

TRANSTORNO DO ESPECTRO AUTISTA NA EJA: Um panorama da Inclusão Escolar no Brasil

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Resumo

O objetivo do artigo é apresentar um panorama sobre como anda a inclusão escolar do Transtorno do Espectro Autista na Educação de Jovens e Adultos no Brasil. O autismo é uma condição geral de desordens do desenvolvimento cerebral, o espectro envolve muitas situações diferentes uma das outras, onde estas características podem ir da mais leve à mais grave ou estarem relacionadas em menor ou maior grau entre si. O autista é considerado deficiente para todos os efeitos legais conforme a Lei No. 12.764/2012, que institui a Política Nacional de Proteção dos Direitos da Pessoa com Transtorno do Espectro Autista, e a inclusão é um direito da pessoa com deficiência. Apesar de ainda existir muito preconceito e despreparo por parte dos profissionais da educação, as pessoas com deficiência também têm direito a frequentar uma escola com ensino regular. O panorama nos mostra que os professores são despreparados para essa realidade e sem apoio de uma equipe multidisciplinar para desenvolver o seu trabalho.

Palavras-chave: brasil; educação inclusiva; educação de jovens e adultos; transtorno do espectro autista.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER IN YAE: An Overview of School Inclusion in Brazil

Abstract

The paper's objective is to present an overview of the school inclusion of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Youth and Adult Education in Brazil. Autism is a general condition of brain development disorders; the spectrum involves many different situations from each other, where these characteristics can range from the mildest to the most severe or be related to a lesser or greater degree to each other. The autistic person is considered disabled for all legal purposes according to Law No. 12.764/2012, which institutes the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of the Person with Autism Spectrum Disorder, and inclusion is a right of the person with a disability. Although there is still a lot of prejudice and unpreparedness on education professionals, people with disabilities are also entitled to attend a school with regular education. The panorama shows us that teachers are unprepared for this reality and without the support of a multidisciplinary team to develop their work.

Keywords: autism spectrum disorder; brazil; inclusive education; youth and adult education.

INTRODUCTION

Bleuler (1911, *apud* Cunha, 2012) defines the expression *autism* for the first time as the loss of contact with reality, causing great difficulty or impossibility of communication. Furthermore, Kanner (1943) was one of the first to report experiments on the subject when he isolated 11 children who had, among other aspects, similar cases of strong isolation, absence of reciprocity in the look, and profound disinterest in establishing contact.

Thus, Kanner used the same expression to describe this clinical picture. In his report, he suggested a rare disability, but perhaps more frequent than expected, due to the analysis of his sample being small. Furthermore, in 1944, Hans Asperger described cases in which there were some characteristics similar to autism concerning social communication difficulties in children with average intelligence.

Since then, after several investigative contexts, it has been understood that autism is not a disease, but rather a complex developmental disorder, defined from a behavioral point of view, with multiple etiologies and varying degrees of severity (TUCHMAN, 1991).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Nowadays, the criteria used to diagnose autism are described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. According to the manual, recent studies suggest that the

prevalence of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may be 2 to 5 cases per 1,000 inhabitants, which has led to speculation that ASD is an “epidemic” (FOMBONNE, 2002). The increase in the number of people diagnosed is likely due to greater recognition of this disorder in mildly affected children and differences in the diagnostic criteria between DSM-III and DSM-IV, which establishes autism in the amount of 130 cases per 100,000 inhabitants (DSM-IV, 1994).

ASD is then a general condition of brain development disorders, where the person has some characteristics that accompany his whole life from birth to death, such as communication difficulties, difficulties with social interactions, obsessive interests and/or repetitive behaviors. The spectrum involves many different situations from each other, where these characteristics can go from the lightest to the most severe or be related to a lesser or greater degree to each other (KLIN, 2006).

It is observed that since the ASD was classified, there are still few studies where the main focus is on listening to the person because, in the vast majority, they are concentrated in the perspective of mental health in which, when specifically addressing autism, investigations are made from the first months of life. In this discussion, in one of the few aspects of intersection, there is a consensus on science to consider as the earliest mental illness.

The Conference on Special Educational Needs was a milestone in the scope of Special Education as it resulted in the Salamanca Statement, in which children with global developmental disorders, such as autistic children, were included in the education for all policy (UNESCO, 1994).

The Special Education Secretariat then decreed the creation of special classes for children with behaviors and manifestations of behavior typical of patients with syndromes and psychological, neurological, or psychiatric conditions that produce delays in development and impairment in social relationships, where autistic individuals would be included here (POLÍTICA NACIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL, 2008).

In Brazil, the person with ASD is considered a person with a disability, according to Law No. 12.764/2012 (Berenice Piana), which institutes the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of the Person with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, in its art. 1, §2, namely: “the person with autism spectrum disorder is considered a person with a disability, for all legal purposes”.

Moreover, Law No. 9.394/2021 (*Diretrizes e Bases da Educação Nacional*), in its chapter V, which deals with Special Education, guarantees the entry of the autistic child in a regular school, and the school must aim at the effective integration of the autistic student into the life in society.

Finally, autists demand well-organized educational spaces with a structure appropriate to their needs since the entry of autistic children into school can generate effects, including therapeutic ones, for children who have limitations in their psychic constitution. It is at school that they leave the role of “sick”, autistic children, and take the place of children and children who learn (NAVARRO, 2017).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

People with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and High Abilities/Giftedness must have access to learning in mainstream schools and, unfortunately, the problems of the inclusion process of this population within the school environment are experienced by everyone, whether they are parents, teachers, students or education professionals (POLÍTICA NACIONAL DE EDUCAÇÃO ESPECIAL, 2008).

The word inclusion by itself implies the idea of exclusion since it is only possible to include those who have already been excluded. It is noteworthy that the social must adapt to receive the special student in inclusion, different from integration, where the student seeks alternatives to integrate into the school environment.

The school has a fundamental role in the life of autistic people because it contributes to their social and intellectual development when it guarantees the right to inclusion and offers quality learning in partnership with parents. However, the segregation of autistic people in the school

environment has been the subject of research in recent years in Brazil, generating reform proposals on how to maintain a multidisciplinary team in these institutions to assist the autistic or the disabled.

In addition, education professionals also play an essential role in assisting this student and everyone in their family and social circles, bringing knowledge about what ASD is and how to deal with it and understanding what strategies can be done to better learning, addressing several aspects.

Teachers are not yet prepared to deal with autism, as they have a misconception about the subject. This is most evident when it comes to the communication process. In this case, teachers come into conflict with themselves because they do not know how to deal with the situation. About this difficulty of the teacher, Goldberg et al. (2005) say that some of these professionals adopt the strategy of keeping the student busy as a way to overcome their own difficulties. However, such strategies inhibit the onset of symptoms.

Other studies show that many autistic children, who have severe learning difficulties, are in establishments that do not recognize their needs, thus creating problems for the teacher to guide them in the classroom. Thus, referral to specialized care is necessary, given that this is the best solution when there is no appropriate environment and adequate conditions in the treatment of the autistic person.

Few education professionals are trained to assist autistic students. These professionals should promote spaces for discussions at the school to assist the teacher, provide guidance on the topic, and students on how to deal with their autistic colleagues. Hence, there is a need for public policies that recognize the importance of these professionals' work to help teachers understand that it is possible to literate the autistic despite the disorder.

In summary, Machado & Souza (2004) reiterate that education professionals, especially the psychologist, have an essential role and must be inserted in the diagnosis of the autistic person. This diagnosis is important to distinguish if this way of acting is considered normal or needs to investigate the symptoms presented.

CONCLUSIONS

People with disabilities have the right to attend a school with regular education, although there is still a lot of prejudice and unpreparedness on education professionals. What exists, in fact, are teachers unprepared for this reality and without the support of a multidisciplinary team to develop their work. Inclusion must work in every way because, unfortunately, many still believe that people with a disability should continue to attend their own schools.

Finally, education is a right for everyone, and inclusion is a right for people with disabilities. Therefore, the work of education professionals consists of identifying factors that help to contribute to a joint intervention with the school community. This is important because it can help others to understand ASD and thus help them to understand more about autistic students, as their inclusion is entirely out of theory.

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