

**HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN BRAZIL**

**ASPECTOS HISTÓRICOS DA EDUCAÇÃO INCLUSIVA NO BRASIL**

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**ABSTRACT:** This article aimed to understand the historical movement of inclusive special education in Brazil. Answers were sought to the following question: How is the inclusion of people with disabilities understood in the history of Brazilian education? The research has a bibliographic and documental nature and historical-documentary methodology, theoretically based on Sassaki (2003), Mantoan (2003), Nogueira (2009) and Plaisance (2015). It presents a historical journey of the concept, educational conceptions and terminologies used to refer to people with disabilities, as well as the policies of Rights and Laws that were created and contribute to guarantee opportunities and equality for all people. Understanding the historical panorama faced by people with disabilities allows us to visualize the path and the struggles faced and shows that the search for the right to education for all is something that has been discussed for a long time and for a period has already been denied to a large part of the population.

**KEYWORDS:** Inclusive education. Historical aspects. Disabled person.

**RESUMO:** *O presente artigo objetivou compreender o movimento histórico da educação especial inclusiva no Brasil. Buscou-se respostas para a seguinte pergunta: Como a inclusão das pessoas com deficiência é compreendida na história da educação brasileira? A pesquisa tem cunho bibliográfico e documental e metodologia histórico-documental, apoiando-se teoricamente em Sassaki (2003), Mantoan (2003), Nogueira (2009) e Plaisance (2015). Apresenta-se um percurso histórico do conceito, das concepções educacionais e das terminologias utilizadas para referir-se às pessoas com deficiência, bem como as políticas dos Direitos e as Leis que foram criadas e contribuem para a garantia de oportunidades e igualdade para todas as pessoas. Compreender o panorama histórico enfrentado pelas pessoas com deficiência permite visualizar o percurso e as lutas enfrentadas e mostra que a busca pelo direito à educação para todos/as é algo que há muito tempo vem se discutindo e por um período já foi negado à grande parte da população.*

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** *Educação inclusiva. Aspectos históricos. Pessoa com deficiência.*

**RESUMEN:** *Este artículo tuvo como objetivo comprender el movimiento histórico de la educación especial inclusiva en Brasil. Buscamos respuestas a la siguiente pregunta: ¿Cómo se entiende la inclusión de personas con discapacidad en la historia de la educación brasileña? La investigación tiene carácter bibliográfico y documental y metodología histórico-documental, basada teóricamente en Sassaki (2003), Mantoan (2003), Nogueira (2009) y Plaisance (2015). Presenta un recorrido histórico del concepto, concepciones educativas y terminologías utilizadas para referirse a las personas con discapacidad, así como las políticas de Derechos y Leyes que se gestaron y contribuyen a garantizar oportunidades e igualdad para todas las personas. Comprender el panorama histórico que enfrentan las personas con discapacidad permite visualizar el camino y las luchas enfrentadas y muestra que la búsqueda del derecho a la educación para todos es algo que se ha discutido durante mucho tiempo y que durante un tiempo ya ha sido negado. una gran parte de la población.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** *Educación inclusiva. Aspectos históricos. Persona discapacitada.*

## Introduction

According to data released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in 2022, there are 17.2 million people with disabilities in Brazil. This corresponds to 8.4% of the population. In this regard, significant advancements in inclusive education have been observed. Several rights and laws focused on inclusion have already been achieved, aiming to overcome the historically challenging reality faced by people with disabilities, who have long lived in a scenario of social exclusion.

Brazil is a country where social issues have been reassessed through programs and incentives for public policies of inclusion and redress for human rights violations. However, prejudice and social disparities still contribute to the decline of the humanistic, cultural, political, and economic landscape. Human rights can change this reality, and education is the primary pathway for this transformation, through the dignity of the human person (BRAZIL, 2013, p. 44, our translation).

Inclusive education remains a significant challenge, despite the educational changes that have taken place throughout Brazilian history, particularly when it comes to not only integrating individuals/students with disabilities into regular classrooms but also establishing effective relationships that foster equal treatment among students with and without disabilities, so that everyone feels included in the school and social context.

Inclusive education represents a path of respect that involves considering the differences among students in educational processes that cannot be the same for everyone. Therefore, inclusive education entails not only the acceptance or integration of individuals with disabilities into a regular classroom but, above all, the appreciation of differences and the restoration of values. This is reflected in the respect needed to build inclusive education.

This article aims to understand the historical movement of inclusive education in Brazil, starting from the following question: how is the inclusion of people with disabilities understood in the history of Brazilian education? To answer this question and achieve the objective, our methodological approach sought to examine the main historical milestones, as well as laws and educational concepts.

Although the history of any phenomenon cannot be traced in a linear fashion with well-defined stages, this work aims to understand, initially, the historical trajectory of the perception of people with disabilities from its origins. Subsequently, it moves on to the understanding of the concept in order to encompass the advancement of terminologies adopted to refer to the

audience of special education. Then, the main historical milestones of inclusive education in Brazil are presented, leading to the final remarks.

This movement is necessary to understand that promoting inclusive transformations goes beyond simply enacting laws and rights. It also requires modifications in various factors to better represent individuals/students with disabilities, allowing them to become more visible in society and the educational process.

### **The transformations in the understanding of individuals with disabilities**

People with disabilities have been understood in different ways throughout history, with highly varied representations. According to Silva (2010), during the medieval period, children born with disabilities were rejected by their families, often being abandoned and even thrown into ditches.

If in antiquity people with disabilities were forgotten and practically "did not exist," in the medieval era, the situation was worse. In the realm of metaphysics, of a religious nature, individuals with disabilities were considered "demonic" (ARANHA, 2005, emphasis added). In this particular period of history, people with disabilities were seen as sinners or individuals deserving of charity. According to Lorentz (2006, p. 131, our translation),

It is evident that in this context driven by charity, pity, and repulsion, the interaction of society with PWD [People With Disabilities] was characteristically anguished, predominantly based on pity (charitable) and distance, as it involved a relationship between unequal individuals, implying the existence of a superior (the one who feels pity) and an inferior (the one for whom pity is felt), a relationship also marked by Catholic-Christian notions of guilt and sin in not assisting a person in need..

With the spread of Christianity in Europe, people with disabilities began to escape abandonment. According to Silva (2010), children with disabilities were abandoned, and it was the responsibility of the Church to remove them from the streets, as they were seen as possessed by demons, and only priests could save their souls. In reality,

During Christianity, the ideas of eliminating babies or children were condemned, as Christians began to value life. All individuals who were considered different came to be seen as children of God. However, despite these changes, they were still considered expiators of someone else's guilt, as physically and mentally disabled individuals, including those with mental illnesses deemed "mad," were accused of being possessed by demons and thus excluded from social interaction. (BRANDENBURG, LUCKMEIER, 2014, p. 176, our translation).

According to Pessotti (1984, p. 187, our translation), "often in the history of peoples, the fear of the unknown has generated anxieties whose alleviation is sought in the elimination of sources of uncertainty." In this context, the Catholic Church, based on the Old Testament, asserted that these children came into the world to punish their parents for some sin they had committed. According to Exodus 34:7 (NIV), God "[...] punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation." This idea is found in the Bible only twice but served as a justification for rejecting children with disabilities for a long time.

According to Carneiro (1998), during the medieval period, with the significant population growth, there was also an increase in diseases, leading to more cases of children with disabilities. These children were subjected to exorcism sessions and were blessed to remove the "demons" within them, as it was believed that disability was a punishment from God.

According to Amaral (2006, p. 28, our translation), "disability was a sign, a mark, a kind of predestination. Instead of being excluded, these individuals were protected by society. They were marked, had a place and a role to play in these communities. They were by no means left out."

Panarotto and Silva (2014) emphasize that with the advancement of medicine, the understanding of the cause of disability has changed, shifting from a spiritual explanation as was believed in antiquity to a health problem. However, this did not lead to a decrease in the challenges faced by individuals with disabilities. Despite stating that it was a medical issue, families still felt abandoned and unsure of what to do, resulting in a lack of effective progress, as the treatment approach remained the same.

Over time, the church began to lose its influence, and anthropocentric values took hold, placing a greater emphasis on the worth of human beings.

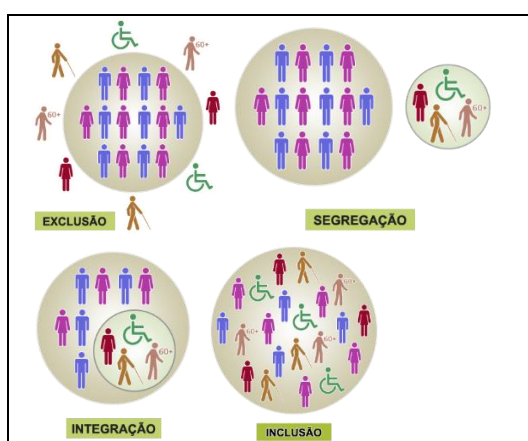
Man started to be understood as a rational animal with the emergence of the scientific method. Studies on different types of disabilities began, and the concept of disability became rooted in the clinical model, emphasizing a pathological nature that required medication and treatment. Motivated by these ideals, some individuals began to contribute to breaking away from the conceptions that linked disability to mysticism. Thus, this new understanding became associated with the medical and pedagogical aspects, seeking to investigate the causes of disabilities and incorporating a scientific approach to research. In this perspective, there was an aim to normalize individuals with disabilities. (SILUK, 2008, p. 63, our translation).

In contemporary times, driven by capitalist needs, individuals with disabilities have had to become productive members of society. In Brazil, in particular, this logic has become

intensified. It was in the 19th century that concerns about the education of these individuals started to arise, still within segregational institutions. Over time, the practice shifted from segregated services to social integration, and more recently, the philosophy of social inclusion has been adopted to modify general social systems (SASSAKI, 2003, p. 16).

Figure 1 depicts visual representations illustrating the practices of exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion.

**Figure 1** – Visual representation of the practices of exclusion, segregation, integration, and inclusion.



Source: AMANKAY Institute of Studies and Research. (2017)

Stainback (1999, p. 25, our translation) clarifies that:

[...] In general, segregated settings are harmful as they alienate students. Students with disabilities, in particular, receive little education that is useful for real-life situations, while students without disabilities fundamentally experience an education that undervalues diversity, cooperation, and respect for those who are different.

During the 20th century, the integration movement emerged, particularly within the mainstream education system. A new struggle began, aiming to include individuals with disabilities in society and, more specifically, in regular education settings. Integration involves "a process that must be embraced by the entire school: the regular classroom teacher should receive support from special education to carry out this work, and students should receive parallel support in resource rooms or from itinerant teachers" (NOGUEIRA, 2009, p. 88, our translation).

In 1970, in Brazil, with the normalization approach, many discussions and disagreements took place. However, new knowledge emerged that influenced the organization of services and teaching methodologies, bringing about transformations to the segregative trends of the time.



When discussing inclusion, it is important to mention the previous model of school integration, in which students had access to schools that offered a range of educational possibilities, ranging from inclusion in regular classrooms to education in special schools (MANTOAN, 2003).

Inclusive special education requires transformations, and acceptance has been one of the major barriers historically faced, as it is only possible when there is an understanding that everyone is equal and should have equal opportunities, conditions, and rights. In this sense, the consolidation of an education that includes and provides learning for all still has much room for improvement. In addition to understanding the person with disabilities throughout history, it is necessary to understand that the terminologies used to refer to this population have also undergone transformations.

### **The terminologies used and their transformations**

If people with disabilities have experienced discrimination throughout history and in all parts of the world (HARPUR, 2012), this reality is no different in Brazil. Despite numerous political and educational initiatives, this issue still persists (CARVALHO-FREITAS *et al.*, 2018).

Among the various forms of action in this perspective, language has been an important vehicle for cultural changes regarding this matter (HARPUR, 2012). In the field of language, terminology is seen as a crucial aspect because the concepts used influence social aspects. (BARNES; MERCER; SHAKESPEARE, 1999).

The historical perspective of terminology allows us to perceive the wear and tear of words that have become pejorative. Terms such as "abnormal," "retarded," "feeble-minded," "invalid," "incapable," or "ineducable," among others, have been used to refer to "persons with disabilities" in a historical and cultural context, but today they are widely rejected (ASSIS; OLIVEIRA; LOURENÇO, 2020). These negative perceptions can become stigmas and further hinder the inclusion process of this group of people (PLAISANCE, 2015).

Below is Table 1, featuring some of the terms used in different eras to refer to people with disabilities.

**Table 1 – Advancements in Terminology for the Target Audience of Special Education**

PERIOD	TERM USED
1920s	It was believed that people with disabilities had reduced capacity, and for this reason, the term "incapacitated" was used to refer to them.
1960s and 1980s	The terms used were "disabled" and "exceptional" as people with disabilities were considered less efficient and different from others.
1988	The term "person with disability" emerged. This expression was heavily criticized since one only carries something that can be left behind, and disability is an innate or acquired condition that is part of the person and cannot be abandoned.
1990s	The term "people with special needs" began to be used, indicating the need for adaptations to the difficulties and incapacities of people with disabilities. However, absolutely everyone, with or without disabilities, can have "special needs" at some point in their lives. This can include a pregnant woman or an elderly person who may need some adaptations to their routine activities.
Since 2009	The term "person with disability" was endorsed by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and has been adopted to this day. This term is associated with empowerment as it implies the use of personal power to make choices, decisions, and take control of one's life situation.

Source: Paraná Inclusivo Collection (Volume I)

The pursuit of using correct terminology is of utmost importance as it facilitates the identification of the group seeking the realization of their rights, fosters the engagement of individuals with the cause, and is a matter of honor, dignity, and respect for these individuals. As BUBLITZ (2015, p. 22, our translation) states,

Finding the most appropriate terminology to designate a group of people is of fundamental importance for their legal protection, as respect or discrimination is also revealed or concealed through language. It is worth noting that the emphasis placed on these terminologies stems from the fact that semantic issues, particularly in the realm of fundamental rights, hold undeniable value. To say that words are merely words and do not serve to modify reality is a falsehood, especially when easily assimilated, they become jargon and enter popular discourse, potentially generating more prejudices and even becoming offensive.

According to Sassaki (2003, p. 12-16, our translation), there is a trajectory regarding terminology throughout Brazilian history, and within it lies the use of the term "inválido," which, according to the author, "[...] meant 'individuals without value'." Even in the 20th century, this term was used, although it no longer carried any pejorative meaning.

Another term that was used is "incapacitado," which, according to Sassaki (2003, our translation), "[...] meant 'individuals who are not capable' of doing certain things due to their disability."

The subtle shift in societal perspective during that time is evident, reinforcing the notion that individuals with disabilities were seen as incapable in various aspects, both socially and



professionally. Other terms that were used include "defeituosos" (defective), "deficientes" (deficient), and "excepcionais" (exceptional), as discussed in the excerpt below.

"The 'defeituosos' referred to individuals with deformities, primarily physical ones. The 'deficientes' represented individuals with physical, intellectual, hearing, visual, or multiple disabilities that affected their ability to perform basic life functions (such as walking, sitting, running, writing, bathing, etc.) in a different manner than those without disabilities. This began to be accepted by society. The 'excepcionais' referred to individuals with intellectual disabilities" (SASSAKI, 2003, p. 12-16, emphasis added by the author, our translation).

The use of the term "deficiente" in isolation emphasizes only one of the characteristics that make up the individual, defining them by their disability. According to Sasaki (2003, p. 12), "[...] the noun 'deficiente' (as in 'os deficientes') started to be used as an adjective, with the noun 'pessoas' added to it." From 1981 onwards, the word "indivíduos" was no longer used to refer to people with disabilities.

In 1981, the UN declared the "International Year of Disabled Persons," a terminology used to focus on people with disabilities not just in terms of their condition, but also their human side, bringing forth a new image of them in society:

People with disabilities. Time: around 1988 until approximately 1993. Some leaders of disability organizations contested the term "disabled person," arguing that it implies that the entire person is disabled, which was unacceptable to them. Meaning: Term proposed to replace the term "disabled people" and used only in Portuguese-speaking countries. Due to the law of least effort, this term was soon shortened to "people with disabilities." (SASSAKI, 2003, p. 12-16, our translation).

The use of the term "people with disabilities" allows us to understand disability as something that a person may sometimes "have" and other times not (like a document or an umbrella). For example, we cannot say that someone "carries" brown eyes. After that, around 1990, the term "people with special needs/people with disabilities" emerged. According to Sasaki (2003, p. 12-16, our translation),

[...] The term initially emerged to replace "disability" with "special needs." Hence the expression "people with special needs." Later, this term acquired its own meaning without replacing the name "people with disabilities." Article 5 of Resolution CNE/CEB No. 2, dated 11/9/01, explains that special needs arise from three situations, one of which involves difficulties related to disabilities and difficulties not linked to an organic cause.

Later on, the term "special needs" replaced the word "disability" with added value, encompassing both people with disabilities and those who require differentiated treatment. Subsequently, the terminology "special people" emerged. The term appeared as a shortened form of the expression "people with special needs," but it constituted a euphemism that was hardly acceptable to designate a population segment (SASSAKI, 2003). There was a need for a new term because the word "special" can be used for all human beings regardless of their condition, as each individual is a unique and special being.

With the UN Convention in December 2006, people considered as members of social movements began to discuss how they would like to be called, leading to the conclusion of the term "Person with Disability," aiming at valuing the person rather than just the disability. According to the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,

people with disabilities are those who have long-term impairments of a physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory nature, which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others (BRAZIL, 2007a, p. 16, our translation).

Understanding this historical journey of the concept and terminology allows for a better representation of people with disabilities and empowers them to be protagonists in this choice. In Brazil, it is evident that there have been several attempts to bring the correct terminology to the public, so that people with disabilities can feel represented and dismantle discriminatory practices.

Below, we present the main historical milestones of inclusive special education in Brazil to illustrate how various transformations have taken place as new understandings and advancements regarding inclusion have been established in the country.

### **Historical milestones of inclusive special education in Brazil**

The provision of education for people with disabilities has evolved over the years. In Brazil, after a long period of exclusion and neglect, attention to this issue gained momentum in the 19th century.

As stated in the Curriculum Proposal of Santa Catarina (2005), Brazil only began to assist people with disabilities around the 19th century. In 1854, the Imperial Institute for Blind Children was established by D. Pedro II, which later became known as the Benjamin Constant Institute. In 1857, the Institute for Deaf-Mutes, now known as the National Institute of Deaf Education (INES), was created.

Both institutions were created through the interaction of friends or individuals who had close ties to the emperor, who responded to the requests due to the friendships they maintained. This practice of favoritism, charity, which was common in the country at that time, established the welfare character that permeated the attention given to people with disabilities in the country, and special education, in particular, since its inception. (AMARAL, 2006, p. 23, our translation).

However, the focus was mainly on visual and hearing impairments, while physical limitations, and especially intellectual disabilities, continued to be excluded. In Brazil, one of the early approaches to treating people with disabilities was marked by charity, which provided them with some dignity. Carneiro (1998) states that in 1906, public schools began to accommodate individuals with mental disabilities. This special education aimed at cure and rehabilitation. These students were placed in schools but measures were taken to ensure they did not disrupt the progress of the class. Furthermore, in 1931-1932, the first inclusive school was established (Pavilhão Fernandinho da Santa Casa da Misericórdia – SP).

In 1988, the Constitution of the Federative Republic of Brazil introduced several provisions based on the principles of equality, autonomy, and human dignity, as well as the protection of persons with disabilities. This Constitution represents a milestone in advancing the rights of people with disabilities, reflecting the achievements of this group that, for many years, remained on the margins of the legal framework.

The 1988 Constitution includes, in Article 208, education for people with disabilities as a duty of the State, ensuring: III - specialized educational assistance for persons with disabilities, preferably in regular education (BRASIL, 1988). An important aspect of this article is that educational assistance prioritizes regular education, representing a significant movement towards inclusion.

In 1990, the Statute of the Child and Adolescent (Law No. 8.069/90) determined that "parents or guardians have the obligation to enroll their children or wards in regular education" (BRASIL, 1990, our translation). In the same year, the World Conference on Education for All, the Jomtien Conference (UNESCO, 1990), drew attention to the high rates of children, adolescents, and young people without schooling, with the aim of promoting changes in education systems to ensure access and retention of all in school.

Torres (2001) states that the Jomtien Declaration reinforces the centrality of Basic Education as a priority to be universally achieved, as education must ensure a set of knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes essential for human development. In the subsequent articles of the Jomtien Declaration, strategies are presented aiming to guarantee education for all.

According to Gomide (2007), the World Declaration on Education for All represents not only the understanding of basic education as the main vector to guarantee the satisfaction of fundamental learning needs for the population but also a document that records a broad conception of Basic Education, advocating for its universalization through access and promotion of equity.

In 1994, the World Conference on Special Needs Education was held in Salamanca, Spain, in partnership with UNESCO. The conference resulted in the Salamanca Statement, a document aimed at promoting inclusive education worldwide. It provided guidance on pathways and actions to develop quality education for all individuals.

Schools should welcome all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic, or other conditions. They should embrace children with disabilities and gifted children; children living on the streets or working; children from remote or nomadic populations; children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities; and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized groups or areas. (BRASIL, 1994, p. 17-18, our translation).

In 1996, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education - LDB (Law No. 9394/96) defines in Article 58 a "[...] modality of school education offered preferably in the regular education system for students with special needs" (BRAZIL, 1996, our translation). It is a great advance that Law No. 9394/96 (BRAZIL, 1996) specifies that school education should be offered preferably in the regular education system, as the process of inclusion should not be separate; students need to be together as it is essential for their social and intellectual development.

In 1999, an important document addresses the National Policy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities, establishing compulsory enrollment of people with disabilities in regular schools.

In 2001, three documents were launched in the field of Special Education, including Resolution No. 2/2001 of the National Council of Education (BRAZIL, 2001a), with the National Guidelines for Special Education in Basic Education, which determined that education systems, following the Guidance for Prosecutors on the Right to Inclusive Education, should enroll all students, with schools being responsible for organizing the provision of educational support for students with special educational needs (Article 2), which includes Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) as a complementary or supplementary service to schooling.

The National Education Plan - PNE, in its Law No. 10.172, emphasizes that "[...] the great advance that the education decade should produce would be the construction of an

inclusive school that guarantees the provision of education to human diversity" (BRAZIL, 2001c, our translation). Additionally, in 2001, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was enacted through Decree No. 3.956/2001 (BRAZIL, 2001b), affirming that persons with disabilities have the same human rights and fundamental freedoms as others, defining discrimination based on disability as any differentiation or exclusion.

In 2003, the Inclusive Education Program: Right to Diversity was implemented, which supported the transformation of education to make it more inclusive. To achieve this goal, there was a greater investment in training for both school administrators and other education professionals, as well as the implementation of Specialized Educational Assistance and the promotion of accessibility in schools.

In the following year, 2004, the Federal Public Prosecutor's Office published guidelines for the access of students with disabilities to regular schools and classes, aiming to disseminate global concepts and guidelines for inclusion and reaffirm the right and benefits of inclusive education for students with and without disabilities in regular education classes.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, approved by the UN in 2006 and ratified with the force of a Constitutional Amendment through Legislative Decree No. 186/2008 (BRAZIL, 2008) and Executive Decree No. 6949/2009 (BRAZIL, 2009), establishes that States parties must ensure an inclusive education system at all levels of education, in environments that maximize academic and social development compatible with the goal of participation and inclusion. Measures should be adopted to ensure that:

- a) People with disabilities shall not be excluded from the general education system on the grounds of disability, and children with disabilities shall not be excluded from free and compulsory primary education or secondary education on the grounds of disability.
- b) People with disabilities have access to inclusive, quality, and free primary education and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the community in which they live. (BRAZIL, 2009, Article 24, 2, our translation).

The Implementation Program for Multifunctional Resource Rooms, implemented through Normative Ordinance No. 13, dated April 24, 2007 (BRAZIL, 2007c), provides public regular schools with a set of computer equipment, furniture, teaching materials, and accessibility resources for the organization of the Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE) space. Also in 2007, the Education Development Plan (PNE) (BRAZIL, 2007b), reaffirmed by the Social Agenda, consists of the following axes: teacher training for special education, implementation of multifunctional resource rooms, architectural accessibility of school

buildings, access and retention of people with disabilities in higher education, and monitoring of access to school for beneficiaries of the Continuous Cash Benefit (BPC).

In the Education Development Plan: Reasons, Principles, and Programs of the Ministry of Education, the vision that seeks to overcome the opposition between regular education and special education is reaffirmed.

Between 2008 and 2010, during the National Education Conference (CONAB and CONAE), the Ministry of Education definitively states that special education policy should be implemented from the perspective of inclusive education.

In 2011, the National Plan for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities - Living without Limits (BRAZIL, 2011), proposes to promote and organize public policies for the social inclusion of people with disabilities, including those in inclusive education. In 2014, with the approval of the National Education Plan, which presents 20 goals for improving education in Brazil for the next 10 years, Goal 4 is dedicated to inclusive education.

GOAL 4 - Universalize, for the population aged 4 (four) to 17 (seventeen) years old with disabilities, pervasive developmental disorders and high skills or giftedness, access to basic education and specialized educational services, preferably in the regular education network, with the guarantee of an inclusive educational system, multifunctional resource rooms, classes, schools or specialized services, public or contracted (BRASIL, 2014, our translation).

And, to conclude this historical survey of the main milestones of inclusive education in Brazil, it should be noted that on July 6, 2015, the Statute of Persons with Disabilities was published, which established the Brazilian Inclusion Law (LBI) - Law no. 13,146. The Law has numerous articles that discuss what is assured, among them you can find Art. 4, which states that “every person with a disability has the right to equal opportunities with other people and will not suffer any kind of discrimination” (BRASIL, 2015, our translation).

By glimpsing the conceptions and references, it appears that, throughout Brazilian history, with regard to inclusive education, the way of seeing and treating people with disabilities has been changing: currently these people have the same rights guaranteed in laws than other people. That said, human beings need to reflect on differences, as they are intrinsic, and we react to life experiences in different ways.



## **Final remarks**

When seeking to understand the historical processes of the struggle for the inclusion of people with disabilities in Brazil, it was evident that there were notable advances in the different social spheres and legislation, mainly from the period of Brazilian redemocratization. Such advances come from various confrontations on the part of people with disabilities and their families, professionals from different segments and due to international pressure through declarations and conventions demanding mechanisms capable of allowing the participation of people with disabilities in society, that historically left them on the sidelines.

Even with significant advances in the last three decades, it is emphasized that there is still a lot to evolve to equalize opportunities in different instances of society, but, above all, it is necessary and urgent that the rights already conquered are put into effect.

When considering education as an important instrument of social ascension, one can see the relevance of guaranteeing the right of people with disabilities in building a more inclusive society, that is, guaranteeing opportunities for access to knowledge for all is a challenge that needs to be addressed. expired to effect the inclusion.

It is also concluded that knowing the historical movements of inclusive education, the legislation, the terminologies and the challenges faced through different times can contribute to the realization of a more inclusive society, because from the historically accumulated knowledge about the barriers faced by these subjects, it is possible to reflect on how each one within their level of performance can collaborate for the promotion of inclusion, which requires constant transformations in favor of its effectiveness.

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