

Autistic children in a municipal daycare center in the city of Recife – Pernambuco: direct access to inclusive stay¹

*Crianças autistas em uma creche municipal da cidade do Recife – Pernambuco:
do direito ao acesso à permanência inclusiva*

*Niños autistas en una guardería municipal de la ciudad de Recife – Pernambuco:
acceso directo a la estancia inclusiva*

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Abstract: The general of this research was to analyze pedagogical and inclusion practices for autistic children at the Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna Daycare School, located in the city of Recife, Pernambuco. Using a qualitative approach with a case study procedure, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and analyzed using the semantic-categorical aspect of Content Analysis. The main results showed that the educational institution in question is well articulated with the inclusion process to promote the permanence of autistic students in the formal teaching space, despite the daily challenges presented by the teachers interviewed. This pointed to potentialities in terms of the act of educating, mainly due to the collective construction of pedagogical practices experienced in the context of Early Childhood Education.

Keywords: Autistic children; Early Childhood Education; Inclusive; Pedagogical Practices; Recife.

Resumo: Esta pesquisa teve como objetivo geral analisar as práticas pedagógicas e de inclusão para crianças autistas na Creche Escola Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna, localizada na cidade do Recife, Pernambuco. Utilizando uma abordagem qualitativa, com procedimento de estudo de caso, os dados foram coletados por meio de entrevistas semiestruturadas e analisados por

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intermédio da vertente semântico-categorial da Análise de Conteúdo. Os principais resultados demonstraram que a instituição educativa em questão se apresenta bem articulada ao processo de inclusão para promoção da permanência dos alunos autistas no espaço formal de ensino, apesar dos desafios diários apresentados pelas professoras entrevistadas. Isso apontou potencialidades no que se refere ao ato de educar, principalmente devido à construção coletiva das práticas pedagógicas vivenciadas no contexto da Educação Infantil.

Palavras-chave: Crianças autistas; Educação Infantil; Inclusão; Práticas Pedagógicas; Recife.

Resumen: El objetivo general de esta investigación fue analizar las prácticas pedagógicas y de inclusión para niños autistas en la guardería Escuela Profesor Ariano Vilar Suassuna, situada en la ciudad de Recife, Pernambuco. Utilizando un enfoque cualitativo, con un procedimiento de estudio de caso, los datos se recopilaban mediante entrevistas semiestructuradas y se analizaron mediante el enfoque semántico-categorial del análisis de contenido. Los principales resultados demostraron que la institución educativa en cuestión está bien articulada con el proceso de inclusión para promover la permanencia de los alumnos autistas en el espacio formal de enseñanza, a pesar de los retos diarios que presentan las profesoras entrevistadas. Esto puso de manifiesto el potencial en lo que se refiere al acto de educar, principalmente debido a la construcción colectiva de las prácticas pedagógicas vividas en el contexto de la Educación Infantil.

Palabras clave: Niños autistas; Educación Infantil; Inclusión; Prácticas Pedagógicas; Recife.

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Introduction

With the growing relevance of the discussion on the inclusion of autistic children in education, it is relevant to investigate how it has been approached in schools. There are uncountable questions affecting the true meaning of scholar inclusion. Including the comprehension of concepts, the disregard of institutional principles, biased interpretation of the legislation in question, among others. These problems result in a limited view of inclusion, reducing it to the notion of inserting students with disabilities in the regular educational system, instead of working with a wider and more inclusive view.

Then, the place chosen to conduct this research was the Nursery School *Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna*, from Dois Irmãos, Recife-PE. This choice considered the daycare's relevance for the communities around it and for *Universidade Federal Rural de Pernambuco* (UFRPE), that ceded the area where it was built, next to the Central Library. Also, most of its public comes from the university regulars' family members.

It is worth noting that the number of autistic students enrolled in Basic Education reached 44%, between 2023 and 2024, as the data from the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (2025) shows. This growth can't be seen in the Nursery

School's reality, as there are classes where the number of atypical children reached half of the whole. Notwithstanding, children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) – some accompanied by Special School Development Support Agents (SSDSA).

Therefore, the goal of this research was to analyze the pedagogical practices in Nursery School *Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna* for autistic children, by evaluating its efficacy to aid their development, by considering the collaboration among professionals of Specialized Educational Care (SCE) and the pedagogical team.

The inclusion of people with disabilities in regular education

By the Salamanca Statement (1994), inclusive education must be founded on the principle that each child has a right to quality education, notwithstanding its abilities or differences, what results in a more egalitarian and fair society (Organização das Nações Unidas para a Educação, a Ciência e a Cultura, 1994). Then, schools must be capable of receiving everyone, without distinctions of individual traits, abilities or disabilities. The document is significantly relevant, as, through recent medical and legal advances, other inclusive perspectives were developed, especially in the field of education.

In Brazil, the Law of Guidelines and Bases of the Education (LDB), nº 9.394 (Brasil, 1996), in chapter III, article 4, paragraph III, states that it is the role of the State to guarantee the “specialized and free educational support to students with special needs, especially in regular school system”⁶ (Our translation). This law represents a legal commitment to offer support and specific pedagogical resources to answer the individual needs of students with disabilities, in order to include them and to guarantee their access to an education of quality.

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by Brazil, through the Decree nº 6.949, of August 25th 2009 (Brasil, 2009), testifies the Evolution of global knowledge on the need to ensure a full and equal access to basic human rights for everyone. Through recognizing the relevance of autonomy, of an equality of opportunities, such convention not only promoted inclusion, but also challenged social and cultural barriers that limited, historically, the full participation of people with disabilities in society. It worked as a catalyst for the creation of broader national laws, as the Law Berenice Piana and the Brazilian Law of Inclusion (BLI).

⁶ In the original: “atendimento educacional especializado gratuito aos educandos com necessidades especiais, preferencialmente na rede regular de ensino”.

The law Berenice Piana (Law nº 12.764/2012) was created specifically related to autism, establishing guidelines to guarantee that persons with autism have access to Education, Health, and other essential services (Brasil, 2012). By recognizing autism as a permanent condition, the law seeks to secure basic rights, to promote social and educational inclusion, while also orienting full attention since the diagnosis until a productive inclusion into society. Through this legislation, there is an impulse for the creation of specialized services, to support their families and professional training.

With the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, in 2006, comes the Resolution CNE/CEB nº 4, from October 2nd, 2009 (Brasil, 2009), that deals with the SCE, and the Statute of the person with disability (Law nº 13.146/2015), that addresses the rights of people with disabilities, including guidelines for inclusive education and promotion of equality of opportunities in various aspects of daily life (Brasil, 2015).

According to this law, the public power must secure that the educational system be inclusive in all its levels, stages and modalities, improving and guaranteeing access conditions, as well as to cut out the previously mentioned barriers. Also, there must be an organization and planning of individual measures that help in the development of such students. Therefore, actions of scholar inclusion were analyzed in the place investigated.

In a classic work on the field, Mantoan (2003) differentiates “inclusion” from “integration”. She is founded on the idea that inclusion questions the scholar organization that imposes a dichotomy between special and regular educations, while also being fundamentally opposed to the concept of integration, that is limited to insert students with disabilities in regular classes. Contemporarily, it is still relevant to rethink educational systems and to overcome this dichotomy, not only to accommodate diversity, but also to embrace it as a key element in the students’ formation (Santana, 2016; Santos, 2021).

The problem starts when the idea of a “regular students” becomes the rule, and all the others are seen as its deviations. It not only stigmatized those that are different but also prevents the understanding and acceptance of diversity in the classrooms. Inclusive education seeks to interrupt such binary divisions, by promoting an environment where all students are valued and have their needs attended. Other than to label some of them as “problems” or “inclusion students”, the inclusive approach recognizes each student’s singularity and works to guarantee everyone access to a model of socially referenced education of quality, adapted to their specific needs.

It is important to understand that each being’s singularity plays a relevant role over processes of learning and teaching. In education, it means that each student has its own background of knowledge, experiences and ways of understanding. Therefore, to make

different knowledges and resources available enables that each one of them interprets and creates meanings according to their own perspectives, enriching the learning process.

Araújo and Santos (2022) emphasizes that both children with and without disabilities needs stimulus to develop their autonomy, essential for them to be active in their learning process. To ascertain this autonomy means to enable children, through daily actions, to be capable of resolving their own challenges and to make decisions. Then, by promoting such opportunities, we are stablishing an environment that favors the full development of children, to be active agents in their own growth and learning.

In the educational context, to recognize which student's individuality and diversity of experiences is crucial. It means to promote inclusive pedagogical practices that help everyone to take on an active role in their own learning process. While making diverse approaches and resources available, educators empower students to interpret and attribute meanings according to their individual perspectives – what means to adapt the curriculum to individual needs. This approach not only enriches the learning environment, but also creates an educational culture that values and respects diversity, guaranteeing that all students have a opportunity to reach their full potential.

The subject with autism spectrum disorder in schools

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5), a document created by the American Psychiatric Association (American Psychiatric Association, 2014), ASD is defined as a disorder in brain development that results in difficulties in social interaction, communication, and repetitive and restricted behavior. Its diagnosis considers the presence of social communication hardships, as the lack of limitations in interaction, with restricted and repetitive patterns of behavior and interests.

This classification presents three levels of gravity, by the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2014). Level 1: characterized by challenges to social communication; level2: shows stronger complications in communication, and a possible lack of verbalization, with a higher probability of comorbidities; and level 3: reflects significant difficulties in neurodevelopment, in socialization and whole-body functioning, frequently associated to diverse comorbidities that affects the individual's independence.

ASD presents diverse characteristics in children, as the difficulty in metaphor interpretation, as also in the interpretation of texts in a non-literal way. This peculiarity is reflected, also, in a resistance to make belief activities, what reveals a certain inflexibility in the development of symbolic thought. Such challenges can significantly impact their social

interactions and compromise their academic performance, what often complicates their inclusion in conventional scholar environments (Lago, 2007).

In Lago's (2007) idea, some of those children show higher abilities in specific fields, as in reading, writing and math. This phenomenon is associated to a kind of visual and detailed knowledge, present in some individuals within the autism spectrum. Therefore, their inclusion in regular schools requires adequate pedagogic strategies, that consider their particular needs of learning and social interaction and that value their individual abilities while understanding autism's particularities.

An ASD child shows learning capacity, although their mental peculiarities result in lacks development if compared with the regular pattern. The fundamental disparities lie in the constitution of a symbolic function and in the structuring of an operative thought. But it is necessary to recognize that this analysis must not be limited to an understanding of the subject restricted to their disabilities. On the contrary, the relevance of educational and therapeutic approaches valuing their individual abilities must be emphasized, seeking to promote their growth in its own rhythm. The understanding of these differences cannot be an obstacle to an adequate inclusion and support, but it needs to be taken as a call to strategies that respect and potentializes their unique ways of learning and interaction with the world.

Individual Development Plan (IDP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?

Poker et al. (2013) considers the Individual Development Plan (IDP) as a guide to a personalized pedagogic evaluation and intervention destined to students frequenting the Multifunctional Resources Classrooms (MRC). This document registers both the results of the student's evaluation and the specialized pedagogic intervention plan, to be implemented by the teacher. The IDP's main role is to promote an organized structure to the educational development of those students inside the MRC environment.

The IDP is essential in the promotion of a personalized pedagogic support for students with specific educational needs. In the MRC's context, the IDP is not a static document, but a dynamic road map that guides the continuous evaluation and a pedagogic intervention adapted to the individual needs of each student. The data collection to the IDP elaboration included a thorough case study conducted by the specialized teacher. This study can be realized in a collaborative or in an individual manner, including the participation of the educational advisor and other school professionals.

During the process of the IDP's elaboration, many sources are consulted – mainly, the family and the professionals of the educational institution that are directly involved with the

student -, including professionals of multidisciplinary team away from the school but that, by chance, serve the student. The organized mixing of the information resulted from those sources allows for a wider view of the specific needs of the subject with disability, enabling a more efficient and directed pedagogic plan.

The Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is, for Glat, Vianna e Redig (2012, p. 84), an “individualized plan, periodically evaluated and revised, that considers the student in his highest level of abilities, knowledges and development, chronological age, level of education already reached and educational goals”. It can be noted that the term’s definition is close to that attributed to the IDP.

The words IEP and IDP are used interchangeably to describe the same concept: a detailed and personalized plan to students with special specific needs. However, in the psychotherapeutic and multidisciplinary-clinical context of care, IEP is used more than IDP – that is more common in the educational context.

The decree nº 36.309, from January 30th, 2023 (Recife, 2023), that establishes the Public Policy of Inclusive Special Education for students of Recife’s Municipal Education System – of which the nursery school, studied here, is part - emphasizes the elaboration of the IEP (replacing the use of IDP) as a central practice in SCE, as established in its sixth Article. More than that, rooted in this legal device, the teacher must systematize projects and reports documenting the students’ progress and development, while organizing administrative documents required by the Department of Education.

Methodology

This research was carried in a qualitative way, with case study, aiming to understand the pedagogic and inclusion practices in Nursery School *Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna*. For data collection, semi structured interviews were conducted with five of the school’s teachers, including the Specialized Educational Care (SCE) Teacher, and those teachers responsible for the groups between two and five of the afternoon shifts. This municipal institution is directly linked with *Universidade Federal Rural de Pernambuco* (UFRPE), the only one in the State of Pernambuco; then, its singularity, reason for its selection as the case to be studies.

The first teacher interviewed was the responsible for the Specialized Educational Care and, during the interview, it was revealed that the groups three, four and five had a higher number of autistic students in class. In this manner, to interview teachers responsible for such classes would significantly enrich the study. This teacher also

suggested the inclusion of hired teacher, in addition to teachers with permanent employment status, in order to obtain a more diversity of views from the teachers involved. Therefore, a total of five teacher were interviews (two with permanent employment status, two hired, and one teacher of specialized educational care). The visits and interviews were done in five weeks, respecting the daycare's weekly routine and guaranteeing a wide and deep approach through time.

Semi structured interviews approached themes related to practices of inclusion, use of tools, collaboration among professionals, and resource availability. They were done in person, inside the school, through the stipulated duration for the observation. We visited the school one a week, for five weeks, doing one interview per visit.

The data analysis was done through Content Analysis, inside the semantic-categorical approach, as indicated by Bardin (1997). It was conducted in four main categories: (1) The Use of Available Resources and Structures, (2) Adequation of Pedagogic Activities, (3) Individual Development Plan (IDP)/Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and (4) Pedagogic Practices and inclusion challenges.

The research followed all ethical patterns necessary for its effectiveness. It received the authorization of Municipality of the City of Recife, by an issued letter, and the free and known consent of the interviewed subjects. The name of the institution was disclosed after the permit obtained from the responsible organization.

Results and discussions

To reference the interviewed teachers and their respective responsibilities inside the educational context in focus, the following acronyms will be used:

- P0: The teacher responsible for the Specialized Educational Care (SCE).
- P1: The first teacher that was interviewed, hired and responsible for the Group 4.
- P2: The second teacher interviewed, hired and responsible for the Group 3.
- P3: The third teacher interviewed, under permanent contract and responsible for the Group 4.
- P4: The fourth teacher interviewed, under permanent contract and responsible for the Group 5.

Those acronyms will be used throughout the paper to identify each interviewed teacher and their specific assignments in the educational context studied. Below, the results of the semantic-categorical analysis are presented in categories.

- Use of the Available Resources and Structures

By interviewing teachers on the use of available pedagogical resources and structures for the inclusion of autistic children, we noted different perceptions and practices. The P1, P2 and P3 teachers highlighted the relevance of the Assistants of Specialized Educational Development Support (ASEDS) in the inclusion process, describing them as devices that offer emotional, organizational and even recreative support to the children: “They are followed by the ASEDS, and they can respond and resolve the situation in moments when they get disorganized. Then she takes over, because she knows better how to deal with the situation (P0)”. Moreover, the presence of the Specialized Educational Care (SCE)’s teacher and of the pedagogic coordinator was seen as a pivotal part of the support structure, able to deal efficiently with specific situations.

Giat (2018) emphasizes that an inclusive education requires not only acceptance, but also adequate structures and resources. All the teachers affirmed that their schools have the necessary resources to make teaching materials adequate to the particularities of autistic children. Although the P3 noted that this availability can vary depending on the institutions, mentioning that daycares can have a lead in this aspect if compared to other schools.

The educational team’s role in the elaboration of those materials is pivotal, from the pedagogic coordinator to the classroom auxiliaries, it reflects the principles of the Statute for Persons with Disabilities (Lei nº 13.146/2015) on assistive technology. The presence of those materials inside the schools not only helps to decrease barriers, as in communication and information, but also provides autistic children with options to express themselves and participate actively in their educational activities.

Thile interviewing the SCE (P0) teacher, it was mentioned that specific materials in the resource room are available, but some are damaged, as the interactive table, essential to communication and learning activities:

Each one of them has, by law, access to 2 hours per week of treatment where I have this interactive table where I can work with them with matters as the sound of letters and little stories, but it is broken and later I will try to fix it again. I’m highly demanded and there should be another AEE with me, but we still couldn’t yet bring one (P0)⁷ (our translation).

⁷ In the original: “Cada um deles por lei tem direito a 2 horas por semana de atendimento que eu tenho essa mesa interativa que posso trabalhar com eles a questão do som das letras e historinhas, mas ela está quebrada e depois eu vou tentar consertar de novo. Eu tenho uma demanda muito grande e era para ter outra AEE comigo e a gente ainda não conseguiu ainda que viesse (P0).”

The teacher expressed frustration with the lack of maintenance of those tools, taking on the responsibility of fixing them, despite the fact that it is the public power that has the obligation to ascertain adequate conditions to the inclusion, as established by the Statute for Persons with Disabilities (Lei nº 13.146/2015). These observations highlight the challenges and urgent needs faced in the implementation of an efficient inclusive education, reasserting the relevance not only of adequate resources, but also of a responsible and collaborative management to guarantee autistic children full access and participation in scholar education.

- Adequation of Pedagogic Activities

While interviewing teacher on the adequation of activities to autistic children, we noted various approaches and challenges to overcome. The teachers p3 and P4 preferred not to adequate specific activities, choosing to realize activities that cover all children in class, including those with autism. P3 emphasizes that doesn't like to differentiate activities but prefers to modify them in a general manner to maintain everyone's interest, including that of the autistic children.

Few are the activities that we need to adapt, and if I have to adapt, I try to use the same activity, but in a way that he realizes it according to his limits, if it is too long and I see that he won't be able to do it, I accept that he does it until he reaches his limits. I am not keen to differentiated activities (P3)⁸ (our translation).

This approach reveals Mantoan's (2003) concept of inclusion, that highlights it without segregation in education. On the other hand, P1 and P2 mentions that they adapt activities according to autistic children's individual interests: offering alternative materials such as brushes, paints, and exploring varied movements to promote a higher level of participation and physical comfort. It is in line with Glat's (2018) methodological adaptations that emphasizes the crucial support of pedagogic coordination in this process, by making flexible and adaptable adequacies to the children's needs. P1 mentions that "[...] I always see that they like games, brushes and paints... Then I start

⁸ In the original: "São poucas atividades que a gente tem que adaptar, se tiver que adaptar eu tento usar a mesma atividade, mas de forma que ele faça no limite dele, se é uma atividade muito longa que eu percebo que ele não vai conseguir, eu aceito até onde ele atingir o limite dele. Eu não gosto muito de fazer as atividades diferenciadas não (P3)."

to adapt activities that I think they will be interested on⁹ (our translation), P2 states “We try to make different things, with the body’s movement and tour for it not to become boresome and stressing, as they pass so much time here”¹⁰ (our translation).

Although, during the interviews, the practical challenge of such adaptations was clear, as the remaining children also demand attention. P4 described the difficulty in coming up with activities such as reding, because of the disorganization of the class and its impact on other children. These occurrences depict the challenges faced by management teachers in an inclusive classroom.

The responsibility for adequation of activities is attributed mainly over the group’s teachers, with guidelines provided by the SCE teacher. Still, it is concerning that teachers don’t receive specific training to realize such adaptations, as pointed during the interviews. This reveals a gap in the implementation of law Berenice Piana (Lei nº 12.764/2012), that recommends the inclusion with adequate support and formation of the teachers involved in it.

On the adaptations of the Multifunctional Resources Classrooms, P0 mentioned the need to adapt the environment, although such adequations are not exclusively pedagogic. The children have access to two hours per week in the resource room, but, many times, they are occupied with therapies offered by the Unified Health System (UHS).

To optimize time and promote socialization, the teacher groups autistic children in pairs or trios during brief moments. On such occasions, the relevance of socialization is emphasized, one of the goals frequently contemplated by the Individual Development Plan (IDP) of autistic children, as guaranteed by the Brazilian law of inclusion (law nº 13.146/2015) and by Law of Lines of Direction and Bases of the Education (law nº 9.394/1996).

- Individual Development Plan (IDP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?

P0 mentions that it receives the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) via email, what reveals an efficient process of communication and access to the necessary documentation to the educational planning. This is in line to article 6 and decree nº 36.309 (Recife, 2023), that stablishes that the IEP must be elaborated by the SCE teacher and include guidelines to the adaptation of activities and pedagogic materials, in addition to organizing documents as requested by the Office of Education.

⁹ In the original: “[...] sempre vejo o que eles gostam se é jogos, pincel e tinta... Aí eu começo a adequar as atividades que eu acho que eles vão se interessar”

¹⁰ In the original: “Tentamos fazer coisas diferenciadas, com o movimento do corpo e circuito para que não fique cansativo e estressante já que eles passam tanto tempo aqui”.

IEP is online, the link arrives by email, and I answer it. I think it is wider and gives me opening to provide information and to evaluate the student with familiar information, what is relevant, other than my observations on their development plan. Therefore, the plan always exists. I can always edit, reevaluate it and add information always that I perceive the student needs with advances or setbacks, but in general I do it every six months (P0)¹¹ (our translation).

The teacher also highlights that the IEP allows the inclusion of familiar information and its own observations, what is crucial to understand the student specific needs. This aspect matches the emphasis of the decree in the personalization of specialized educational support. Moreover, the teacher also mentions IEP's flexibility, stating that it is possible to edit, reevaluate and to add information to it, as needed, every six months. This is in conformity with the decree's Article 6, that foresees the systematization of projects and reports and the plan's periodic updating according to the student's advances and setbacks.

"We have an interview with questions that I always do and, in the end, I give them space for them to tell what they want me to do or if there is something that I didn't ask, but that they still want to say, as for example, a fear, stereotypy, noise sensibility... (P2)"¹² (our translation). Here, it can be noted that P2 mentions that, while receiving the children, a detailed history is made and filled alongside their parents.

This points to an initial process in data collection, that is pivotal in IEP's elaboration, as discussed by Pletsch and Glat (2012). The teacher keeps explaining that, when children are diagnosed with a report, the process is directly forwarded to the person responsible for the SCE. Such situation shows a structured flow of communication and evaluation, where the medical documentation and the reports help to base the decision making over the next educational steps.

When children do not possess a report, P2 mentions the relevance of observing them and speaking with their parents to elaborate a detailed report. This report is, then, forwarded to the SCE, that can request a medical consultation as needed. The described process highlights the concern in understanding each student's individual needs and in guaranteeing

¹¹ In the original: "O PEI é online, chega no meu e-mail o link e eu respondo. Eu acho ele mais amplo, ele me dá abertura de dar informações e de avaliar o aluno com informações familiares, que é importante, além das minhas observações com o plano de desenvolvimento deles. Assim, o plano sempre existe. Eu sempre posso editar, reavaliar e acrescentar informações sempre vendo a necessidade do aluno com avanços e retrocessos, mas em geral eu faço de 6 em 6 meses (P0)."

¹² In the original: "A gente tem uma entrevista com perguntas que eu sempre faço e no final tem um espaço para que eles digam o que eles querem que eu faça e se tem algo que eu não perguntei, mas que eles querem dizer, como por exemplo, algum medo, estereotipia, sensibilidade ao barulho...(P2)".

that the IEP be built in a whole and precise way, not only considering the educational aspects, but also the health and development aspects.

When we receive the children we make a whole history, filled alongside their parents. When they have a report, it goes directly through Gil. And when the children do not possess a report, we try to observe them and speak with their parents in order to obtain a report and forward it to Gil, the one responsible for the SCE, for her to request a medical consultation (P2)¹³ (our translation).

- Pedagogic Practices and inclusion challenges

The answer of the Specialized Educational Care (SCE)'s teacher, P0, should be highlighted: "Some teachers say that they are my students, my responsibility, but they are the school's students. They need to be received and to be at class. But I keep requiring this need of inclusion that is not easy to carry out. If we must include, we will include". This answer reflects a concern for the true inclusion of students with special need in the scholar environment. P0 highlights the shared responsibility of all teachers and the school in welcoming those students, noting that they are not only under the SCE's responsibility, but of the whole institution.

Lago (2007) adds to that thought by suggesting that knowledge should include both similarities and differences. The true challenge is to integrate both dimensions in a way that differences are not erased but used for learning. In this manner, both the AEE teacher's answer and the author concentrate in the idea that inclusion is a complex and continuous process, requiring a collective approach and a constant commitment of learning and adapting to the needs of all students, by providing a truly inclusive and equative scholar environment.

One of the interviewed teachers, P4, highlights the difficulty faced when trying to engage autistic children in activities, such as the reading of stories. She mentions that this moment requires the student's concentration, but also a training on the need of stopping to listen. However, she points that some autistic children do not have this notion because of the disorganization, what can also be aggravated by the lack of familiar support or the interruption of necessary medication.

¹³ In the original: "Quando a gente recebe essas crianças fazemos todo um histórico, preenchemos com os pais. Quando eles têm um laudo, passa logo por Gil. E quando as crianças não têm laudo a gente tenta observar e conversar com os pais para poder ter um relatório e encaminhar para Gil que é a responsável pelo AEE e ela solicitar uma consulta com um médico (P2)."

Lago (2007) describes that autistic children frequently present a rigor of development of their symbolic function, what includes difficulties in understanding metaphors and in participating in make belief games. These traits can complicate their adaptation in scholar activities and social relations.

Therefore, the P4 teacher's answer confirms the author by showing how the rigidity in symbolic development can impact the participation and the learning of autistic children in educational environments. The inability in following simple instructions during the reading of stories depicts the complexity faced by the educators in trying to include those students in activities that asks a symbolic and social understanding. Then, it is possible to note significant challenges faced by autistic children in regular school, highlighting the relevance of educational strategies with and an adapted and adequate support in order to promote their participation and to result in an effective learning.

It is very hard because you are reading a story and needing the student's attention, we have this hearing moment, teaching them that they need to understand that they must stop in order to listen. Then, a disorganized child, that lacks this notion and doesn't have their family's support sometimes, may need drugs, but stop their treatment. Among my students there are some like that, he screams and runs and I say: All right, I can't continue the story today, now I must stop. And the others get scared (P4)¹⁴ (our translation).

P4 expresses her favorable opinion on inclusion but reasserts that she faces significant challenges. She mentions the need of adequate conditions to guarantee inclusion's success, by emphasizing that it is crucial to stablish an agreement with the students' families. P4 criticizes the understanding of some families that consider school just as a place to "leave" their children, without valuating their educational work.

It is tough and sickening. I am not against inclusion, on the contrary, I am really in favor of it. But we need to have the conditions, because an agreement must be established with the family, as usually the family sees the school as a warehouse or they home's yard where you can let them play and leave, as if we weren't worth anything (P4)¹⁵ (our translation).

¹⁴ In the original: "É muito difícil porque você está lendo uma história e precisa de uma concentração da criança, a gente tem esse momento de escuta, esse ensinamento para eles compreenderem que esse momento precisa parar para ouvir. E aí uma criança desorganizada que não tem aquela noção e muitas vezes a família não contribui para isso algumas vezes, algumas crianças precisam de uma medicação, às vezes cortam a medicação. Nos meus mesmo tem assim, ele grita e fica correndo e digo: Pronto, hoje já não dá para continuar a história e eu tenho que parar. E os outros ficam assustados (P4)."

¹⁵ In the original: "Tem sido muito árduo e adoeecedor. Eu não sou contra a inclusão, pelo contrário, eu sou super a favor. Agora que a gente tenha condições, porque assim tem que ter um acordo com a família, porque muitas vezes para a família a escola funciona como um depósito ou o quintal da sua casa que você solta lá para brincar e deixa, como se a gente não tivesse valor nenhum (P4)."

Araújo and Santos (2002) define inclusive schools as a manner of educational organization that not only accepts every student, notwithstanding their traits, but also adapts their curriculum and planning to tend each student's specific needs. They point that inclusion goes beyond simply putting students with disabilities in regular classes; it also implies structural and educational adjustments to guarantee a full and significant participation.

The investigation of these two perspectives reveals that P4, while mentioning the necessity of adequate conditions and a mutual commitment with the families, is approaching crucial themes for an efficient inclusion. She recognizes that to simply put students in regular classes is not enough; but it is important to adapt the environment and adequate the teaching in order that all the students can be successful.

P3's answer raises a crucial question on the true meaning of educational inclusion. She expresses worry over the idea that, in some cases, one children's right to learning could be sacrificed for other student's right of being present at school. This reflection takes us to two questions: what is the kind of inclusion that we are promoting? Is the child really included, or only inserted?

So, I have a really high number of kids at the same time in a moment where they are way disorganized and something happens in their routine that destabilizes the whole class... Then, I don't help neither the atypical nor the typical and the feeling is that in many times we are not doing anything. The result is that we take away the child's right to learn in exchange of the other's right to be included at school. And then we question: What is this inclusion? Is this child included or only inserted? (P3)¹⁶ (our translation).

This thought echoes the concerns brought by Mantoan (2003) on the difference between inclusion and integration. Mantoan argues that inclusion goes beyond simply putting children with special needs in regular classes. She reasserts the importance of adapting the educational environment and the teaching methods to answer each student specific needs, guaranteeing not only their physical presence, but also their active and effective participation in the educational process.

When questioning whether a child is truly included or only inserted, P3 highlights the need of an educational approach that not only accepts diversity but also promotes a true equity in opportunities of learning for all students. This requires both inclusive policies and a cultural

¹⁶ In the original: "Então, eu tenho uma quantidade muito grande de crianças que em determinado momento que estão muito desorganizados que aconteceu alguma coisa na rotina acaba desestabilizando uma sala inteira... Aí eu nem ajudo os atípicos e nem os típicos e a sensação que dá é que muitas vezes a gente não tá fazendo nada. Acaba que a gente tira o direito da criança de aprender em detrimento do direito do outro de estar ali incluso na escola. E é aí onde a gente se questiona: Que inclusão é essa? Essa criança está inclusa ou está inserida? (P3)."

and pedagogical change inside the schools, where each child is seen as only and valued for their individual contributions to the scholar community.

Conclusions

In the end of this study on the pedagogic practices in Nursery School *Professor Ariano Vilar Suassuna*, headed to the inclusion of autistic children, we observed the relevance of adequate resources for the promotion of educational inclusion. As discussed by Glat (2018), the availability of adequate pedagogic materials is essential to attend autistic children specific needs.

Nonetheless, the reality faced by the SCE teacher (P0) with broken tools, shows the urgent need of a efficient and continuous management of resources, as established by the Statute for Persons with Disabilities (law nº 13.146/2015). This understanding shows not only the relevance of the resources, but also the shared responsibility in the adequate maintenance of such tools. Therefore, we suggest a debate on what means to include, headed by the management of the educational institution (Santos, 2021).

The teachers varied approaches relating to the adaptation of activities reveal different views inside the same institution. While some teachers (P1 and P2) opt to adequate the activities according to the individual interests of autistic children, following the methodological bases discussed by Glat (2018), others (P3 and P4) prefer a less differentiate approach, seeking to integrate every student in adaptable activities, reflecting Mantoan's (2003) concept of inclusion without segregation. This diversity of views shows the need of a continuous and specific formation, as requested by the law Berenice Piana (law nº 12.764/2012), to empower teachers in the efficient implementation of curricular adaptations.

The IEP's crucial role in the personalization of educational support for autistic children was emphasized by the interviewed teachers. P0's account on the efficient receiving of the IEP, allowing for periodic updates and the inclusion of information on the families, is aligned with the precepts of decree nº 36.309, that establishes the need of a detailed plan to guide individualized educational practices. This practice not only guarantees an adaptive approach to the students' needs but also promotes an efficient communication between the school and the families, as recommended by Pletsch and Glat (2012).

The teachers' thoughts on the challenges of a true educational inclusion, specially P3's, are pivotal. She raises questions on the effectiveness of inclusion when the child's right to learn can be disturbed in place of their physical presence at school, echoing Mantoan (2003)

and Santana (2016)'s worries on the distinction between inclusion and simply integration. This reflection highlights the need, not only of policies of inclusion, but also of a cultural change inside the scholar community, as discussed by Araújo and Santos (2022).

In short, this paper shows that the promotion of an inclusive and efficient inclusive education requires adequate resources, as well as a collective and committed approach to overcome the challenges and foster a truly inclusive schoolscape. Such efforts not only benefit autistic children but also strengthen the commitment with principles of equity and educational accessibility to all students.

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