

**The institutional policy and the accessibility core at the university:
access and permanence actions for Special Education target audience students**

*A política institucional e o núcleo de acessibilidade na universidade:
ações de acesso e permanência dos estudantes público-alvo da Educação Especial*

*La política institucional y el núcleo de accesibilidad en la universidad:
acciones de acceso y permanencia de los estudiantes del público objetivo de Educación Especial*

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Abstract: This article analyzes the institutional policy of accessibility at the State University of Maranhão, from the perspective of the actions of the Accessibility Nucleus, for the access and permanence of Special Education students. The theoretical matrix was Sasaki (2006; 2009) and Martins (2022). The approach is qualitative with bibliographical and documentary research, and Thematic Analysis for the treatment of the corpus. The results indicate that the inclusion of Special Education target audience students cannot be limited to the space and activities of the Accessibility Nucleus, since institutional accessibility and inclusion policies are necessary to establish access and permanence for students, a target of Special Education in the institution.

Keywords: Special Education. University. Policy. Accessibility.

Resumo: Este artigo analisa a política institucional de acessibilidade da Universidade Estadual do Maranhão, na perspectiva das ações do Núcleo de Acessibilidade, para o acesso e permanência dos estudantes público-alvo da Educação Especial. A matriz teórica foi Sasaki (2006; 2009) e Martins (2022). A abordagem é qualitativa com pesquisa bibliográfica e documental, e Análise Temática para tratamento do *corpus*. Os resultados indicam que a inclusão de estudantes público-alvo da Educação Especial não pode se delimitar ao espaço e a atuação do Núcleo de Acessibilidade, visto que as políticas institucionais de acessibilidade e inclusão são necessárias para firmar o acesso e a permanência dos estudantes, alvo da Educação Especial na instituição.

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Palavras-chave: Educação Especial. Universidade. Política. Acessibilidade.

Resumen: Este artículo analiza la política institucional de accesibilidad de la Universidad Estadual de Maranhão, en la perspectiva de las acciones del Núcleo de Accesibilidad, para el acceso y permanencia de los estudiantes de Educación Especial. La matriz teórica fue Sasaki (2006; 2009) y Martins (2022). El abordaje es cualitativo con investigación bibliográfica y documental, y Análisis Temático para el tratamiento del corpus. Los resultados indican que la inclusión de los estudiantes del público objetivo de Educación Especial no puede limitarse al espacio y las actividades del Núcleo de Accesibilidad, ya que las políticas institucionales de accesibilidad e inclusión son necesarias para establecer el acceso y la permanencia de los estudiantes, objetivo de la Educación Especial en la institución.

Palabras llaves: Educación Especial. Universidad. Política. Accesibilidad.

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Introduction

As an introduction, we point out that the National Policy on Special Education in the Perspective of Inclusive Education (PNEEPEI), from 2008, defined Special Education as a transversal modality of education that permeates all levels of education. In addition, it designated that the Target Audience of Special Education (PAEE) are students with disabilities, Autistic Spectrum Disorder (TEA), and those with high abilities and/or giftedness. These students are included in regular education classes and can also have access to the services and resources of Specialized Educational Assistance (AEE).

The AEE covers complementary and/or supplementary activities whose objective is to meet the specific needs of accessibility and inclusion of students who are PAEE in order to enable full participation of these students in teaching-learning activities of regular education. Furthermore, according to the National Education Policy from the Perspective of Inclusive Education (PNEEPEI/2008), in Higher Education, the AEE procedures for students who make up the PAEE are the responsibility of the Accessibility Nucleus (NA) of each Higher Education Institution (IES) (BRASIL, 2008). But, nowadays, students, targets of Special Education, still face many barriers to access and permanence in Higher Education Institutions. In this sense, the inclusion of these students must be part of debates, planning, and institutional policies.

We distinguish that the (PNEEPEI/2008) became a milestone for the design of institutional accessibility and inclusion policies as well as for the structuring of NA in IES. However, the formulation and implementation of these institutional accessibility and inclusion

policies are faced with the challenges inherent in the deconstruction of the conditions and exclusion processes that exist in the objective reality of each Higher Education institution.

Given these initial considerations, this article aims to analyze the institutional policy of accessibility at Maranhão State University (UEMA), from the perspective of the actions of the Accessibility Center (NAU), for the access and permanence of students with specific needs that are the target audience of Special Education.

For this reason, we point out that academic productions on institutional accessibility and inclusion policies are still scarce, especially with a peculiar focus on the AN actions of state universities. The constitution and fulfillment of these accessibility policies need to be unveiled through scientific studies that increase knowledge for the improvement of the guidelines contained in the educational inclusion policies.

We emphasize that after the publication of legal and political frameworks with principles of inclusion, mainly the Federal Constitution (CF) of 1988, the current Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB) no. 9.3994/96, and the already mentioned PNEPEI/2008, there was an increase in the number of enrollments of students who make up the PAEE in Higher Education (MARTINS; 2022). In this context, we add the decisive impact of the publication in 2015 of Law No. 13,146 the Brazilian Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities (LBI), which delineates the concepts of accessibility, universal design, assistive technology or technical aids, and barriers to social participation. Furthermore, in Chapter IV, Articles 27 and 28 deliberate on inclusive educational systems at all levels of education. Item XIII makes it clear that people with disabilities must have "access to higher education and professional and technological education on an equal basis with other people" (BRASIL, 2015, s/p).

From this perspective, we confirm that in a decade, the number of students who are PAEE in Higher Education has almost tripled. In 2011, we noticed that 22,367 enrollments of students who are PAEE in undergraduate courses were proportional to 0.33% of the total number of enrollments in the HEIs. After ten years, that is, in the year 2021, we identified a total of 63,404 registrations of students in the PAEE, corresponding to 0.71% of the universe of enrollments in undergraduate courses in Brazil (INEP, 2022).

Thus, we reflect that the successive expansion of the admission of students who are PAEE in IES makes it urgent to consolidate the institutional policies of accessibility and inclusion. On the other hand, the tiny percentage of enrollments of these students in Higher Education confirms that there is still much to be done in terms of reorganization and preparation of educational institutions for inclusion.

Furthermore, we witnessed, not long ago, on the national scene, the paradoxical attempt via Decree No. 10,502 of September 30, 2020, to replace PNEEPEI/2008 with a proposal for Special Education with a segregationist tendency. Despite this, by Direct Action of Unconstitutionality (ADI) 6590, the Federal Supreme Court (STF) suspended the said decree for "provoking discrimination and segregation between students with and without disabilities and encouraging the creation of specialized schools, specialized classes, bilingual schools of the deaf, and bilingual classes of the deaf" ⁴. In this way, this retreat concerning the guidelines of the Inclusive Special Education paradigm, established in PNEEPEI/2008, was revoked through Decree No. 11.370 of January 1, 2023⁵.

We deduce from this described fact the current spirit of weakening the national policy of Special Education. However, on the other hand, this episode also makes more evident the importance of the role of institutional accessibility policies as a basis for sustaining the paradigm of inclusion of students who are PAEE in Higher Education.

Therefore, in view of the justifications presented here, we question: how is the institutional accessibility policy of the State University of Maranhão (UEMA) presented, in the perspective of the actions of the Accessibility Center (NAU), for the access and permanence of students with specific needs who are the target audience of Special Education?

In the search for answers to this central concern, which implied the need for fieldwork to collect empirical material on the reality under analysis, we opted for a qualitative approach of a bibliographic and documental nature. The locus of the documentary sources was the public repository of the researched institution: the State University of Maranhão (UEMA).

The collection of information occurred from more than one source to allow the triangulation of different pieces of information about the same reality. This diversified the possibilities of data crossings, made the analyses more complex, and increased the reliability of the results. (YIN, 2016). In this way, the documents became precise sources of the origin and formation of the investigated nucleus and of how accessibility is planned in the institution's policy.

The selection of documents from the UEMA public repository was based on the most important ones, that is, the documents that would respond to the problem of this study, namely: how is the institutional accessibility policy of the State University of Maranhão (UEMA) presented, from the perspective of the actions of the Accessibility Nucleus (NAU),

⁴ Available at: <https://portal.stf.jus.br/noticias/verNoticiaDetalhe.asp?idConteudo=456419&ori=1>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2023.

⁵ Available at: <https://static.poder360.com.br/2023/01/DOU-revoga-educacao-especial-2-jan-2023.pdf>. Accessed on: 14 Feb. 2023.

for the access and permanence of students with specific needs who are the target audience of Special Education? Therefore, when choosing documents, we focus on:

a) (UEMA) accessibility policy, intending to identify the goals foreseen for the NAU, regarding the access and permanence of students who are PAEE;

b) Institutional Development Plan (PDI 2021-2025), with the objective of verifying the institutional guidelines for accessibility and Inclusive Education;

c) Resolutions n° 231/2000; No. 679/2007; No. 886/2014; No. 891/2015 of the CONSUN/UEMA University Council, with the aim of characterizing the origin, structure, and functioning of the NAU. It should be noted that we also used the reading of other related documents to support the understanding of the main documents.

We used the Thematic Analysis reference by Braun and Clarke (2008, s/p) for data analysis since, in the authors' conception, this type of analysis: “[...] is a method to identify and report patterns (themes) within the data. These patterns/themes reveal the meanings of the data”.

So we follow the fundamental steps of this method, namely:

a) Reading and transcriptions necessary for familiarization with the contents of the documents;

b) Systematization and coding of information;

c) Grouping of contents by units of meaning and respective themes.

The Main Themes and respective groupings found are the following:

1) UEMA's institutional accessibility policy from the perspective of NAU actions;

2) The origin, structure, and functioning of the NAU; It is

3) NAU Actions for the inclusion and permanence of students who are PAEE at the university in conjunction with UEMA's institutional accessibility policy.

However, before explaining the thematic axes of our analysis, we will make a brief contextualization regarding the constitution of NA in Brazilian IES, in effect, cohesive with current legislation, accessibility and inclusion policies.

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A brief contextualization of the constitution of NA in Brazilian IES

The Ministry of Education (MEC), together with the Secretariat for Special Education (SEESP) and the Secretariat for Higher Education (SESu), from 2005 to 2010, encouraged the creation and organization of NA in Federal Institutions of Higher

Education (IFES). For this purpose, it launched the Accessibility Program in Higher Education (Incluir) with the financing of access actions for people with disabilities (PcD) in Higher Education. Federal funding for accessibility actions was carried out through competition notices, and the allocation of resources was stipulated each year, according to general demands for the acquisition of equipment, permanent materials, and for training and qualification actions for professionals at the Institutions of Higher Education in the field of Special Education.

Next, another important note to be made refers to the publication of Decree No. 7611, in 2011, which was provided in Article 5, §2, item VII on technical and financial support for the structuring of NA in Federal Institutions of Higher Education (IFES). The decree notoriously specifies in §5 that the purpose of the NA is the elimination of “physical, communication and information barriers that restrict the participation and academic and social development” of Special Education students (BRASIL, 2011).

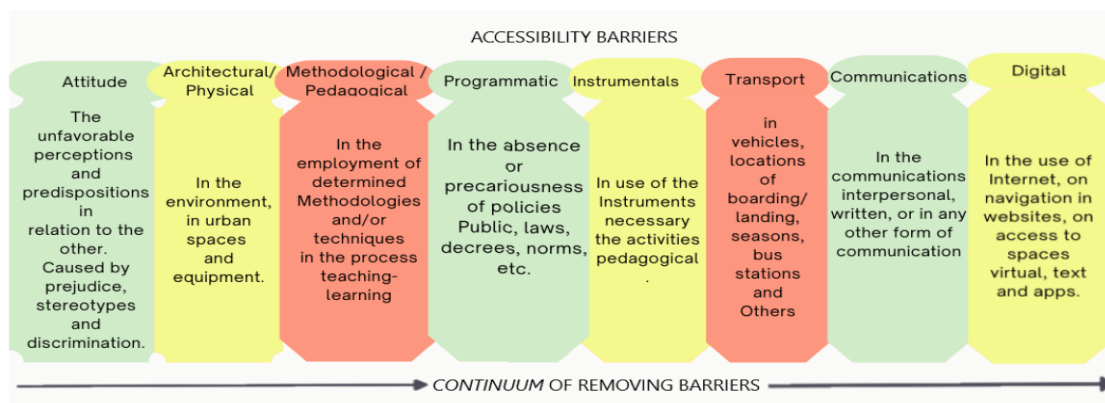
After the regulation under Decree 7.611/2011, namely, after the year 2012, the financing of accessibility actions is no longer restricted to MEC public notices specific to the Include Program. Thus, the allocation of financial resources to the IFES, intended for Inclusive Education and accessibility actions, became annual by direct transfer (CIANTELLI; LEITE, 2016) (PLETSCH; MELO, 2017) (MARTINS, 2022) (MOREIRA; FERNANDES; DAMASCENO, 2022).

Another highlight that we consider essential in our previous discussion, relates to the fact that under the aegis of educational public policies to improve the quality of institutions and undergraduate courses, the National System for Evaluation of Higher Education (SINAES) was established by Law No. 10.861 of April 14, 2004. This system periodically monitors compliance with accessibility prerequisites, and the results of this evaluation are crucial for the authorization of the HEIs' operation and undergraduate courses (BRASIL, 2004) (DA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR, 2013).

We consider that, historically, human diversity hasn't been contemplated in the formation of our societies. In this way, students who are PAEE were excluded and, or segregated from the common spaces of the social structure and educational institutions. In this logic, Sasaki (2006; 2009) discusses the complexity of the concept of accessibility in the sense of building a society for all. The author reflects that accessibility can only really happen with the elimination of existing barriers: attitudinal; architectural; various forms of communication, including those that take place in virtual spaces; and obstacles in a country's policies and laws.

In addition to these accessibility barriers in education, there are also those relating to teaching methodologies and instruments used by students in pedagogical practices. We illustrate in Figure 1 below the manifestation of these barriers.

Figure 1 - Manifestation of barriers to accessibility



Source: Sasaki (2006; 2009); On Higher Education (2013).

In summary, this Figure 1 indicates that the promotion of accessibility and inclusion requests the “[...]” construction of a new type of society through small and large transformations, in the physical environments (internal and external spaces, equipment, devices and utensils, furniture, and means of transport) and, in the mentality of all people” (SASSAKI, 2006, p. 40). Therefore, in contemporary times, inclusive policies assume the understanding that the school belongs to everyone and for everyone, regardless of differences. The existence of accessibility for all in educational environments, especially at the university, is fundamental, along with the awareness of the collective responsibility for promoting accessibility.

Discussion of the central themes of the analysis

In our dialogue with studies on the reality of NA in different regions of Brazil, mainly with Pletsch and Melo (2017) in the Southeast; Martins (2022) in the North; Moreira, Fernandes, and Damasceno (2022) in the South and Southeast, we noticed several structural difficulties in implementing the actions of the investigated nuclei. In this logic, the analytical themes discussed in this section showed that NAU also faces difficulties and challenges in the development of UEMA's accessibility actions.

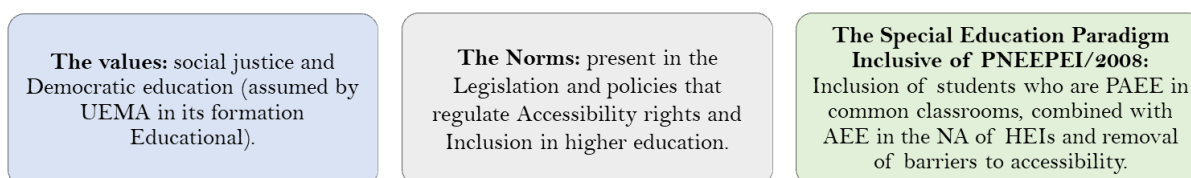
In summary, we mention: the temporary appointment of the professionals in the interdisciplinary team due to the absence of public competition for the area; difficulties

in obtaining funds for the acquisition of assistive technologies and support materials; the need for expansion of the nucleus' facilities; failure to register and notify the specific needs of students who are PAEE; little participation of university professors in the training courses promoted by the NAU.

a) UEMA's institutional accessibility policy from the perspective of NAU actions

In the content of the UEMA institutional policy guidelines text, we apprehend three central themes that guide the proposal of objectives, goals/actions to be developed, with the view to convert expectations of accessibility and inclusion into effective practices, as outlined below.

Figure 2 – Basic themes of the UEMA Accessibility Policy



Source: NAU/UEMA, 2022.

We ponder that the tessitura of these three themes, laid out in the document text, even reveals in an implicit sense the increase of the individualistic neoliberal praxis that rages in Brazil and the post-modern capitalist states. This results in the dismantling of public universities and the reduction of educational policies to guarantee the fundamental right to the education necessary for "[...]the materialization of policies that allow those who are marginalized and excluded to have access in equal measure to a series of goods and advantages from which they are apart" (CROSARA; SILVA, 2018, p. 294).

Therefore, with a view to democratic and inclusive Higher Education, the deployment of UEMA's accessibility policy was organized into eight axes, whose goals/actions to eliminate barriers and produce accessibility were delegated to the different university pro-rectories and, or sectors, respectively being, according to NAU/UEMA (2022, s/p):

- Axis 1 – Accessibility: Inclusion and permanence (PROEXAE⁶ and NAU).
- Axis 2 – Accessible Infrastructure (PROINFRA⁷).

⁶ Pro-Rector for Extension and Student Affairs.

⁷ Pro-Rector of Infrastructure.

- Axis 3 – Pedagogical and Curricular Accessibility (PROG⁸).
- Axis 4 – Communicational and Informational Accessibility (library + language course + sign language interpreters).
- Axis 5 – The Cataloging of Information on Accessibility (CTIC⁹).
- Axis 6 – Teaching, Research, and Innovation in Accessibility (PPG¹⁰).
- Axis 7 – Extension and Accessibility (PROEXAE).
- Axis 8 – Human Resources and Financing of the Accessibility Policy (PROGEP¹¹).

The axes listed are inseparable and interdependent and they show that achieving the accessibility continuum assumes a multidetermined and complex connotation in exclusionary societies. The deconstruction of barriers erected to the participation of students with special needs requires the involvement of several agents and segments of the university community in constructing a culture of inclusion.

The existence of conditions of exclusion in Higher Education should mobilize, according to Melo and Araújo (2018, p. 58), a constant “rethinking of institutional policy to implement effective changes that guarantee these students the resources and means necessary to participate in teaching, research and extension activities, with maximum autonomy and success throughout their academic career.”

Besides the AEE practice, UEMA's accessibility policy also elected general objectives and three engagement goals for the NAU, identified and gathered in the following chart.

Figure 3 - Table with the objectives and goals of the accessibility policy for NAU

Objectives of the accessibility policy directed to the NAU	Specific goals for the NAU
Carry out extension actions to strengthen the PNEEPEI/2008.	Increase the number of people with disabilities (PwD) at the university, namely: students who are PAEE, professors and civil servants who are part of the technical-administrative staff of UEMA.
Advise on the development and transformation of local educational policies.	Put into practice actions for the permanence of students who are PAEE in the university until graduation.
Carry out continuing training in inclusive education for the internal and external community.	Form agreements with specialized institutions and/or representatives of PwD with a view to providing services or collaborating in accessibility and inclusion activities.

Source: NAU/UEMA, 2022.

⁸ Pro-Rectorcy of Graduation.

⁹ Coordination of Information and Communication Technology.

¹⁰ Pro-Rectorcy of Research and Post-Graduation

¹¹ Pro-Rectorcy of People Management.

The objectives and goals, shown in the table presented, were established in the review of the institutional policy of accessibility with the participation of NAU and dialogue with the strategic guidelines of the pedagogical project outlined in the Institutional Development Plan of UEMA for the period (2021-2025).

Nevertheless, we understand that the execution of the intentionality of the institutional policy of accessibility demands planning that emerges from the social reality of students at the university and the application of material and human resources to achieve the proposed objectives. However, according to Martins (2022, p. 141), "[...]scarcity of "financial resources is still common, skilled professionals, lack of assistive technology for the implementation of a well-equipped Accessibility Center, in short, alternatives that can ensure, with more security and autonomy, its actions [...]". Given this problem, the study by Ciantelli and Leite (2016, p. 424) presents the following suggestion: "A possible way out would be the transformation of the centers into accessibility coordinator ships, with greater autonomy and representativeness in the administrative sphere of the university.

As regards an accessible infrastructure in the university, we identified in the institutional policy of accessibility of UEMA the realization of the "construction program, reforms &/or adaptations, maintenance of facilities and equipment"; this program, in according with the "principles of universal design" aims at the conception of environments and utensils for the use of all people (SASSAKI, 2006; 2009).

In this case, the planned action for the NAU is the establishment of "a study group to analyze the specificities of people with disabilities and the reality of UEMA's classes" (NAU/UEMA, 2022, n.p.). Soon, we recall with Martins (2022, p. 124) that: "Public and private universities have the duty and the legal and moral obligation to comply with the legal guidelines, thus ensuring the legitimization of this space for all those who need it."

As for the pedagogical and curricular accessibility, the institutional policy of accessibility brought together the actions of accessibility and inclusion in a single major goal, which clarifies that the inclusive and accessibility practices should be extended to "students, teachers, and administrative staff with special needs in administrative, teaching, research and extension activities" (NAU/UEMA, 2022, s/p.). Thus, the main action of the NAU is characterized as the realization of inclusive pedagogical monitoring of students who are the PAEE.

For this purpose, students need to register in the Integrated System of Academic Activity Management (SIGUEMA). Which is the university's academic and administrative services platform, where students enroll and can access information and procedures relevant

to their university careers. It is necessary to access the particular module to notify specific needs and request NAU follow-up (NAU/UEMA, 2022, s/p).

So, we appropriate Martins' thought (2022, p. 122) to emphasize that:

It is of fundamental importance that the academic unit becomes aware of the presence of these students with disabilities and establishes a procedure for welcoming and meeting educational needs, placing a multidisciplinary team at their disposal.

Therefore, any intervention must take place with the consent of these students.

Concerning communication and information accessibility, we selected the two main activities directed at NAU in the institutional accessibility policy. Those are: respectively the preparation of promotional material with accessibility information; and the “improvement of accessibility on UEMA sites'” (NAU/UEMA, 2022, s/p). In the latter, actions are foreseen to stimulate the registration of PAEE students in the specific module for requesting follow-up of the NAU, as explained in the previous paragraphs.

In this sense, we reflect that the practice of communicational and informational accessibility needs to be accompanied by the dissemination of “scientific, correct and coherent information about people with disabilities [...] fundamental for a new posture and development of a culture of respect for diversity” (MELO; ARAÚJO, 2018, p. 61). It is because students may not immediately communicate their specific needs to the institution. We warn that, sometimes, even those students evaluated with high abilities &/or giftedness, resist being identified as PAEE students in the face of prejudice, stigma, discrimination, and bullying that they may suffer (DA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR, 2013, p. 33- 34).

The axis of research and innovation in accessibility prioritizes the institutional accessibility policy, the implementation of continuing education programs, and the qualification of the university community. Thus, jointly with the NAU, content on accessibility and assistive technologies is presented/disseminated in teacher training programs and technical courses at UEMA. In this sense, we warn with Pletsch and Melo (2017, p. 1623) that:

We understand that expanding access to higher education requires more financial investments, but also research that privileges the theme and its dimensions in the face of inclusion policies. Without empirical research that analyzes the ways in which this educational policy is translated into higher education, there is no way to identify and problematize the successful or unsuccessful experiences, as well as the real demands placed to put this process into effect.

NAU's participation in extension actions is conceived in the text of the institutional accessibility policy, based on the idea of NAU's representativeness in scientific events. It also

aims at presenting academic productions by the core team and exchanging experiences on accessibility and inclusion with actors from other institutions (NAU/UEMA, 2022, s/p).

However, the presence of professionals in the nucleus is more constant in the continuing education events promoted for the university community and its surroundings. In this way, as Martins (2022, p. 188) highlights: "University extension is a two-way street, in which the university takes knowledge to the external community and this, in turn, returns to the university walls.

The strategy, guided by human resources and financing of UEMA's accessibility policy, is the hiring of professionals at the NAU. The planned strategy aims at expanding the interdisciplinary team with teachers, AEE professionals, psychologists, social workers, translators/interpreters of Brazilian Sign Language (Libras), and specialized teacher in visual impairment - blindness / low vision, psycho-pedagogues, and computer technicians (NAU, 2022).

Actions to achieve this goal would involve relocating professionals who already work at the university and holding public tenders &/or simplified selection processes. From this perspective, we infer that this is a necessary and urgent action to be carried out by UEMA, given the leading role of NAU in the accessibility development and inclusion policy in the institution.

b) The origin, structure and functioning of the NAU

The trajectory of implantation of a nucleus for the attendance/follow-up of the students that constitute the PAEE in the institution began through Resolution nº 231/2000-CONSUN/UEMA. This Resolution complied with Official Letter No. 086/1999, from the Direction of the Pedagogy Course, on the merits of the approval by the Department of Education and Philosophy and by the Board of the Center for Education, Exact and Natural Sciences (CECEN), of the project to create an Interdisciplinary Nucleus in Special Education (NIESPE) (UEMA, 2000).

Discussions about the need to implement the nucleus gained strength from 1989 onwards. In this sense, it is important to emphasize the background of these debates. In other words, the emerging paradigm of Inclusive Special Education is endorsed in the principles of the right to education, contained in Chapter III, articles 205, 206, and 208 of the Federal Constitution (CF). The cited articles are categorical in affirming the equality of conditions for all regarding access and permanence in the educational system. Likewise, that they determine the practice of AEE for PwD up to the highest levels of education (BRASIL, 1988) (CROSARA; SILVA, 2018).

Another important fact that boosted discussions and measures regarding the adequacy of accessibility conditions in IES was the publication of Circular Notice No. 277 of the Education Ministry on May 8, 1996. The document guided rectors on strategies to meet the specific needs of PcD, in selection processes, from the preparation of public notices to the application and correction of tests (BRASIL, 1996).

After the implementation of NIESP at UEMA, another normative act of the institution, Resolution No. 679/2007-CONSUN/UEMA, changed the binding of the respective core that had been delimited, at first, to the Pedagogy course. Therefore, NIESP is now bound to the Board of the Center of Education, Exact and Natural Sciences (CECEN). The arguments presented for the change ensure the importance of permanence and expansion of the core's actions, in addition to the need for the involvement of teachers from courses in other areas (UEMA, 2007).

However, the creation of the Accessibility Nucleus (NAU) only occurred through Resolution 886/2014-CONSUN/UEMA. Subsequently, the structure and operation of the NAU settled in Resolution No. 891/2015-CONSUN/UEMA, which approved the internal regulations of the core. Thus, it became “an executive body of the Higher Administration, directly subordinated to the Rectory” with a “permanent structure of an interdisciplinary nature. In agreement to This document merges the core structure, the general coordination, and the sectors and accessibility committees (UEMA, 2014; 2015) (BRASIL, 2008).

Currently, the interdisciplinary team of the core is composed of the following professionals: pedagogues; psychologists; speech therapists; translators-interpreters of Libras; psycho-pedagogues; specialized teachers in visual impairment - blindness / low vision; Braille proofreader; physical educator; artistic producer (to support the making of the accessible contents); assistant to a student with a disability; secretary; administrative assistant; and interns. The professionals of the interdisciplinary team also integrate the Accessibility Commissions of the São Luís campus and provide advisory to the other commissions of the campuses in the countryside of the state.

From the point of the human view of resources, we found that the interdisciplinary team has specialized training and demonstrates experience in the area of expertise. The team also has the opportunity to reflect on the processes of educational exclusion/inclusion based on the professionals' experiences with disabilities who make up the group. However, the staff is not permanent because most professionals are hired through simplified selection processes and assume temporary contracts.

In this way, the absence of a public tender for the core becomes a major challenge in maintaining the continuity of the work. Because, as Martins (2022, p. 59) points out, it is essential to “establish a multidisciplinary team of professionals in universities, as well as robust funding for the acquisition of support materials and assistive technology.”

Regarding the facilities, the NAU is located in the Pro-Rectorate of Graduation (PROG) building and occupies three fixed administrative rooms destined for the coordination and the interdisciplinary team. These rooms also accommodate multifunctional resources, and assistive technologies, designed to favor accessibility. Among these are the resources acquired by the institution and those made in the center for the AEE services, according to the specific needs of the public received.

In addition to these environments, the nucleus reserves rooms &/or auditoriums in the campus buildings according to planned activities. In this way, we reflect with Melo and Araújo (2018, p. 63) that “[...] it is not enough to just institutionalize the Accessibility Center with the purpose to eliminate pedagogical, architectural, communication or attitudinal barriers if the necessary objective conditions to ensure its successful stay [...],” and we pay attention to the need to expand the NAU facilities at UEMA.

c) NAU's actions for the inclusion and permanence of PAEE students at the university in articulation with UEMA's institutional policy of accessibility.

The NAU's action to access students who are PAEE has happened since the realization of the Selective Process for Access to Higher Education (PAES/UEMA). The activities carried out by the nucleus are, above all, advisory to the accomplishment of accessibility for the enrolled students. The demands arise from the elaboration and publication of the announcement and continue in the process of applying and correcting the exams. The center provides interpreters of Libras, readers, and other necessary support to candidates (CIANTELLI; LEITE, 2016).

The access actions also involve the monitoring policy's affirmative of quotas of UEMA, approved by Resolution No. 820/2011-CONSUN/UEMA. The document, determined from the Selective Process for Access to Higher Education (PAES/UEMA) of the year 2013, the effectuation of a Special System - 2 of Vacancy Reservation in the proportion of 5% for people with disabilities/PAEE. We verify that the introduction of this affirmative policy at UEMA was influenced by the norms established by the "Federal Constitution, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Law No. 7853/1989, and Federal Decree No. 3.298/1999," which are the legislations referred to in the text of the previous resolution.

Uniquely, we also observed in Resolution No. 1001/2012-CEPE/UEMA, which approved the Report of the Commission for Study on vacancies reservation, the mention of a "Commitment and Conduct Adjustment Term" signed between the university and the Office of the Specialized Prosecutor for the Defense of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UEMA, 2012). Thus, we confirm that the influence of legislation was decisive in the reservation policy of vacancies implementation at UEMA (CIANTELLI; LEITE, 2016).

The actions already proposed in the institutional policy of accessibility to favor permanence in the university refer to the purpose of the social reality of PAEE students who face social vulnerabilities and need scholarships or student assistance programs (NAU/UEMA, 2022) (UEMA, 2022).

From this perspective, we identified the implementation activities of the Project of Scholarship Support to Students with Disabilities, provided in the IDP (2021-2025) of UEMA. The publicizing of scholarship notices occurs in accessible formats (with spoken and Libras versions). Because according to Melo and Araújo (2018, p. 60).

Since the university is a space for building knowledge and citizenship, it must be equally committed to the student's social reality. In this way, it must provide objective conditions for permanence in Higher Education, preventing causes of retention &/or evasion from situations arising from socioeconomic difficulties, combined with other forms resulting from the different expressions of the social issue, which in turn have a particular impact about the daily life of people with disabilities &/or SEN.

According to UEMA's accessibility policy, NAU's performance concerning the promotion of accessible infrastructure corresponds to the case studies, the production of reports, and follow-up technical visits. From this perspective, we see the unfolding of the following Strategic Projects: accessible UEMA (adaptation of existing buildings at the university to accessibility standards); Visual Identification and Accessible Signage (implantation of building identification totems with tactile signage and indicative signs on the campuses); and Mobility on Campuses (implementation of routes; parking; and urban furniture accessible with safe traffic) (UEMA, 2022).

We observed several constructions and renovations underway on the São Luís campus, which has increased the need to monitor architectural accessibility. But, it is relevant to emphasize that: "The Infrastructure cannot only be seen from an architectural perspective. In addition to accessible environments, infrastructure involves services and products made available to people with disabilities" (MELO; ARAÚJO, 2018, p. 63).

In the context of pedagogical and curricular accessibility, UEMA's accessibility policy, as already commented in this text, mentions that PAEE students must register in the SIGUEMA academic services platform. This procedure seeks to facilitate the immediate access of the NAU team to the students who are PAEE for initial analysis of the potentialities and specific needs of these students in academic activities.

A equipe interdisciplinar do NAU observa as adequações necessárias à prática pedagógica (metodologia e avaliação), como também do emprego de tecnologias assistivas e/ou auxílio dos serviços de leitor e transcritor de Braille, intérprete de Libras dentre outros. Assim, no processo de acompanhamento, são realizadas orientações à direção de curso, aos professores, à família do/a estudante, e aos colegas de turma quando é necessário (MELO; ARAÚJO, 2018).

UEMA is a university that currently (2023) has 19 campuses settled in different towns in Maranhão. The locus of our study turned to Campus 1 – São Luís, for being the only one that has an NA installed. Accessibility Commissions operate on other campuses that are assisted and monitored by NAU through guidance and provision of material and human resources via the Rectory based on enrollment and registration of Special Education students.

Specifically in the São Luís Campus, we verified the lack of registration in SIGUEMA on the part of students of Special Education since the reports of activities of the nucleus in the first semester of 2022 indicate that of the total of 55 students accompanied by the NAU in the São Luís Campus, 35 of them had not promptly registered in SiGUEMA as a student of Special Education. Given this, the support request is commonly made by the director course or by faculty members as a result of difficulties already installed in the student's academic path. That delays the intervention procedures, and the impacts are significant in these students' academic life. We verified that the actions of communicational and informational accessibility are expressive, with the creation and distribution of informative material on accessibility. The NAU website has become a widely used channel for disseminating the NA productions, such as newsletters, booklets, glossaries, books, etcetera. In the same way, they use social networks like Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, and Podcasts (NAUdCAST) to spread knowledge about inclusion.

Through the Internet, Lives are also held on themes of Special Education with the participation of debaters from local IES and other states. This process of dissemination of knowledge and awareness is crucial, because like Martins reflects (2022, p. 144, emphasis added): "Inclusion is not only an attribute of these centers, it - inclusion - must 'cross-referenced'" permeate all actions and instances of higher management, impacting on all sectors and bodies creating an inclusive culture in each gesture produced.

Other outstanding actions are those of extension, which include the continuous offer of vacancies for face-to-face programs in the Inclusive Special Education area. The programs are intended for the internal and external community and are spread throughout the publication of accessible public notices. In 2022, the programs were made available: basic and intermediate Libras; Braille; Training of Readers and Transcribers; Autistic Spectrum Disorder, etcetera.

However, the NA professionals report little spontaneous participation by professors in the university community, a situation that coincides with the reality found in other universities. “Unfortunately, the demand for these pieces of training has been mostly by teachers who are having experiences with these students in the classroom or for their own interests” (MELO; ARAÚJO, 2018, p. 63).

Finally, we reflect that the actions of access and permanence of students with special needs, promoted by the accessibility centers, cannot be restricted to the contributions given through the effectiveness of the AEE and the support to promote accessibility. These actions must be spread throughout the entire university community based on inclusion policies.

Conclusions

- At the end of this study, we arrive at the following considerations, which, in turn, are very important for university inclusion policies:
- Accessibility is fundamental for inclusion and must be understood as building a society for all.
- The legislation has contributed significantly to the constitution of institutional policies of accessibility and inclusion, as well as to the structuring of accessibility centers in Higher Education Institutions.
- Universities need to transcend compliance with legislation and create processes to build a permanent culture of accessibility and inclusion.
- Generally, Brazilian states have limited public revenue to meet the demands of Basic and Higher Education. So, the state IES, in the application of their revenues, faces the complex challenge of achieving the goals of the Inclusive Education policy and the funding of the actions of the accessibility centers a priority.

The inclusion of the target audience of Special Education students at the university cannot be limited to the space and activities of the accessibility center.

We conclude that institutional accessibility and inclusion policies are extremely necessary to consolidate the access and permanence of Special Education students at the university.

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