

**A PERCEÇÃO DOCENTE SOBRE CONCEITOS, POLÍTICAS E PRÁTICAS
INCLUSIVAS: UM ESTUDO DE CASO NO BRASIL**

**LA PERCEPCIÓN DOCENTE SOBRE CONCEPTOS, POLÍTICAS Y PRÁCTICAS
INCLUSIVAS: UN ESTUDIO DE CASO EN BRASIL**

**THE PERCEPTION OF TEACHERS ON INCLUSIVE CONCEPTS, POLICIES AND
PRÁCTICES: CASE STUDY IN BRAZIL**

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RESUMO: A educação inclusiva continua sendo um desafio e uma meta a ser alcançada em benefício da educação para todos, dentro da escola regular e do atendimento aos alunos que apresentam dificuldades de aprendizagem, sejam estes estudantes da educação especial ou não. Neste texto, apresenta-se um estudo de caso, de cunho qualitativo, realizado com 51 professores de escolas públicas do Mato Grosso do Sul, relacionado às suas percepções sobre conceitos, políticas e práticas inclusivas. Assim, os resultados apontam que, embora muitos docentes tenham os conceitos adquiridos, as sensações de descrédito, de falta de apoios e recursos ou de organização trazem implicações em suas construções sobre o tema. Estes elementos importantes configuram para esta amostra uma diferente forma de abordagem da inclusão que se divide entre ações e práticas educativas inclusivas e falta de respostas adequadas derivadas dessa construção de conceitos.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Educação inclusiva. Práticas educativas inclusivas. Políticas públicas inclusivas. Percepção docente.

RESUMEN: *La educación inclusiva hoy en día sigue siendo un desafío y una meta a conseguir en beneficio de la educación para todos dentro de la escuela común y de la atención a los estudiantes que presentan dificultades de aprendizaje, sean estos alumnos de educación especial o no. El camino andado por Brasil ha sido largo, no obstante partimos del problema de si realmente esta se está desarrollando. Presentamos aquí un estudio de caso de corte cualitativo realizado con 51 profesores de colegios públicos de Mato Grosso do Sul (Brasil) sobre la construcción que hicieron de los diferentes conceptos envueltos y las percepciones dentro de esta trayectoria, encontrando que, a pesar de que muchos tienen los conceptos adquiridos, las sensaciones de desconfianza, de falta de apoyo y recursos o de organización son importantes, lo que sirve para que esta muestra se presente con dos formas diferentes de actuar, aquellos que realizan acciones y prácticas educativas y aquellos que no ofrecen respuestas adecuadas derivadas de esa construcción de conceptos.*

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PALABRAS CLAVE: *Educación inclusiva. Prácticas educativas inclusivas. Políticas públicas inclusivas. Percepción docente.*

ABSTRACT: *Inclusive education still is a challenge and a goal to be achieved for the benefit of education for all, within the regular school and in the care of students who have learning difficulties, whether these being special education students or not. This text presents a qualitative case study conducted with 51 teachers from public schools in Mato Grosso do Sul, related to their perceptions of inclusive concepts, policies and inclusive practices. Thus, the results point out that, although many teachers have the acquired concepts, the sensations of discredit, lack of support and resources or organization have implications in their constructions on the subject. These important elements configure for this sample a different kind of approach to inclusion that is divides itself between inclusive educational actions and practices and lack of adequated answers derived from this construction of concepts.*

KEYWORDS: *Inclusive education. Inclusive educational practices. Inclusive public policies. Teacher perception.*

Introduction

After a long and difficult journey, discussions on inclusive education intensified after the signing of the Salamanca Declaration (BRASIL, 1994). This, published after the Education for All Declaration, is considered a milestone in the struggle for principles, policies and practices for inclusive education. The Declaration provided worldwide guidelines for educational reforms, underpinning the principle of equal rights for all, respecting differences and ensuring access, permanence and formation in mainstream schools.

In addition, the document expanded the concepts of special educational needs, benefiting not only children with some type of disability, but also children with permanent or temporary learning difficulties, thus stating that every student has the right to be inserted in a regular room, without any type of discrimination. Proclaiming:

[...] regular schools, following this inclusive orientation, constitute the most capable means to combat discriminatory attitudes, creating open and solidary communities, building an inclusive society and reaching education for all; in addition, they provide an adequate education to most children and promote the efficiency, in an excellent cost-quality ratio, of the entire education system (BRASIL, 1994, p. VIII).³

³ [...] as escolas regulares, seguindo esta orientação inclusiva, constituem os meios mais capazes para combater as atitudes discriminatórias, criando comunidades abertas e solidárias, construindo uma sociedade inclusiva e atingindo a educação para todos; além disso, proporcionam uma educação adequada à maioria das crianças e promovem a eficiência, numa óptima relação custo-qualidade, de todo o sistema educativo (BRASIL, 1994, p. VIII).

The dissemination of inclusive education in Brazil had an important legislative path, and the year 1996 was decisive with the proclamation of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDBEN – Portuguese initials) (BRASIL, 1996). Subsequently, great advances in favor of inclusion would come, but only in January 2016, when Law 13,146, Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities - Statute for Persons with Disabilities (BRASIL, 2015), reaffirmed that people with disabilities has the right to quality school education, with projects aimed at the further development of all students, thus ensuring full access to education. Specifically, article 28 of this law proclaims that the public power must guarantee, create, develop, encourage, monitor and evaluate students in this inclusion process:

V - adoption of individualized and collective measures in environments that maximize the academic and social development of students with disabilities, favoring access, permanence, participation and learning in educational institutions (BRASIL, 2015, p. 7).⁴

Thus, we must not forget that the inclusive process is a collective construction, which requires the involvement of the entire community that circumscribes the school: students, teachers, managers, other employees, families, public authorities and society. For this construction some adjustments still need to be made, as it is not enough to just insert students with disabilities in the same physical space as the school.

Sebastián-Heredero (2010) states that with inclusive actions, we aim to ensure conditions for all students to learn and succeed in schooling in regular education. In addition, the author points out that these children will be educated with students of the same chronological age, thus allowing them to live together in a scenario similar to the one that is developing. To guarantee this, access is not enough; it is necessary to guarantee the quality and permanence of students with special educational needs by developing inclusive educational practices at various levels, with changes in strategies from school to the classroom.

Going a little deeper, Rodrigues (2006) talks about how to manage a classroom in an inclusive way and, in this sense, raises the fact that students can have access to a different way of organizing the structure of the room, the methodology and the process, so that the learning situations are diversified and the possibility of adapting to the different characteristics and potentialities of the students and the proposed work really happens.

⁴ V - adoção de medidas individualizadas e coletivas em ambientes que maximizem o desenvolvimento acadêmico e social dos estudantes com deficiência, favorecendo o acesso, a permanência, a participação e a aprendizagem em instituições de ensino (BRASIL, 2015, p. 7).

Theoretical foundation

- Inclusion as a concept

Inclusion as a concept aims to ensure that all students develop and learn in the same educational spaces and with the same quality, which involves relevant changes in school and teacher concepts. Ensuring access to the common school establishes the simplest part, as it depends primarily on the legislation; but it is achieved only through actions in schools and classrooms. Access to a curriculum that really ensures everyone's involvement and learning is the most complex part of this inclusive process.

In this perspective, Ainscow and Miles (2013) present inclusion as a process, in order to identify and eliminate possible barriers, in addition to ensuring real participation and development with quality for all, emphasizing the schooling of students at risk of marginalization, exclusion or low income in mainstream schools to combat inequality.

The philosophy of inclusion advocates an effective education for all, sustained in that schools, as educational communities, must satisfy the needs of all students, whatever their personal, psychological or social characteristics (regardless of whether or not they have a disability). It is about establishing the foundations so that the school can successfully educate the diversity of its students and collaborate with the eradication of the wide inequality and social injustice (ARNAIZ-SANCHEZ, 2005, p. 11).⁵

Within this view, what is understood as a student with learning difficulties is considered relevant, as this manifestation is characteristic of every human being at some point in his life. In this perspective, the importance does not fall on the possible disability, concept of medicine, but on the difficulties of learning, concept of education.

Students with learning difficulties constitute a much larger population than the subjects targeted by special education and, often, with equal or more educational needs. For some of those classified with disabilities, these difficulties will present themselves permanently, which implies greater attention, but the other students also deserve attention, although their educational needs may be transitory.

Bueno (2008) highlights the great mistake that is considering inclusion in the educational space to be, almost exclusively, a synonym for the inclusion of students targeting special education, as if only these were excluded from and in the formal schooling space.

⁵ A filosofia da inclusão defende uma educação eficaz para todos, sustentada em que as escolas, enquanto comunidades educativas, devem satisfazer as necessidades de todos os alunos, sejam quais forem as suas características pessoais, psicológicas ou sociais (com independência de ter ou não deficiência). Trata-se de estabelecer os alicerces para que a escola possa educar com êxito a diversidade de seu alunado e colaborar com a erradicação da ampla desigualdade e injustiça social (ARNAIZ-SANCHEZ, 2005, p. 11).

For schools to develop true inclusion, the teaching process needs a review in order to adapt and organize the curriculum in all its elements: objectives, contents, methodology and evaluation, making them more open and flexible based on respect for the singularities of each student and with respect to their characteristics and learning conditions. This because,

The most balanced curricula, in which social and personal development is also important and in which the assessment is made according to the progress of each student, facilitate the integration of students (COLL; PALACIOS; MARCHESI, 1995, p. 39).⁶

- Inclusion in practice

Teaching practice, according to Gimeno Sacristán (1999), is conceptualized as the accumulated culture of actions. In this way, it is at the same time the source of and nurtures actions:

Teaching practice is the collective crystallization of the historical experience of actions, it is the result of the consolidation of action patterns based on traditions and visible ways of developing the activity (p. 73).⁷

The genesis of educational practice lies in other practices capable of interacting with the school system, maintaining a relationship with the other spheres of society, for example, the political, the cultural and the economic.

This brings about the need for an important change, Pimenta (1997) points out that pedagogical practices need a new meaning, because according to the author it is necessary to build new knowledge about didactics.

It is observed that a re-signification of didactics emerges from research on teaching as a living social practice, in the social and institutional contexts in which it occurs. [...] The analyzes point to the need to take this practice as a starting point for the construction of new knowledge about the teaching phenomenon (PIMENTA, 1997, p. 19-20).⁸

But the focus of our action is that these practices are inclusive. Paratanto, Ainscow and Miles (2013) present inclusion as a process, in which it is necessary that all students with

⁶ Os currículos mais equilibrados, nos quais o desenvolvimento social e pessoal também tem importância e em que a avaliação seja feita em função do progresso de cada estudante, facilitam a integração dos estudantes (COLL; PALACIOS; MARCHESI, 1995, p. 39).

⁷ A prática docente é a cristalização coletiva da experiência histórica das ações, é o resultado da consolidação de padrões de ação sedimentados em tradições e formas visíveis de desenvolver a atividade (p. 73).

⁸ Observa-se que uma re-significação da didática emerge da investigação sobre o ensino como prática social viva, nos contextos sociais e institucionais nos quais ocorre. [...] As análises apontam para a necessidade de tomar-se essa prática como ponto de partida para a construção de novos saberes sobre o fenômeno ensino (PIMENTA, 1997, p. 19-20).

educational needs learn and this translates into inclusive educational practices. To conceptualize them we will use the definition given in the document *Guía para la reflexión y valoración de prácticas inclusivas*:

Good inclusive practice must be understood as a “situated” action, which gains meaning and is viable from a concrete reality, from structural constraints that make it something unique and unrepeatable (OEI, 2009, p. 5, free translation).⁹

This leads us to reflect on their uniqueness and the need to contemplate appropriate pedagogical proposals for each educational context, whether at school or in the classroom, and with a constant review depending on the type of students that make up each class in each year.

But not everything that is considered as good inclusive educational practices really is, because, as Rosa, Possa and Iop (2016) warn, they depend on the results and how they are applied. Thus, Booth and Ainscow (2011) mention a dimension in their *Índice para la inclusion* called “Developing inclusive practices” and put a set of indicators that characterize these inclusive educational practices:

Organize the learning process:

- Lesson planning and development responds to student diversity.
- Classes are accessible to all students.
- Classes contribute to a greater understanding of differences.
- Students are actively involved in their learning.
- Students learn cooperatively.
- The evaluation stimulates the results of all students.
- The discipline of the room is based on mutual respect.
- Teachers collaboratively plan, review and teach.
- Teachers are concerned with supporting the learning and participation of all students.
- Support professionals are concerned with facilitating the learning and participation of all students.
- “Homework” contributes to everyone's learning.
- All students participate in complementary and extra-school activities.

Mobilizing resources:

- School resources are fairly distributed to support inclusion.
- Know and take advantage of community resources.
- Making full use of the experience of school staff.
- Student diversity is used as a resource for teaching and learning.
- Staff generate resources to support everyone's learning and participation (p. 56-57).¹⁰

⁹ A boa prática inclusiva deve ser entendida como uma atuação “situada”, que ganha sentido e é viável a partir de uma realidade concreta, de uns condicionantes estruturais que fazem dela algo único e irrepetível (OEI, 2009, p. 5, tradução livre).

¹⁰ - O planejamento e desenvolvimento das aulas responde à diversidade dos alunos.

- As aulas se fazem acessíveis a todos os estudantes.
- As aulas contribuem a uma maior compreensão das diferenças.
- Implica-se ativamente aos estudantes na sua aprendizagem.

In this inclusive perspective, teachers are committed to developing these inclusive practices and, for that, they need detailed planning of activities and a record of them with a view to all students are really learning.

There is no list of educational practices that are cataloged as such, but some of them are considered because they fulfill this function of providing work alternatives for all students as to how to be applied, as seen previously. In this sense, we highlight the discussions of Universal Design for Learning (DUA, Portuguese initials) (CAST, 2014), as a curriculum alternative for everyone and the proposals for inclusive activities are to motivate, present information or to offer alternatives that allow all students to present learning in different ways.

This perspective has been shown to be possible to encourage students to learn in collaborative environments, which require investments in teacher formation, in planning curricula and infrastructure. This proposal is based on the universal principles of accessibility, without losing reference to the specificities of students who have special educational needs due to their physical, sensory, mental or intellectual conditions.

According to Cast (2014), DUA uses the contributions of Neurosciences, as it understands that the brain is composed of a set of networks in connections, amalgamated by the socio-affective and cognitive dimensions, which enable students to transform information into knowledge and build strategies to organize them and use them for planning activities. To this end, Ribeiro and Amato (2018), when analyzing the curriculum components proposed by Cast (2014), inform that the objectives, assessments, methods and materials must be made more flexible, according to the guidelines that follow:

1. Objectives: list of knowledge and skills that students must master and develop.
2. Assessment: checks the student's learning process and makes adjustments in teaching; points to the curriculum, not to the student. Checks the student's progress along the route. It should not offer a single way of response and the result is an indicator of knowledge.

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- Os estudantes aprendem de forma cooperativa.
 - A avaliação estimula os resultados de todos os estudantes.
 - A disciplina da sala se fundamenta no respeito mútuo.
 - Os docentes planejam, revisam e ensinam em colaboração.
 - Os docentes se preocupam de apoiar a aprendizagem e a participação de todos os alunos.
 - Os profissionais de apoio se preocupam de facilitar a aprendizagem e a participação de todos os estudantes.
 - Os "deveres para casa" contribuem à aprendizagem de todos.
 - Todos os alunos participam nas atividades complementares e extraescolares.

Mobilizar recursos:

- Os recursos da escola se distribuem de forma justa para apoiar a inclusão.
- Conhecem e aproveitam os recursos da comunidade.
- Aproveita-se plenamente a experiência do pessoal da escola.
- A diversidade dos alunos se utiliza como um recurso para o ensino e aprendizagem.
- O pessoal gera recursos para apoiar a aprendizagem e a participação de todos (p. 56-57).

3. Methods: must be in accordance with each network; a) affective (different challenge levels, rewards, tool options, learning context); b) strategic (flexible performance models, continuous feedback, practice as support, opportunity to show skills); c) recognition (providing several examples of the content, various media and resources). The methods must be in accordance with the needs of each student and include all students in a collaborative environment.

4. Materials: must be aligned with the learning goals; engage students to become proactive (RIBEIRO; AMATO, 2018, p. 127).¹¹

Despite the contributions of the DUA to favor the learning processes for all students, regardless of the perspective that is presented, however, there is a lot of investment to make the conditions favorable, which depend on the current educational policies.

Methodology

The option chosen to develop the research was a case study that, according to Yin (2001), is an empirical investigation, a method that covers planning, specific techniques of data collection and analysis. In addition, the author states that the case study contributes, in an unparalleled way, to understand the individual, organizational, social and political phenomena.

Concretely, we use the data provided by teachers from state and municipal public schools in two municipalities in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul. Because it deals only with some schools and not with a significant and stratified sample, the research is justified as a study of case. The selection of schools was made by the municipal Education Secretariats of Aquidauana and Campo Grande and the State Education Secretariat of Mato Grosso do Sul.

This research is characterized as being qualitative interpretative, as it is not intended to list or measure the events surveyed (BARDIN, 2006). In this type of research, there is no use of statistical instruments in the analysis of data, as the purpose is not to count quantities as results, but to understand the dynamics of the behavior of a particular group researched in a given context. This decision was made based on the type of selection of schools and teachers, as we are not facing a significant sample.

¹¹ 1. Objetivos: rol dos conhecimentos e habilidades que os alunos devem dominar e desenvolver.

2. Avaliação: verifica o processo de aprendizagem do aluno e faz ajustes no ensino; aponta para o currículo, não para o aluno. Verifica a evolução do aluno ao longo do percurso. Não deve oferecer um único meio de resposta e o resultado é um indicador do conhecimento.

3. Métodos: devem estar de acordo com cada rede; a) afetiva (níveis de desafios diferentes, recompensas, opções de ferramentas, contexto da aprendizagem); b) estratégica (modelos flexíveis de desempenho, *feedback* contínuo, prática como suporte, oportunidade de mostrar as habilidades); c) reconhecimento (fornecer vários exemplos do conteúdo, várias mídias e recursos). Os métodos devem estar de acordo com a necessidade de cada aluno e incluir todos os alunos num ambiente colaborativo.

4. Materiais: devem estar alinhados com as metas de aprendizagem; envolver os alunos para que se tornem proativos. (RIBEIRO; AMATO, 2018, p. 127).

The instrument for obtaining the information was an *ad-hoc* questionnaire (Vid. Annex I) with six questions, five open and one closed, in order to get to know something about the construction of teachers' concepts, opinions and proposals. In total, 62 questionnaires were collected, of which 51 were valid, from six different schools. Most teachers work in the 3rd or 4th year as multipurpose or specialists, special education teachers and support teachers were not included; some data was also collected from managers and coordinators.

In order to be able to understand our results in a qualitative way, we used some statements such as: most of the interviewees to refer to those statements that appear in more than 41 of the cases; when we say that many of the teachers say something refers to expressions of between 31 and 40 of the participants; thus, we also use half of the respondents to aggregate the data that are between 21 and 30 of the interviewees; we will still use the term few educators when we find answers of this type between 11 to 20 teachers; to finish the rest below 10 answers we will be using just some. In this way, we avoid the use of quantitative data and, by grouping results into qualitative categories, they can be taken as trends in results according to the opinion of this study group.

The data were organized into approximate categories that addressed the different concepts described by the participants in the sample to generate knowledge of how the process of inclusion in the classrooms has been, through the perception of the teachers, and in some way to know the fundamentals for the inclusive educational practices based on opinions and suggestions.

This research was submitted to the UFMS Ethics Committee and approved with the CAAE process number 15448919.1.0000.0021, and all ethical aspects were respected.

Results

The research results were organized into four approximate categories born from the literature review and reviews on the theme. In the triangulation of information and in the construction of the links, opinions and proposals produced by the participants were also used, which were presented in some subcategories. The four categories of analysis are: Knowledge of inclusive policies; Conceptualization of inclusive education; Conceptualization of students with learning difficulties; Teacher formation from the perspective of inclusion.

- On educational policies on inclusion

Educational policies are the effective references to the legal norms and instruments that define the policies. Public policies, when establishing their actions and goals, have as a guideline to combat any inequality.

Policies focused on inclusion should be concerned with the elimination of any type of exclusion, be it in the school or social space. With the creation of public policies, a structure is favored to modify the relations and practices in different institutions with a focus on inclusion and with the objective of making them something that remains over time.

It appears from the teachers' responses that they are not used to explaining laws or regulations, except for the appointments of LDBEN and the National Common Curricular Base (BNCC, Portuguese initials), no specific law, decree or resolution has been made explicit.

Teachers' comments were more towards qualitative issues related to policies. Thus, many mentioned that: inclusive policy goes on the one way, but the practice and reality is different – *“The inclusion policy needs to be more practiced, the laws are only on paper, there is still a long way to go for inclusion to really happen”*¹²(P-9); is a form of disenchantment with what would become in theory, either by decreasing or modifying resources – *“It is regressing, as currently the APEs (Portuguese initials for Educational Support Assistants) have been replaced by professionals who are not trained”*¹³(P-16); the feeling of lack of investment – *“The government should give greater political and financial priority to improving education systems”*¹⁴(P-17); inexistent teacher capacitation – *“it doesn't exist, they worry about putting the student in school but they don't prepare teachers to include them in school”*¹⁵(P-31).

Only a few relate policies with the objective that everyone learns on equal terms, but their simple explanation already indicates that they know their path, as in the statement: *“I see that inclusion has had many positive advances, where the student has differentiated service and resources to work with his (adequate) difficulties”*¹⁶(P-44).

There is one among them who says that there is no inclusion and that students with disabilities should be served in special institutions: *“For me it doesn't exist, I think that the*

¹² *“A política de inclusão precisa ser mais praticada, as leis estão apenas no papel, falta muito ainda para inclusão realmente acontecer”*

¹³ *“Está regredindo, pois atualmente os APEs (Auxiliares de apoio educativo) foram substituídos por profissionais que não estão capacitados”*

¹⁴ *“o governo deveria atribuir maior prioridade política e financeira para aperfeiçoar os sistemas educacionais”*

¹⁵ *“não existe, se preocupam em colocar o aluno na escola mas não realiza a preparação dos professores incluí-lo na escola”*

¹⁶ *“Vejo que a inclusão teve muitos avanços positivos, onde o aluno tem atendimento diferenciado e recursos para trabalhar com suas dificuldades (adequadas)”*

*special student would be better served in a specialized location. Ex APAE*¹⁷(P-21), a position that distances itself from current educational policies. In the same way, we find some who: either did not express their opinion or this was done beyond the purposes of this research.

We found among the results an important fact to note, which refers to the fact that, in one of the schools, most teachers have a negative concept of policies. About this, it is worth mentioning that research on educational policies reported that in the school movement, they have difficulties to become viable due to the lack of investments and management of resources destined for education. In addition, the inclusive school takes place on a daily basis through the challenges that arise, which makes it necessary to pay attention to the subjective dimensions that move the pedagogical actions and relations (ROSSATO; MATOS; PAULA, 2018).

- On the concept of inclusive education

When we talk about inclusive education, derived from the foundation that supports this research, we are referring to education for all students within a regular context, offering the same activities for everyone regardless of their particular conditions.

The concept that teachers have about inclusive education seems, in terms of research, to demonstrate their desire for the consolidation of the principles of inclusive school, that is, that all students are successful in the schooling process.

To do so, we asked two questions: one focusing on special education and another on what they mean by inclusive education. This was planned in order to avoid misunderstandings among teachers and that they somehow felt oriented to respond differently.

When asked to define what special education is, most of them have a concept according to the principles of the same, whether dealing with care for people with disabilities – *“An education geared to meet a specific disability, for a particular student”*¹⁸(P-28) – whether orienting itself to attend students with special needs – *“Teaching for students with special needs”*¹⁹(P-3).

We also positively emphasize those answers given by only a few when they indicate that this is a right – *“[...] a means of showing society that human beings, whatever they may be, have the same right”*²⁰(P-51) – or an action within a broader inclusion process – *“An action that*

¹⁷ *“Para mim não existe, acho que o aluno especial seria melhor atendido em um local especializado. Ex APAE”*

¹⁸ *“Uma educação voltada para atender uma deficiência específica, de um determinado aluno”*

¹⁹ *“Ensino destinado a alunos portadores de necessidades especiais”*

²⁰ *“[...] um meio de mostrar para a sociedade que o ser humano, qualquer que ele seja, tem o mesmo direito”*

seeks to transform through a society's participation process to promote development and learning”²¹(P-22).

We also found some interviewees who provided us with a type of answer to the question about special education that is close to care positions in the assistentialist perspective, which is not educational: *“It is a look with love to meet the special students”*²²(P-5).

Already in the concrete focus of the concept on inclusive education, most have developed a concept very close to the current proposals on the subject, however we still find a few who are unable to express a definition coherent with the fundamental principles of inclusive education or manifest disbelief that it really exists, which also leads us to reflect on how their performance can be in their classrooms.

Among those who present answers in line with the philosophy of inclusive education policies in Brazil, we find a group that states that it is about attending students with disabilities in schools or regular classrooms – *“The education in which we include the special student in classes, they participate in the same class as the “normal” student”*²³ (P-24) – and another group that already specifies that it is a service for all students due to their personal characteristics – *“[...] quality teaching to all students, regardless of their intelligence and learning conditions”*²⁴(P-37). These versions are divided into currents that defend the principles of inclusive education for all groups and those that are adept at segregated education in institutions and/or special services for certain individuals that make up the target audience of special education. This sectarian perception contributes to inhibit the dialogue and articulation between the levels, stages and other teaching modalities, de-characterizing the functioning of the Brazilian Educational System. In this same line of responses close to inclusive concepts, two more types appear, given by only some who emphasize, on the one hand, the philosophy of this education – *“The movement for the defense of the rights of all students to be together learning”*²⁵ (P-22) or *“When we know the limitations of each one and we believe in the development of their potential”*²⁶ (P-25) – and, on the other hand, the need to act for a movement of *“Transformation of society”*²⁷ (P-5). In this understanding, education is inspired by the

²¹ *“Uma ação que procura transformar através de um processo de participação de uma sociedade para promover o desenvolvimento e a aprendizagem”*

²² *“é um olhar com amor para atender aos educandos especial”*

²³ *“A educação na qual incluímos o aluno especial nas aulas, eles participam da mesma aula que o aluno “normal””*

²⁴ *“[...] um ensino de qualidade a todos os alunos, independente de sua inteligência e condições de aprendizagem”*

²⁵ *“O movimento de defesa dos direitos de todos os alunos a estarem juntos aprendendo”*

²⁶ *“Quando sabemos da limitação de cada um e acreditamos no desenvolvimento de suas potencialidades”*

²⁷ *“Transformação da sociedade”*

current perspective of historical-critical pedagogy, of which Dermeval Saviani (2011) is one of its main representatives.

With this, we observed that the majority of teachers in this sample, whether from more philosophical positions or really from specific actions, know and explain an inclusive education concept in line with related public policies. However, we still have only some that treat it as integration: *“It is social integration with the school community”*²⁸(P-6).

We also find, even if there are only some, who make an outburst in the response, manifesting situations of lack of possibilities for inclusive education to really happen: *“I see full classrooms, it is a utopia, especially with a lack of resources, both material and human”*²⁹(P-29).

- On the conceptualization of students with learning difficulties

Learning difficulties result from several factors, which are mutually implicated and impact the school life of students with or without development considered atypical. It should be noted that if the necessary conditions are given for everyone to learn, difficulties will be eased and, in some situations, resolved. In this sense, it is necessary to break with the understanding that the difficulties are due to disorders, pathologies and deficiencies.

As we have justified, it seemed relevant to know what the teachers in this sample understand by students with learning difficulties, so we asked a question that would guide the teacher to discern between students of special education and students with learning difficulties.

The responses we analyzed in this group of teachers reflect that everyone, with the exception of one participant who did not respond, in one way or another, knows the difference between both types of students. When these answers are categorized, there are basically three alternatives: those that make a difference in terms of students' characteristics and competences, in general – *“Learning difficulties are not always related to disabilities. Each child has a learning pace”*³⁰(P-3) – or specific to each of them – *“Special Education students are students with disabilities in some aspect that compromises their learning, whether physical or cognitive. Students with learning disabilities, on the other hand, can be several factors not defined by ICD, for example, emotional”*³¹(P-29).

²⁸ *“É a integração social com a comunidade escolar”*

²⁹ *“Vejo salas cheias, é uma utopia, principalmente com falta de recurso tanto materiais quanto humanos”*

³⁰ *“A dificuldade na aprendizagem nem sempre está relacionada com a deficiência. Cada criança tem um ritmo de aprendizagem”*

³¹ *“Os alunos da Educação Especial são alunos com deficiência em algum aspecto que compromete sua aprendizagem, seja física ou cognitiva. Já os alunos com déficit de aprendizagem podem ser vários os fatores não definidos por CID, por exemplo, emocionais”*

Everything indicates that, although the report is not mandatory for the target public of special education to guarantee their enrollment, it is observed that it is mentioned as being necessary for it to take effect, as expressed by one of the participants in this study - “*Special education students with a report. Learning difficulties students without a report*”³² (P-21). Still, there is differentiation by the resources destined to students: “*Special education students are entitled to a support teacher who performs specialized care in the regular school together with the conducting teacher to take him or her to learning. Since students with learning difficulties are those said to be normal that responsibility lies with the conducting teacher to develop activities adapted to remedy their learning difficulties*”³³(P-18).

- On teacher education from the perspective of inclusion

The meaning we want to bring here when we talk about teacher formation is not restricted to initial formation only, but conditioned by the complementary formation that teachers carry out and especially, by continuing in-service formation.

Many professors participating in the research have extensive experience in the classroom, as they indicate that they have been working for more than 10 years, with some of them having more than 20 years of profession. Only some have three years or less of experience, and few have a classroom experience of between four and nine years. This data indicates that, basically, these teachers, by the time in the classroom, have already undergone reforms, new laws and, above all, this walk of inclusive education in Brazilian schools.

In reference to the formation of teachers, we observed that most have initial formation in Pedagogy or other degrees, and complementary formation in capacitation or graduate courses.

The question about teacher formation was presented with 12 items or topics, all of them related to contents that appear within the formation in inclusive education, to ask whether or not they received this kind of formation or if they do not remember. We highlight, as a significant point, that a teacher indicated that he did not remember any of the topics described. In addition, two more teachers indicated that they did not receive any formation related to the items of the question; and two others who indicated in all items that they did not receive formation or do not remember.

³² “*Educação especial alunos com laudo. Dificuldades de aprendizagem alunos sem laudo*”

³³ “*Os alunos da educação especial têm direito a um professor de apoio que realiza o atendimento especializado na escola comum juntamente com o professor regente para levá-lo a aprendizagem. Sendo que os alunos com dificuldade de aprendizagem são aqueles ditos normais que a responsabilidade é do regente e desenvolver atividades adaptadas para sanar suas dificuldades de aprendizagem*”

The topics of “Conceptualization and implications of inclusive education”, “Differentiated models for student assessment”, and “Conflict resolution/coexistence between students” were the most remembered as offered in formation by the teachers.

At the opposite extreme, there are three other alternatives that few teachers remembered as being worked on or presented to them in some form of formation. They are: “Realization of individualized plans (adaptations)”; “Multilevel teaching” and “Reinforcements, awards and the like”.

In six other contents, namely, “Characteristics of the learning of the various disabilities and/or special educational needs”; “Planning focused on diversity”; “Teachers' work in a collaborative team”; “Design and use of cooperative learning with students”; “Classroom work strategies among pairs of students”; and “Use of technology to support learning by students with disabilities”, half of the teachers say that they have studied or worked with it within their teacher formation.

Considering the analyzed variables of years of experience acting as teachers, formation they declare to have and topics on which they received formation, we could infer that there are many who should have developed skills to attend a classroom with diverse students from the perspective of inclusive education. In this perspective, in the version of Zarafian (2001), it is necessary to offer conditions for teachers to develop capacities to act in an articulated way with the knowledge that integrates knowledge, values, motivations and praxis.

Final considerations

Researches such as the one presented are used to know the situation of a certain group of teachers in a given context, and should help to make decisions on how to act to improve teacher formation, in order to enable performance within the classrooms in line with the principles of inclusive education, guaranteeing equal opportunities for all students and quality education.

Even though it is a case study, the results presented show some data that can be taken into account both by public policies and educational management, as well as by teacher formation and practice, even though their limitations when dealing with opinions and manifestations.

After these caveats, the need to continue working for inclusive education is explicit, since this is an endless challenge. An inclusive school is never finished, it is always under

construction, and therefore needs the involvement of the entire educational community to move towards quality education for all.

Many teachers who participated in the study indicated that, in some way, they know the policies of inclusive education and, even without knowing how to explain where these principles come from, they explain the philosophy or the meaning of it. Thus, there are those who still cannot express more accurately what it is about when we talk about inclusion, taking the subject to concepts close to special education or its discredit. An in-depth look at the models that they experience within certain schools could be a working hypothesis for another research that would reveal the reason for these statements, even after such a long journey for educational inclusion.

It is made explicit in this research, for the majority of participating teachers, that the concept of inclusive education is familiar to them, with a differentiation of what special education is and what are the objectives of each one of them. In the responses received, there is a focus on service actions under equal conditions.

In the same way as what has already been observed regarding policies, here also appear those who do not believe in inclusive education or have an opinion of defeatism or the impossibility of it being developed. In this sense, we make the same previous observation about the need to deepen the causes that led to expressing these considerations.

According to the data analyzed in the questionnaires, it seems that the majority makes a distinction between special education students and students who have learning difficulties, although some only manage to elaborate it based on the report or the resources that are offered for the former.

This seems to be in line with what they expressed with regard to their education, since most have complementary education and half of them say they have knowledge of most of the work topics on inclusive education.

These considerations lead us to think that this group of education professionals, a microsystem within a broader system, presents a reality that indicates the need to continue working for the knowledge and development of inclusive education, since a portion, albeit small, does not believe or has reservations about inclusion.

Likewise, there is a need for formative strengthening with regard to pedagogical actions, which help to act concretely in the perspective of inclusive education. This is because, although many manifests knowing the concept of inclusive education and learning difficulties, not everyone has this knowledge about inclusive educational practices.

Such indications constitute investigative possibilities, focused on knowing inclusive educational practices in schools in Mato Grosso do Sul, in order to identify their difficulties, their paths and their successes.

Due attention to inclusive educational practices, therefore, becomes urgent, relevant and necessary, being the responsibility of the school and also academic community. In this sense, we believe that for the construction of a truly inclusive school, it takes a lot of effort and teamwork from the whole society, aiming to achieve a quality in education for all.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS: This research is financed through the Visiting Foreign Teachers program, PROPP 163/2017 and based at PPGEDU/FAE of the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (Brazil).

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How to quote this article

SEBASTIAN-HEREDERO, E. & ANACHE, A. A. A percepção docente sobre conceitos, políticas e práticas inclusivas. Estudo de caso no Brasil. **Revista Ibero-Americana de Estudos em Educação**, Araraquara, v. 15, n. esp. 1, p. 1018-1037, maio 2020. e-ISSN: 1982-5587. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.21723/riaee.v15iesp.1.13514>

Submitted: 11/10/2019

Approved: 28/12/2019

Required revisions: 20/11/2019

Published: 30/04/2020

ANEX I

QUESTIONNAIRE CONCEPTS

What year or years do you teach?
How many years of classroom experience do you have?
What is your background? Specify Graduate: Teaching Degree: Specialization: Postgraduate:
How would you define Special Education with your words?
How would you, in your words, define Inclusive Education?
Can you explain, in your own words, the difference between special education students and students with learning difficulties?

In your formation as a teacher, you received formation in any of the following subjects, either initial or continuing. (Mark with X)

	Yes	No	Don't remember
The conceptualization and implications of inclusive education.			
Learning characteristics of the various disabilities and/or special educational needs.			
Planning focused on diversity.			
Realization of Individualized Plans (adaptations).			
Teachers' work in a collaborative team.			
Design and use of cooperative learning with students.			
Multilevel teaching.			
Strategies for classroom work among pairs of students.			
Use of technology to support learning by students with disabilities.			
Reinforcements, awards and the like.			
Solution of conflict/coexistence between students.			
Differentiated models of student evaluation			

What is your opinion on the current inclusion policy?

In your opinion what would your school need to be inclusive? (No need to explain, just list)