

**The challenges of including people with disabilities in stricto sensu Graduate Studies:  
a systematic review and empirical research on the subject.**

*Os desafios da inclusão de pessoas com deficiência na Pós-Graduação stricto sensu:  
uma revisão sistemática e uma pesquisa empírica sobre o tema*

*El desafío de la inclusión de personas con discapacidad en la posgraduación stricto sensu:  
una revisión sistemática y una investigación empírica sobre el tema.*

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**Abstract:** The permanent effort to include historically marginalized groups constitutes a priority of isonomy that reaffirms the fundamental commitment of the federative republic of Brazil to the realization of the dignity of the human person. There is a gap in the literary production of such a relevant theme. This article aims to analyze the reservation of vacancies for People with Disabilities (PwD) in *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs offered by federal public universities. Based on a systematic review of the literature and empirical research, this study seeks to understand the reality of institutions concerning the normative aspects of entry, permanence, and egress from master's and doctoral courses offered in the country.

**Keywords:** Disabled person. Quotas. Postgraduate studies. Reserved vacancies. College education.

**Resumo:** O esforço permanente de inclusão de grupos historicamente marginalizados constitui um primado de isonomia, que refirma o compromisso fundamental da República Federativa do Brasil na promoção da dignidade da pessoa humana. Compreendendo a relevância da temática e uma vez verificada a lacuna na produção acadêmica, o presente artigo surge com o objetivo de investigar a reserva de vagas para Pessoas com Deficiência em programas de pós-graduação *stricto sensu* ofertados por universidades públicas federais. Este estudo busca analisar, a partir de uma revisão sistemática da literatura e de pesquisa empírica, a realidade das instituições, no que concerne aos aspectos normativos do ingresso, permanência e egressos dos cursos de Mestrado e Doutorado ofertados no país.

**Palavras-chave:** Pessoa com deficiência. Cotas. Pós-graduação. Reserva de vagas. Educação superior.

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**Resumen:** El esfuerzo permanente por incluir a los grupos históricamente marginados constituye una primacía de isonomía, que reafirma el compromiso fundamental de la República Federativa de Brasil en la realización de la dignidad de la persona humana. Entendiendo la relevancia del tema y una vez verificada la laguna en la producción académica, este artículo tiene como objetivo investigar la reserva de vacantes para Personas con Discapacidad en los programas de posgrado *stricto sensu* ofrecidos por las universidades públicas federales. Este estudio busca comprender, a partir de una revisión sistemática de la literatura e investigaciones empíricas, la realidad de las instituciones, a respecto de los aspectos normativos de ingreso, permanencia y egreso de los cursos de Maestría y Doctorado que se ofrecen en el país.

**Palabras clave:** Persona con discapacidad. Cuotas. Posgraduación. Reserva de vacantes. Educación universitaria.

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## Introduction

When addressing compensatory discrimination in a preferential admission program at the Law School of the University of Washington, Dworkin (2002) considers that affirmative actions may not actually create a more egalitarian society. In practice, there is a possibility that they may not achieve the equality effects envisioned by their creators. Therefore, evaluating the effectiveness of these measures is a strategic action for promoting equality.

From an academic perspective, this study is justified by its potential to fill a gap in the literature. The research conducted did not identify any scientific articles that empirically study quota systems in master's and doctoral programs at federal universities, nor did it find any literature reviews on individuals with disabilities in Brazilian higher education.

Considering the social relevance of science for the improvement of *praxis* fields, this article is also justified by its potential to uncover elements of effectiveness in the establishment of institutions that regulate the admission, retention, and graduation policies and, consequently, the integration into the labor market of individuals with disabilities associated with *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs in Brazil.

In addition to identifying a *gap* in academic production regarding individuals with disabilities in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs, as well as consolidating the reviewed literature into thematic sections addressing normative frameworks, admission, retention, and alumni tracking, this article provides an overview of the current reality experienced by Brazilian federal universities. It highlights the need to establish programs and public initiatives that genuinely aim to structure and solidify inclusion in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate education, with the goal of effectively implementing a social approach to individuals with disabilities.

## Objective

In the context of affirmative actions, the main objective of this article is to investigate, through a systematic literature review and empirical research, the quota system for People with Disabilities (PwDs) in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs offered by Brazilian federal public universities.

## Method

To achieve the main objective, a systematic literature review was conducted, which involved the analysis of scientific articles published in peer-reviewed journals available on the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) Journals Portal. Furthermore, an empirical research was also conducted using a questionnaire developed based on the systematic literature review. The questionnaire was sent to universities through the Integrated Platform of Ombudsman and Access to Information (Fala.Br).

Beginning with the systematic literature review, it is important to clarify that the starting point is the provisions of the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), which advocates in its Article. 58 that special education comprises the modality of school education offered preferably in the regular education system for learners with disabilities, global developmental disorders, and high abilities or giftedness. It begins in Early Childhood Education and extends throughout life. Furthermore, the norm also establishes, in its Article 44, that Higher Education comprises Master's and Doctoral courses and programs, Specialization courses, Improvement courses, and others, open to candidates who have obtained a bachelor's degree and meet the requirements of the educational institutions.

In this sense, guided by the central objective of this work, which focuses on higher education, specifically *stricto sensu* postgraduate education, a survey of academic production on the subject was conducted. The aim was to identify studies that address the topic of individuals with disabilities in Higher Education. For this purpose, three searches were conducted in the database of the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES) Journals Portal, without a specific time frame or language limitation, using the following search terms: "Person with disability" AND "Higher Education," "Person with disability" AND "Undergraduate," and "Person with disability" AND "Postgraduate." The results of these searches are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 - Summary of the results obtained

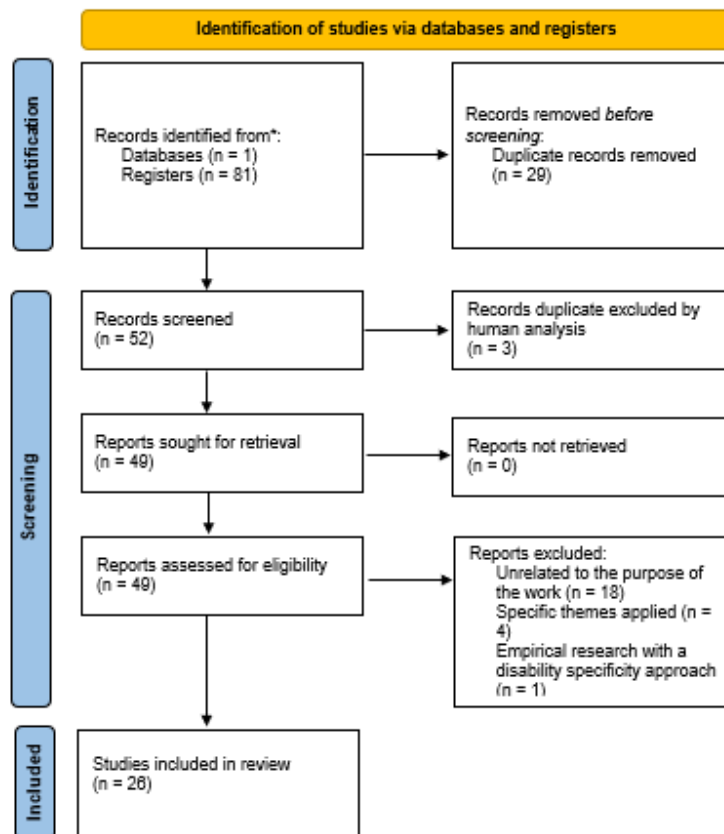
	<b>Research 1</b>	<b>Research 2</b>	<b>Research 3</b>
<b>Search engine</b>	“Person with disability” and “Higher Education”,	“Person with disability” and “Undergraduate”	“Person with disabilities” and “Postgraduate”
<b>Language</b>	Any language	Any language	Any language
<b>Publication Date</b>	Any year	Any year	Any year
<b>Search Field</b>	Title	Title	Title
<b>Total Documents Found</b>	72	21	17
<b>Number of articles</b>	72	21	17
<b>Articles published in peer-reviewed journals</b>	47	19	15

Source: Data collected by the author (2022)

Regarding Table 1, it is clear that the performance of the three studies separately and without limitation of time or language had the scope to maximize the number of findings. Understanding the title as the briefest summary of the topic addressed in the text, it is noted that the choice to search in the specified location was made to identify documents focused on individuals with disabilities in the context of Higher Education, either at the Undergraduate or Postgraduate level. Furthermore, the selection of articles aimed to include only scientific research, and the decision to search only in peer-reviewed journals was made to ensure a higher level of quality control in the selected texts.

Once the searches were performed, using the PRISMA Protocol diagram, the 81 selected results were exported in three files with extension *RIS* and loaded into the *Mendeley* reference manager. Then, the texts from the three studies were grouped into a single folder for a screening phase, and 29 articles duplicated by *Mendeley* were identified automatically, and therefore 52 articles were submitted to a screening phase for abstract and title analysis. After a second analysis carried out by the authors in the screening phase, three articles were excluded, leaving, therefore, 49 publications, which were analyzed in full, in order to ascertain theoretical elements necessary to understand the phenomenon. After analyzing the texts, 26 articles were included to compose the systematic review. At the same time, 23 studies were excluded due to their limited alignment with the objective of the work, as they addressed specific applied topics or were empirical research focusing on specific aspects of disabilities, as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - PRISMA protocol applied to literature review



Source: The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews (2022)

With regard to the methodological aspects that support the realization of the empirical study, it initially used documentary research through the analysis of information stored in the data and statistics section of the Sucupira Platform of CAPES, to ascertain information regarding the *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs and, specifically, information related to People with Disabilities associated with these programs, either as students or professors. The data repository used as a source was the one entitled “BR-CAPES-COLSUCUP-CURSO - Ano Base 2020”.

Upon extracting and consolidating the data, it was found that there were a total of 4,526 programs in Brazil at that time. Among these programs, 8.5% were located in the Central-West region, 20.46% in the Northeast region, 6.08% in the North region, 21.72% in the South region, and 43.22% in the Southeast region. Furthermore, despite a greater concentration of postgraduate programs in Minas Gerais, São Paulo, and Rio de Janeiro, which together represent 41.58% of the national programs, it is important to note that postgraduate courses are offered in all states. Therefore, a geographical analysis may not fully represent the entire picture.

Considering the legal *status* of the institutions, 17.74% of the programs are offered by private institutions and 82.26% by public institutions, being 0.82% municipal, 22.82% state-level, and 58.61% federal. When verifying the distribution of *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs by the academic organization of institutions, it can be observed that universities offer 81.18% of the programs. Additionally, 51.30% of the programs are affiliated with federal universities that offer courses in all states of the federation. The smallest offering is nine programs in Roraima, while 370 programs in Minas Gerais is the largest.

Considering the extensive presence of federal universities across all states and the number of courses offered by these institutions, a specific focus was given to investigate empirically, the reality of people with disabilities in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate education offered by federal public universities. In this sense, since no structured data were identified on the platforms of the Federal Government on the reality of PwDs in postgraduate studies at federal universities, a questionnaire was prepared, which was sent to the entities by the Integrated Platform for Ombudsman and Access to Information - Fala.Br, containing eight closed questions, as shown in Figure 2.

In addition to information related to the student body and research carried out in the Sucupira Platform repository, the Federal Government's Personnel Statistical Panel (PEP) sought to survey which institutions have Professors of the Federal Magisterium with disabilities. In addition, this research aimed to verify whether the report indicated the allocation of the respective teachers to the Postgraduate Programs.

Despite the attempted effort, it is worth noting that the data obtained from the PEP (Public Employee Census) does not provide a breakdown of the number of disabled employees by career, but only by institution and type of disability. Therefore, it was not possible to identify how many of the 2,221 disabled employees affiliated with federal universities are faculty members. Furthermore, the report only provided the name of the entity where the employee is stationed, making it impossible to ascertain their allocation within the academic structure of the respective university. As a result, it was challenging to gather information regarding the affiliation of these faculty members with postgraduate programs. Therefore, questions about the faculty were also included in the research instrument, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 - Items included in the questionnaire sent to federal public universities

1. Is there a standard in this educational institution that establishes a reservation of places for students to ENTER the condition of Person with Disabilities (PwD) in *stricto sensu* Postgraduate courses (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
2. Does the educational institution maintain an ORGANIZED and UPDATED RECORD THAT ALLOWS TO DETERMINE the NUMBER of people with disabilities enrolled in each of its *stricto sensu* Postgraduate courses (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
3. Does the educational institution currently maintain an ORGANIZED and UPDATED RECORD ON the TYPE OF DISABILITY of each of the students with disabilities enrolled in a *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
4. Does the educational institution have a specific standard, policy, program or action aimed at supporting the PERMANENCE OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ENROLLED in the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate courses (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
5. Does the educational institution have a specific standard, policy, program or action aimed at MONITORING GRADUATES WITH DISABILITIES from *stricto sensu* Postgraduate courses (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
6. Does the educational institution maintain an organized and updated record, which allows determining the NUMBER OF TEACHERS WITH DISABILITIES, who are part of the faculty of the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course(s) (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
7. Is there any standard, policy, program or specific action in this educational institution to ENCOURAGE the ACCREDITATION of TEACHERS WITH DISABILITIES in the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No
8. Is there in this educational institution any standard, policy, program or specific action to encourage the PERMANENCE OF teachers WITH DISABILITIES in the FACULTY of the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course(s) (Master and/or Doctorate)?  Yes.  No

Source: Prepared by the author (2022)

The questionnaire was sent to the 63 Brazilian federal universities, and all institutions responded to the request for information by the Fala.Br Platform, even if incomplete or with the refusal to respond. In addition, considering the relevance of all items of the questionnaire, which seek to identify normative, structural, permanence and follow-up aspects of graduated students, as well as the reality regarding the accreditation and permanence of teachers with disabilities in *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies, it was established that only fully answered questionnaires would be considered and analyzed in this work.

## Results and Discussion

### Systematic Literature Review

The first result contained in this article stems from the survey carried out in the systematic review of the literature. In this sense, the works contained in Table 02 were analyzed and sought to extract from each text clippings to support the elaboration of the questions contained in the questionnaire used in the empirical research.

In addition, such clippings were also used in the analysis of the results obtained in response to requests for information sent to Brazilian federal universities. Based on the content of the excerpts extracted, the texts were organized into categories, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2 - Organization of articles by clippings of subjects relevant to the achievement of the work objective

Clippings Categories	Título do Artigo	Authors
	Protection of Persons with Disabilities	(SENNA, 2013)
<b>Conceptual aspects, movements and approaches on disability</b>	Social protection and care for people with disabilities: comments to an article	(SPOSATI, 2013)
	Social Protection for Persons with Disabilities in Post-Constituent Brazil	(ZUCCO, 2013)
	BPC and people with disabilities: analysis from municipalities in Rio de Janeiro	(SOCHACZEWSKI; TAVARES, 2013)
	Person with physical and sensory disabilities: perception of undergraduate nursing students	(REBOUÇAS <i>et al.</i> , 2011)
	Quotas for people with disabilities in higher education courses of the Federal Institute of Paraná (IFPR)	(BONDEZAN <i>et al.</i> , 2022)
<b>Legal aspects and normative evolution on PwD and education</b>	Public policies for access of people with disabilities to Brazilian higher education: an analysis of educational indicators	(MARTINS <i>et al.</i> , 2015)
	The inclusion and reservation of places for people with disabilities in higher education	(MENDES, 2022)
	Social Movements and the Role of People with Disabilities	(FERREIRA; CABRAL FILHO, 2013)
	The concept of persons with disabilities and the proposal for a dialogue of courts: analysis of its meaning in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and in the jurisprudence of Brazilian higher courts	(COSTA, 2020)
	Affirmative actions, people with disabilities and access to higher education in Brazil - context, normative framework, effectiveness and challenges	(SARLET; WOLFGANG; SARLET, 2019)
<b>Admission and permanence of PwDs in Higher Education</b>	Persons with disabilities and their inclusion in Brazilian higher education	(FERREIRA; MOTTA, 2017)
	Fraternal law: legal provision for the access and permanence of persons with disabilities in higher education	(PRANDI <i>et al.</i> , 2018)
	Affirmative Action Policies, Persons with Disabilities and the Recognition of Identities and Differences in Brazilian Higher Education	(CABRAL, 2018)

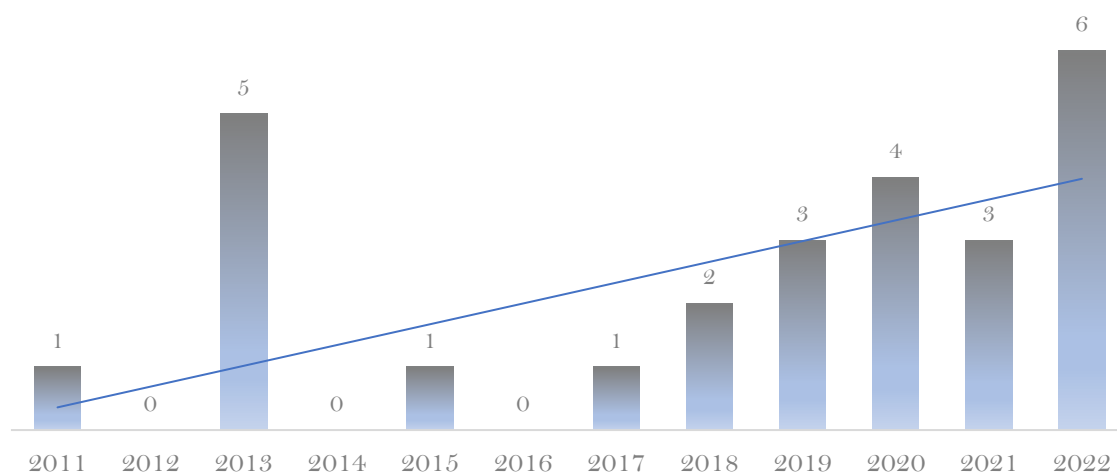


	Indigenous academics, quilombolas and people with disabilities in higher education: an analysis of the inclusion policy adopted by the State University of Southeastern Bahia (UESB)	(ALVES, 2019)
	Accessibility of people with disabilities to higher education: social attitudes of students and professors of a higher education institution	(BRUNHARA <i>et al.</i> , 2019)
	Struggle for Dignity and Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Higher Public Education: an Accessibility Construction Experience from the perspective of Inclusive Management in the Brazilian Northeast	(GUEDES, 2020)
	Organization of access and permanence of persons with disabilities in higher education from the establishment of the include program	(LARA; TANGANELLI; SEBASTIÁN-HEREDERO, 2020)
	Educational inclusion of visually impaired people in higher education	(SILVA; PIMENTEL, 2021)
	Barriers and facilitators in the inclusion of people with disabilities in higher education: The students' point of view	(WUO; PAGANELLI, 2022)
	The experience of graduation by a person with disabilities: reflections to advance inclusion and accessibility	(MARQUES; BARBOSA, 2022)
<b>PwDs insertion in the world of work</b>	Analysis of the integration processes in the work of people with disabilities: case study in a higher education institution	(VAZ; FERREIRA, 2020)
	People with Disabilities Working as Teachers in Higher Education	(NASCIMENTO <i>et al.</i> , 2021)
	Accessibility Barriers for Persons with Disabilities in Higher Education	(PORTE <i>et al.</i> , 2022)
	Democratization of Higher Education for Persons with Disabilities/Special Needs: The Unioeste as a Field of Social Recognition	(SILVA; RUSCHEINSKY, 2021)
	Quotas for people with disabilities at the Federal University of Uberlândia (UFU): inclusion policy in higher education	(BUIATTI; NUNES, 2022)

Source: Prepared by the author (2022)

At this stage of surveying the scientific production on the subject, although no time frame was performed, it was identified that 2013 and 2022 were the years with the highest number of papers published, as can be seen in Graph 1. In addition, there is a prospect of an increase in academic production on the subject, as indicated by the trend line.

Graph 1 - Distribution of selected academic production by year



Source: Prepared by the author (2022)

Reading the works, it is identified that from the 1970s onwards, the movements of people with disabilities gained visibility and adherence in the country, being initially promoted by civil society initiatives in the light of an incipient state action (SOCHACZEWSKI; TAVARES, 2013). In this sense, understanding disability as an evolving concept that results from the interaction between people with disabilities and environmental and attitudinal barriers that impair the effective equal participation of these people in society (SENNA, 2013), it is necessary to consolidate inclusive actions that reveal themselves as measures of social justice and that, therefore, must be able to promote effective provision of the State, through access and continuity of public services (REBOUÇAS *et al.*, 2011).

Aside from access, the effectiveness of the public services provided must be guaranteed, which must be integrated and overcome the institutional (ZUCCO, 2013) fragmentation typical of a dysfunctional bureaucratic administrative model. Furthermore, the conceptual paradigm of state action should not be based on a retrograde conception of disability as a personal tragedy or a deviant pathology of a body considered "normal". (SPOSATI, 2013).

When addressing the evolution of the concept of disability from a normative and jurisprudential perspective, Costa (2020) presents a synthesis of the three treatment models of people with disabilities throughout history. The model of dispensation prevailed until the Middle Ages, and conceived disability as a moral or religious punishment and people with disabilities as useless and to be borne by their peers. The medical or rehabilitative model

gained strength from the World Wars and understands disability from a medical perspective and therefore needs a cure or rehabilitation. Finally, the social model seeks to understand the combination between the individual's bodily limitations and the possibility of society including him or her. This model, in Sarlet's conception (2019), is directly linked to the theory and practice of human and fundamental rights.

The evolution of the concept of disability was also incorporated by the United Nations (UN), since in its original definition, the Declaration of the Rights of Disabled Persons of 1975 focused only on people and did not consider issues related to accessibility and the social and economic situation, as evidenced by Ferreira and Cabral Filho (2013). Regarding the evolution of normative aspects, Martins *et al.* (2015) highlight the relevance of the Salamanca Declaration of 1994 for the realization of the rights of people with disabilities in the educational field, which also reverberated in the inclusion of Special Education as an element of Brazilian educational policy provided for in the LDB.

Likewise, the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of 2007, signed in New York, brought, in its Art. 1, a concept aligned with the social model comprising people with disabilities as those who have long-term impediments of a physical, mental, intellectual or sensory nature, which, in interaction with various barriers, can obstruct their full and effective participation in society on equal terms with other people.

In addition to the conceptual aspect, the Convention also recognized in its preamble the importance of accessibility in education as an instrument of full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this context, when addressing the theme inclusion in the educational field, the contributions of Mendes (2022) and Bondezan *et al.* (2022) regarding the systematization of norms related to people with disabilities and the reservation of vacancies are highlighted, consolidated in Table 3.

Table 3 - Normative evolution on the inclusion and reservation of vacancies for PwDs

Normative Instrument	Year	Accomplished approaches
<b>Federal Constitution</b>	1988	Protection of persons with disabilities in various devices
<b>Law No. 7.853</b>	1989	National Policy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities
<b>Declaration of Salamanca</b>	1994	Principles, Policies and Practices in the Area of Special Educational Needs
<b>Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education.</b>	1996	Prevision of a chapter dedicated to Special Education
<b>Circular Notice No. 277 – MEC</b>	1996	Access to higher education for students with disabilities
<b>Decree No. 3.298</b>	1999	National Policy for the Integration of Persons with Disabilities is regulated
<b>Ordinance No. 1.679</b>	1999	Accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities, to instruct the processes of authorization and recognition of courses and accreditation of higher education institutions.
<b>Montreal International Declaration</b>	2001	Developing policies for people with disabilities
<b>Ordinance No. 3.284</b>	2003	Accessibility requirements for persons with disabilities to instruct the processes of authorization and recognition of courses and accreditation of higher education institutions.
<b>Decree No. 5.296</b>	2004	Regulates Laws No. 10.048/2000 and No. 10.098/2000
<b>Decree No. 7.611</b>	2011	Provides for Special Education
<b>Law No. 12.711</b>	2012	Admission to federal universities and federal institutions of technical education of high school level
<b>Decree 7.824</b>	2012	Regulates Law No. 12.711/2012
<b>National Education Plan (PNE)</b>	2014	PNE Target 4
<b>Law No. 13.146</b>	2015	Statute of Persons with Disabilities
<b>Law No. 13.409</b>	2016	Amended Law No. 12.711/2012 and included the reservation of places for people with disabilities in the technical courses of high school and higher education of federal institutions of education
<b>Decree No. 9.034</b>	2017	Amends Decree No. 7.824/2012
<b>Decree No. 10.502</b>	2020	National Special Education Policy - Suspended - ADI No. 6590 - STF

Source: Adapted from Mendes (2022) and Bondezan *et al.* (2022)

Despite the scope of the normative provisions consolidated by Mendes (2022) and complemented by Bondezan *et al.* (2022), it should be added, at this point, that the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Education Personnel (CAPES), by Normative Ordinance No. 13/2016, established elements for the induction of Affirmative Actions in Postgraduate Studies, including for People with Disabilities. However, on

June 16, 2020, the then Minister of Education revoked, by MEC Ordinance No. 545, the CAPES standard that fostered such a reserve of vacancies, weakening, even if momentarily, such a program to foster inclusion.

The establishment of affirmative actions that enable the entry of people with disabilities into Higher Education, both at the Undergraduate and Postgraduate levels, is, under the terms recorded by Ferreira (2017), an indispensable component for the realization of personality rights, as well as a mechanism to mitigate inequalities, since it provides opportunities for social interaction and favors the self-development of these people (PRANDI *et al.*, 2018). However, Silva and Pimentel (2021) consider the need to understand the access to higher education of PwDs in addition to the actions that enable only admission.

In this sense, despite the advances resulting from the establishment of quotas in higher education, the inclusion policy still demands the creation, by the government, of programs and actions that ensure the permanence of people with disabilities in the university space, providing a dignified educational experience and, consequently, a satisfactory and pleasurable learning (CABRAL, 2018; MARQUES; BARBOSA, 2022). This is necessary, since the inclusive access practices carried out in universities are, in many cases, insufficient to ensure the effective participation and permanence of students with disabilities in university life (WUO; PAGANELLI, 2022).

Regarding the challenges of the permanence of people with disabilities in higher education, Brunhara *et al.* (2019) highlight the existence of physical, communicational, methodological and attitudinal barriers, which restrict the potential for full participation in the academic training process. In this sense, Alves (2019) points out the fundamental role of governmental measures, among which he highlights the importance of student assistance and the continuous provision of specialized care/services, as pillars for the support of an inclusive policy in the educational field.

In addition to strategic actions, Guedes (2020) emphasizes the importance of the engagement and integration of university managers in the development of transversal and continuous actions that involve both the pedagogical aspect and the administrative dimension of the institution. Lara, Tanganelli and (2020) Sebastián-Heredero also highlight the need for political debates with different segments so that actions can be implemented democratically and according to the needs of the target audience of special education.

Understanding the quotas in Brazilian universities as instruments for reducing inequalities, valuing diversity and training people for professional work (BUIATTI; NUNES, 2022; SILVA; RODRIGUES; RUSCHEINSKY, 2021), the relationship between the completion of the Undergraduate or Postgraduate course and the insertion of graduates in the world of work becomes inseparable. In this field, Nascimento and

Figueiredo *et al.* (2021) emphasize that scientific production is scarce regarding the social inclusion of people with disabilities in the labor market, as well as in relation to educational policies directed to this theme.

Finally, another gap found in this stage of systematic literature review is the disproportionate representation of people with disabilities in graduate activities promoted by educational institutions, a fact that does not contribute to democratization in filling organizational spaces, such as those intended for professionals working in higher education (PORTE *et al.*, 2022; VAZ; FERREIRA, 2020).

Based on such theoretical surveys and seeking to understand the issues and gaps pointed out by the literature regarding the reservation of vacancies for People with Disabilities (PwDs) in *stricto sensu* postgraduate programs offered by federal public universities in Brazil, empirical research was carried out, which will be presented below.

## The Empirical Research

Analyzing the information sent by the 63 federal universities, it was identified that eight feedbacks were answered incompletely or with refusal to fill out the questionnaire. Therefore, the sample considered in this study is composed of 55 federal universities, that is, 87.3% of the institutions of this nature that, together, offer 1949 *stricto sensu* Postgraduate courses in the five Brazilian regions, being: 222 in the Midwest, 460 in the Northeast, 216 in the North, 584 in the Southeast and 467 in the South of the country.

The first question was elaborated from the synthesis of the revised literature and sought to understand the normative aspect of the theme of reserving vacancies for admission of PwD in postgraduate courses *stricto sensu* (Master or Doctorate). This issue becomes even more relevant since there was, in 2020, the revocation, for a period, of CAPES Normative Ordinance No. 13/2016, which established elements for the induction of Affirmative Actions in Graduate Studies. Regarding this topic, it was found that 42 (76%) of the federal universities that make up the sample have some normative production establishing such a reserve. In comparison, 13 (24%) do not have such a forecast.

When performing an analysis of the responding institutions segmented by Brazilian geographic regions, it is verified that there are universities without a normative framework in all regions, one in the Midwest, two in the Northeast, four in the Southeast, three in the South and three in the North. Despite the little regional variability, it should be noted that, proportionally, the data show that in the northern region of the country three of the eight responding institutions signaled for the absence of regulations, being, therefore, a finding that

demonstrates the need to deepen the studies to understand if there is any specific phenomenon in this region that is contributing to this higher proportion.

Also on the theme of admission, a survey was also made of institutions that have a norm, policy, program or specific action to encourage the accreditation of teachers with disabilities in a *stricto sensu* postgraduate course (Master and/or Doctorate), since the study of other education workers, was also pointed out as a gap in scientific production. Regarding this questioning, 52 (95%) institutions stated that they do not have an initiative in this regard and only 3 (5%) stated that they have some type of initiative that encourages the insertion of people with disabilities in the faculty of Postgraduate programs.

In addition to the normative issues inherent to the admission of students and teachers to the *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses, and understanding the relevance of organizing data for the development of programs and actions in the context of public administration, the number of federal universities that have organized and updated records on the number of students with disabilities enrolled in each of their *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses were also researched. On this point, 35 (64%) institutions stated that they have such data organized and updated, while 20 (36%) reported not having it. Aiming for further detail on the previous question, a survey was conducted to identify Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) that have organized and updated records on the specific type of disability of each of the students with disabilities enrolled in the *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses. Regarding this research, 30 (55%) universities reported having records of such information, while 25 (45%) stated that they do not have such records.

Concerning the organization and accuracy of data, it was also investigated whether the HEIs have a repository that allows to determine the number of professors with disabilities who are part of the faculty of the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course(s) (Master's and/or Doctorate). Regarding this question, 34 (62%) universities stated that they do not have it and 21 (38%) answered that they have such records organized and updated. By analyzing this question in relation to the data regarding students, it can be observed that there seems to be a more efficient structuring of student data records compared to faculty members in the *stricto sensu* postgraduate context. This highlights the need for administrators to take action to create or share tools that enable a more efficient organization of this information for the development of programs or public policies.

Based on the literature review conducted in the second section, which highlighted the relevance of retention as a fundamental axis of educational inclusion policy, efforts were made to also investigate the actions carried out by federal universities regarding this topic, both for students and faculty members in the context of *stricto sensu* postgraduate studies. Regarding this questioning, 26 (47%) of these Federal Institutions

of Higher Education (HEIs) surveyed stated that they have a standard, policy, program or action to support the permanence of students with disabilities enrolled in *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses (master's and/or doctorate) and 29 (53%) answered that they do not have. Regarding the permanence of PwDs in the faculty, 6 (11%) of the HEIs surveyed reported that they have a specific norm, policy, program or action to encourage the permanence of teachers with disabilities in a *stricto sensu* Postgraduate course (Master's and/or Doctorate), on the other hand, 49 (89%) pointed out that there is no action regarding the permanence of the faculty.

Apart from issues related to the normative aspect, admission, and retention, the literature also pointed out that the integration of people with disabilities into the labor market is a fundamental aspect of inclusion in Higher Education. In this sense, the researched HEIs were asked if they have any rules, policies, programs or actions aimed at monitoring students with disabilities who have graduated from *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses (Master's and/or Doctorate). Regarding this question, 50 (91%) participating institutions expressed that there is no action in this regard and only 5 (9%) showed that there is some initiative that covers all students, including people with disabilities.

Analyzing the empirical results in light of the reviewed literature, it is understood that federal universities, for the most part, have normative actions that align with the social model of understanding the concept of disability. Despite the temporary revocation of Normative Ordinance No. 13/2016 by the Minister of Education, there is an institutional effort/response in the production of internal instruments for the admission of people with disabilities into *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs. This effort is based on university autonomy, as stipulated in Article 207 of the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Beyond the normative level, the literature also indicates that the effectiveness of a policy for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in higher education requires measures that go beyond admission. It is necessary to implement actions that ensure the retention and support of both students and faculty members. In this regard, there is a need for the development of initiatives by federal universities, as a significant portion of the surveyed institutions lacks programs and actions aimed at ensuring the retention and support of persons with disabilities. Therefore, this theme could be included in the collegiate discussion agenda of the National Forum of Pro-Rectors of Research and Graduate Studies (FOPROP) and the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education (Andifes), in order to develop shared and inter-institutional projects.

Furthermore, it is also suggested that CAPES, as the agency that supports the Ministry of Education in formulating policies and developing activities to train teaching



professionals for basic and higher education, as well as for scientific and technological development in the country, as stated in Article 2 of Law No. 8.405/1992, perfect, update and publish a new normative act to induce affirmative actions in postgraduate school and that includes other dimensions besides admission. It is also suggested, in the terms registered by Ferreira and Motta (2017), that actions of inclusion and accessibility of PwDs students and teachers in the Master's and Doctorate courses constitute elements considered in the evaluative dimensions of the *stricto sensu* postgraduate courses.

Finally, regarding actions aimed at monitoring the inclusion of graduates with disabilities from the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs, and their integration into the labor market, a significant gap was identified in a considerable number of the surveyed institutions. In addition, the structuring, granularity and transparency of data regarding the composition of the PwD workforce within federal universities require improvement so that studies can be carried out, and effective actions can be taken.

### Final Considerations

The article achieved its objective, since it carried out an investigation on the reservation of places for People with Disabilities (PwD) in the *stricto sensu* Postgraduate programs offered by federal public universities and, based on the results found, revealed the need to create and improve programs and actions within the federal public administration, to ensure greater effectiveness in the inclusion of these people in Higher Education, especially with regard to the permanence and monitoring of graduates/insertion in the labor market.

At this point, it is also noteworthy that some methodological aspects adopted may constitute limitations of the study carried out, among which stand out: the exclusion of eight federal universities from the surveyed sample due to the absence or incomplete response to the questionnaire sent; the use of searchers of academic production only in Portuguese and, also, the selection of academic production composed only of scientific articles published in peer-reviewed journals.

Finally, based on the results obtained, it is suggested as the object of future studies that researches be developed in private universities and Federal Institutes of Education, Science and Technology, as well as in state and municipal public institutions. In addition, it is also recommended that comparative research be carried out between the current reality in Brazil and in other countries, such as Portugal, so that any inclusive practices can be shared and improved in an international scenario.

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