

The contributions of the occupational therapist in the inclusive process of students with ASD

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SUMMARY

The objective of this study was to identify the contributions of occupational therapists working with collaborative consulting to the inclusion of students with ASD in regular schools. This is a bibliographical study, and the search for articles was conducted in journals specific to the field of OT, namely: Revista de Terapia Ocupacional da USP (Occupational Therapy Journal) and Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional (Brazilian Notebooks of Occupational Therapy) of UFSCar (Federal University of São Paulo). The search was guided by the Portuguese descriptors "Terapia Ocupacional" (Occupational Therapy), "Consultoria Colaborativa" (Collaborative Consulting), "TEA" (Teaching Inclusion), and cross-referenced between them. Data collection was carried out from August 2021 to January 2022. A total of 15 articles were found; however, after reading them in full, only three were selected because they specifically addressed the study topic. As established by the collaborative consulting framework, the three categorized articles highlight the space for knowledge sharing that should exist among education and health professionals. The occupational therapist in collaborative consulting acts as a facilitator of the school-student-family relationship and promotes the inclusion of students with ASD. However, in the socio-educational processes of the Social and Educational Program (PAEE), these actions remain isolated or underreported. Thus, it is concluded that it is necessary to encourage the development of new research involving occupational therapy and collaborative consulting, as gaps were identified in the national scientific production of occupational therapy journals regarding this topic, which is so important for the field, as well as for Special Education and Inclusive Education.

Keywords: Occupational Therapy. Collaborative Consulting. Autism Spectrum Disorder. Educational Inclusion.

ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to identify the contributions of occupational therapists working with collaborative consultancy to the inclusion of students with ASD in mainstream schools. This is a bibliographical study, and the search for articles was conducted in journals specific to the field of Occupational Therapy, namely: Revista de Terapia Ocupacional da USP (Revista de Terapia Ocupacional) and Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional da UFSCar (Cadernos Brasileiros de Terapia Ocupacional). The search was guided by the Portuguese descriptors "Terapia Ocupacional" (Occupational Therapy), "Consultoria Colaborativa" (Collaborative Consulting), "TEA" (Teaching Inclusion), and "Inclusão Educacional" (Educational Inclusion). Data collection was carried out from August 2021 to January 2022. A total of 15 articles were found; however, after reading them in full, only three were selected because they specifically addressed the study topic. As established by the collaborative consulting framework, the three categorized articles highlight the space for knowledge sharing that should exist among

1

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education and health professionals. The occupational therapist in collaborative consulting acts as a facilitator of the school-student-family relationship and promotes the inclusion of students with ASD. However, in the socio-educational processes of the Social and Educational Program (PAEE), these actions remain isolated or underreported. Thus, it is concluded that it is necessary to encourage the development of new research involving occupational therapy and collaborative consulting, as gaps were identified in the national scientific production of occupational therapy journals regarding this topic, which is so important for the field, as well as for Special Education and Inclusive Education.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder - ASD is a disorder of the neurodevelopment characterized by difficulties in social interaction, communication and repetitive and restricted behaviors (DSM-V, 2014).

ASD is a diverse group of conditions characterized by some degree of difficulty with social interaction and communication; atypical patterns of activities and behaviors, such as difficulty transitioning from one activity to another, focus on details and unusual reactions to sensations (WHO, 2021).

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - CDC, released the prevalence of ASD, which currently stands at 1/44, unlike 2004 when the proportion was 1/166, with the highest number of cases still prevailing in boys (CDC, 2021).

Early diagnosis is extremely important to direct treatment and obtain evolution.

Regarding treatment, the involvement of a team is necessary multidisciplinary involving psychologists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, physical educators and physiotherapists. These professionals must work in different ways skills such as cognitive, social and language skills, reduction of rigidity and stereotypes, the elimination of maladaptive behavior and the reduction of stress family (FERREIRA, *et al.* 2016).

Individuals with ASD have the right to education in the regular school environment, guaranteed, in accordance with Law No. 12,764, of December 27, 2012, which establishes the National Policy for the Protection of the Rights of People with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

The school context gives them the opportunity for social contact, favoring their development, as well as that of other children, as they live together and learn from differences (CARDOSO, 2019).

Students with ASD should be placed in regular classrooms appropriate to their needs. They should receive high-quality instruction, interventions and supports that allow them to achieve curricular success. The school and the classroom must operate based on the premise that students with disabilities are as competent as students without disabilities. One of the philosophies of Education is to include these children in the educational environment in which significant learning can occur (CARDOSO, 2019).

The participation of professionals in Education, Special Education and Health are very important for these children to be successful in their learning process. One form of collaborative work between these professionals is Collaborative Consulting.

Collaborative Consulting can be a service model to support the process of school inclusion. By differentiating itself from other consulting formats, it aims to work in a situation of equality among all those involved in working with target audience students in special education - PAEE (OLIVEIRA, 2021).

As the school context is one of the areas of activity of the occupational therapist, this professional has a great insertion in collaborative work, since he intervenes in school spaces with children, teachers and the environment, in a process of interactive and dynamic collaboration and teamwork to identify needs and make plans and actions. Thus, it is expected that the best plans within the student's educational interest are implemented (BARBA et al., 2013).

In this sense and in view of the above, the objective of this study was to identify the contributions of the occupational therapist who works with collaborative consultancy for the inclusion of students with ASD in regular schools.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This is a bibliographic research that, according to Lima and Miotto (2007, p. 44) “are extremely important because they can generate hypotheses on unknown or with little collection, being a trigger for the production of more research”.

Gil (2002, p.45) when describing the bibliographic research states that “The main advantage of bibliographic research lies in the fact that it allows the researcher to cover of a much wider range of phenomena than could be researched directly.”

2.1 Procedures

For the development of this work, a survey of articles was carried out scientific works published only in Occupational Therapy journals: Revista de Terapia USP Occupational Therapy (<http://www.revistas.usp.br/rto>), Brazilian Journals of Therapy Occupational Therapy of UFSCar (<http://www.cadernosdeterapiaocupacional.ufscar.br>). The survey carried out only in national Occupational Therapy journals, was because of the desire to identify how the therapists' performance is being produced occupational issues in the educational field within specific periodicals in the field.

To guide the search, descriptors in the Portuguese language were used, namely: “Occupational Therapy”, “Collaborative Consulting”, “Autism Spectrum Disorder” and “Educational Inclusion”. The descriptors were also cross-referenced to refine the search.

As inclusion criteria, full-text articles were chosen published with open access, in Portuguese language that were directly linked to the topic of the study. Articles that did not address the topic in a specific way were excluded. general, as well as those in which it was not possible to access the full text.

The search was carried out from August 2021 to February 2022 and the period search period was 10 years (2012 to 2021). After the survey, 15 were found articles, 12 were discarded and 3 were selected precisely because they dealt with the subject matter.

Content analysis was performed using the categorization procedure. (BARDIN, 2016), thus, when analyzing the articles, the following categories were considered: journal, title, author/year of publication, design/type of research, objective, profile of participants, intervention and benefits identified by the authors in relation to

Occupational Therapy practices with collaborative consulting in cases of the Disorder of the Autism Spectrum.

2.2 Ethical Precepts

Regarding the ethical aspects of the research, as it is a research in which the collected data and the identification of their authors are in the public domain, available in online databases, it is understood that the requirement for submission and approval by the Ethics Committee is dispensable. However, the ethical aspects of the scientific research, in relation to honesty and accuracy in relation to the data collected, which implied respect for scientific authorship and fidelity to the ideas of the authors of the analyzed texts.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the bibliographic survey carried out, 15 articles were found, of which 12 were discarded after reading, so only 3 are part of the study because they deal with the thematic more specifically.

Table 1 shows the quantities of articles found by periodicals. No articles were found in the Bahian Journal of Occupational Therapy.

Table 1 – Number of articles in journals

Periodicals	No. of articles
USP Occupational Therapy Journal	1
Brazilian Occupational Therapy Journals of UFSCar	2
Total	3

Source: prepared by the authors

Below, Table 2 will present the categorization of the 3 articles found in the study.

Table 2 – Categorization of articles

Articles	A1	A2	A3
Title	"Contributions of the Occupational Therapy for the school inclusion of children with autism"	"Reflections on the performance of the occupational therapist in the process of school inclusion of children"	"Occupational therapy and consultancy collaborative: a narrative review of literature"

		with needs educational specials”	
Author(s) and Year	Beard and Minatel (2013)	Trevisan and Barba (2012)	Santos and Libra (2016)
Design/Type of research	Case study	Revision Bibliographical	Narrative Review of Literature
Objective	Report the occupational therapist’s performance with the consultancy collaborative in two early childhood education schools.	Point out possibilities for Therapy to work Occupational process of social/school inclusion of children’s educational needs specials	Perform an analysis reflective of literature national scientific about the performance of Occupational Therapy in inclusive education through put Consultancy Collaborative
Profile of Participants	Two students diagnosed with autism, their mothers and the school’s technical team consisting of a coordinator pedagogical, teacher, monitor and director.	Children’s needs educational specials.	Children’s needs educational specials.
Intervention	The proposed intervention partnership between the actors involved and share of experiences.	The intervention aimed to point out possibilities of occupational therapy in inclusion.	A was carried out survey of articles published in four journals.
Benefits Identified	There was the implementation of school inclusion, highlighting access children’s permanence in school and facilitating their learning.	THE occupational therapist contributed mainly as a facilitator of the relationship between school, student and family, enabling the inclusion process.	The possibility of problem solving by offering technical support. and the of

Source: prepared by the authors.

Regarding the articles by Barba and Minatel (2013) and Trevisan and Barba (2012), it is important to highlight the fact that many children with ASD are entering



regular education network, due to the legal framework that supports the school inclusion of children with special educational needs and therefore, adjustments are required school to better include him.

In the article by Barba and Minatel (2013) the objective was to report the therapist's actions occupational consultant who works with collaborative consulting in two Early Childhood Education schools, being a possible way of intervening in school spaces, putting into discussion the practice and knowledge specific to Occupational Therapy in an interactive process and dynamic of collaboration and teamwork, to identify needs and make planning and actions.

The need for support and guidance regarding the possibilities of inclusion school and its implementation, brought by some families and children accompanied in the The School Health Unit – USE, of the Federal University of São Carlos, mobilized the conceptualization and organization of the authors' study. The two children in the study attended early childhood education schools, one of which had deficits in the areas highlighted by the Spectrum as language, social interaction and use of imagination and the other was in investigation of the diagnosis of ASD. The inclusion of both children in the regular school system teaching created the need for support for the school in the needs they presented during the school year, favoring the partnership between school, therapist occupational and family.

As the collaborative consultancy framework predicts (Barba and Minatel 2013), it was built a space for listening and sharing knowledge and experiences, highlighting the following activities carried out: adaptations of school materials, such as scissors, to assist in fine motor coordination; use of visual resources and clues (illustrative figures) helping the student organize and orient themselves regarding time and space; strategies for school activity, as to how to offer, guide and conduct it; flexibility of curriculum in order to broaden the form of assessment to understand learning acquired and perceived; ways of coping with difficult situations (among others, them, the student's discomfort with some sounds), among other issues that were explored.

The study showed positive results regarding the retention of one of the students with ASD at school, expanding their relational possibilities, enhancing their

performance, strengthening the work between the school-family-therapist team, in the construction of this context.

In the study by Trevisan and Barba (2012), the authors point out that the goal of collaborative consulting is finding ways to ensure the success of any student in regular education and its effectiveness depends on honest and authentic communication of the consultant. The authors point out that the role of Occupational Therapy in the workplace collaborative is the training of all those involved in the inclusion process: family, school and community, and that its target at school is to strengthen the power of action of teachers and students, through the creation of solutions to the difficulties that arise of the group itself and its reality. Therefore, the occupational therapist is a facilitator which, together with the people and professionals involved, analyzes how the objectives can be achieved, according to the highlighted needs and desires.

According to Martins (2006), studies on teachers' attitudes towards the addition of children with disabilities in public and private schools demonstrate the need for continuing education in this area, as many do not believe they are prepared or capable of the challenges. Because of this, the teaching team requests support or technical assistance from health or education professionals when students with serious illnesses appear motor, cognitive or affective impairments

According to Mendes (2008) collaborative work as a practice of promoting school inclusion in some countries has proven effective in solve problems related to the special educational needs of students and to promote the personal and professional development of educators

The occupational therapist, based on the collaborative consultancy proposal, works as a support professional for the team and the family, through actions aimed at to seek collective, environmental and supportive solutions, undoing attitudes prejudiced or generalizing in relation to students with disabilities, promoting link with the school and teachers, ensuring the success of the strategies used. (ROCHA; CASTIGLIONI; VIEIRA, 2001)

Also highlighting that the action of Occupational Therapy has focused on building inclusion with students, families and educators, and not just for develop skills to adapt the individual to the educational environment or to minimize disabilities. There is a range of possibilities for action, but to be effective, the



Occupational Therapist needs to provide work in conjunction with all others professionals who work with students in the school context, with the aim of achieving a sum of knowledge and not an imposition of knowledge.

Della Barba's work (2009) points out the possibilities of the action of Therapy Occupational that uses collaborative consultancy to develop support activities together with teachers and school staff from regular municipal schools, this also shows that the school team, when receiving technical support to deal with the particularities of each disability in its context, improves feelings of frustration and helplessness in the face of the difficulties presented. When information is shared, the teacher does not feel alone, to implement the student inclusion plan, it is up to so in this process, guidance with family members, discussion and implementation of actions together with the school team, such as adaptations of materials and furniture, technology resources assistive, application of strategies for curriculum flexibility and discussion of common goals. The author's conclusion is that the consulting approach collaborative allows a new look at the role of Occupational Therapy in the area of inclusion of children with special educational needs, as it works in partnership with everyone involved.

Authors Trevisan and Barba (2012) also point to collaborative consulting as a new perspective on the role of Occupational Therapy in the inclusion of children target audience of Special Education – PAEE.

The study by Santos and Libra (2016) states that the PAEE student is enrolled in school does not guarantee their real inclusion, because the fact that the student is at school does not mean who is participating in the activities carried out, so it must be ensured that possibility of student entry, performance and permanence in school to guarantee the academic success.

Another highlight in the article by Santos and Libra (2016), as pointed out in the study by Trevisan and Barba (2012), concerns the lack of teacher training to work with students with special educational needs in their classrooms of class.

It can be seen that working with collaborative consultancy makes it possible to occupational therapist to solve problems that compromise engagement, performance, integration and quality of teaching and learning of students with ASD.



4 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study aimed to identify the contributions of the Occupational Therapist in inclusive process for students with ASD.

Authors have demonstrated the expansion of the intervention space and the possibilities of Occupational Therapy actions in the field of school inclusion.

The family-school-therapist triad is crucial in the process of school inclusion of students with ASD.

As much as collaborative consulting makes it possible, problem-solving in school environment to the occupational therapist, where greater integration and inclusion is possible of students, it is necessary to encourage the development of new research and action plans involving occupational therapy and collaborative consulting, as they found gaps in the national scientific production of Occupational Therapy journals in relation to this topic.

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