



THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS OF ADOLESCENTS WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES IN THE VIEW OF EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS

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ABSTRACT

The inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in regular education changed the reality until then, treating them in a special way according to their abilities and limitations. It is not only about inserting them, but also offering services through specialized services that organize resources according to your specific learning needs. This study aimed to evaluate the teaching-learning process of adolescents with special needs/intellectual disabilities of a Municipal School in the municipality of Montes Claros-MG. **Methodology:** This is a descriptive study, with a qualitative approach, conducted through a semi-structured interview with professionals about the teaching-learning process of adolescents with intellectual disabilities. **Results:** Through the analysis of the data, it is possible to perceive that the professionals, despite having difficulties in dealing with this public, are seeking training and teaching methods that contribute to the evolution of these students, both social and learning. **Conclusion:** The school inclusion of students with special needs is a process that has undergone several transformations and to be effectively implemented, there must be a contribution from the various sectors of society, not only is a responsibility of the school and family, but also of the society.

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INTRODUCTION

According to Decree No. 3,298 of 1999, disability is considered any loss or abnormality of a psychological, physiological or anatomical structure or function that causes incapacity for the performance of activity, within the standard considered normal for the human being. Among the deficiencies, the mental disability, which is discussed in this study, "consists of significantly lower than average intellectual

functioning, with manifestation before eighteen years old associated with limitations in two or more areas of adaptive abilities" (BRASIL, 1999). Among these skills may be cited: the communication, personal care, social life, work, among others (BRASIL, 1999). According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2010), the percentage of the population aged 4 to 17 with disabilities attending school in Brazil, in 2010, represented 85.8%. According to the Municipal Plan of Education "in Montes Claros this percentage is 90.1%" (PME, 2015, p.89), these data represent all students enrolled in common classes, special classes and inclusive schools. According to the 2016 School

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Census of the National Institute of Educational Research Anísio Teixeira (INEP), the total enrollment in primary education of Special Education of state and municipal, urban and rural, part-time and full time schools in Brazil was 60,7044 students. In the municipality of Montes Claros, there were 1779 students. The scientific literature lacks recent studies on the teaching and learning process of students with intellectual disabilities, many studies are focused on the process of inclusion of students with disabilities in general, not addressing the methodological aspects used to reach the inclusion of these students. Tomaz *et al.* (2016), states that the inclusive school was officially assumed by several countries through the Declaration of Salamanca in 1994. The inclusion of students with special needs was a measure that modified teaching strategies, seeking new methods to enable the learning process of these students, starting from the principle of equality according to the difficulties of each person. Although the inclusion of disabled people is proposed in Brazilian legislation and accepted by educational institutions, it is noticed that there is still a lack of preparation in the inclusion process. This lack is, mainly, due to the doubts of professionals in dealing with children with intellectual deficit and the scarcity of structure and adequate method for the teaching and inclusion process of these students with disabilities (OMETE, 2008; VALENTIM, OLIVEIRA, 2013, TOMAZ *et al.*, 2016). The literature shows a change in the terminology regarding "mental retardation" that is now recognized as intellectual and developmental difficulties. This change suggests that the intellectual or intelligence capacity is evaluated, assessing the cognitive functions of the person from childhood and analyzing their early interactions in society, and are thus identified in school education, which is usually the first form of interaction in the social context (SANTOS; MORATO, 2012). According to Carvalho and Maciel (2003), another aspect to be observed in the teaching-learning process concerns the peculiarities of each student. The level of intellectual disability should be analyzed, some of which are of a mild level and others are more serious. This way, the traditional teaching process of schools is not insufficient for the educational promotion of students with intellectual disabilities.

Some authors refer common characteristics to those with intellectual difficulties related to the learning process, which may help to organize the supports and materials to be used. Among these characteristics, some are: difficulties in attention, concentration and memorization abilities, delays in language development and non-adaptation of social activities (SANTOS, 2010; SILVA, COELHO, 2014). In order to improve the quality of teaching and learning of students with intellectual disabilities, several aspects must be analyzed and reformulated according to the changes that take place in society. Despite constant advances in legislation for social inclusion, in practice, professionals encounter many challenges in the academic training that make it difficult for the teaching and learning process in the regular education of adolescents with special needs, such as intellectual disability. Through the analysis of the teaching and learning process of adolescents with intellectual disabilities, the present study aims to add recent scientific data relevant to the subject in question, providing the critical analysis of the teaching of these adolescents, presenting improvements in the school for the best intellectual and social development. Considering the importance of the above, the present study evaluated the methodological teaching and learning process used for the

inclusion of adolescents with intellectual disabilities in a public education service in a city in the North of Minas Gerais, Brazil.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This is a descriptive study with a qualitative approach, developed on the teaching-learning process of adolescents with intellectual disabilities of a School in the municipality of Montes Claros, MG. Data collection was carried out in the first two weeks of the month of November. The research was conducted through a semistructured interview with the school's professionals, including teachers and supervisors. A questionnaire containing eleven guiding questions elaborated by the researchers was used in this study. Seven professionals were selected to sample, with work time for at least 6 months; being lucid and oriented, after clarification regarding the objectives and methodology of the study; accept signing the Term of Assent and Free and Informed Consent as a criterion for answering the questionnaire. The interviews were conducted individually at the workplace, at a predetermined time with the professionals. The responses of the respective questionnaires were recorded and then fully typed into Microsoft Word 2010 document for analysis, selection and segregation of responses. The analysis of the data was operationalized through the content analysis modality based on the following items: the data were read, the significant, similar and different reports were highlighted; the choice of the utterances that have greater power of synthesis and comprehension were made; search for information from the themes mentioned in the objective; and elaboration of a list of speech of the interviewed by categories.

The speeches were identified by the denomination P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, P7 according to the increasing order by the age of the interviewees. Regarding the socio-demographic characteristics, the minimum age was 28 years old and the maximum age was 58 years old. The minimum working time was 9 months and maximum 16 years. Among those surveyed, only 1 professional was male and the rest were female. The data were collected after approval of the project by the Ethics and Research Committee of the Faculdades Integradas Pitágoras de Montes Claros, under the number 2.423.121. The research followed all legal ethical precepts in accordance with Resolution No. 466 of 2012 of the National Health Council, which stipulates ethical norms regulating research involving human beings, directly or indirectly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The questionnaire aimed to evaluate the teaching-learning process to the bearer of special educational needs (intellectual disability), in a public service of teaching based on the analysis of professionals. The interview questions were separated by thematic axes for analysis and discussion.

Teaching methodology used by professionals

Among the answers analyzed, most of the professionals agreed that the methodologies used depend on the level of difficulty of each student. Being elaborated by the professionals differentiated pedagogical apostilles.

"We usually develop differentiated activities to (try) to meet the student's need. We also use a flyer suggested by the professionals of the Multifunctional Resource Room (P4)."

Table 1. Characterization of the interviewees

Professional	Age	Sex	Educational Background	Employment Duration
P1	28	Female	Arts & Humanities/Portuguese	9 months
P2	30	Female	Specialization in special and inclusive education	2 years
P3	37	Female	Master's degree in Arts & Humanities/Portuguese	15 years
P4	42	Female	Arts & Humanities/Portuguese and English, specialization in Linguistics applied to the teaching of Portuguese; Master's degree in linguistic studies.	16 years
P5	43	Female	Pedagogy, specialization in clinical and institutional psych pedagogy	10 years
P6	46	Female	Pedagogy, specialization in educational services	25 years
P7	58	Male	Psycho pedagogy	5 years

" Application of spelling activities, reading, comprehension, interpretation and production of differentiated text, according to the student's level of learning (P3). "

In order for inclusion to take place effectively, it is necessary to think of educational pedagogical forms capable of satisfying the needs of each student (OLIVEIRA, VALENTIM, 2013).

When asked if the methodologies used contributed to the students' learning, the answers diverged. Some, although said yes, reported that learning is very relative according to the level of difficulty of the students.

"Yes, even if we do not have the appropriate training for the specific work with the special needs of the students and / or we use the same material for different reports, it is perceived that the students present evolution within the limitations of it. In this sense, I think that affectivity and the school context itself contribute to students being motivated to learn (P4). "

" Yes. However, it is noticeable to regress in cases where the pedagogical sequence with this student is lost, when, for example, the student's absence occurs due to his or her health problems (P5). "

Another interviewee has already stated the opposite:

" No , it takes a more differentiated work, it is an effort of the companion to put the student at the level of the class (P7) ". "

According to Omote (2006), regardless of whether the intellectual process is deficient or not, the learning process for all students has some difficulty, since each student has its unique way of learning.

Difficulties faced by professionals

The main difficulties reported by professionals were: lack of professional qualification, material resources, physical structure, support from government authorities and family support.

"The academic training does not prepare us for attending the student with special needs, the system itself does not offer didactic support for this (the student only has the follow-up of the teaching assistant, and even then, in 2017, an auxiliary had to follow 3 (three) students in one room, there is no specific planning for "special" student attendance. Note, I am not considering the Multifunction Resource Rooms here. I do consider classroom work where the student should be included not just inserted (P4). "

"There is a lack of material resources, lack of professionals with adequate training to the specific specialty for the student, inadequate physical infrastructure, adequate poor pedagogical ambience to the student's needs (P3). "

One of the interviewees showed a differentiated opinion regarding multiprofessional care, with the need for professionals from other areas to work together in order to contribute to the evolution of the student.

"A lack of support on the part of some relatives and professionals of other areas as psychologists, psychiatrists, among others (P6)". "

When asked if their professional training was enough to enable them to attend to students with disabilities, the majority said that it was not enough, because graduation is approached very superficially, requiring a professional's own search for training. In this regard, it was interesting to analyze that, according to the time of training and performance, the professionals with the longest training time reported that there was insufficient training and others even reported that there was no training.

"No, because each student is special and unique, each one has its limitations and new needs and limitations arise every day. Only the practice associated with the theories seen in formation can prepare us for each day, but we will never be fully prepared (P1). "

"Not. In practice, reality is totally different from theory. In theory we learn in a superficial way about the disabled student (P5) ". "

"Not. In fact, there was almost no training for this (P3). "

The result found in this study corroborates Artioli's (2006) speech, which shows that there are several obstacles that make it difficult to include students with disabilities, such as teacher unpreparedness, problems of public education, such as lack of resources, difficulties which still persist between linking special education and common education. On the other hand, the professionals with less time of performance and training have already said that they had a better qualification even if superficially the subject was approached. This shows the evolution by the public and private institutions of the pedagogical approaches and the knowledge focused on the area of inclusion.

"Yes, my training was great and I try to train myself more and more (P7)". "

Students' intellectual and social evolution and the importance of family support

Regarding the perception of professionals in the follow-up of students and their intellectual evolution, the teachers mentioned that the evolution depends very much on the level of the student's deficiency, being able to evolve or regress.

"It depends on the student and the type of disability. In some cases, we notice some evolution or even an oscillation: sometimes it evolves, sometimes it recedes. However, there are students in whom evolution is minimal (P4)."

"In the case of Intellectual Disability (ID), the processes of schooling of the people have been quite complex, due to the specificity of some deficiencies" (OLIVEIRA, VALENTIM, 2013, p.853).

The oscillation mentioned in the above report occurs mainly when the student is no longer accompanied as, for example, due to health problems, vacation period, etc.

"Yes. For some cases of less severe intellectual disability. According to the didactic evolution of the student, he advances to another book of higher difficulty grade, but the same occurs if a regress occurs, being turned to the initial handbook, with a lower level of difficulty (P5)."

For Santos (2012), the teaching process for the intellectual disabled in regular education is insufficient, since they have specific functional conditions that compromise their adaptation to the environment and the acquisition of information for learning. Not only the intellectual capacity of each student should be evaluated, but also the pedagogical way used for each one, being thus adapted for each student according to its evolution or regression. Professionals have unanimously mentioned that for the student to evolve, family support is essential, since parents are the basis for helping their children and believing in their evolution, not only intellectually but also socially. However, they reported that the family does not support the children sufficiently, most have difficulties accepting and then understanding the children's deficiency.

"I see that the family contributes partially, since it is unprepared through the clinical picture of the child as soon as the diagnosis is confirmed, taking time to accept. It is only after many dialogues on the subject that the family begins to collaborate in every way in the social and school life of the child (P4)."

"The family is fundamental. It is imperative that parents understand the problem of the child and help him at home, with tasks, for example. It is a continuous work, it is not only the school and the auxiliaries, but the family is base. If the student does not have family support, consequently he will be unmotivated, and this complicates his development. And one of the main drawbacks in special education is the lack of support from the student's family (P1)."

Regarding the social interaction, all professionals agreed that the social interaction of adolescents improved throughout the teaching favoring the development of learning.

"I think this is the biggest contribution to many students. Social interaction favors the development of autonomies and, consequently, learning (P4)."

Social interaction is as important as student learning, because through social interaction the student is prepared for a collective life with people of different characteristics later (OMOTE, 2006).

Inclusion of students in regular education

As for the inclusion of students in regular education, the professionals gave very divergent opinions, some of which,

although important, report that the inclusion process occurs in a very precarious, slow and insufficient way.

"There is no inclusion based on specific studies, what we have is a number of students with disabilities in regular school, in a school unsuitable for them (P7)."

"I do not agree with this inclusion, I think it excludes more than includes. The student feels inferior in a regular classroom where his / her classmates can learn and he / she does not (P1)."

Although not yet fully implemented, inclusive education came precisely with this proposal to modify, even if so the reality about inclusion, bringing important reflections for the changes to take place (SANTOS, 2012).

Another professional said that inclusion is a duty of the state and that the government should be prepared to offer a service adapted to the reality of the student.

"It is a law student established by law and must be implemented in full, namely, the school and the system must be adapted to receive them not to happen precariously, as in reality (P4)."

This professional cited that for inclusion there is a need for greater training of professionals and greater preparation of schools.

"I think it is important, however, that there is a need for greater training of teachers and other professionals involved in education. In general, further preparation of schools is required (P3)."

Concerning the preparation of professionals to receive the increasing demand of students with intellectual disabilities in regular education, some of them, despite feeling prepared, report the need to qualify more and more.

"Not totally prepared, but I see that a great deal of it has been brewing. But this preparation must be from everyone, from government, institution (P6)."

Main laws known by professionals and suggestions for improvement for teaching

Among the answers analyzed, all professionals know of some law or norm that guarantees the rights of people with special needs. The main ones cited were:

"The Child and Adolescent Statute (P4) (P5) (P1)".

"Federal Constitution (P4)".

"Law of Guidelines and Bases of Education (P5)". "Law No. 13,146 of July 6, 2015 (P2)".

According to a study by Tomazet *al.* (2016), on public policies for the intellectual disabled in Brazil, shows that there are no policies directed exclusively to this public.

Regarding suggestions for improvement to the teaching-learning process, all professionals agreed that improving the process requires greater preparation of the school and professionals before receiving students with special needs; greater investment in the physical structure of the school, as well as investments in materials and didactic resources; more

offers of professional training courses; greater interaction between professionals and the family, rooms with fewer students and professional appreciation.

"Increased investment by the authorities, especially the Ministry of Education in the provision of training courses aimed at educational professionals in the area of school inclusion and funds intended to structure schools in all their physical and pedagogical scope with materials and didactic resources other than necessity of demand (P5) ".

Final considerations

Despite the constant advances in Brazilian legislation for the inclusion of students with intellectual disabilities in regular education, in practice, professionals encounter many challenges in the academic formation that hinder the teaching-learning process. Lack of material resources, physical structure, support from government authorities and mainly lack of family support have also been identified. It is not only for teachers to be prepared and empowered, the family and school must also take on this responsibility. The professionals are committed and willing to prepare themselves more and more to receive students with intellectual disabilities in regular education. However, they report that it is a great challenge because of the particularities of each student. The present study becomes essential to understand the difficulties faced by professionals and the reality that is found in the inclusion of these students in a public service of teaching. It was found that through the methodology of teaching applied by the professionals, students can evolve even slowly, their intellectuality, and that the inclusion of them in regular education is also essential for their social evolution.

School inclusion is a process that has undergone several transformations and to be effectively implemented, there must be a harmony of the different sectors of society: social, economic, political, professional and family. Scientific studies on the intellectual disability of any professional area, is essential to get to know better this public that still goes unnoticed, needing a greater effort to conquer their rights and fit in society. The inclusion of intellectually disabled people in regular education was one more right won, this inclusion tends to increase each day as a result of the changes and improvements presented. Consequently, everyone must be prepared for an increasing demand for the disabled in the various sectors of society.

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