfactory response in their learning. The inclusion of these students demands that the responsible team be prepared and that the teaching process be organized, since teaching based on diversity relies on implementing adaptations to the school curriculum and work methods, aiming at results and success in the learning of all students (Brasil, 2003).

Serving students with disabilities requires careful attention to methods and resources that enhance their learning. Serra (2010) considers that effective service to students with disabilities is ensured by public policies and must provide a pedagogical intervention to serve these students and offer an appropriate education that meets expectations.

Pedagogical practice should help students develop autonomy and interaction. Rosa (2010) highlights that activities should support processes of creation, students' actions, and their discoveries, as they are able to invent knowledge through relationships established with the environment.

The Salamanca Statement presents the following guidelines for building an inclusive school: every student has the right to education and should have the opportunity to reach and maintain the appropriate level of learning; every student has unique characteristics, interests, abilities, and learning needs; educational systems must be reorganized and educational programs implemented to consider the diversity of such characteristics and needs; students with special educational needs must have access to the regular school, which should accommodate them within a child-centered pedagogy; regular schools with an inclusive orientation are the most effective means to combat discriminatory attitudes, creating

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welcoming communities, building an inclusive society, and achieving education for all (Rosin-Pinola; Del Prette, 2014).

Special education confers upon all the right to schooling. Students who are the target of service in special classes must be assured of teachers specialized in special education; the organization of the class must be in accordance with their educational needs; specific equipment and materials; curricular adaptations (Brasil, 2001).

It is important that the teacher take care with regard to the routine of proposed activities. Weber (2010) emphasizes that the teacher must have the student experience different possibilities through various activities so that the student develops skills and potential inherent to the process.

The next item addresses the importance of continuing education in special education for teachers in the service provided to students with needs.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR TEACHERS: A DOCUMENTARY AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC REVIEW

Continuing education for teachers working in special education constitutes an object of reflection and dialogue, given its importance for the development of a pedagogical practice that is effective in serving students with disabilities.

Professional training occupies a prominent place in academic, professional, and political debates concerning the school inclusion of students with special needs. It is important to emphasize the need for appropriate professional training to meet the specific demands of students in complex and dynamic contexts such as the classroom or other school spaces. Considering that in a large part of discussions and texts about school inclusion of students with special needs, teacher training is deemed necessary, it is understood that such professional preparation does not end upon completion of an undergraduate program (Cruz, 2011).

The National Curriculum Guidelines for Teacher Education in Basic Education (BRASIL, 2002) stress that higher education institutions must train teachers who are prepared to deal with issues involving diversity in schools. In Article 6, the Guidelines affirm the relevance of content that contemplates students with special educational needs (Greguol; Gobbi; Carraro, 2013).

It is necessary to understand that changes in education to meet the paradigm of educational inclusion depend on the social, economic, and cultural context in which the school is inserted, on the conceptions and social representations related to disability, and on the material and financial resources available to the school. In this sense, teacher education must meet the needs and challenges of the present. Thus, it is relevant that the teacher be trained in such a way as to mobilize his or her knowledge,



articulating it with competencies through the action and reflection of theory with practice (Pletsch, 2009).

For Cruz (2011), academic and professional knowledge must be articulated in pursuit of teacher training, fostering a closer relationship between basic education teachers and higher education faculty. In this sense, the teacher's everyday life must be seen as a stage for the development of knowledge that supports practice.

Teacher education acquired a new perspective in 2009 with the approval of the National Plan for Teacher Training in Basic Education (PARFOR), which was proposed to meet the legal requirement for the minimum training necessary for all teachers, seeking articulation with public institutions of higher education and state and municipal departments of education, with the aim of ensuring that all teachers working in basic education have access to an undergraduate program (Greguol; Gobbi; Carraro, 2013).

In Special Education, debates about the training of the teacher responsible for the educational service of students with disabilities involve pedagogical meetings held in school units, the definition of public education policies, and theoretical reflections. In this context, the importance of professional experience in the teacher's day-to-day practice is observed in continuing education (Cruz, 2011).

The next item discusses the continuing education in Special Education offered to teachers at João Chama Municipal School, also considering the importance of such training for serving students with disabilities.

CONTINUING EDUCATION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION OFFERED TO TEACHERS AT JOÃO CHAMA MUNICIPAL SCHOOL

João Chama Municipal School is located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado/MS, at Rua Confins, no. 2,210, in the Jardim Aeroporto neighborhood. The school was inaugurated on 10/28/2010 and had as its first principal Professor Edileide Aparecida Xavier da Cruz and as pedagogical coordinator Professor Vera Lucia Pereira.

Its Political-Pedagogical Project (PPP) was prepared in 2010 in accordance with the following regulations: the National Education Guidelines and Framework Law (LDB no. 9394/1996), the 1988 Federal Constitution (CF), the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (ECA – Law no. 8.069/1990), the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC), the Reference Curriculum of the State of Mato Grosso do Sul (2021), and the deliberations of the Municipal Education Council of the municipality of Paranhos/MS, namely Deliberations no. 004 and 005/2012 of January 27, 2012. The document expresses the principles and guidelines of pedagogical decisions approved by the segments of the educational institution which, after analyses, reflections, and discussions on educational legislation and in accordance with the expectations and needs of its school community, was drafted.

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Regarding the field research, it was conducted with two female teachers. We established questions for the semi-structured interview script based on the practice of professionals who work in special education in the elementary level at João Chama Municipal School. In conducting the interviews with open and closed questions, we sought to understand from the interviewees issues related to their training to work in special education, length of practice in special education, whether continuing education is offered to work in special education, possible training needs for working with students with disabilities, whether the school under study offers humane service to parents of students with disabilities, and whether the interviewee feels qualified to work with these students.

The first item addresses length of service in special education. In this context, teacher A.S. states: I have been working at the school for 5 months (A.S.). Teacher P.A. has worked in the field longer, i.e., 15 years.

The responses show that one professional's length of service is quite significant compared to the other, which may lead us to understand that she has taken part in specific training in special education.

Regarding higher education training of these professionals, or specific training to work in special education, it is observed that only professional A.S. has training to work in the field.

As for the Municipal Department of Education of Aparecida do Taboado/MS offering training for teachers to deal with students with special educational needs, the interviews indicate that no training is offered. See teacher P.A.'s response: "No, to date we have not had specific training in the area to work in special education."

The responses reveal the absence of training on the part of the Municipal Department of the municipality in question.

Regarding identification of gaps in teacher training in special education, the first interviewee (A.S.) states that there is no training, but she emphasizes the concern and efforts of the Municipal Department of Education in serving students with disabilities.

The second interviewee (P.A.) asserts that there are many shortcomings with regard to continuing education.

Concerning the provision of humane service to parents of students with disabilities by João Chama Municipal School, professional A.S. emphasizes that there is space for parents to participate in accompanying their children: "Yes, the school allows parents to be present in the Educational Unit for the good performance of their children with special needs."

Interviewee P.A. showed a lack of knowledge about the space intended for parents of students with disabilities.

Regarding whether the professionals interviewed feel qualified to work with students with disabilities, interviewee A.S. reported that she seeks learning outside the school. Let us see: "Yes,

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however I seek each day to learn strategies and methods for teaching, because each day we face situations and demands in this area.”

Interviewee P.A. tells us: “No, unfortunately I do not think I am qualified to work with students with disabilities (PCD).”

From the participants’ responses, we perceive a lack and a concern regarding the need for continuing education for teachers. Although one of them has a significant length of service in special education, she reveals the need for more training on the part of the school in special education.

It is important to clarify that this is the school where we carried out the Supervised Professional Internship related to the Pedagogy Program at the State University of Mato Grosso do Sul. The school’s principal was informed about the conduct of this research, and the teachers signed the Free and Informed Consent Form, agreeing to answer the questionnaire, which was personally delivered to them.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In the course of the research it was possible to learn a bit about the reality of special education in the elementary level at João Chama Municipal School, located in the municipality of Aparecida do Taboado/MS, specifically regarding the continuing education of the teachers working in this field. It is observed that there is a gap and a concern among these professionals regarding the absence of specific continuing education for the area of special education.

The service provided to students with disabilities enrolled in elementary education is supported by the National Policy on Special Education, which ensures the access of this segment of the population to regular education, requiring the adoption of methodologies and also the preparation of professionals to receive these students. The National Curriculum Guidelines for Teacher Education in Basic Education (DCNs) highlight that higher education institutions must train teachers to deal with issues involving diversity in schools.

Specifically in analyzing the research object, it was observed that there is a lack of continuing education among the professionals interviewed, who seek, on their own, the knowledge necessary to work in their practice with students with disabilities.

Considering the documentary analysis that included access to the Political-Pedagogical Project of João Chama Municipal School, it was verified that the school seeks to integrate its teaching in consonance with the National Curriculum Parameters and current national legislation.

As for continuing education, it is observed that there is no specific training intended for professionals working in special education; however, there is a concern on the part of these teachers regarding the service provided to these students, offering support through the hiring of support



professionals (PA) and childhood development assistants (DI). Nevertheless, we emphasize the absence of continuing education for these professionals who work directly with this population.

In response to the research objective, the professionals working in the area reveal that they seek knowledge through strategies and methods to work in serving these students, since continuing education is not effectively offered to these professionals, which leaves them at the mercy of having to teach certain needs that are unknown to them without specific methodologies and diversified assessment instruments.

The results demonstrate the importance of continuing education and, at the same time, its absence in the practice of these professionals in elementary education at João Chama Municipal School, further revealing a concern among these professionals in seeking knowledge and preparation for serving students with disabilities.

The research concludes that continuing education is relevant to strengthen and provide a solid foundation for professionals who serve students with disabilities, considering not only the stance and support of current legislation on this issue, but also the need to prepare these professionals for the performance of their practice.



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